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PRESIDENTIAL CENTER
FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



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VOL.10 NO. 41

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2020

PRICE LD\$40.00

Pastors, others face arrest



Police Boss Patrick Toe Sudue

-as police crackdown on violators of public health law



Representative Josiah Marvin Cole

Declare state of emergency

-Rep. Cole recommends to govt.



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CMYK



Continental News

Fares hiked as matatus comply with social distancing order

Fares have been hiked in major parts of Nairobi City as Public Service Vehicles implement the government's social distancing order to curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

Last Friday, Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe directed 14-seater matatus to carry a maximum of eight passengers, 25-seaters to carry 15, buses whose sitting capacity is 30 and above to have 60 per cent sitting capacity.

The CS said that if they don't comply, the sacco's licenses will have to be revoked.

A spot check by the Star on Monday indicated that many routes have increased double the fare passengers are used to pay.

In Umoja, fares hiked from about Sh70 to Sh200 one-way.

This made some passengers to stand on different stages as they waited for the fare to be reduced. From Kasarani to the CBD, passengers were forced to

pay double the fare. "I'm not a happy citizen. It took me 15mins to get to town but paid Sh100 bob!! Considering there was no traffic and it was at

5:45 am I was supposed to pay Sh50. I love that they are taking the necessary measures that are the use of sanitizers and minimizing the number of passages but what I don't get is why we have to pay for the empty seats!" Jacinta Wanjiru told the Star.

Lewis Nyaundi told the Star he had to part with Sh200 from Ongata Rongai to town and another Sh70 from the CBD to Westlands. Matatu Owners Association chairperson Simon Kimutai told the Star on Monday that the directive from the government was not sustainable at all.

"The government has got to address this situation. Otherwise, we have no way out but to increase the fares," he said.

Many passengers also resorted to using SWVL for their commute.

"This is just like Sh50, unlike

the matatus that have hiked their fares.," commuter Mary Wanjiru told the Star.

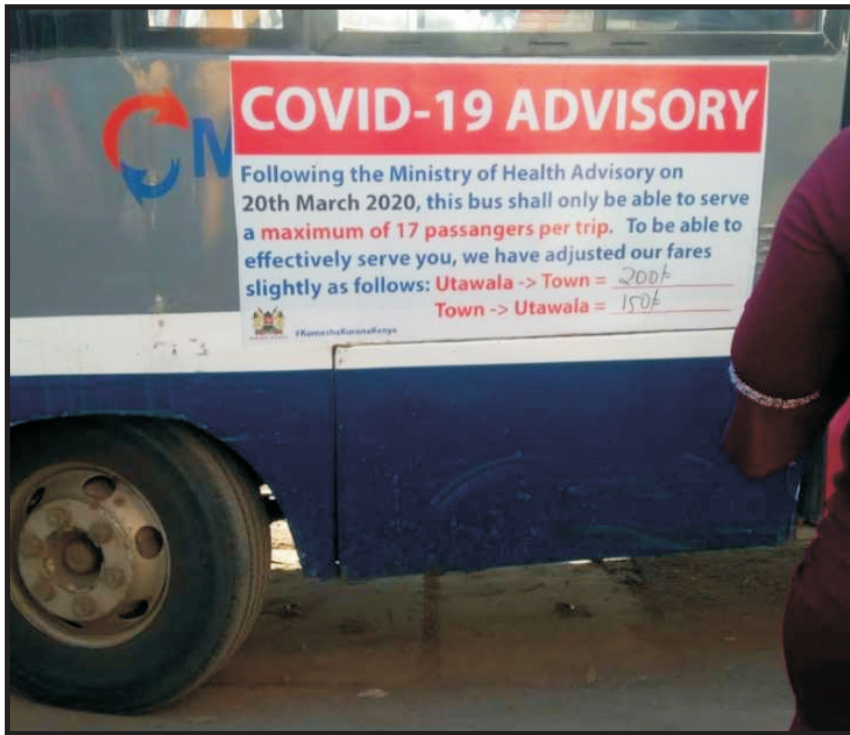
Even though SWVL is the better option, it does not adhere to social distancing.

Police have also enhanced the crackdown of matatus. Vehicles that have carried excess passengers are being stopped.

"This will not work. Buses from Uthiru carry excess passengers but when they reach near a police area, they tell some passengers to alight," another commuter added.

As at 9 am Monday, there were 1,572 confirmed cases of coronavirus, including 47 deaths, in 44 Africa countries.

Kenya has so far confirmed 15 cases with no fatalities. The government is currently tracing 363 people who got into contact with eight new cases that were announced on Sunday. AFP



Algeria protests called off for first time in a year

Algerian protesters have called off their weekly anti-government demonstrations for the first time in more than a year to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

This would have been the 57th week in a row that Algerians came out onto the streets.

Authorities banned the demonstrations, but opposition activists also urged supporters to stay inside.

There have been at least 10 deaths and 90 confirmed virus cases in Algeria.

Imprisoned activist Karim Tabbou was among the protest leaders who told demonstrators to suspend their marches, according to Reuters news agency. The protests began in February 2019 after the then president Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced he was going to seek a fifth term in office.

As the protests grew, the 82-year-old scrapped his plans and

stood down from power. But demonstrators continued to fill the streets every Friday, demanding the whole ruling regime stand down too and accusing them of widespread corruption.

Some weeks, tens of thousands of people filled the streets of the capital Algiers.

On Friday, Algiers' streets were empty - apart from police and journalists, Reuters reports.



This has been the scene in Algiers for most Fridays in the past year

Guinea's opposition says 10 killed in protests



Many opposed the vote which could pave the way for the president to stay in power beyond his mandate

Opposition activists in Guinea say at least 10 people have been killed in street clashes during Sunday's controversial referendum on a new constitution.

Critics said the vote was a ploy by President Alpha Condé to stay in power beyond his mandate.

The deaths occurred in the capital, Conakry, where police fired tear gas to disperse demonstrators.

Opposition supporters attacked the police, burned polling centres and destroyed voting equipment.

Mr Condé, 82, insists the new constitution will bring about positive reforms, especially for women.

Many people say they are worried about the vote taking place during the coronavirus outbreak.

More than 30 people have been killed in months of opposition protests against the referendum. BBC

EDITORIAL

In union strong, success is sure! We can beat the coronavirus

THANK GOD THE President of the Republic of Liberia, Mr. George Manneh Weah, has constituted a Special Presidential Advisory Committee for the Prevention of the corona virus (COVID-19) in Liberia.

CLEARLY, HE UNDERSTANDS that the corona virus outbreak requires all national and international hands on deck to handle eradicating the virus. With donor support, I hope the President takes his initiative a step further and establish a standing Incident Management System (IMS) and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to help manage all the details of this crisis and any future crisis.

THE WORLD HEALTH Organization reports that worldwide the virus has infected more than 184, 000 people and has killed at least 7,500. This global pandemic has arrived in East, West, Central and Northern and Southern Africa. Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Togo, Cameroon, the DRC, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, South Africa, Morocco. These countries have reported confirmed cases.

EVEN LIBERIA'S NEIGHBORS, Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire have confirmed cases. Al Jazeera is reporting that most of Africa's cases came from those who travelled abroad and returned. Only five people have succumbed to corona virus so far -- all in North Africa, reported Al Jazeera, with the Sub-Saharan region recording no deaths and very low numbers of confirmed cases.

UNLIKE MANY OF these countries, Liberia has the hard won experience of successfully combatting Ebola. Through the active implementation of lessons learned, data collection and communication along with International and national engagement, and community activism, key measures were put in place - aggressive communication campaigns, contact tracing programs and reliable reporting mechanisms to eradicate the virus.

THERE WERE ALSO vigilant hand washing schemes, meaningful calls to action like calling community or traditional leaders when sick or when seeing someone who is sick, seeking early treatment and no touching. These measures helped to combat the deadly but survivable disease. There is a collective memory of what to do. Business and homes alike have installed hand washing stations. The Ministry of Health and the National Public Health Institute of Liberia are working to ensure the relevant parties are quarantined and effective contract tracing is activated.

HOWEVER, THE CORONA VIRUS is not Ebola. New measures, campaigns and messages are needed because COVID-19 is infectious in a pernicious way Ebola wasn't. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has said the corona virus is not just spread between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) but it is also spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets, said the CDC, can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly inhaled into the lungs.

IMAGINE, THOUGH, THE prospect of an infected person displaying symptoms and sneezing in a taxi. Those people are potentially affected. When they get out of the taxi, they in turn infect the people they come into contact with.

THE MINISTRY OF Transport is encouraging drivers to wear masks and has reduced the number of authorized passengers in a taxi to one in the front. What about passenger safety? Should passengers wear masks and gloves, too?

GOOD CRISIS MANAGEMENT CRITICALLY examines the worst-case scenario. For example, what will parents do if one child or another family member in the household has the virus and the rest of the family doesn't? How will the family manage that? How will sanitation be handled? Are hospitals and clinics equipped with enough gloves and masks to manage the crisis? Will the borders be closed?

HOW WILL INFECTION prevention be handled at congested markets across the country or with the people who travel to Guinea or Sierra Leone to buy and sell or visit family? What measures are put in place for this scenario? How will they be informed about accurate and reliable ways to prevent infection?

EBOLA WAS MORE than a health emergency. The epidemic severely impacted the provision of health care services and caused setbacks in the treatment and control of other diseases including: HIV, TB and Malaria according to the CDC, but Ebola also affected the population on the social, cultural, economic and political level.

Ebola changed the way greetings were conducted and it caused the need for safe burials which was a departure from traditional burial ceremonies. Other social norms were either transformed or were temporarily dropped from the cultural fabric of society.



EDITOR'S NOTE: LISA R. WHITE is a crisis communication specialist who consults with businesses and organizations on their crisis management plans and community outreach initiatives. She is the former UN Ebola Emergency Response Mission Public Information Officer for Liberia and former Senior Radio Producer with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). She can be reached at genesyscomms@gmail.com for questions or comment.

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc.,
UN Drive, P.O. Box 1266 Opposite National Investment Commission,
Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-886978282 /
+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan

COMMENTARY

By Elizabeth Drew

Why Biden?

Former US Vice President Joe Biden is almost certain to be the Democratic Party's nominee to challenge President Donald Trump in November. Biden's emergence at the front of a once-crowded field caps what may be the most significant and unusual US presidential primary ever.

WASHINGTON, DC - The most significant and unusual contest - possibly ever - to nominate the challenger to a sitting United States president is effectively over. Former Vice President Joe Biden - written off by most observers until his triumph in South Carolina last month and victories in other Southern states turned the race around - now has such a commanding lead in delegates over his rival, US Senator Bernie Sanders, that it's virtually impossible for Sanders to overtake him. Biden's double-digit wins in the three states that voted on March 17 - Florida, Illinois, and Arizona - doubled his lead to more than 300 delegates. (Ohio postponed its primary because of the COVID-19 pandemic.) Sanders, having signaled that he'd quit the race (after last Sunday night's two-man debate), has now done so again.

After a dismal start in Iowa and New Hampshire (where he finished fourth and fifth, respectively) and an unimpressive finish in Nevada (a distant second to Sanders), many had written Biden off. And yet he quickly flipped the narrative, owing to a few key factors: the unrepresentative nature of heavily white Iowa and New Hampshire, the strength of the black vote in the South, and the moving endorsement of Biden by Rep. Jim Clyburn, the House Majority Whip and the most powerful African-American political figure in South Carolina (and possibly the entire South). But, most important, there was a change within Biden himself.

As Clyburn recently explained the candidate's transformation to me, no sooner had an uncertain (and rusty) Biden entered the race than he was hit by attacks over his sole surviving son, Hunter, who joined the board of a large Ukrainian gas company, Burisma, at a time when Biden, as Barack Obama's vice president, was charged with dealing with Ukraine's widespread corruption. This made Biden defensive; then, as Clyburn put it, "accusations from women about his being a touch-feely guy" intensified Biden's unease. As Biden was trying to adjust to all this, Clyburn said, "he got hit upside the head over busing" by rival candidate Kamala Harris, a US senator from California. Biden was a longtime civil-rights supporter, but mandatory busing of black students, often over long distances, to integrate white schools was deeply unpopular with his working-class constituents. (As it happens, Clyburn, too, had opposed busing, which many African-American families also didn't like.)

Clyburn wanted to endorse Biden, and not only because they and their families were longtime friends. Black Democratic candidates further down the ballot, like down-ballot white Democrats - especially those who in 2018 had flipped the House from Republican control - tend to be moderates. Both groups were uneasy about their prospects with Sanders, a self-described democratic socialist, at the top of the ticket. Their assumption, valid or not, was that Trump would clobber Sanders.

But Clyburn felt that Biden was making it

difficult to endorse him. "Joe wasn't being Joe," he told me. In a meeting on the Sunday before the South Carolina primary the following Saturday, Clyburn urged Biden to "loosen up," and "talk to people more personally, talk to them about their families, and about their communities." Clyburn also advised Biden, "Don't talk about what you and Obama did; talk about the voters' futures." Clyburn went backstage during the debate's first break and told Biden, "You're saying all the right things, but people aren't feeling you; look straight into the camera and talk personally." As he told me later, "You're not going to raise much money if people can't feel you in the debate."

Biden put together an effective coalition of African-American and suburban voters, mainly women. As in 2016, Sanders won younger voters, but he came up short in meeting his pledge to significantly expand his base in 2020. In the three days between the South Carolina primary and Super Tuesday (when 14 states were to vote - two other candidates, Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar, seeing no path to victory, withdrew and endorsed Biden. Former candidates Harris and US Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey, both African-American, endorsed Biden after Super Tuesday.

Sanders faced another disadvantage: multiple polls indicated that voters cared a lot less about ideological agreement with the candidate than about who they thought was most likely to defeat Trump. This was reflected in Biden's decisive victories on March 10 in Michigan, Missouri, and Mississippi. At this point, Biden was widely believed to be the next Democratic nominee.

Multibillionaire businessman and former New York City mayor Mike Bloomberg also quit after Super Tuesday and endorsed Biden. Bloomberg's strategy of entering the race late, after flooding the country with slick and expensive ads, didn't work once he appeared in the flesh. And his rationale for running had disappeared: he had assumed that Biden would remain a weak candidate, and that he himself was the strongest challenger to Trump. But Bloomberg fell flat when he appeared in his first debate on February 19. The most brutal attacks came from US Senator Elizabeth Warren, who pounced on complaints from women about misogyny in Bloomberg's company (Bloomberg himself wasn't accused of physical assaults but of insensitive wisecracking about women).

Warren's withdrawal two days after Super Tuesday was seen by many Democratic women as a devastating blow to women's chances to win the presidency - a view that Warren encouraged. Although Warren had been quite popular last fall, her failure to dominate the race should have come as no surprise. Even liberal Senate colleagues were put off by the intensity of her advocacy for broad reform of domestic policies and large new government programs and what they perceived as her "holier-than-thou" attitude. In any case, the view that Warren's failure to win the nomination amounts to a calamity for women seeking the presidency is puzzling, given that the Democrats nominated a woman four years ago.

O-PED

By Shang-Jin Wei

Beating COVID-19 and the Economic Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens the world with disaster. But the crisis also offers governments a rare chance to undertake policy changes that address the short-term public-health challenge and boost the global economy's long-term growth potential.

NEW YORK - Back in January, I predicted that the spread of the new COVID-19 coronavirus in China would reach a turning point by the second or third week of February. Indeed, the total number of serious and critical cases in the country has been declining since February 22, and there have been no new cases in the last few days other than international travelers arriving in China. Unfortunately, new infections outside China have risen very fast, with potentially disastrous consequences for public health and the global economy.

Faced with this pandemic, policymakers can draw several useful lessons from China and other countries that were among the first to be hit by COVID-19. This is especially useful for countries that have not yet experienced a major outbreak. Above all, they must act fast.

First, governments and public-health authorities must ramp up preparations before a major outbreak occurs. When COVID-19 hits, there will be a spike in demand for testing kits, face masks, alcohol wipes, protective clothing, hospital beds, and life-support machines. Europe and the United States did not use their six-week lead time well; other countries should get ready now.

If domestic supplies of such materials are limited, then countries should consider importing more of them from China, Japan, and elsewhere. After all, most of these products are not high-tech, and can be made in many countries. China in particular is eager to resume production, and factories there have the competence and can respond speedily to a surge in global demand.

Furthermore, national contingency plans should ensure adequate numbers of hospital beds - especially in intensive-care units - in the event of a large-scale outbreak. If a national plan is not feasible or is insufficient, then the government will need to consider building new hospitals quickly, using foreign companies if necessary.

Public authorities also must advise the public early, clearly, and forcefully on how to minimize the virus's spread, through both personal hygiene and social distancing. Singapore, where health officials and even the prime minister have delivered accurate medical information to the public, is a good model to emulate.

Critically, governments need to act early and decisively to enforce social distancing as soon as there are signs of an outbreak. As Silicon Valley entrepreneur Tomas Pueyo has shown, such steps have been effective in China and likely will be necessary in many other countries.

In order to mitigate some of the economic fallout from the pandemic, policymakers must provide rapid emergency assistance to workers, firms, and financial institutions. COVID-19 will have a strong negative impact on the overall economy in the short run, and potentially on some sectors even in the medium term.

The negative supply shock caused by factory closures is transmitted via supply chains to downstream sectors around the world, including in countries not currently experiencing a major COVID-19 outbreak. In addition, the pandemic is causing incomes and demand to contract, which affects upstream sectors everywhere. The resulting decline in business income and confidence can cause a downward spiral in demand for products and services. To forestall self-fulfilling recessionary expectations, governments must quickly roll out emergency programs that may include the temporary suspension of tax and interest payments, financial support and guaranteed health benefits to workers, and financial assistance to banks.

Countries also need to make the best (or better) use of digital technologies. Robust online shopping can offset some of the economic difficulties facing retailers and factories, but this requires broad Internet availability, widespread acceptance of digital payment by firms and households, and an efficient and inexpensive delivery system. While China is fortunate to possess all three, many developing countries do not. Their governments should thus consider emergency service-sector reforms that would allow internationally competitive firms to help build infrastructure quickly in order to advance national public-health objectives.

As for economic stimulus, an internationally coordinated program will be more effective in tackling a global recession than isolated action by individual countries. This is especially true in the case of fiscal stimulus. When a government cuts taxes or provides temporary financial assistance to needy households, the increase in domestic demand may "leak" to foreign producers via increased imports. This leakage is especially significant for small and medium-size economies that have a relatively high ratio of imports to GDP, and may discourage them from pursuing enough stimulus.

International coordination can help to solve this problem. When all countries boost their total demand, exchange rates do not need to move as much, and the increase in global demand will benefit all. The G20 or the International Monetary Fund can play a crucial coordinating role in this regard.

Finally, reducing tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers also can help to fight a pandemic-induced recession. Many major central banks have already cut their policy interest rates to nearly zero, and thus are limited in how much more they can do. But many countries maintain various trade barriers that both raise production costs and reduce domestic households' real incomes.

While the risk of a recession often tempts governments to raise trade barriers further, the exact opposite is needed to boost global output and employment. As with fiscal expansion, coordinated trade liberalization offers the best chance of success, because each country's "concessions" to foreign firms will be met with improved access for their own companies to foreign markets. The World Trade Organization and the G20 need to step up their leadership in this area.

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens the world with disaster. But the crisis also offers governments a rare chance to undertake policy changes that not only address the short-term public-health challenge, but also boost the global economy's long-term growth potential.

While the Chinese did not actually invent all the interesting sayings attributed to them, it is true that the Chinese phrase for "crisis" consists of a character signifying "danger" and another for "opportunity." Governments around the world should seize the moment and not waste the COVID-19 crisis.

OPINION

By Robert Skidelsky

What Would Keynes Say Now?

One hopes that governments will not have to choose between higher prices and increased taxes to finance efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. But it's not too early for policymakers to start thinking about how to pay for this particular war.

LONDON - The United Kingdom's new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, has done what Prime Minister Boris Johnson wanted him to do following the forced resignation of Sunak's predecessor, Sajid Javid, in February. In his March 11 budget, Sunak turned on the spending taps by unveiling a stimulus package worth £200 billion (\$235 billion) over five years.

"It was a budget of which [...] J.M. Keynes could have approved," wrote political commentator Matthew Parris in *The Times*. And there was even more praise for Sunak's March 17 announcement of an extra £350 billion to support UK businesses through the coronavirus pandemic. UK fiscal policy, it seems, has at last been restored to its proper place after years of austerity.

But I am skeptical about these latest "return of Keynes" stories. This is partly because there has been no principled repudiation of austerity, and partly because most of the new converts simply equate Keynes with budget deficits. In fact, Keynesian arithmetic can also point to surpluses.

For starters, there is nothing Keynesian about Sunak's £350 billion package to protect the economy against COVID-19: Any government will spend freely to protect its people against such disasters. Even the austere former Conservative Chancellor George Osborne would have recognized that these are not normal times. But Keynes would have asked something that no one so far has, namely, "How do we pay for it?" - a matter to which I shall return shortly.

Before I do, consider Sunak's budget-day announcement of an extra £175 billion in public investment over five years. "Investment in roads, rail, housing, broadband and capital projects as a proportion of the economy will rise to levels not seen since the 1970s," enthused the *Financial Times*, which had been a staunch champion of the last ten years of spending cuts. Certainly, this seems to mark a return to the fiscalism of the Keynesian era, and Sunak hinted as much: fiscal policy, he said, should play a "more active role" in stabilizing the economy. But what neither the chancellor nor the FT explained is why this fiscal Exocet missile is being fired only now.

For example, Sunak announced a £2.5-billion fund to fill 50 million potholes on UK roads over the next five years. But why could this program not have been started in 2010, when there would have been fewer potholes and many more people available to fill them (because UK unemployment then stood at 8%, as opposed to just under 4% today)? The orthodox answer is that the government "couldn't afford it" in 2010, but that its prudent deficit-reduction policy since then has now given it the "fiscal space" to launch the initiative. This is nonsense. What a government can afford is limited only by the amount of real resources it can command, and not by self-imposed financial constraints.

The pothole story has an important moral, though. Not only should the fiscal stimulus have come a lot earlier; it now risks coming at the wrong point in the economic cycle. Keynes wrote that, "the boom, not the slump, is the right time for austerity at the Treasury." True, it doesn't feel much like boom-time right now; forecasters were pointing to a possible UK recession even without the coronavirus. But the UK and other Western economies undoubtedly have less fiscal capacity today than they did ten years ago.

Third, having spent the last 40 years "fighting inflation," and continually warning of its re-emergence if fiscal policy was unchained, governments are now turning a blind eye to this risk. But although "cost-push" inflation is indeed unlikely to be a problem in an era of decentralized labor markets, expanding demand at full employment will still result in faster price growth. So, at some point, governments will have to raise taxes if inflation is to be avoided. By loosening and tightening fiscal policy at the wrong times, they would repeat the "go-stop" approach that discredited Keynesian demand management in the 1970s.

That brings me back to the virus. Johnson has said that the UK needs to go onto a war footing, and other leaders such as French President Emmanuel Macron have said the same about their countries. But a war economy is a shortage economy in which you can't have both guns and butter. Butter has to be rationed to produce more guns. The problem then becomes one of excess demand, not deficient demand.

Keynes recognized this in his 1940 pamphlet *How to Pay for the War*. UK civilian consumption needed to be cut, either by higher prices or higher taxes. Keynes advocated a steeply progressive income tax (with a top marginal rate of 97.5%) on the grounds that it was "fairer" than inflation. And, in an imaginative twist, he proposed that the taxes collected automatically from the poorest workers would be repaid by the government after the war.

It is to be hoped that the COVID-19 pandemic will not force today's governments to make such a choice. But it's not too early for policymakers to start thinking about how to pay for this particular war; and it's good to be reminded of tough Keynesian arithmetic.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Why Africa must fear virus

-Millions of Africans lack access to clean water. This makes coronavirus a bigger threat.

By: Brian Howard, Kangwook Han

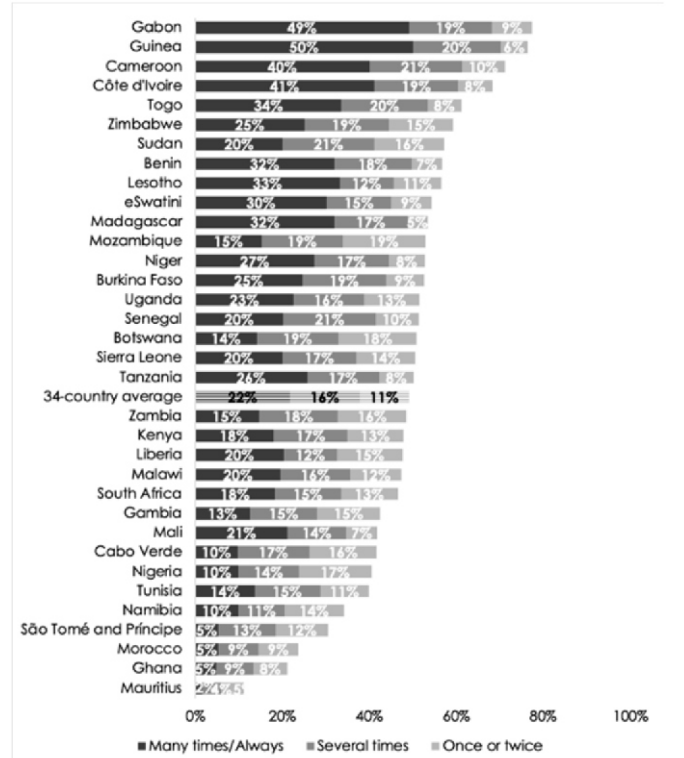
The best protection against coronavirus and other infectious diseases is frequent handwashing, the experts say. Simple enough – if you have water.

But as we observe World Water Day on March 22 during a coronavirus pandemic, millions of Africans still lack access to running water. And things don't seem to be getting better.

Based on more than 45,800 face-to-face interviews in 34 African countries between late 2016 and late 2018, Afrobarometer found that a majority of Africans see their governments as failing them when it comes to the provision of clean water and sanitation services.

About half (49 percent) of respondents said they went without enough clean water for home use at least once during the previous year. In some countries, this form of "lived poverty" affected more than three-fourths of the population, as shown in Fig. 1. Repeated shortages of clean water (at least "several times") decreased slightly between survey rounds in 2011/2013 (39 percent) and 2014/2015 (35 percent) but then increased again to 38 percent, wiping out the earlier gains.

Fig. 1: Who's without enough clean water in



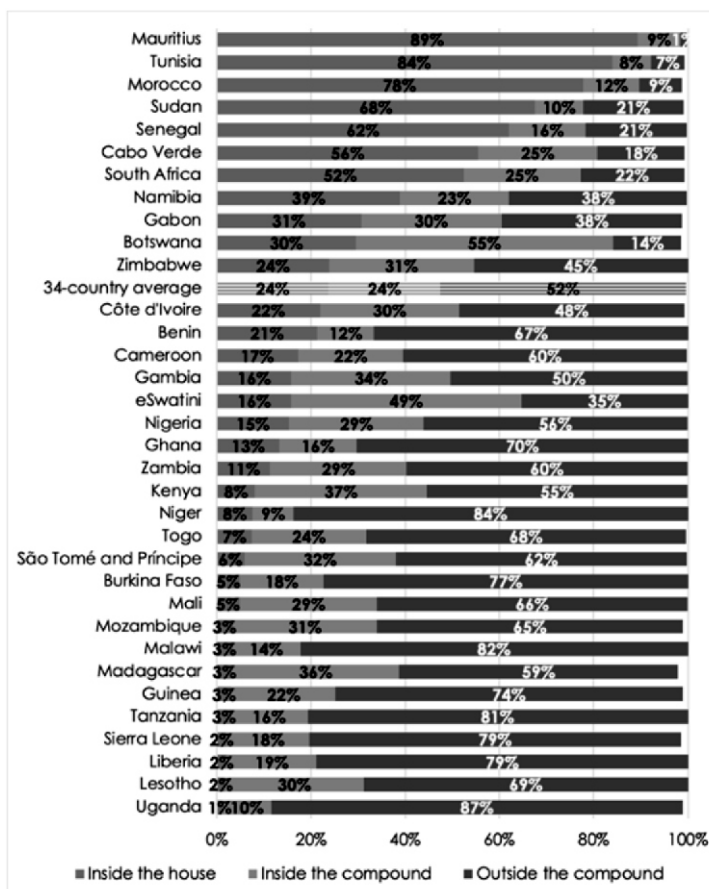
Respondents were asked: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without enough clean water for home use? Source: Afrobarometer, based on in-person surveys in 34 African countries, 2016-2018.

Poor infrastructure limits access to water

If the likelihood that people will wash their hands depends on how readily water is available, that's a problem for disease prevention in Africa. More than half (52 percent) of Africans have to go outside their compound to get water. This is true for majorities in 20 of the 34 surveyed countries, including for more than 8 out of 10 citizens in Uganda (87 percent), Niger (84 percent), Malawi (82 percent), and Tanzania (81 percent) – see Fig. 2.

Fig. 2: Where is your main source of water for household use?

Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether each of the following are available inside your house, inside your compound, or outside your compound: Your main source of water for household



use? Source: Afrobarometer, based on in-person surveys in 34 African countries, 2016-2018.

Inadequate infrastructure is a problem across the continent: Only a slim majority (54 percent) of Africans live in areas served by a piped-water system. In 5 of the 34 surveyed countries, water infrastructure is only accessible to one-quarter or less of the population: Uganda (25 percent), Malawi (25 percent), Guinea (24 percent), Zambia (23 percent) and Liberia (8 percent).

The situation is even more dire when it comes to sanitation: Only 26 percent of Africans live in zones with sewage systems, and about 3 in 10 have to go outside their compound to use a toilet or latrine (22 percent) or have no access to a facility at all (7 percent).

As might be expected, rural residents and poor people are far less likely than their urban and better-off counterparts to have access to water and sanitation infrastructure. For example, while 80 percent of city residents live within reach of a piped water system, only 34 percent of rural residents do. For sewerage, the gap is 50 percent vs. 8 percent. Similarly, almost half (46 percent) of well-off Africans live in areas served by sewage systems, but the same is true of just 16 percent of the poorest.

Water and sanitation are among citizens' top priorities

Even without the added threat of coronavirus, ordinary Africans were well aware of the urgency of government action on water and sanitation. When Afrobarometer asked survey participants what they consider the most important problems their government should address, only unemployment and health outranked water/sanitation as a priority. It's the top priority in Guinea, the second-highest priority in Tanzania and Benin, and the third-highest in eight other countries.

Considering these concerns, it's hardly surprising that a majority (54 percent) of Africans say their governments are doing a poor job of providing water and sanitation services for their citizens. The worst scores come from Gabon and Guinea (84 percent and 82 percent disapproval, respectively) – the countries where people are most likely to suffer water shortages, as we saw in Fig. 1. But disapproval of the government's performance is the majority view in 20 of the 34 countries.

The costs of this failure can be measured in any number of ways and sectors, including an estimated 829,000 deaths each year globally from diarrhea as a result of unsafe drinking water, sanitation and hand hygiene, according to the World Health Organization. The coronavirus outbreak, should it hit Africa hard, would be one more reminder of these costs. Source://www.washingtonpost.com



© Zohra Bensemra/Reuters A girl carries a bucket of clean water in Pikine near Dakar, Senegal, on March 9.



USAID | LIBERIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOLICITATION NUMBER: VA-669-20-00004

ISSUANCE DATE: 02/26/2020
CLOSING DATE/TIME: 03/25/2020 (17:30 local time)

SUBJECT: Solicitation for the AID Procurement Agent, Cooperating Country National Personal Service Contract (CCNPSC).

Dear Prospective Offerors:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking offers from qualified persons to provide personal services under contract as described in this solicitation.

Offers must be in accordance with Attachment 1, Sections I through III of this solicitation. Incomplete or unsigned offers will not be considered. Offerors should retain copies of all offer materials for their records.

This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a Personal Services Contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the offers.

Any questions must be directed in writing to the Point of Contact specified in the attached information.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robert W. Appiah
Supervisory Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT 1

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

SOLICITATION NO: VA-669-20-00004

1. **ISSUANCE DATE:** 02/26/2020
2. **CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS:** 03/25/2020 at 17:30 Monrovia time
3. **POSITION TITLE:** Procurement Agent
4. **MARKET VALUE:** \$24,064.00 to USD \$38,498.00 equivalent to CCN-08 in accordance with AIDAR Appendix J and the Local Compensation Plan of the US Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia. Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value.
5. **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** Initial two years with possibility of extension depending on need, performance, and availability of funding. This is considered a permanent position.

Employment under any contract issued under this solicitation is of a continuing nature. Its duration is expected to be part of series of sequential contract; all contract clauses, provisions, and regulatory requirements concerning availability of funds and the specific duration of the contract shall apply.
6. **PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:** Monrovia, Liberia with possible travel as stated in the statement of duties.
7. **SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED:** Facility and computer access
8. **STATEMENT OF DUTIES**

A. BACKGROUND

USAID and Liberia maintain a long-standing partnership to support economic stability and growth, strengthen democratic governance, and improve health and education systems. USAID/Liberia fosters a spirit of self-reliance and self-sufficiency, building and supporting local systems so there is no longer a need for external support. USAID/Liberia is the first bilateral program to have an approved 2019-2024 Country Development Cooperation Strategy; the Mission is in the midst of designing and procuring a significant number of new activities, and the Mission fully embraces the Agency's newly issued Acquisition and Assistance Strategy as well as the Effective Partnering and Procurement Reform Initiative.

B. BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION

This position is in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA), USAID/Liberia. The incumbent is under the direct supervision of the Supervisory Contracting Officer (SCO) or his/her delegate. H/she performs procurement duties within the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT) for both commodities and services, including international and local consultants; as well as a limited amount of clerical and secretarial duties on behalf of the SCO and the rest of the OAA team.

Serving as the OAA advisor on simplified acquisitions, h/she is responsible for the operational expense and program related procurement activities for OAA (which includes support to other offices in the Mission), and procures a variety of commodities by contract, purchase order, or other available instrument. The position fully complies with all relevant US Government laws, regulations, policies and procedures; liaises with the Financial Management Office (FMO) and

the Executive Office (EXO) to ensure the availability and accounting of funds, proper equipment inventory, etc., and monitors how well the contractors and service providers perform towards achieving a contract's purpose.

He/she is principally responsible for planning and coordinating the procurement of goods and services throughout the year, and will be the technical liaison between the contractor(s) and the Contracting Officer; this will include monitoring services and activity implementation, receiving goods and services, and verifying contractor performance.

The incumbent also serves as the principal administrative support person for the Office Director, ensuring that administrative functions are performed effectively, efficiently, and in a manner that promotes harmony and problem-solving, so that other office staff members may be more effective.

The incumbent is expected to work primarily in accomplishing the specific tasks as outlined below. Given the nature of the position, the Procurement Agent will also be expected to respond to any changes in priorities that emerge during the contract period to provide efficient, timely, and effective services to the Mission.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PROCUREMENT DUTIES

60%

- A. Performs all OAA local and off-shore procurement actions that are within the Simplified Acquisition Procedure (SAP) threshold for both program and operational expenses (OE) funded requests; from receipt of requests to preparation of purchase order (PO) or contract, and fully close out of the action. Procurement actions may use the full range of procurement instruments available for SAP.
- B. Provides assistance to support and technical offices on how to prepare appropriate documentation such as statements of work, statement of duties, government estimates (IGCE), evaluation criteria, and single source justifications. Works with Mission personnel to resolve questions related to budgets, classification of terms, reporting/deliverables requirements, market research and developing sources, and special conditions to be included in the solicitation document.
- C. Develops solicitations and assists the Contracting Officer in screening and reviewing bids and quotations and negotiating contracts. Reviews responses and recommends the best offers based on knowledge of availability, delivery schedules, reliability of suppliers, and cost/price analysis.
- D. Prepares and reviews final contract language, supplier's bill, and paperwork prior to submission to the Contracting Officer. Writes memorandum of negotiation and justification notes; has the responsibility for planning and organizing work, setting priorities, and making the most efficient use of available resources.
- E. Conducts periodic informal market surveys to allow reasonable control of prices offered. H/she is knowledgeable of the local and international market and the customs and shipping practices for delivery of commodities. Keeps abreast of market conditions, including price and availability of important commodities and services, and maintains contracts with officials of local supply firms to facilitate resolving procurement problems.
- F. Prepares contract amendments, negotiates revisions to various contract provisions; writes memoranda of negotiation and prepares other required documentation as needed.
- G. Monitors contractors' performance to ensure total compliance with the FAR, AIDAR procedures, policies and regulations, and Mission needs.
- H. Works with the Financial Management Office on financial reviews or audits of implementing partner awards. Analyzes findings and recommends courses of action regarding questioned and ineligible costs to the Contracting Officer.
- I. Closes out purchase orders, task orders, etc., when deliveries and payments are complete. Maintains a computerized database for generating special, quarterly and annual reports of Mission's procurements. Maintains an updated file of vendors, and all documentation associated with procurements and incoming and outgoing correspondence.
- J. Maintains contract files and records, prepares reports on closing out purchase orders and contracts which have ended. Maintains an up-to-date filing system (orders, catalogues, magazines), and a contractor/vendor's database.
- K. Performs contract management support and administrative functions in the review, termination and close-out of government contracts and delivery orders for awards both above and below the simplified acquisition threshold.

ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

40%

- A. The Agent takes messages in the absence of the supervisor and other staff, directing calls to appropriate staff members, receives and assists visitors, answers questions from the public and/or mission members, ensures that attendees are briefed or provided proper background material for meetings; and arranges for conference room space as required by OAA.
- B. The Agent receives and places phone calls, sends and receives E-mails, and sets up working meetings, workshops, conferences, and makes appointments at the request of the supervisor and other office staff within OAA with the Government of Liberia, donors, implementing partners, non-governmental organizations, private-sector, and other contacts; responds on behalf of the office director as needed, and takes minutes at meetings when requested.
- C. The Agent schedules appointments based on knowledge of the supervisor's commitments, maintains the office calendar, maintains and develops leave plans, weekly travel reports, emergency database and the USAID cascade list for emergency contacts. The incumbent will have expertise in word processing and spreadsheet development in the performance of a variety of assignments such as typing correspondence and other documents in draft and final form, proof-reading for format and consistency with standard Mission and Embassy requirements in advance of the supervisor's signature.
- D. The Agent maintains control of all correspondence for the OAA, is responsible for organizing OAA electronically located project/activity folders ("P" drive and subsequent filing systems), establishing and maintaining computerized tracking systems to track office actions, providing weekly reports to the SCO, drafting non-technical responses to routine correspondence and letters in English, and searching files and records to assemble background information for correspondence and other pending actions. The Agent reviews outgoing mail for proper address, routing, attachments, etc., prior to dispatch, reviewing outgoing correspondence for accuracy

and conformance with Mission formatting procedures and special instructions. The Agent distributes internal policies and procedures as necessary.

- E. The Agent establishes and maintains files according to standards set by USAID/Washington and the Mission Communications and Records Technician/Supervisor in EXO, and according to ADS provisions related to file and records retention. Marks correspondence and other documents for filing, and files accordingly. Reviews all correspondence prepared in OAA or elsewhere in advance of the supervisor's signature, corrects errors by drafters and edits correspondence, and assures that responding correspondence fully meets the requirements posed by incoming correspondence to which it pertains. The Agent maintains and updates documents such as visitors' lists, telephone listings, personnel rosters, vacation schedules, etc.
- F. The Agent may assist, in his absence, the subject matter expert (SME) or principal point of contact for multiple internal procurement related systems such as GLAAS-the Agency's world-wide web-based acquisition and assistance system that manages awards throughout the procurement life cycle, ASIST-the Agency's official electronic filing system, CPARS-the USGs contractor performance and assessment system, etc. As assistant to the SME, the incumbent will be expected to become familiar with how the systems work, and be designated open/close accounts, troubleshoot issues and solve problems, liaise with USAID/W SMEs, etc.
- G. H/she will make travel arrangements for OAA staff using the Agency's electronic travel system (E2) to prepare travel authorization (TA) requests, submit and track travel approvals by the Regional Security Office when necessary, make hotel and airline reservations through the travel agency and arrange for transportation to and from the airport. The incumbent will prepare travel vouchers after completion of travel. Also, s/he will provide assistance making vehicle requests, apartment and hotel reservations for temporary duty (TDY) arrivals and departures, and ensures welcome kits are ready (if needed) and pre-arrival information is sent to incoming staff. Also, liaises with RSO for security passes, airport passes, emergency contact list, and in-country travel request coordination.
- H. The incumbent is designated as POC for Country Clearance submissions and approvals through the eCC system, as well as File Custodian for OAA, responsible to upload documents and approved eCCs using ASIST. The incumbent is the primary timekeeper for OAA, collecting Time and Attendance (T&A) sheets from all the OAA staff, compiles these sheets and sends a consolidated report to the USAID main timekeeper. S/he will need to become proficient with WebTA, and other systems as needed.
- I. Arranges and submits MyServices requests for office related equipment needs, office and cell phone issues, updates/maintains phone lists, and supports USDH and TCN staff with official residential maintenance requests and needs.

9. POSITION ELEMENTS:

- a. **Supervision Received:**
The Supervisory Contracting Officer or her/his delegate assigns work in terms of objectives and priorities. Assistance is provided on assignments. Employee exercises initiative and judgment in developing and coordinating the procurement actions from beginning up to award, in accordance with standard practices and established procedures.
- b. **Supervision Exercised:**
None.
- c. **Available Guidelines:**
Guidelines include Federal (FAR) and Agency (AIDAR) procurement regulations, USAID Automated Directives System, Mission Orders, and other Agency and Mission policies and procedures as applicable.
- d. **Exercise of Judgment:**
Sound judgment is required to identify problems, provide guidance and make recommendations. A considerable degree of sound judgment is required in the analysis of costs, budgets, financial status and other characteristics of prospective contractors; in deciding what questions need to be asked to project officers and proposed contractors to ensure achievement of the acquisition objectives, purchase request or other instrument.
- e. **Authority to Make Commitments:**
The Procurement agent will participate in discussions and negotiations with potential vendors for related to simplified acquisition procedures. Purchase orders and all obligation documents will be reviewed and signed by the Contracting Officer. The job holder is not authorized to commit or obligate USG funds.
- f. **Nature, Level, and Purpose of Contacts:**
Daily contact with Mission staff, especially with the FMO, office chiefs, and team leaders or other technical team members including COR/AORs; may require occasional contact with Embassy procurement, mailroom services and shipping and customs staff; regular contact to be expected with counterparts, implementing partners and contractors, as well as with GOL officials and private sector business executives as needed.

Contact is maintained with the Financial Management Office and other Mission officials to obtain statements of work/scopes of work, financial data, clarification on terms, conditions and specifications of proposed purchase orders and contracts. Frequent and continuing contact is maintained with present and potential contractors, vendors, and suppliers to clarify terms and conditions of contracts and other procurement documents.
Time Expected to Reach Full Performance Level: One year.

10. **AREA OF CONSIDERATION:** Open to All Interested CCNs (Cooperating Country Nationals).

AIDAR, Appendix J. 1 (b) Definitions:

(6) "Cooperating country" means the country in which the employing USAID Mission is located.

(7) "Cooperating country national" ("CCN") means an individual who is a cooperating country citizen, or a non-cooperating country citizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the cooperating country.

11. **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

12. **POINT OF CONTACT:**

All application packages are to be submitted:

Procurement Agent

USAID/Liberia, C/O American Embassy Service Entrance,
Gibson Street, Mamba Point, Monrovia

Or by email to: Agatha W. Mangou, Human Resources Assistant, email: amangou@usaid.gov
and Sylvester Browne, Human Resources Specialist, email: sbrowne@usaid.gov

II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

a. Education

Completion of a four year university degree in administrative areas to include but not limited to accounting, business administration, finance, marketing, procurement systems, or a related technical/liberal science (agronomy, computer science, ecology, education, environmental sciences, mathematics, political science, etc.) is required. Specialized training in U.S. Government and USAID acquisition and assistance is desirable.

b. Prior Work Experience

Three to five years of progressively responsible work experience, of which two years could be in procurement, logistics, international development, or related field with other donor organizations, international development organizations, civil society or community-based organizations, private sector, or host-government organizations.

c. Language Proficiency

Level IV (fluent) English skills are required with demonstrated fluency in both written and spoken English.

d. Clearances

The ability to obtain medical and security clearances (Public Trust level –building access) in a timely manner is required.

III. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS

A. Education—20 points

USAID will assess educational qualifications that increase the candidate's competitiveness for the position.

B. Relevant Work Experience – 40 Points

USAID will assess relevant work experience that increases the candidate's competitiveness for the position.

C. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities – 20 Points

Must possess strong analytical, communication and interpersonal skills. H/she must have strong command of the English language as well as strong computer, writing and speaking skills, including keyboarding/typing skills. Incumbent must possess highly developed organizational and task prioritization/tracking skills.

Demonstrated ability to establish and maintain effective relationships at all levels within the Mission personnel, vendors, contractors, and high-level Embassy Officers. Incumbent must possess the ability to shift priorities as required and excellent customer service skills and be able to respond sympathetically to all staff in a timely and positive manner.

H/she must possess excellent negotiation and persuasive skills. Ability to evaluate the capability of a contractor in terms of adequate productive facilities, current commitments, and financial status is desired. Incumbent must be skilled in determining the responsiveness of price and/or cost proposals, through analysis of cost elements. Must be able to speak authoritatively before USAID's personnel and counterparts to negotiate and represent the U.S. Government's best interests to both U.S. and host country individuals.

D. Communication and Computer Skills – 20 Points

Applicant skills in oral and written communication in the English language, including the ability to obtain, evaluate, and interpret reports, and to effectively communicate organizational mission and policies to staff and partners will be evaluated. USAID will evaluate the applicant's computer skills, including ease and skill in using MS-Office Suite of Applications and Google G Suite applications, and in using the internet to solve problems and conduct research on matters such as regulatory guidance and compliance.

Total possible points = 100

ADDITIONAL SELECTION CRITERIA

Management will consider potential nepotism/conflict of interest, and visa status when determining successful candidacy.

SELECTION PROCESS

After initial screening of applications, only short-listed applicants will be contacted and invited for an interview and a written exercise. Applicants selected for interview will also be evaluated on their reference checks.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications shall be submitted no later than the closing date specified, and should include the following:

1. A clearly typed application cover letter that briefly summarizes why you believe you are qualified for this position.
2. Resume or CV.
3. The names and contact details of three references that can attest to your procurement management experience.
4. Documentation (e.g. copies of certificates or degrees) that address the minimum requirements of the position.
5. One to two-page writing sample broadly related to procurement development in Liberia.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Français

Le gouvernement déclare un « état d'urgence sanitaire nationale »

Le gouvernement libérien a déclaré un « état d'urgence sanitaire » pour lutter efficacement contre la propagation du COVID-19. L'état d'urgence est entré en vigueur tôt dimanche matin.

Les églises et autres lieux de culte religieux où les gens s'étaient rassemblés avant l'entrée en vigueur de l'état d'urgence ont dû fermer sur ordre des agents de police. Selon le

gouvernement, l'état d'urgence sanitaire nationale est conforme à l'article 33 de la loi sur la santé publique du Libéria.

Plusieurs mesures rigoureuses ont été prises, dont notamment la fermeture de toutes les écoles privées et publiques, des universités, des centres de formation d'informatique et de tous les autres établissements de formation, des bars, des

casinos, des vidéo-clubs, des cinémas et des plages privées et publiques.

Les églises, les mosquées et autres lieux de culte ont également été fermés dimanche matin. Les activités sportives, les rassemblements de plus de 10 personnes sont également interdits. Les mariages et les funérailles sont autorisés mais le nombre de personnes

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Cote d'Ivoire : La Candidature d'Amadou Gon Coulibaly divise le RHDP

Désigné comme candidat du RHDP, en présence de plusieurs cadres et militants du Rassemblement, par acclamation lors d'un conseil politique extraordinaire tenu le 12 mars 2020, M. Amadou Gon Coulibaly est dans des eaux troubles. Et pourtant, les images du Conseil politique extraordinaire ont laissé voir un grand consensus et une cohésion à nulle autre pareille au sein

des Houphouëtistes. Beaucoup d'observateurs de la classe politique ivoirienne avaient cru à un véritable rassemblement des héritiers du Président Houphouët Boigny, car la salle était pleine à craquer et les cadres et militants étaient tous enthousiastes, comme à une cérémonie de prestation de serment d'un nouveau Président. Une petite semaine seulement après la désignation d'Amadou Gon Coulibaly dans

une ambiance festive, le rassemblement s'est fissuré avec la démission de Marcel Tanoh Amon. Donc, la mise en scène savamment orchestrée par Alassane Ouattara pour faire croire à l'opinion nationale voire internationale que tout marche comme sur des roulettes au RHDP a été démentie. Le rang des blasés s'élargit désormais, car après Guillaume Soro et ses partisans, c'est autour de Marcel Tanoh Amon de claquer la porte pour montrer son désaccord face au choix de l'actuel Premier ministre pour porter le brassard de capitaine du RHDP à la compétition pour le fauteuil présidentiel d'octobre 2020

Pour Marcel Amon-Tanoh, Alassane Ouattara s'est cherché un dauphin en violant les principes du choix démocratique au sein du RHDP. Le désormais ex-ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la Côte d'Ivoire et compagnon de longues années de M. Ouattara pense à tort ou à raison que le choix

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Éditorial

L'affaire du COVID-19 n'est pas un jeu d'enfant

L'incapacité du gouvernement libérien de gérer de manière efficace le premier cas officiellement confirmé de coronavirus au Libéria est très inquiétante. C'est un acte irresponsable de la part des autorités.

Le président George Manneh Weah a déclaré lundi 16 mars dans un discours national que le Libéria avait enregistré son premier cas confirmé de COVID-19. Il s'agit du directeur exécutif de l'Agence de protection de l'environnement, Nathaniel Blama, qui aurait refusé d'être mis en quarantaine après avoir été testé positif par les autorités sanitaires à l'aéroport international Roberts dans le comté de Margibi dès son arrivée.

M. Blama est arrivé ici le vendredi 12 mars dans la soirée via Air Brussels. Il avait pris part à une conférence internationale en Europe. Les autorités disent que d'autres fonctionnaires qui étaient avec lui sur le même vol sont recherchés. Il faut les mettre en quarantaine afin d'éviter la propagation de la maladie dans le pays.

Nous sommes déçus d'apprendre que le patron de l'EPA a également refusé de monter dans une ambulance qui s'est rendue à son domicile pour l'emmener dans un centre d'observation. Il aurait préféré monter dans son véhicule officiel. Le ministre de la Santé, le docteur Wilhemina S. Jallah, qui a informé les journalistes lundi, a déclaré que M. Blama avait « violé » le règlement sanitaire à l'aéroport et était rentré chez lui.

Sommes-nous sérieux dans la lutte contre le COVID-19 et pour la protection du public contre les infections de masse qui pourraient détruire ce pays dont le système de santé est déjà défaillant en raison d'un manque de capacités ? Ou est-ce une mise en scène afin d'attirer la sympathie, la solidarité et le soutien de la communauté internationale ?

Pourquoi un gouvernement qui se dit soucieux du bien-être de ses citoyens, qui ne veut pas qu'ils soient infectés et meurent permettrait volontairement à ses responsables de violer les réglementations et les mesures de sécurité publique ? Le président Weah devrait aller au-delà de la simple suspension et faire inculper et poursuivre M. Blama pour son comportement grossier et son arrogance malveillante.

L'Institut national de la santé publique du Libéria devrait renforcer et appliquer ses mesures de surveillance sans crainte ni faveur, car la maladie ne connaît pas de frontière. Depuis Wuhan, en Chine, le COVID-19 s'est propagé à plus de 10 pays dans le monde, y compris aux États-Unis. Le nombre de morts aux États-Unis est de plusieurs centaines, tandis que l'Italie a perdu plus de 1000 personnes.

Le gouvernement du Libéria doit mettre en place des mesures et se montrer ferme dans la gestion de la crise actuelle. Qu'il s'agisse de Nathaniel Blama ou toute autre personne qui présente un risque grave pour le public, il faut qu'ils soient mis en quarantaine pour éviter de contaminer tout le pays entier.

À part Blama, nous ne savons pas combien d'autres personnes ont pu « glisser » entre les mailles à la RIA et aux autres portes d'entrée. Cela représente un risque pour le public.

Ebola a tué plus de 4 000 personnes, détruit l'économie et fait des orphelins. La question de COVID-19 n'est pas une plaisanterie car ses impacts se font sentir dans le monde entier.

Français

Le gouvernement déclare un « état

qui y prennent part ne doivent pas excéder 10.

C'est aussi le cas pour les supermarchés et les grands magasins qui ne doivent accepter que 10 personnes à la fois. Les personnes qui sont à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur doivent être loin les uns des autres de six pieds. Quant aux banques, elles sont ordonnées d'accepter 5 clients à la fois.

Les ventes dans les rues sont interdites. Des restrictions ont été imposées à la circulation des personnes à destination et en provenance des comtés de Montserrado et Margibi, qui sont jusqu'à présent les zones touchées.

Les dernières mesures ont été prises après que les autorités sanitaires ont annoncé qu'elles ont enregistré un troisième cas confirmé de coronavirus.

Le ministre de l'Information, Lenn Eugene Nagbe, a confirmé qu'une troisième personne a été testée positive au COVID-19 dans le pays. Le nouveau cas est Linda Ross, 63 ans, qui a été immédiatement

transférée à l'hôpital militaire 14 pour y être traitée. Ses contacts sont activement recherchés.

Bien que le gouvernement n'ait pas dit comment Russ a été infecté, des notes médicales consultées par FrontPageAfrica indiquent que le fils de Russ a déclaré aux médecins que sa mère avait assisté à une soirée dansante sur une plage de la place avec des anciennes camarades de classe le dimanche 8 mars 2020.

Contrairement à ce que l'on croit, Russ ne s'est pas rendue en Italie - et n'a pas été en contact étroit avec M. Blama, le premier cas infecté connu.

Le fils, selon les notes médicales, a expliqué que sa mère était tombée malade il y a environ trois jours. Elle avait de la fièvre, de la toux et des malaises et a décidé de venir pour le test. « La patiente ne sait pas si la personne qui est arrivée d'Italie souffre de symptômes maintenant. Elle ne sait pas si d'autres personnes qui ont assisté à la soirée sont malades », a déclaré samedi un employé de l'hôpital proche du dossier.

Cote d'Ivoire : La Candidature d'Amadou

d'Amadou Gon Coulibaly comme candidat du RHDP à la présidentielle d'octobre n'a pas été fait dans les règles de l'art. Son souhait était de voir organisées des primaires pour que le meilleur candidat puisse être choisi. C'est l'une des raisons pour lesquelles il a préféré boycotter le conseil politique du parti, le 12 mars, lors duquel Gon Coulibaly a officiellement été désigné.

On pourrait affirmer que la grande saignée au sein du RHDP a commencé et après la candidature de Guillaume Soro et celle d'Amadou Gon Coulibaly, il faudrait s'attendre dans les prochaines semaines à la candidature de Marcel Tanoh Amon et d'autres encore. Cet imbroglio inédit en Côte d'Ivoire rappelle fort

opportunément l'ADEMA-PASJ d'Alpha Oumar Konaré, en 2002 et le PDS d'Abdoulaye Wade en 2012. Le premier parti, à savoir l'ADEMA a connu le même scénario, après le choix du candidat du parti à l'élection du Président de la République. Soumaila Cissé vainqueur des primaires de l'ADEMA a eu en face de lui

deux autres candidatures issues du rang du parti de l'Abeille à savoir celle de feu Mandé Sidibé et la candidature d'El Madani Diallo. La suite est connue, le parti de l'Abeille a perdu le pouvoir au profit d'un indépendant ATT.

Quant au Sénégal, le PDS a connu sa zone de turbulence quand le Président sortant, Abdoulaye Wade, a voulu d'abord briguer un troisième mandat et ensuite imposer son fils Karim Wade. Le parti avait alors volé en éclats et beaucoup de cadres avaient quitté le navire PDS. Pour rappel, c'est un transfuge du parti, en l'occurrence Macky Sall, qui a fini par succéder au Président sortant et s'installer au pouvoir au grand dam du PDES.

En définitive, le compte à rebours semble commencer en Côte d'Ivoire et Alassane Ouattara, après une crise postélectorale qui a fait plus de 3 000 morts n'aura gagné son pari que lorsqu'il transmettra le pouvoir sans heurt à son successeur dans les conditions les plus transparentes, qu'il soit du RHDP ou de l'Opposition.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Elizabeth Drew

Pourquoi Biden ?

WASHINGTON, DC - La course à l'investiture démocrate la plus importante et la plus inhabituelle, peut-être de tous les temps, visant à désigner un candidat face au président américain en exercice est pour ainsi dire terminée. Les chances de l'ancien vice-président Joe Biden étaient jugées bien minces par la majorité des observateurs jusqu'à ce que sa large victoire en Caroline du Sud le mois dernier et ses succès dans d'autres États du Sud inversent la tendance. Il a aujourd'hui pris tellement d'avance en terme de délégués sur son rival, le sénateur Bernie Sanders, qu'il sera quasiment impossible pour ce dernier de reprendre l'avantage. En remportant haut la main les primaires démocrates dans les trois États qui ont voté le 17 mars - la Floride, l'Illinois et l'Arizona - Biden a doublé son avance en réunissant 300 délégués de plus que son adversaire. (L'État de l'Ohio a annoncé le report de sa primaire en raison de la pandémie de Covid-19). Suite au débat qui l'a opposé à Biden le dimanche 15 mars, Sanders, qui avait déjà indiqué qu'il pourrait renoncer à la course à l'investiture, a récemment dit « réfléchir à la suite ».

Après un début de campagne lamentable dans l'Iowa et le New Hampshire (où il a terminé respectivement en quatrième et cinquième places) et des résultats peu impressionnants dans le Nevada (loin derrière Sanders), Biden semblait bien mal parti. Il a pourtant rapidement trouvé un second souffle, grâce à quelques facteurs clés : la nature non représentative des électeurs de l'Iowa et du New Hampshire, majoritairement blancs, la force du vote noir dans le Sud, et le soutien déterminant apporté à Biden par le député Jim Clyburn, le plus haut responsable noir du Congrès, le « whip » de la majorité de la Chambre des représentants, et la plus puissante personnalité politique afro-américaine de la Caroline du Sud (et peut-être de tout le Sud). Mais surtout, Biden lui-même a changé.

Comme me l'a récemment expliqué Clyburn, parlant de la transformation du candidat démocrate, à peine un Biden incertain (et rouillé) était-il entré dans la course qu'il subissait les attaques venues de la Maison-Blanche concernant les activités de son seul fils survivant, Hunter, qui avait rejoint le conseil d'administration d'une grande compagnie de gaz ukrainienne, Burisma, au moment même où Biden, en tant que vice-président de Barack Obama, était chargé de s'occuper de la corruption généralisée en Ukraine. Cette affaire a mis Biden sur la défensive ; ensuite, toujours selon Clyburn, « des femmes l'ont accusé d'être trop tactile », ce qui intensifié son malaise. Alors que Biden tentait de s'adapter à ces diverses accusations, m'a encore dit Clyburn, il a subi l'attaque de la sénatrice démocrate de Californie Kamala Harris qui a rappelé que Joe Biden s'était opposé dans les années 1970 au « busing », qui visait à promouvoir la mixité raciale en transportant des élèves noirs dans des écoles majoritairement blanches. Même si Biden était un partisan de longue date des droits civiques, l'idée d'un transport par bus des étudiants noirs, souvent sur de longues distances, était profondément impopulaire auprès de ses électeurs de la classe ouvrière. (Il se trouve que Clyburn s'était lui aussi opposé au « busing » à l'époque, ainsi que de nombreuses familles afro-américaines).

Clyburn avait de bonnes raisons de soutenir Biden, et pas seulement parce qu'eux-mêmes et leurs familles sont des amis de longue date. Les démocrates noirs, tout comme les démocrates blancs, candidats à d'autres fonctions que la présidence - en particulier ceux qui ont repris aux Républicains le contrôle de la Chambre des représentants en 2018 - ont tendance à être des modérés. Les deux groupes étaient mal à l'aise quant à leurs perspectives avec Sanders, un indépendant autoproclamé socialiste, en tête de liste. Leur hypothèse, valable ou non, était que Trump allait écraser Sanders.

Mais Clyburn avait l'impression que Biden ne lui facilitait pas la tâche. « Joe n'était pas Joe », m'a-t-il dit. Lors d'une réunion le dimanche précédant la primaire de Caroline du Sud le samedi 29 février, Clyburn a exhorté Biden à « se décontracter » et à « parler aux gens de manière plus personnelle, leur parler de leurs familles et de leurs communautés ». Un autre conseil de Clyburn a été : « Ne parle pas aux électeurs de ce que vous avez fait avec Obama, parle leur de leur avenir ». Pendant la première pause du dernier débat télévisé, Clyburn est

allé dans les coulisses et a dit à Biden : « Tu dis toutes les bonnes choses, mais le message ne passe pas ; regarde directement dans la caméra et trouve les mots justes, plus personnels ». Et comme il me l'a dit plus tard, « Tu ne récolteras pas beaucoup d'argent si les gens ne te sentent pas impliqué dans le débat ».

Biden a su réunir une coalition efficace d'électeurs afro-américains et des banlieues, en majorité des femmes. Comme en 2016, Sanders a remporté les votes des électeurs plus jeunes, mais il n'a pas été capable d'élargir sa base électorale en 2020. Au cours des trois jours écoulés entre la primaire de Caroline du Sud et le « Super Tuesday » du 3 mars où 14 États ont voté, deux autres prétendants encore en lice, Pete Buttigieg et Amy Klobuchar, ne voyant aucun chemin vers la victoire, se sont retirés et ont soutenu Biden. La sénatrice Kamala Harris et le sénateur Cory Booker du New Jersey, tous deux afro-américains, ont également apporté leur soutien à Biden après le « Super Tuesday ».

Sanders est confronté à un autre désavantage : de nombreux sondages indiquent que les électeurs se soucient beaucoup moins d'une convergence idéologique avec le candidat que de la personne qui serait, selon eux, la plus susceptible de battre Trump. D'où les victoires décisives de Biden le 10 mars dans le Michigan, le Missouri et le Mississippi. À ce stade, Biden est quasiment assuré de la nomination du parti démocrate.

Mike Bloomberg, le candidat multimilliardaire et ancien maire de New York, s'est également retiré de la course après le Super Tuesday et a déclaré son soutien à Biden. La stratégie de Bloomberg, entrer tardivement dans la course après avoir inondé le pays de spots publicitaires léchés et coûteux, a fait un flop une fois qu'il est apparu en chair et en os. Il a été disqualifié par sa prestation catastrophique lors de son premier débat télévisé le 19 février, en particulier face aux vives attaques de la sénatrice du Massachusetts Elizabeth Warren au sujet de ses récurrents propos misogynes. Plusieurs plaintes pour discrimination sexiste ont d'ailleurs été déposées par des employées contre Mike Bloomberg et son entreprise. (Bloomberg lui-même n'a pas été accusé d'agressions physiques mais de commentaires extrêmement désobligeants à l'égard des femmes). Et sa raison de se présenter a disparu : il avait supposé que Biden resterait un candidat faible, et qu'il était lui-même le mieux placé pour affronter Trump.

L'abandon de Warren deux jours après le Super Tuesday a été perçu par de nombreuses femmes démocrates comme un coup dévastateur pour les chances qu'aurait une femme de remporter la présidence - un point de vue que Warren a encouragé. Bien qu'en tête des sondages à l'automne dernier, son échec à dominer la course ne devrait pas être une surprise. Même ses collègues progressistes du Sénat ont été rebutés par l'intensité de son plaidoyer en faveur d'une vaste réforme des politiques nationales et de nouveaux programmes gouvernementaux de grande envergure, et par son attitude perçue comme moralisatrice. Quoi qu'il en soit, l'idée que l'échec de Warren à obtenir l'investiture démocrate constitue une calamité pour les femmes candidates à la présidence est déconcertante, étant donné que les démocrates ont nommé une femme il y a quatre ans.

Dans l'intervalle, le président Donald Trump, auparavant considéré comme un imbattable candidat à sa réélection grâce à une économie apparemment forte et à des marchés boursiers solides, est maintenant confronté à un effondrement économique lié la pandémie de COVID 19 (une pandémie que Trump a admis à contrecœur). Pourtant, à la mi-mars, les atermoiements désastreux de la réponse donnée par son administration au nouveau coronavirus mortel n'avaient pas encore fait évoluer de manière significative l'attitude à son égard. Même après que Trump ait minimisé et ridiculisé les craintes liées au COVID-19 pendant plusieurs semaines, pour ensuite décréter l'état d'urgence, ses partisans acceptent toujours ce qu'il dit, et l'évaluation du degré de danger suit largement les lignes des partis.

Et aujourd'hui comme en 2016, celui qui remporte la course à l'investiture démocrate pourrait être très affecté par la conduite de Sanders et de ses partisans, ajoutant un nouvel élément d'incertitude dans ce qui s'annonce déjà comme une élection présidentielle exceptionnellement aléatoire et imprévisible.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Supreme Court orders public to stay away

By Winston W. Parley

Liberia's Supreme Court says it will assign cases minimally to have no more than five counsellors available for presentation, while ordering members of

day for trial (one case in the morning and the other in the afternoon) and ONLY party litigants and their lawyers are permitted into the court for each trial. The public is asked to stay away to avoid overcrowding," the Judiciary

across the globe, with three confirmed cases reported here so far.

Classes of professional magistrate training at the James A.A. Pierre Judicial Institute are suspended, and normal court activities throughout the country will be closed at 3:00PM from Mondays to Fridays until further notice.

In a statement authorized by Judicial Public Information Director Atty. Darryl Ambrose Nmah, the judiciary orders that the preventive protocol of hand washing shall be strictly adhered to at all courts throughout Liberia, as hand washing buckets will be provided at the entrances of all courts here, beginning with Montserrado and Margibi Counties.

"Court Officers have been mandated to enforce this regulation and anyone refusing to adhere thereto will not be permitted on the premises of the court," the judiciary continues.

It says further that the court (Supreme Court) will concentrate more at this time on writing opinions in cases already heard, while it also mandates all circuit judges to

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the public who are not a party to a case to stay away from court to avoid overcrowding to curtail the spread of the coronavirus here.

"All Circuit and Magistrate Court Judges are to assign no more than two (2) cases per

said in a statement Monday, 23 March.

The judicial measures against the spread of coronavirus come as Liberia with its very weak health system has been hit by the virus which has been waging havoc

Samukai, others

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Cllr. Nwabudike, now a presidential nominee to head the National Elections Commission, argued that the defendants are not soldiers and were not qualified to contribute to the account, and therefore they were not also qualified to benefit from that account, as he alleges that the accused had partly made expenditure before asking for authorization.

"They failed to produce evidence as to what they did with the money," he alleged, and said withdrawals were made 11 times for salaries.

Cllr. Nwabudike added that even if the government pays the money, it does not suggest that the defendants are free of the crimes charged.

To counter a suggestion that government has agreed to pay back the soldiers' money, he argued that by 17 January 2018 [which was in a time of transition], outgoing President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf did not have the power to commit government to anything, as the Legislature was not seated to give approval to budgetary commitment by the president.

He pleaded with the court to convict the defendants for having allegedly committed economic sabotage, theft of property, and misuse of public money.

But defense lawyer Cllr. Wilkins Wrights questioned the prosecution as to why President George Manneh Weah committed himself to

pay back the money if former President Sirleaf's commitment was invalid.

He accused the state of persecuting and harassing the former officials, claiming that they are not being prosecuted but facing witch-hunt.

He argued that with the exception of "illegal orders," no defense minister would refuse to take the Commander - in - Chief's orders and instruction, saying "these people are not criminals."

"Your Honor, if the clerk follows your instructions, has he committed a crime?" he asked, and noted further that the defendants spent the money on the order of the Commander - in - Chief, former President Sirleaf.

"No matter how this case ends, these people got nothing to be ashamed of," he continued, as he told State lawyers to be prepared to face similar consequences after President Weah's regime when new government comes.

"The thing is prosecution didn't produce any evidence that these people personally benefited anything," he added.

Cllr. Wright says the State considers the AFL money as private money, and yet charges the accused for misuse of public money, saying "private money is not supported by public law, so we are asking you to please acquit and set the defendants free."

CPP saddens by Corona virus outbreak

Liberia's four opposition Collaborating Political Parties or CPP says it is deeply concerned and saddened by the confirmation of three cases of the Corona virus in the country.

As a country that prides itself in hospitality, free trade and respect for international protocols, the current global trend of the virus, and its mode of transmission made it almost inevitable that it would have eventually reached our borders. However, we did not envisage that COVID-19 would make its way into our population in a manner that was clearly preventable, the CPP notes.

According to a press release issued in Monrovia Monday, recent confirmation by President Weah that the virus made its way into the population through a senior official of Government who made it a "choice" not to be quarantined in keeping with prevailing health protocols at the Roberts International Airport (RIA) is disturbing, to say the least.

The CPP is dismayed by the fact that the rule to have all travelers coming into Liberia from COVID-19 affected

nations quarantined would be subjected to arbitrary and individualized compliance. Over and over again, individuals connected to the president or high ranking government officials and government officials themselves have deliberately refused to abide by the existing emergency health protocols intended to safeguard the country.

"The case of Dr. Nathaniel Blama, Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency, and that of Fatu Sheriff

Schmidt are just few examples of how selectively the health protocol is being implemented. Sadly for our country, the first case of COVID-19 is as a result of one of the selective implementation of the health protocol. This is worrisome for us and the entire country because these people interacted with many others and research has shown that COVID-19 can also be transmitted by people who are not showing any symptoms



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at all. The CPP calls on the National Public Health Institute of Liberia and the Ministry of Health to scrupulously implement the emergency health protocols without prejudice."

Meanwhile, the CPP commends the government for its efforts thus far in combating the deadly virus, including its decision to have a partial and temporary shutdown of certain sectors of the country.

"However, we call on the government to with immediate effect employ the following measures in addition to the ones already being implemented: strengthen safety measures all Border Points of entry to ensure that they are effective; provide special emergency support to the press, health institutions, civil society organizations and

local government institutions to begin a nationwide awareness and safety campaign; properly enforce the regulations issued by the Ministry of Health and ensure that traditional leaders, religious leaders and local government structures are deeply involved with the awareness processes."

It further calls on the Weah administration to demonstrate additional goodwill by announcing full budgetary allocation and funding to address the current situation holistically. "In the same vein, we call on everyone within our country and those entering to adhere to all emergency health and safety measures that are being provided by the government and the International Community." - **Press Statement**

Pastors, others face arrest

By Winston W. Parley

Liberia's Inspector General of Police Col. Patrick T. Sudue has threatened to arrest and prosecute pastors according to public health law if they open their Churches to conduct services as of next Sunday, 29 March in defiance of health protocols announced to curtail coronavirus spread here.

"The entire country is aware next Sunday there will be no Church service. Anybody who open their door to have Church service, you doing it in total defiance of the law and we will go in, we will arrest you and prosecute you. Trust me, we will arrest the pastor and prosecute him," Sudue told a local FM Monday, 23 March via mobile.

The Liberia Council of Churches says it will abide by health protocols as it is aware of the health situation in the country, but it clarifies that a

meeting held with President George Manneh Weah over the weekend did not reach any decision to close Churches, as it was rather suggested that multiple services be conducted to prevent mass gathering amid

the coronavirus outbreak here.

The head of the Council of Churches Bishop Kortu Brown has indicated that the Church regrets the abrupt police action against peaceful

worshippers on Sunday.

Notwithstanding, Col. Sudue argues that everybody is in the know of what is happening here, but police were moderate with the Churches on Sunday, 22 March because most of them said the mandate to close Churches came up late and people didn't know that's why they went to Church.

He warns that anybody who defies the mandate and opens Church next Sunday will be arrested and prosecuted according to the public health law.

"But I can tell you, this coming Sunday, any Church, any Church that will open this coming Sunday, we are not going to talk to the pastor to say please stop your service. Everybody, we putting them out. Any Church, it can be who," Sudue warns.

Col Sudue insist that he will this time around enforce the law without fear or favour, accordingly.

He said police were a bit flexible on Sunday because the declaration of the national emergency was not widely publicised and many worshippers had gathered at their places of worship before the news went viral.

"So if Senator [Prince Yormie] Johnson prayed for less than a minute... I don't see what the argument is about. The idea here Senator Johnson's Church was closed,"

he explains.

Government late Saturday night announced the declaration of a nationwide health emergency to help curb the spread of COVID-19 here which came into force early Sunday morning.

Churches and other religious worship centers where people had gathered before the emergency order came into force had to send worshippers home, directing them to follow the services online.

The government said the declaration of the nationwide health emergency is in line with title 33, Chapter 14 of the Public Health Law of Liberia.

The declaration outlined several stringent measures which includes the closures of all schools both private and public including universities, computers schools and all other training institutions; all bars, casinos, video clubs, cinemas, betting centers, beaches both private and public ordered closed.

Churches, Mosques, and other religious places of worshiped were also ordered closed on Sunday morning. Large gathering to include sporting activities, parties of more than 10 persons are also ordered banned. Wedding and funerals are allowed but should not include more than 10 persons. Those attending such functions are to keep a distance of six feet apart.



Police Boss Patrick Toe Sudue

Declare state of emergency

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Bong County Electoral District # 3 Representative Josiah Marvin Cole calls on government to declare a 'State of Emergency' amidst the Corona virus spread here.

The Liberian government through the Ministry of Health and the National Public Health Institute of Liberia has since announced a third case of the virus and said affected individuals have been quarantined at the newly constructed 14 Military hospital in lower Margibi County.

Already, the government has put several measures in place, including banning public gathering, reducing number of passengers in commercial transport, constructing health protocol at the Roberts International Airport, and shutting down

schools, churches and mosques.

Speaking on Ok Morning Drive Monday, March 23, Cole said Liberia is attacked by an invisible invader and the best option is to declare state of emergency to allow government enforce some strong measures for the safety of Liberians and foreign residents.

"I wonder the mindset of people who think that government is creating false alarms of the virus; those people are insane. Those people have lost their five senses, look at the world today, everywhere people are dying of the virus and we have reported three cases and people think is about making money, this is totally unacceptable," he said.

Cole narrated further that those claiming President George Manneh Weah is raising false alarm about the corona virus outbreak are 'devilish'

and they have lost their sense of reasoning in the name of political differences.

Article 85 of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia states: The President, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, may order any portion of the Armed Forces into a state of combat readiness in defend of the Republic, before or after the declaration of a state of emergency, as may be warranted by the situation. All military power or authority shall at all times, however, be held in subordination to the civil authority and the Constitution."

The Bong County lawmaker encouraged Liberians to follow all health protocols and staysafe.

"We encourage our people to follow the health protocol; we are being attacked by extended forces especially, invisible forces and it requires the collective effort of every one of us," he emphasized.

Speaking on the show, the Managing Editor of FrontpageAfrica newspaper, a local daily here, Rodney Sieh said the virus is ragging hell the world over and Liberia is no exception, so Liberians should rise up to the challenge by following the procedurals set by health authorities.

Mr. Sieh said, he has instructed both the editorial and business staff of his paper to work from home and the senior management is considering to suspend production of hard copy of the paper, meaning the paper would only operate online. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



Representative Josiah Marvin Cole

Supreme Court orders

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encourage party litigants to opt for bench trials instead of jury trials, where possible.

"However, where a party litigant insists on his/her/its right to trial by jury, the Judge MUST suspend the hearing of said case until the health situation on the country is declared safe," the judiciary notes.

Given the health situation here, the judiciary says it is

temporarily scaling down its workforce at this time, as each subordinate court is required to have a maximum of five support staffs inclusive of clerk, clerk typist, file clerk, bailiff and sheriff at work each day.

The judiciary indicates that the restriction does not include court security and maintenance workers where applicable.

ArcelorMittal Liberia

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Samukai, others brace for Court's ruling today



By **Winston W. Parley**

Criminal Court "C" Judge YamieQuiquiGbeisay has designated today, Tuesday, 24 March to rule in the trial of former Defense Minister Brownie Samukai, former Deputy Defense Minister Joseph Johnson and former Defense Ministry Comptroller NyumahDorbor. The ruling was scheduled after prosecutors and defense counsels for the former officials held their final

arguments last Thursday, 19 March during which both sides battled on opposing interests to either convict or acquit the accused indicted for allegedly embezzling funds deducted from soldiers' salaries for pension.

A notice of assignment from the court mandates the parties involved in the case to be present for the final ruling at 9:00A.M.

Arguing for the Sate last week as the head of the Liberia Anti - Corruption Commission at

the time, Cllr. A. NdubusiNwabudike, claimed that the indicted officials allegedly used their powers to usurp the authority of the people [soldiers] that they were supposed to represent.

The three officials have been on trial following their indictment last year for allegedly embezzling funds generated through a compulsory savings scheme established in July 2009 in which soldiers' salaries were deducted and placed in an account as supplementary pension benefits for assistance to wounded soldiers and deceased soldiers' families.

The state alleges that over US\$1.2m of the US\$1.9m deposited was misapplied by the officials, with further claim that the defendants made themselves the only signatories to the account, leaving out the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and other ranking officers.

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ArcelorMittal Liberia Contributes \$100,000 for Coronavirus Medical Supplies

ArcelorMittal Liberia will contribute urgent medical supplies to the value of \$100,000 to the Ministry of Health to support their efforts to curb the spread of the Coronavirus during this crisis. The company is urgently seeking to procure medical equipment for its own hospitals, and this is proving to be a very challenging process given the global shortage. However, the Company will continue this search and in so doing, will endeavor to facilitate procuring such

equipment on behalf of Liberia.

In a letter to the Minister of Health, the CEO of AML, Scott Lowe, said AML is working in close coordination with designated health and security authorities at all levels of the Government of Liberia (GoL) to ensure the safety of our staff and the communities where we work and live.

ArcelorMittal Liberia continues to closely monitor the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and has instituted an extensive range measures to protect our people, first and foremost, and to ensure business



and operational continuity. We need to collaborate with all stakeholders to confront this serious public health crisis.

As a major investor in Liberia's private sector, ArcelorMittal Liberia reconfirms its support and commitment to the Government and people of Liberia in containing the spread of the virus.

About Coronavirus
Mainly spread by sick people through droplets created when they talk, cough and sneeze.

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