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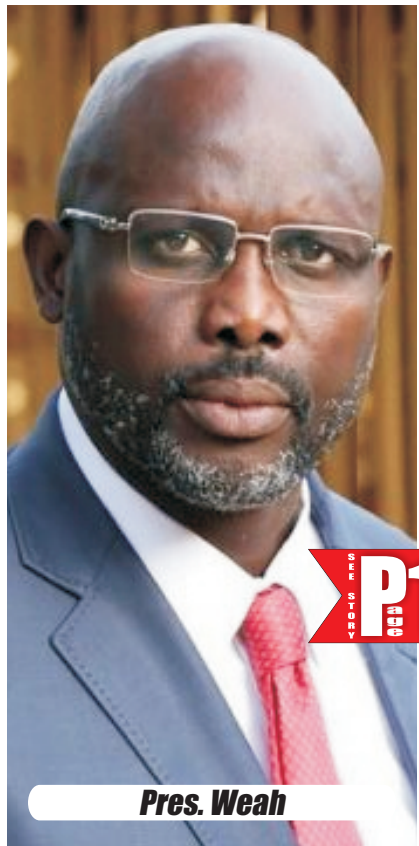


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Pres. Weah



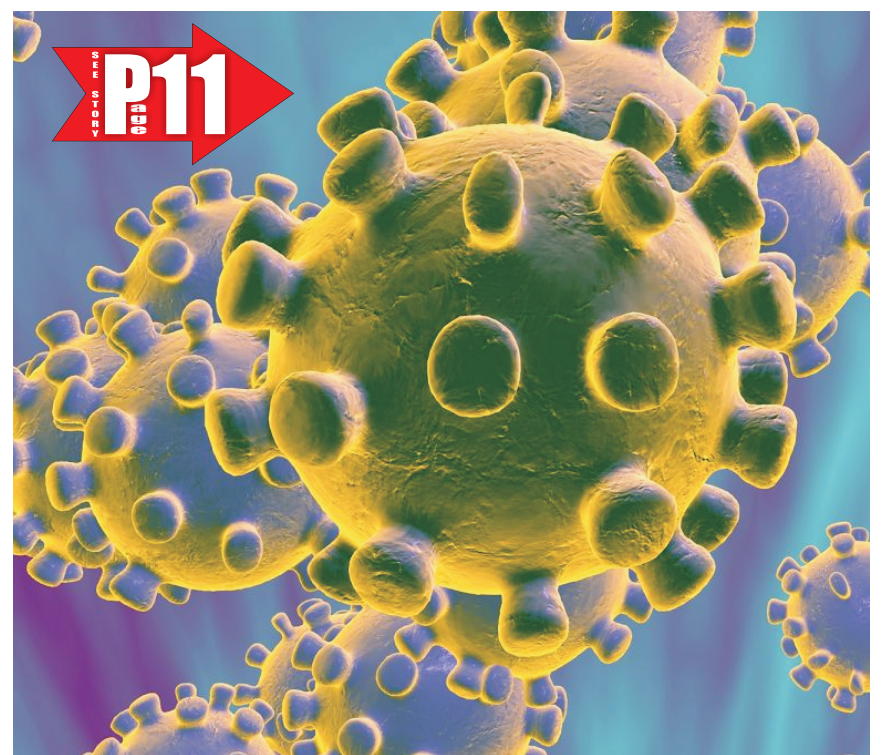
Cllr. Nwabudike

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“He’s too close to Weah”

-IJG wants Cllr. Nwabudike rejected (Pt-1)

Over half a million now infected with Coronavirus



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Continental News

Uganda bans public transport for two weeks

Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni declared a ban on public transport across the country to stop the spread of coronavirus on Wednesday night.

This will have a big impact on millions of people - not only because it restricts their movements but also because it affects the incomes of some of the most vulnerable.

First of all, people cannot get to work or to their businesses meaning they can no longer earn a living. The casual labourers who survive on a daily wage also suffer.

Markets have been ordered to allow only the sale of food items.

Business in shops, transport hubs and commercial buildings in the centre of the capital, Kampala, has ground to a halt: By mid-morning, videos started circulating of security forces dispersing

crowds of sellers and people in the city centre.

There are accusations of heavy handedness by the police and army personnel deployed, who were seen

beating people on the streets.

Journalists say that, even though shops are not meant to be closed under the president's directive,

security forces have shut down businesses leaving only restaurants and supermarkets open.

By Wednesday afternoon, the police said 14 people had been arrested for looting food.

A video shared on Facebook by a journalist showed a few young men grabbing pineapples from the back of a small truck.

Abel Mwesigye, head of Kacita, a national traders' association, told me that groups of people had tried to steal goods displayed on the streets and police moved in to disperse them.

There is a real sense of confusion, fear and uncertainty especially among people who will struggle to get by without the ability to earn an income. BBC



Kampala's streets are usually full of "boda boda" motorbike taxis

Kenyan MPs mull coronavirus pay cut

Members of parliament in Kenya are considering whether to follow the example of President Uhuru Kenyatta by accepting a temporary pay cut in response to coronavirus.

suit, saying it would free up resources to tackle the outbreak.

The speakers of National Assembly and Senate held a news conference on Thursday morning at which they announced a personal

Coronavirus: Kenya bans second-hand clothing imports

Kenya has banned the importation of second-hand clothes, popularly known as "mitumba", as a way of limiting the spread of coronavirus.

"Importation of used clothes is suspended with immediate effect to safeguard the health of Kenyans and promote local textiles," Kenya's Daily Nation newspaper quoted

Trade Minister Betty Maina as saying. Many people buy the second-hand clothes sent from Europe, North America and China, which they prefer because they are more affordable than new products.

A significant number of Kenyans with low-incomes depend on the mitumba business for their livelihoods.

But the government has been keen to discourage these imports in support of local

industries.

On Wednesday, Ms Maina met second-hand clothes dealers and encouraged them to source goods from local manufacturers.

But not everyone is happy with the suspension.

The MP for Kamukunji sub-county, where the bustling clothes market of Eastleigh is situated, tweeted his opposition, saying he was shocked by the move: BBC



The president and his deputy are taking an 80% pay cut

The MPs are among the highest paid in Africa.

President Kenyatta announced on Wednesday that he and his deputy would be taking an 80% reduction in pay. He urged other parts of the government to follow

pay cut of 30% for three months.

Mr Kenyatta also announced that a nationwide, night-time curfew would be imposed from Friday. BBC



The second-hand clothing trade provides a living for many Kenyans

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EDITORIAL

Bracing ourselves for the worse

LIBERIANS ARE NO doubt a resilient people, who come together to addressing a common problem that threaten their wellbeing nationally. A case in point, Liberians stood in a united front and defeated the dealy Ebola virus in 2015.

WE HAVE NOT seen that same resilience since President Weah announced the first case of the COVID-19 in the country a week ago followed by subsequent cases. We see a national leadership void here on this pandemic that is ravagting countries around the world with death toll now already hitting 400,000.

ONE PATRIOTIC LIBERIAN and former official who has stood up to suggest a way forward is Dr. Nathaniel Barnes, ex-minister and ambassador.

DR. BARNES WARNS that it could get worse in Liberia due to lack of capacity and global impact both on the social and economic fronts unless government embarks immediately on series of stimulus packages to save the population from obvious starvation and death.

HE STRESSE THE need to incent and subsibize business people, especially importers of rice, the nation's staple and other basic commodities. He recommends tax waiver for rice importers in order to avoid hoarding and price hike so the commodity can reach the most vulnerable.

THE LIBERIAN ECONOMIST further suggests government, thru the Central Bank suspends payment on loans by commercial banks and pay civil servants, including those sent on compulsory leave.

THE WEAH ADMINISTRATION has not indicated which way it is taking the economy that could no doubt, negatively impact citizens' lives besides the Coronavirus.

THE AUTHORITIES HERE are pre-occupied with locking down, including closure of schools, churches, and mosques than looming economic consequences that may soon hit the population.

EVEN THE LIBERIAN Senate has called on President Weah to take charge of the pandemic himself, rather than leaving the situation with his officials. While infection may slow for now, the rate of contacts is rapidly increaseng, which shows a looming calamity is ahead.

WE COULD NOT have agreed with Grand Kru County Senator Doctor Peter Coleman, who chairs the Senate Committee on Health, any better. President Weah should switch from being a backbencher in the current crisis and take charge.

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+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan

COMMENTARY

By Mark Leonard

Leadership in a Time of Contagion

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has been compared to the 2008 financial crisis, the two episodes are quite different, not least in their cast of leading characters. Unlike the previous generation, today's European leaders have been shaped by a decade of austerity, refugee crises, and America's denouement as a global hegemon.

BERLIN - Google "Europe" and "crisis" and you will turn up 784 million results. So often do the two terms appear together that they might as well be a compound noun. With each new eurocrisis, commentators wring their hands over the question of whether the European project will survive.

On the surface, many eurocrises seem similar. European governments go through different phases of grief - from denial and anger to reconstruction and acceptance - and eventually blame the usual suspects. For northern Europeans, the problem always lies in southern Europe; for southerners, the Germans are the bad guys, and China is a potential savior.

But, of course, there are fundamental differences between the generation of leaders who steered Europe through the 2008 financial crisis and those now grappling with COVID-19. That became apparent this month when former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown embarked on a media tour to share the lessons from his own time in office.

Owing to his proactive response to the 2008 crisis, which included organizing the April 2009 G20 summit where world leaders agreed on a coordinated economic-policy response, some commentators have suggested that Brown single-handedly saved the global financial system. Now, Brown is asking why today's leaders haven't organized an equivalent summit to get ahead of the pandemic's economic fallout.

Today's leaders have a fundamentally different outlook. Brown, US President Barack Obama, and French President Nicolas Sarkozy have given way to Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, and Emmanuel Macron (to which one might add Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, and Austrian Prime Minister Sebastian Kurz).

These leaders' political instincts were shaped by the widespread backlash against the post-2008 establishment and globalization more generally. Today's leaders are decidedly less Atlanticist than their predecessors were. As young adults, they witnessed America's disastrous war in Iraq, and watched as a financial crisis born in the United States went on to wreak havoc across the entire world. Unlike their predecessors, they see America - or at least Trump's America - more as of a source of problems than of solutions.

Europe's current leaders are also much less neoliberal in their economic-policy orientation. In the post-2008 period, even social democrats who had demanded large-scale stimulus measures turned out to be relatively conservative, more or less embracing austerity. Having lived through those years of belt-tightening, the new generation is much more interventionist, and not just in economic terms. In the 2008 crisis, the biggest fear - to quote Roosevelt - was fear itself, so governments needed to project normality. Today's governments need to promote and harness fear in order to contain the deadly virus.

Nor does the current crop of leaders share the previous generation's confidence in global governance. On the contrary, their first instinct in the face of COVID-19 was not to organize a global summit but to seal their borders and re-nationalize supply chains. This reaction may

reflect the experience of the 2015 refugee crisis, when multilateral governance seemed to have failed spectacularly.

That brings us to the one leader who links the two eras: German Chancellor Angela Merkel. While political generations have come and gone, Merkel has remained. Having held her current office since 2005, she has seamlessly managed to change her perspective to reflect the prevailing instincts of each crisis.

She played an active role in the cooperative response to the 2008 crisis and became the face of the European Union's Willkommenskultur (welcoming culture) in 2015, when the bloc took in some one million refugees. But now she has closed Germany's borders. After 2008, she joined the neoliberal push for austerity; but she has now agreed to abandon Germany's "black zero" (anti-deficit) budget policy, announcing that her government will do whatever it takes to save the German economy. Her legacy will most likely center around the fact that she held the EU together through multiple crises. But many people criticized her for not mentioning Europe at all in a recent national address - her first since taking office.

Given these tendencies, some people have argued that while the financial crisis leaders managed to bring the EU back from the brink, the corona generation is more likely to destroy it. Are they right?

The initial reaction to the pandemic does not bode well. European governments have been at odds with one another, and their citizens have increasingly questioned the very idea of interdependence, particularly vis-à-vis strangers beyond their immediate community. Then again, all eurocrises have cast a shadow on cosmopolitan interdependence. Each time a crisis has struck, Euroskeptics have criticized the European project for taking away national control, whether over borders, safety, or money. The COVID-19 moment is hardly the first time that Europeans have come to fear the consequences of deeper integration. There will be a battle of narratives in the months ahead about whether salvation will come from cooperation or isolation.

The task for the current leadership, then, is to make interdependence feel safe again. And in a strange way - given their lack of European religion - these leaders might have the credibility to make a new case for cooperation, by showing that it is the best way for European countries to protect their citizens.

On the economic front, the European Central Bank seems to be finding its way after some initial messaging flubs. It has committed to doing "everything necessary" to stabilize the eurozone and its constituent economies. European institutions now need to devise ways to supplement member states' responses by funding research, procuring protective equipment and ventilators, sharing information, participating in global discussions, upholding the single market, and even developing "Corona Bonds."

If EU leaders can demonstrate that the bloc is a partner rather than a threat to national sovereignty, the corona generation may yet lay a stronger foundation for Europe's future than the 2008 generation did.



Lord, they knew he is playful, yet they put him there

Dear Father:

Hmm, you know the other day I was sitting with some of my friends in our village and the talking points soon centered on our Country Giant.

Some say while other country's leaders and paramount chiefs are busy every day encouraging their people and finding means to help in the wake of this deadly wicked woman called Corona, who is destroying everything she touches-our Country Giant is on the other side spending time in studio to produce a song.

Father you could imagine how far this debate was heading as if the reason we had gathered was about the Country Giant. Yes, Father, people said a lot some of which I can't put in this letter for the sake of our children.

But as I listen in to the conversation Father, it was one friend who opened our eyes to reality and said something very interesting.

Our friend said "I don't understand why people have problem with the Country Giant when the man has never lie to us since he told us he wanted to be president.

Father you could imagine the silence in the room with everybody waiting for our friend to explain the reason behind his comment.

As we all affixed our eyes on him, our friend stretch his eyes and gesturing with his hands said " yes, the Country Giant did not hide from us about his playing hot sun lodo, checker, football, singing and his partying and plenty woman bisnay."

Aah, you mean your friend said that?

Yes, Father, sure he did. But this is the most interesting part Father-He said we saw all these playful attitudes in the man and yes we said da him we want.

Really, my son?

Yes, Father and guess who he say is the real problem for our village?

Hmm, but this one da open secret na, the Old Lady who else because I know it can't be the Old Soja man who is now opening schools all over the place and have turned pastor-at least he has repented.

No, Father far from that. He said the real problem is the people of our village because we saw all these playful attitudes in the Country Giant and we still went for him da now we want him to wake up soon morning and stop playing? It's not possible he said.

Father, as if our friend has just raised a familiar song, we all jumped in and said "that true" as if that was the chorus.

For a second there Father our friend is right. Now come to think of it from the first day I heard the Country Giant on radio, I told people who go around lying for him that they will always embarrass themselves because if you lied for the man the man will make you shame.

Everybody used to say the man nafini high school. Some of his blind loyalists said da lie the man fini high school. One morning when one of our friends who was also with us put him on the radio and asked him. He said me I na want to lie to the people I nafini high school.

You don't mean that, you mean he really said that?

Yes, Father. I told you no body can lie for the man and da the only thing I like about him. If he does it, he will say it. If not him he will say it.

So, yes, our friend was right, the village people knew the man was playful and yet they put him there so why complain?

OPINION

By Willem H. Buiter

The Helicopters Are Coming

With the economic situation in many advanced economies rapidly deteriorating, policymakers are rolling out unprecedented stimulus programs, setting the stage for what amounts to a massive experiment with hitherto unorthodox Modern Monetary Theory. Today's extraordinary problems, it would seem, require extraordinary solutions.

NEW YORK - With the COVID-19 pandemic intensifying, the United States has just adopted a \$2 trillion economic-rescue package (equal to 9.2% of 2019 GDP). The legislation follows unprecedented actions by the US Federal Reserve, which will engage in open-ended quantitative easing, and has introduced new mechanisms to backstop businesses and keep credit flowing.

Much of the US response will come in the form of "helicopter money," an application of Modern Monetary Theory (MMT) in which the central bank finances fiscal stimulus by purchasing government debt issued to finance tax cuts or public spending increases. The US economy is deteriorating at a spectacular rate, partly because of the direct health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, but mostly as a result of social-distancing mandates that are preventing people from producing and consuming.

Given the circumstances, it is safe to assume that the Fed's incremental asset-purchase program will reach at least \$2 trillion if that is what it takes to spare the federal government from having to access asset markets directly to fund its new initiatives. In January, before the coronavirus had become a recognized threat, the Congressional Budget Office predicted that the US government would have an annual recurring federal deficit above \$1 trillion for at least the next decade.

A few weeks ago, when the severity of the crisis started to become clear, some federal officials warned that US unemployment could rise to 20% in the absence of a strong fiscal-policy response. But even with the new legislation, job losses could continue to mount in the second and third quarters of this year. To be effective, the fiscal support must be targeted meticulously at households that have lost incomes and at companies (large and small) that have lost revenues as a result of the pandemic. It remains to be seen if the US response will include such targeting, or whether such targeting is even feasible in a timely and orderly fashion.

Meanwhile, the United Kingdom is also pursuing a vigorous experiment in MMT/helicopter money. For starters, the Bank of England is preparing to buy up £200 billion (\$238 billion) worth of UK government bonds and sterling non-financial investment-grade corporate bonds - a monetary stimulus equal to just under 10% of 2019 GDP. And on the fiscal side, Rishi Sunak, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, is unleashing an avalanche of deficit-increasing stimulus measures.

For the calendar year 2020, the British government is looking at a deficit of at least 7.5% of GDP, and perhaps as high as 10%. But even at the upper end, the deficit would still fall within the range covered by the BOE's monetized debt purchases. In other words, despite the extraordinary size of the fiscal stimulus, the government still will not have to go to the markets to borrow.

There is less fiscal space in the eurozone. But the European Central Bank has already committed to net asset purchases of €120 billion (\$130 billion), in addition to the €750 billion it announced on March 18. Its new Pandemic Emergency Purchase Program will even buy Greek sovereign bonds, something that was ruled out under previous asset-purchase programs following Greece's debt default in 2015.

All told, the ECB's additional asset purchases (which typically are monetized) amount to just under 7.3% of the eurozone's 2019 GDP, placing its response somewhere below that of the US and the UK. Unfortunately, the bloc's fiscal policy has been utterly pathetic. On March 16, member states' finance ministers announced that they would pursue stimulus worth a meager 1% of GDP over the course of 2020 - and this for an economy that was already struggling to achieve growth. While eurozone leaders indicated that they would do more if needed, that is scant comfort. The only positive development on this front is a commitment to institute liquidity facilities - public-guarantee schemes and deferred-tax payments - worth at least 10% of GDP.

Because the eurozone lacks a serious central facility with independent budgetary powers, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) is the obvious institution through which financially strong member states could provide politically transparent support for weaker members should the need arise. And yet, there does not appear to be any consensus within the eurozone on whether the ESM could be used in this way.

The remaining option, then, is for member states to increase their national fiscal-stimulus programs to, say, 7.3% of GDP, while the ECB acts as the monetary helicopter. This, however, would engage the ECB in quasi-fiscal actions involving cross-country redistributions of fiscal risk, requiring either a change in existing treaties or a collective willingness to ignore the obvious legitimacy issues raised by such operations.

Unlike in the US and the UK, where there is one central bank for one country, the ECB cannot so easily assume the role of fiscal agent for the government. Euro-system purchases of, say, Italian sovereign debt would shift sovereign risk to the national central banks of the financially stronger member states and, ultimately, to those countries' taxpayers.

But even if that is the case, it would be criminally negligent to allow a design flaw in existing treaties to inhibit the appropriate use of helicopter money at a time of existential crisis. Italy must implement a fiscal stimulus worth at least 5% of GDP - most likely more - and some combination of the ECB and the ESM must enable it to do so.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

UNFPA, LISGIS lend logistics to NPHIL

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) thru the Liberia Institute for Geo-Information Services or LISGIS loan four two-cabin Toyota pick-ups, five Yamaha bikes and 60 pieces of RG+6 Techno mobile phone to the National Public Health Institute of

Resident Representative to Liberia, Dr. BannetNdyanabangi, says the logistics are intended to empower the NPHIL carry out contact tracing in the two affected counties, Montserrado and Margibi.

“Interruption of the Coronavirus transmission in the

probable and confirmed cases are systematically identified and put under observation for the maximum incubation period of the disease,” says Dr. Ndyanabangi.

“On behalf of UNFPA”, Dr. Ndyanabangi said; “we are glad to be here to support NPHIL.” He stresses that though the country has three confirmed cases, all those people with whom the infected persons had contact, will have to be followed or traced.

The UNFPA Resident Representative assures that UNFPA and LISGIS will be working together to support the surveillance pillar of the national response; specifically contact tracing, stressing, “We have to ensure that every person that gets in contact with a COVID-19 infected person is followed and all the contacts are traced to stop further spread of the virus in the society.”

He says the 60 phones have been loaded with SIM cards and data, and will be connected with softwares for effective contact tracing.

UNFPA also provides drivers and riders for both the vehicles and bikes. However, the logistics are expected to be returned to LISGIS for the census next year.

LISGIS Director-General

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 6



Liberia or NPHIL to boost ongoing fight against the coronavirus here.

LISGIS is partnering with UNFPA and other multilateral donors to conduct national population and housing census in 2021.

United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNFPA

community is premised on the early detection and prompt isolation of new cases. During disease outbreak with established person-to-person transmission, new cases are more likely to emerge among contacts. For this reason, it is critical that all potential contacts of suspected,

GoL, ANC settle Coronavirus noise

The recent standoff between authorities of the Liberian National Police and Security details of the Political Leader of the Alternative National Congress (ANC), Mr. Alexander Cummings at the Coronavirus quarantine center has been resolved.

The Liberian Government and the opposition ANC reached a resolution on Cummings' Security a day after the party reported that the life of their leader was at risk.

The party made the claims after Cummings' bodyguards at the Coronavirus quarantine center were ordered quarantine for being at the center where they were providing security for their leader.

Mr. Cummings who returned to the country from the Bahamas via Ghana was forced to be quarantine at the government's quarantine center after initially being told to self-quarantine at his home.

The Liberian Government has made it mandatory for

anyone arriving in the country to undergo a 14 day quarantine. Though here have been some violations by state officials.

At a meeting called by the Ministry of Justice and held between the Director of Police Hon. Patrick Sudue and Deputy Director of Police/102 and the Chief of Staff to Mr. Cummings, Atty. Moriah Yeakula and Security Detail Team headed by

Mr. Justin Zigbuo, they agreed as follow:

- a. That the two securities quarantined be released and resume duty;
- b. That a security detail of four persons will rotate as pair on a day and night shift and continue to abide by the health protocols;

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 6



Political Leader of the Alternative National Congress (ANC) Mr. Alexander Cummings

Misinformation needs to stop!!

-NPHIL warns the public

By Ethel A. Tweh

National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) Director designate Dr. MosokaFallah has told a Senate confirmation hearing that one of the greatest challenges NPHIL faces is the misuse of social media and other means of spreading information that will scare the public and cause more problems and work for NPHIL.

Appearing before the Senate's Committee on Health and Social Welfare Thursday, 26 March on Capitol Hill, Dr. Fallah alarmed that the public keeps carrying out misinformation about the Coronavirus, warning that it must stop.

Dr. Fallah who has been acting head of NPHIL prior to his appointment by President George Manneh Weah, says his team is fully prepared and qualified to fight this COVID-19.

contacts from the coronavirus patients of which 49 are high risk.

The NPHIL director - designate also says on Thursday morning, 20,000 testing kits had arrived in Liberia, saying the kits take 24 hours for the results to be out.

Dr. Fallah explains further that in the soonest possible time, 14,000 testing kits will be in country from one of their partners and those testing kits will give coronavirus results in 30 minutes.

He adds that while they are in the fight against the coronavirus, his team is also tracking other sicknesses and diseases like lassa fever, among others.

The NPHIL director - designate says that the experience of the Ebola Virus Disease has helped them a lot in combating this new disease.

He continues that most of the doctors and nurses that



Officially Liberia is battling against three confirmed cases of coronavirus and lot of contacts with a poor health system which serves a country with vast majority of its population in abject poverty.

He told the committee chaired by Grand Kru County Senator Dr. Peter Coleman that the fight against the virus requires the public's help by abiding by preventive measures and stop spreading messages to create panic.

“For once, let us all suspend our political and other differences and help fight this deadly coronavirus,” Dr. Fallah cautions.

According to Dr. Fallah, their work is not influenced by any politician, explaining that politicians listen to them because they are the health experts and allow them to do their work.

He tells the Senate's Health Committee that there are 390

were used and trained to combat the Ebola virus are the same people they are using now.

Commenting on his appointment to head NPHIL, Dr. Fallah indicates that his training and love for his country makes him best suited for the position.

Following his presentation, Senator Daniel Naathan of Gbapolu County suggested that when the kits arrive in Liberia, NPHIL should test each senator because they meet every time and they need to know their statuses.

Meanwhile, Montserrado County Senator Abe Darius Dillon says NPHIL needs to give his office an update on the reported harassment of the political leader of opposition Alternative National Congress, Alexander B. Cummings.—Edited by Winston W. Parley

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Lawmaker rejects Weah's nominee to NEC

Sinoe County Representative J. Nagbe Sloh is appealing to President Weah to appoint another competent Liberian to the National Elections Commission as Chair, rather

withdraw the nomination. He disclosed that some members of the House of Representatives are already planning a communication for the Senate to not confirm Cllr. A. Ndubusi Nwabudike, a Nigerian-born Liberian as head

Nationalized Liberian to head the NEC should not be taken for joke.

Representative J. Nagbe Sloh of Sinoe County has a l a r m e d o v e r t h e appointment of Cllr. A. Ndubusi Nwabudike, a naturalized Nigerian-Liberian as Chairman of the National Election Commission (NEC).

The CDC lawmaker stated that the NEC, an institution responsible to conduct elections in the country, is very much troubling for a Naturalized Liberian to held such position.

He argued that it would be very much unfair for a foreign national or naturalized citizen to spearhead elections for the Liberian people.

President George Manneh Weah appointed Cllr. A. Ndubusi Nwabudike over the weekend to head the NEC along with a fresh team of commissioners, replacing Cllr. Jerome George Korkoya, whose tenure expired.

Prior to his latest preferment by the President, the nominee served as chair of the Governance Commission and lastly executive director for the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission.



Representative J. Nagbe Sloh

than a naturalized citizen.

Appearing on Truth FM Wednesday, March 25, in Paynesville, outside Monrovia Representative Sloh vowed to find personally reach the President to appeal to him to

of the NEC.

The CDC lawmaker stated that in his mind, most of those Senators that are going for election will surely support the communication, emphasizing that this issue about a

WFP installs Video Conferencing System at NPHIL

As part of efforts to support the Government of Liberia to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Food Programme (WFP) installs a video conferencing system at the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) - the central coordination point of the Incident Management System (IMS) that leads the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to a press release, the facility will limit the number of people present in the hall for meetings, in compliance with enhancing the social distancing requirements that is part of global requirements to prevent infection.

WFP Representative and Country Director, Ms. Karla Hershey, said the World Food Programme is in full readiness to assist the government and people of Liberia to roll back the coronavirus attack.

"The World Food Programme stands by the people of Liberia and their government during this emergency. Emergency

telecommunications (ETC) is instrumental in allowing for a consistent and reliable flow of information among partners to respond flexibly and

distancing measures and ensuring the safety of all stakeholders involved in the response", Ms. Hershey noted.

She said besides the video conferencing system, WFP is providing quality internet



WFP's Logistics team constructing the mobile storage unit. Photo: WFP/John Monibah

concertedly to leave no one behind. This is even more critical in the context of COVID-19, where ETC contributes to complying with social

services at the Liberia Institute of Biomedical Research (LIBR) in Marshall, Margibi County where COVID-19 tests are taking place and

UNFPA, LISGIS

Cont'd from page 5

Professor Francis Wreh hopes that at the end of the exercise, the items will be returned.

NPHIL Deputy Director General for Technical Services Ms. McJane Macauley, lthanks UNFPA and LISGIS for their support to the national response of the COVID-19, adding, "We shall ensure the proper use of the vehicles, motorbikes and mobile phones," she vows.

The House of Representatives adopted Joint Resolution 003/2020 recently, authorizing the Executive branch of government to conduct National Census on March 8, 2021.

Article 39 of the Constitution of Liberia empowers the National

Legislature to carry out national census every 10 years.

Liberia has registered three confirmed cases of the virus with no fatality, but health authorities are tracing dozens of contacts, which creates an urgent need for logistics that the NPHIL currently lacks.

President George Manneh Weah recently appointed Acting Executive Director, Doctor Mosoka Fallah to head the institute, created after a successful fight against the Ebola virus in 2015 with assistance from the Center for Disease Control of the United States. -Story by Jonathan Browne

GoL, ANC settle

Cont'd from page 5

c. That the names of the security detail will be provided to the LNP and they will undergo searches before entering the premises;

d. That the LNP and security detail will cooperate and coordinate with each other and with the NPHIL staff for the duration of the quarantine;

e. That a direct communication line is developed and maintained with the LNP and Mr. Cummings' team to expeditiously address any further issue during this period.

"We want to thank the Liberia Council of Churches and other partners of the government for their intervention and the Ministry of Justice for their response in resolving this matter. We also want to thank all of our partisans, supporters,

sympathizers, partners, members of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), the media and every Liberian citizen who expressed concerns and joined their voices in holding the government accountable for the safety of Mr. Cummings," the party said in a statement Wednesday night.

"We look forward to continue working with the government through the Ministry of Justice/LNP to ensure that our Political Leader remains safe and protected while at a government run quarantine center. Mr. Cummings has continued to adhere to all health protocols as the humble and the law-abiding citizen he is. It is our hope that this arrangement with the government remains in place and the security of our leader is taken seriously going forward," the party concluded.

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nearing the completion of the construction of a mobile storage unit at LIBR.

Since the outbreak of coronavirus in Liberia last week, WFP has been at the forefront of providing essential logistics, emergency telecommunications, and warehousing support to the government-led response.

In a related development, WFP is currently prepositioning over 1,700 metric tons of assorted food items in Nimba and Maryland

Counties for distribution to students as take-home rations as part of the national home-grown school feeding programme should the closure of schools last longer than expected.

The government had announced a 21-day lockdown in Montserrado and Margibi counties, dubbed by the Minister of Health, Doctor Jallah as "affected area."

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

LNRCS, NDMA scale – up efforts to keep hand washing constant

The Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) and National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) are scaling up efforts to

Liberia.

As part of the efforts, the Red Cross and NDMA have distributed hygiene kits and hand washing buckets to 500

The two institutions renewed their commitment to complementing the national efforts in preventing or slowing further transmission and helping communities already affected or vulnerable to keep washing their hands as a simple but effective precaution to keep safe during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Red Cross recently donated 400 hand washing buckets to the National WASH Commission and several assorted hygiene materials including hand washing buckets, chlorine, soap and 400 pieces of nose masks to the Monrovia Central Prison.

The Liberia National Red Cross Society is scaling up its COVID-19 program initiative including community awareness raising and hygiene promotion in working with affected and at-risk communities to take action and keep safe.

The Red Cross has reiterated that COVID-19 prevention measures is not an option but a real demand that



promote Infection Prevention and Control measures at the community level to slow further transmission of the COVID-19 pandemic in

homes to ensure best hygiene practices in five communities covering churches, mosques, orphanages and communities, a press release issued by LNRCS says.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

WBG, IMF want debt payments suspended -for IDA countries

The World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) call on all official bilateral creditors to suspend debt payments from International Development Association (IDA) countries that request forbearance or restraint.

In a joint statement dated 25 March the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund say this will help with IDA countries' immediate liquidity needs to tackle challenges posed by the coronavirus outbreak and allow time for an assessment of the crisis impact and financing needs for each country.

They note that the coronavirus outbreak is likely to have severe economic and social consequences for IDA countries, which is home to a quarter of the world's population and two-thirds of the world's population living in extreme poverty. Liberia is a member of IDA countries.

According to research, the International Development Association (IDA) is the part of the World Bank that helps the world's poorest countries.

Overseen by 173 shareholder nations, IDA aims to reduce poverty by providing loans (called "credits") and grants for programs that boost economic growth, reduce inequalities, and improve people's living conditions.

Eligibility for IDA support depends first and foremost on a country's relative poverty, defined as GNI per capita below an established threshold and updated annually (\$1,175 in fiscal year 2020).

"We invite G20 leaders to

task the WBG and the IMF to make these assessments, including identifying the countries with unsustainable debt situations, and to prepare a proposal for comprehensive action by official bilateral creditors to address both the financing and debt relief needs of IDA countries. We will seek endorsement for the proposal at the Development Committee during the Spring Meetings (April 16/17)", says the statement.

**WBG-IMF Staff
AFRICAN SOCIETY**

MOT's fire report delays at LNFS

More than two months since fire gutted the 3rd floor of the Ministry of Transport (MOT) in Monrovia, destroying several sensitive documents, the Liberia National Fire Service (LNFS) is yet to release findings.

Delay by the LNFS in releasing to the public what caused the fire is generating

million dollar question.

Ministry of Transport officials, including Minister Samuel Wulu, who usually speak on crucial matters concerning the ministry, are tightlipped thus, raising public concern and suspicion.

This paper gathered that the ministry is usually protected by government employed security personnel



concern among Liberians.

A source from the office of the chief investigator at the LNFS said findings from the fire are being withheld because they could indict the Transport Ministry itself.

It is established that there was no electricity in the ministry when the fire broke out, so what caused the fire in the ministry remains the

who sleep at the ministry every night thereby, leaving many to wonder what really caused the fire outbreak there.

When this paper contacted the Liberia National Fire Service recently, the Director of Press Mr. Augustine Momo could not state for the delaying in coming out with findings. -

Editing by Jonathan Browne

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IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world's 76 poorest countries and is the single largest source of donor funds for basic social services in these countries.

IDA lends money on concessional terms. This means that IDA credits have a zero or very low interest charge and repayments are stretched over 30 to 38 years, including a 5- to 10-year grace period. IDA also provides grants to countries at risk of debt distress.

In addition to concessional loans and grants, IDA provides significant levels of debt relief through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI).

In the fiscal year ending

June 30, 2019, IDA commitments totaled \$22 billion, of which 36 percent was provided on grant terms. New commitments in FY19 comprised 254 new operations. Since 1960, IDA has provided \$391 billion for investments in 113 countries. Annual commitments have increased steadily and averaged about \$22 billion over the last three years.

The World Bank Group and the IMF believe it is imperative at this moment to provide a global sense of relief for developing countries as well as a strong signal to financial markets, adding, the international community would welcome G20 support for this Call to Action. Statement

Français

L'opposant Cummings se dit en danger de mort

L'ANC (Alternative National Congress) a dit craindre pour la vie de son leader politique, M. Alexander B. Cummings, mis en quarantaine pour une période de 14 jours dès son retour des Bahamas ce week-end.

Le gouvernement a rendu obligatoire la mise en quarantaine des personnes en provenance de l'étranger pour une période de 14 jours. Il faut signaler cependant que plusieurs responsables gouvernementaux ont maintes fois violé les mesures mises en place par les autorités sanitaires dans le cadre de la lutte contre le coronavirus.

Dans un courriel qui a été envoyé à ce quotidien, la directrice de cabinet de M. Cummings a accusé le gouvernement, plus précisément le directeur adjoint de la police nationale du Libéria, Marvin Sackor, de harceler son patron dans le centre où il est mis en quarantaine.

M. Cummings a été contraint d'être mis en quarantaine dans un centre désigné par les responsables gouvernementaux, en dépit

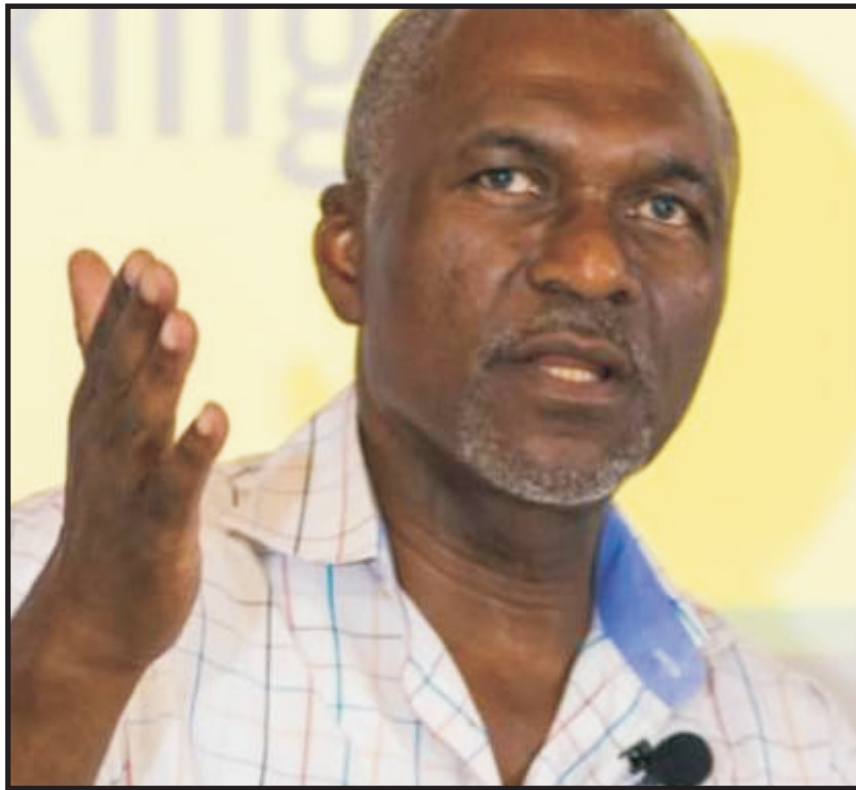
du feu vert que des responsables de l'Institut national de la santé publique du Libéria (NPHIL) avaient accordé à l'opposant pour se mettre en quarantaine à domicile.

L'assistante de M. Cummings s'est offusquée contre le fait que le directeur adjoint de la police ait insisté lundi que les gardes du corps de son patron qui assuraient sa sécurité quittent les lieux en dépit du fait qu'ils aient respecté à la lettre toutes les mesures mises

en place par le NPHIL et le fait qu'ils ne représentent aucun danger pour leurs familles.

Elle s'est félicitée des gardes rapprochés qui auraient catégoriquement refusé d'abandonner leur patron et de le livrer à merci des adversaires politiques dont ils ignorent l'intention. Ils auraient été eux-aussi mis en quarantaine par le chef adjoint de la police pour avoir

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Samukai, un des proches collaborateurs de Mme Sirleaf jugé coupable de détournement de fonds

L'ancien ministre de la Défense J. Brownie Samukai (l'un des proches collaborateurs de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson) et ses co-accusés (M. Joseph P. Johnson et M. James Nyumah Dorkor) ont été reconnus coupables de plusieurs charges et condamnés à restituer 1 147 656,35 \$ US.

« Les accusés sont condamnés à restituer le montant de 687 656,35 USD au compte d'épargne-pension de l'AFL [Forces armées du Libéria] et de 460 000,00 USD au compte du gouvernement du Libéria,

soit un total de 1 147 655,35 USD », a statué mardi 24 mars le juge Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay de la cour

pénale « C » de Monrovia.

Les anciens responsables ont été inculpés l'année dernière de plusieurs charges, dont vol de biens, complot criminel, sabotage économique, détournement de fonds publics et blanchiment d'argent. Selon le parquet, les accusés auraient détourné des fonds générés par le biais d'un plan d'épargne obligatoire mis en place en juillet 2009 pour les militaires qui étaient tenus de cotiser.

Les militaires devraient, grâce à ces fonds, bénéficier d'une pension supplémentaire et d'une assistance en cas de blessure ou en cas de retraite et en cas de décès, leur famille en bénéficiera aussi.

Le juge Gbeisay a rejeté les délits de blanchiment d'argent et de sabotage économique contre les accusés car il affirme ne pas avoir vu l'élément de sabotage économique et il n'est pas non plus convaincu par l'accusation en ce qui concerne le blanchiment d'argent.



Éditorial

Il faut se préparer au pire

Les Libériens sont sans aucun doute un peuple résilient qui se rassemble chaque fois pour résoudre les problèmes communs qui menacent son bien-être au niveau national. Les Libériens avaient formé un front uni et vaincu le virus Ebola en 2015. Ceci est un exemple typique.

Mais nous ne pouvons prétendre avoir vu cette même résilience depuis que le président Weah a annoncé le premier cas de COVID-19 dans le pays il y a une semaine, et d'autres cas quelques jours plus tard. Nous assistons à une gestion nationale catastrophique en ce qui concerne cette pandémie qui ravage les pays du monde entier, avec un bilan global de plus de 400 000 cas.

Un Libérien patriote s'était levé pour proposer une voie à suivre. Il s'agit de Dr Nathaniel Barnes, ancien ministre et ambassadeur.

Le Dr Barnes avait fait part d'une possibilité d'aggravation de la situation au Libéria en raison du manque de capacités et de l'impact mondial sur les fronts social et économique, à moins que le gouvernement se lance immédiatement dans une série de plans de relance pour sauver la population d'une famine et d'une mort évidentes.

Il a souligné la nécessité d'encourager et de subventionner les hommes d'affaires, en particulier les importateurs de riz, des denrées alimentaires de base et d'autres produits de première nécessité. Il a recommandé une exonération fiscale pour les importateurs de riz afin d'éviter la hausse des prix et de permettre que le produit puisse atteindre les plus vulnérables.

En sa qualité d'économiste, l'homme a demandé au gouvernement de suspendre le paiement de ses dettes aux banques commerciales afin de pouvoir payer les fonctionnaires, y compris ceux qui ont été mis en congé obligatoire.

L'administration Weah n'a pas indiqué dans quelle direction il a l'intention d'orienter l'économie, ce qui pourrait sans aucun doute avoir un impact négatif sur la vie des citoyens, à part le coronavirus.

Les autorités semblent plutôt préoccupées par la fermeture des écoles, des églises et des mosquées, au lieu de se pencher sur les conséquences économiques imminentes qui pourraient bientôt s'abattre sur les populations vulnérables.

Même le Sénat libérien a appelé le président Weah à prendre lui-même en charge la pandémie, au lieu de laisser la situation aux mains de ses fonctionnaires. Bien que l'infection ralentisse pour l'instant, le taux de contacts augmente rapidement, ce qui montre qu'une calamité imminente est à venir.

Nous sommes tout à faire d'accord avec le sénateur du comté de Grand Kru, le docteur Peter Coleman, qui préside le comité sénatorial sur la santé. Le président Weah devrait cesser d'être un député d'arrière-ban dans la crise actuelle et prendre les choses en main.

Français

L'opposant Cummings

refusé d'abandonner leur patron.

« Aujourd'hui, le harcèlement continue et ils ont mis en quarantaine 2 de gardes de corps dans le même centre. Sa vie est en danger car il est désormais entièrement entre les mains d'un gouvernement téméraire et irresponsable qui le considère comme son principal rival. Ils peuvent tout faire pour éliminer un redoutable concurrent et nous ne pouvons pas laisser cela se produire », a-t-elle alarmé.

Contacté par ce journal, le porte-parole de la police, Moses Carter, a confirmé que les éléments de la garde rapprochée de M. Cummings avaient été mis en quarantaine par le directeur adjoint de la police Sackor pour avoir été en contact avec M. Cummings qui est en quarantaine.

Selon lui, comme les éléments de sa garde rapprochée sont entrés dans le centre où est mis en quarantaine leur patron, le directeur adjoint de la police n'a eu d'autre choix que de les mettre en quarantaine.

M. Carter a déclaré que si M. Cummings ne fait pas confiance à la police, qu'il le dise au lieu d'avoir des gardes du corps dans le centre avec lui.

M. Cummings est venu des Bahamas le 22 mars. Il s'y était rendu pour assister à la réunion du conseil d'administration de la société Fortune 500 dont il est membre. Il a fait escale au Ghana où il a passé une semaine avant d'arriver dans le pays.

Selon le parti, avant son retour dans le pays, Cummings avait consulté les autorités de l'Institut national de santé publique (NPH-IL) et s'était mis à leur disposition pour être mis en quarantaine.

Double scrutin : l'indignation et la désolation se lisent chez les familles des victimes

Après le double scrutin du 22 mars 2020, place à la guerre des chiffres entre le Ministère de la sécurité et le Front National pour la défense de la constitution. Une dizaine de morts pour l'opposition, cinq pour le gouvernement. Parmi les victimes, Thierno Oumar Diallo tué par balle dans la journée du 22 mars.

« Ils ont tiré sur mon enfant au niveau de la tête. J'étais absent, c'est quand ils ont tiré sur lui qu'on m'a appelé

cet habitant de la haute banlieue de Conakry appelle à la responsabilité des dirigeants.

« C'est devant moi qu'ils ont tué l'enfant, c'est nous qui l'avions pris et l'envoyer à la clinique. On a utilisé tous les moyens possibles pour prendre le corps en main mais impossible. On est parti chez le chef de quartier, il dit qu'il ne peut pas. On voit la croix rouge, elle dit qu'elle ne peut pas qu'on les a interdits de prendre les corps pour amener à donka ou à ignace-deen. On est dans



A partial scene of the crowd on Monday

de venir, je suis parti à l'hôpital où on lui a envoyé. Quand je suis arrivé, j'ai trouvé qu'il est décédé. On ne peut rien que de s'en remettre à dieu »,

a déclaré Mamoudou Diallo, père de la victime.

La journée du 22 mars a également enregistré plusieurs blessés graves et des interpellations dans les rangs de l'opposition. Une situation qui plonge le pays dans une crise sans précédent. Face à cette escalade de violences

quel pays ? Nous devons tous prendre conscience que le développement ne se fait pas comme ça, il se fait en se donnant la main. Il faut que les guinéens cultivent la paix et la prospérité, parce que tôt ou tard nous rendrons compte devant dieu », a lancé El hadj Amadou Batouly Diallo, témoin oculaire. Ces nouvelles victimes viennent allonger la liste des violences politiques en Guinée.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Mark Leonard

Le leadership dans un contexte de contagion

BERLIN - Si vous faites une recherche sur les termes « Europe » et « crise » sur Google, vous allez trouver 784 millions de résultats. Ces deux termes sont si souvent associés l'un à l'autre qu'ils sont quasiment devenus un mot composé. À chaque nouvelle eurocrise, la question de savoir si le projet européen va survivre hante les commentateurs.

En surface, un grand nombre de ces eurocrises se ressemblent. Les gouvernements européens traversent différentes phases de chagrin - le désaveu et la colère, puis la reconstruction et à l'acceptation - et finissent par se retourner contre les suspects habituels. Pour les Européens du Nord, le problème se situe toujours dans le Sud de l'Europe ; pour ceux du Sud, les Allemands sont les méchants et la Chine est un sauveur potentiel.

Mais bien sûr, il existe des différences fondamentales entre la génération de dirigeants qui ont dirigé l'Europe à travers la crise financière de 2008 et ceux qui sont aujourd'hui aux prises avec celle du COVID-19. Cela est devenu évident ce mois-ci lorsque l'ancien Premier ministre britannique Gordon Brown s'est lancé dans une tournée médiatique pour partager les leçons de son mandat de Premier ministre.

En raison de sa réponse proactive à la crise de 2008, qui comprenait l'organisation du sommet du G-20 en avril 2009 où les dirigeants du monde ont convenu d'une réponse coordonnée en matière de politique économique, certains commentateurs ont suggéré que Brown avait sauvé le système financier mondial à lui tout seul. Brown demande à présent pourquoi les dirigeants actuels n'organisent pas un sommet équivalent pour anticiper sur les retombées économiques de la pandémie.

Les dirigeants actuels sont dans une perspective radicalement différente. Brown, le président américain Barack Obama et le président français Nicolas Sarkozy ont cédé la place à Boris Johnson, Donald Trump et Emmanuel Macron (auquel on pourrait ajouter le Premier ministre danois Mette Frederiksen, le Premier ministre italien Giuseppe Conte et le Premier ministre autrichien Sebastian Kurz).

Les instincts politiques de ces dirigeants ont été façonnés par la réaction généralisée contre l'establishment et la mondialisation post-2008, plus généralement. Les dirigeants actuels sont décidément moins atlantistes que leurs prédécesseurs. En tant que jeunes adultes, ils ont assisté à la désastreuse guerre américaine en Irak et ont vu une crise financière née aux États-Unis faire des ravages dans le monde entier. Contrairement à leurs prédécesseurs, ils considèrent l'Amérique - ou du moins l'Amérique de Trump - comme une source de problèmes plutôt que de solutions.

Les dirigeants européens actuels sont également beaucoup moins néolibéraux dans l'orientation de leur économie politique. Au cours de la période post-2008, même les sociaux-démocrates qui avaient exigé des mesures de relance à grande échelle se sont avérés être relativement conservateurs, quand ils ont plus ou moins adopté l'austérité. Pour avoir vécu ces années de mesures d'austérité, la nouvelle génération est beaucoup plus interventionniste, et pas seulement en termes économiques. Lors de la crise de 2008, la plus grande crainte - pour reprendre les mots de Roosevelt - était la peur elle-même, de sorte que les gouvernements devaient projeter la normalité. Les gouvernements actuels doivent promouvoir et mettre la peur à leur service en vue de contenir le virus mortel.

La génération actuelle de dirigeants ne partage pas non plus la confiance de la génération précédente en la gouvernance mondiale. Au contraire, leur premier instinct face au COVID-19 n'a pas été d'organiser un

sommet mondial, mais de fermer les frontières et de renationaliser les chaînes d'approvisionnement. Cette réaction reflète peut-être l'expérience de la crise des réfugiés de 2015, où la gouvernance multilatérale semble avoir échoué de façon spectaculaire.

Cela nous amène à un leader qui relie les deux époques : la Chancelière allemande Angela Merkel. Alors que plusieurs générations politiques se sont succédé, Merkel est restée en place. À son poste actuel depuis 2005, elle a réussi à changer de perspective de façon transparente pour traduire les instincts dominants de chaque crise.

Elle a joué un rôle actif dans la réponse concertée à la crise de 2008 et a incarné la Willkommenskultur (culture de l'accueil) de l'Union européenne en 2015, lorsque le bloc a accueilli un million de réfugiés. Mais elle a à présent fermé les frontières de l'Allemagne. Après 2008, elle s'est jointe à la pression néolibérale en faveur de l'austérité : mais elle a désormais accepté d'abandonner la politique budgétaire « zéro noir » (anti-déficit) de l'Allemagne, annonçant que son gouvernement ferait tout ce qui serait en son pouvoir pour sauver l'économie allemande. Son héritage sera probablement centré sur le fait qu'elle a maintenu l'unité de l'UE lors de multiples crises. Mais de nombreuses personnes lui ont reproché de ne pas mentionner l'Europe du tout dans une récente allocution nationale - la première depuis son entrée en fonction.

Compte tenu de ces tendances, certains ont fait valoir que même si les dirigeants de la crise financière ont réussi à sauver l'UE de la catastrophe, la génération corona a plus de chances de la détruire. Ont-ils raison ?

La réaction initiale à la pandémie n'est pas de bon augure. Les gouvernements européens ont été en contradiction les uns avec les autres et leurs citoyens ont de plus en plus remis en question l'idée même de l'interdépendance, en particulier vis-à-vis des étrangers au-delà de leur communauté immédiate. Encore une fois, toutes les eurocrises ont laissé planer le doute sur l'interdépendance cosmopolite. Chaque fois qu'une crise a éclaté, les eurosceptiques ont critiqué le projet européen pour avoir pris le contrôle national, que ce soit au sujet des frontières, de la sécurité ou de l'argent. Le moment du COVID-19 n'est donc pas vraiment la première fois où les Européens redoutent les conséquences d'une intégration plus profonde. Les mois à venir vont nous montrer des joutes oratoires sur la question de savoir si le salut viendra de la coopération ou de l'isolement.

La tâche du leadership actuel est donc de rendre l'interdépendance plus sûre. Et de façon étrange - compte tenu de leur manque de religion européenne - ces dirigeants pourraient disposer de suffisamment de crédibilité pour plaider en faveur de la coopération, en montrant qu'elle est la meilleure manière pour les pays européens de protéger leurs citoyens.

Sur le plan économique, la Banque centrale européenne semble trouver sa voie après quelques premiers ratés dans sa communication. Elle s'est engagée à faire « tout ce qui sera nécessaire » pour stabiliser la zone euro et ses économies constitutives. Les institutions européennes doivent désormais trouver des moyens de compléter les réponses des États membres en finançant la recherche, en fournissant des équipements de protection et des ventilateurs, en partageant les informations, en participant à des débats mondiaux, en soutenant le marché unique et même en développant des « obligations Corona ».

Si les dirigeants de l'UE peuvent prouver que le bloc est un partenaire plutôt qu'une menace pour la souveraineté nationale, la génération corona pourra peut-être bien poser une base plus solide pour l'avenir de l'Europe que celle de 2008.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

UL students produce hand sanitizers to fight COVID-19

As part of efforts to control the infection of coronavirus in Liberia, students in the School of Pharmacy at the University of Liberia (UL), are undertaking a milestone project of producing hand sanitizers intended to be distributed free of charge to a targeted population of 50,000.

The project is initiated by the faculty of the School of Pharmacy along with students and it is being implemented in

the laboratory at the Medical School in Congo Town by second, third and fourth year students.

The Dean of the School of Pharmacy Dr. Ezekile F. Hallie disclosed over the weekend that when more resources are available, the initiative will be expanded to other institutions.

By the weekend, Dean Hallie revealed that 300 plus bottles of hand sanitizers had been produced and ready for use by Monday, March 23, 2020 while the school mobilizes additional

resources from donors through a proposal to aid mass production to extend supply to a larger population to control coronavirus infection.

“So I, as the Dean I mobilized the faculty members with the limited resources we have ... to begin something to sanitize our workers, our students and the community in general,” he said.

He termed the initiative as a boost for the university and the School of Pharmacy, as he recalled that during the Ebola crisis, pharmacists were very limited in taking control and prevention of the disease.

But with the expertise and improvement they got in education, he said the School of Pharmacy decided to take this initiative and let the public know that pharmacists here have the ability to control infection and they know about medicine.

He indicated that this initiative is not intended only for the fight against coronavirus, but it is the students’ regular practical that they have to go through in laboratories at the School of Pharmacy. But he concluded that because coronavirus is very immediate, they want to attack it right away.



USAID market women enforce COVID-19 measures

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Marketers at the USAID Market in Monrovia are working along with the leadership of the Liberia Marketing Association (LMA) in enforcing government measures in the fight against the Coronavirus in Liberia.

Making the disclosure at the market on 26 March, the Market Superintendent for Operations Madam Cecelia G. Wuduwelh said by the mandate of Superintendent of the Market Madam Sando Johnson, all marketers selling in the market have been made to have hand washing bottles with prepared water to be used whenever customers appear at their market tables to buy.

Besides that, she indicates that they have also ensured that hand washing buckets and drums are positioned at all entry points into the market building with monitors posted to ensure that visitors to the market adhere to the COVID-19 measures.

She furthers that with the

assistance of her special aide Mr. Justine K. David, the marketers are fully cooperating and also insisting that their customers abide by government’s measures to stop the spread of the Coronavirus in

the country.

She expresses gratitude to the Government of Liberia for providing drums and hand washing materials which she said are helping marketers to prevent the spread of the disease.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



Nimba Lawmaker

Cont’d from back page

ceremony, but Kougar refutes the claim.

While Rep. Kougar claims to be in self-quarantine, no one knows how many contacts he’s making that could pose risk to villagers, not knowing his status.

Liberia’s index case, suspended executive director of the Environmental Protection Agency returned from Switzerland recently and chose not to be quarantined after testing positive, leaving

for his home, according to President George Manneh Weah.

That choice led to him infecting his private cook, Johnny Phillips, now in 21-day quarantine.

President Weah has threatened to dismiss and arrest any of his officials who return from abroad and refused to be quarantined upon arrival by health authorities here. *Story by Jonathan Browne*

LNRCs, NDMA scale

Cont’d from page 7

must strictly be followed to make sure the outbreak doesn’t proceed out of control and overwhelm local health services and response capacities.

The Red Cross says it remains focused and ready to respond to evolving public health measures being established but renewed call for increasing support, partnership and collaboration to make the COVID-19

response much more effective and robust.

The LNRCs reminds the public not to stop hand washing, covering their mouths and noses when coughing and sneezing as well as ensuring social distance, staying home and seeking early medical treatment when they have fever or are showing symptoms of respiratory illness.—*Press release*

Fishermen complain gas stations over demand for US dollars

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Fishermen in Liberia have complained gas stations of allegedly demanding United States dollars from customers, saying they face challenge in getting product.

Addressing reporters in the Township of West Point Thursday, 26 March, Fanti Chief Fishermen Mr. Kofi Kwansah disclosed that several fishermen from his community who had visited some gas stations in Monrovia were told to buy gasoline in United States dollars, something he says is a challenge to their survival.

Kwansah laments that since fishermen started fishing in Liberia, at no time had they been requested to buy gas at any filling stations with U.S. dollars here.

He explains that this has contributed to shortage of fish in West Point as fishermen are unable to go fishing.

“Our fishing canoes are

parked and we cannot go to fishing so how do the gas stations operators expect us to survive. Something urgently must be done by the government to ensure that this practice stops as the action by these filling stations undermines government’s revenue generations,” Mr. Kwansah asserts.

He appeals to the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) to deploy agents from the ministry to police filling stations to ascertain unfolding events that have characterized the gasoline market.

Meanwhile, Chief Fishermen Kwansah says he and other officials of the Fanti community are helping government to fight the Coronavirus by spreading preventive messages to protect themselves from the virus.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

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Over half a million now infected with Coronavirus

The number of people now infected with the deadly novel Coronavirus commonly known as COVID-19 has surpassed half a million people, according to the John Hopkins University.

John Hopkins reported that as at Thursday March 26, about 510,000 people have been confirmed to have tested positive of Coronavirus worldwide, while at least 22,000 people have died with Italy recorded the highest death toll of 8,165. Italy recorded 662 deaths just over the last 24 hours.

Over all China still top the number of infections with 81,782, though the infection rate is said to have slowed down. China is followed by Italy with 80,539 confirmed cases while the United States which witness a rise in infection rate is at 75,233 and is closely followed by Spain at 56,187.

In African reports indicate that the infection rate on the 54 nation continent are still low with 2,700 cases in 46 countries.

The BBC reported Thursday that there are fears that the number will rise rapidly because of cross-infections, overwhelming health services on the mainly

poor continent.

In Liberia, the country has recorded three confirmed cases so far with dozens of people who have arrived in the country being in government held quarantine centers.

On Saturday March 21, government declared a nationwide health emergency to help curb the spread of COVID-19.

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 worship 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.

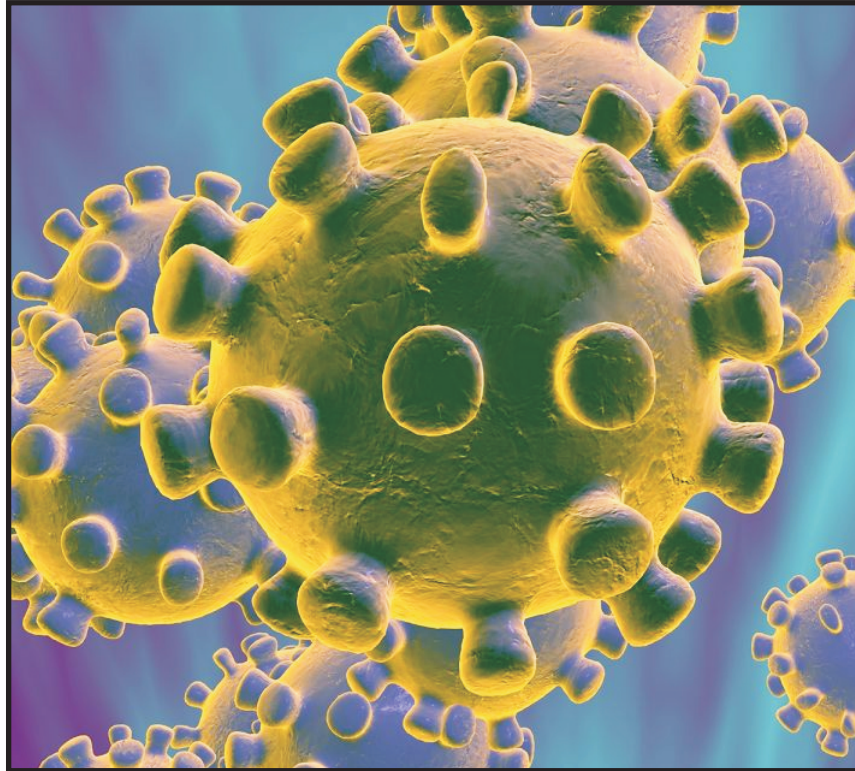
Supermarkets and large stores are to allow only 10 persons at a time with each being six feet apart from each other. Banks were also ordered to allow 5 customers at a time the same apply to restaurants and cook shops.

The government restriction also banned streets selling, while restrictions have been

placed on the movement of people in and out of Montserrado and Margibi Counties which are the affected areas so far.

The Government's latest pronouncement came after health authorities announced that it they had recorded the third confirmed coronavirus case here.

The victim, a 63 year old woman tested positive for the Coronavirus disease in the country, after report say she had attended a beach party with an affiliate who had returned from Europe-details about the friend who returned from Europe is still scanty as health officials are still mute. However there are speculations that she is still in quarantine at a government held center.



“He’s too close to Weah”

“Cllr. A. Ndubusi Nwabudike is too close to President (George) Weah in a corrupt conspiracy that undermines his public standing and moral integrity to hold such a high office of public trust”, the International Justice Group (IJG) has said.

The group noted that Cllr. Nwabudike's inclusion and appointment to NEC will undermine the integrity, independence and neutrality of that electoral body.

President Weah on Saturday March 21, nominated Cllr. Nwabudike, a

naturalized Liberian who originally hails from Nigeria to head the National Elections Commissions or NEC this is his third appointment in the Weah's regime in less than three years.

His nomination to occupy such position of trust as a naturalized citizens has raised eyebrows and drawn a lot of criticisms with many questioning his integrity.

In a statement issued Wednesday and signed by the IJG Executive Director Cllr. Jerome J. Verdier, Sr., the group further stated that it is offended by the actions of President

George Weah to appoint and nominate a supposedly recently naturalized citizen of Liberia from the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the high office of chairman of NEC.

“Whenever the constitution of Liberia, statutory laws, regulations and policies refer to a “Liberian” as a qualifying criteria, for a position of high office and trust in the land, like the National Elections Commission (NEC) that reference is unequivocally referring to natural born Liberian, and not a naturalized Liberian,” the IJG asserted.

“As a matter of public policy and interest, it is unthinkable inimical to our national interest that a naturalized person will be nominated to assume such high office, especially one created by the constitution of Liberia which, therefore demands unquestionable allegiance, undying loyalty and commitment to the state without an iota of doubt,” the IJG continued.

“It is even worse,” the group further argues “that the nominee is claiming Liberian nationality under doubtful circumstances and has exhibited low scale virtues of unethical conduct.”

More besides, the IJG said,

Importers dispel

Starts from back page

dismissed fears that they could eventually run out of supply after the available quantities saying there are some consignments on the way.

The Ware House Manager of Fouta Corporation, Josiah Grando told journalists that all their ware houses are full with supplies.

Mr. Grando also dismissed claims on an increase in the price of the commodity by importers saying “the prices have not change.” He said any dealer doing so is bent on exploiting the customers. “We still sell the rice at US\$13 per bag to the dealers,” he added.

At the Fousni Brothers Ware House, Manager Ali M. Jichi, explained that his company supply on hand could last up till July.

“On that ship, we have a total of 15,000 metric tons of rice that is being offloaded. As you can see, we already had

enough in stock before this new product arrived,” Jichi narrated.

“Any news that there is no rice in the country is just a mere rumor. I think the people are in a hurry to buy because of the rumors and in the end, they purchase at a very high rate,” Jichi explained.

Warehouse managers of both UCI and SWAT repeated similar claims made by Fuouta and Fouani giving the assurance that the country has commodity that can last up to six months.

Earlier Commerce Inspector General Josephine W. A. Davies explained the purpose of the tour to journalist saying that it was intended to show that there are enough of rice supply here and that those who are claiming that the commodity is in short supply are dealers who sole intend is to exploit the Liberian people.

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Pres. Weah



Cllr. Nwabudike

Cllr. Nwabudike appointment is a conflict of interest in that he once performed legal and advisory services for president Weah and is being moved around from one position to another, describing it as “testing the resolve of the Liberia people before finally landing at the NEC, which may not be his final destination”.

“He has been moved around based on the personal interests of the president in manipulating, denigrating, eclipsing the independence of integrity institutions and establishing an all-powerful Executive Branch, thus securing his dominance of the other two branches of

government and removing the checks and balance principle, without which there can be no true democracy,” the IJG noted.

The IJG argues that Cllr. Nwabudike has been moved from the Good Governance Commission to Anticorruption Commission just when Mr. Weah thought covering crimes and corruption was a priority; then he is now moved to the NE when he believed rigging elections was an even greater priority.

The group said rather than appointing Cllr. Nwabudike to NEC Weah should rather contemplate on reforming the entire NEC.

Nimba Lawmaker shuns quarantine

-after visit abroad



Representative Samuel Kogar

From all indications, it appears that officials of the Government of Liberia are not adhering to safety measures imposed by health authorities against the coronavirus as Nimbe County District#4 Representative Samuel Kogar, who returned to the country after a trip abroad, avoids quarantine

and instead goes to his district in Nimba.

This is happening at the time when a prominent opposition politician, who returned here was stopped at the Roberts International Airport where he's being quarantined for 14 days precautionary observation.

Mr. Alexander B. Cummings, leader of the Alternative

National Congress, returned from the Bahamas over the weekend.

Rep. Kougar is one of several officials, including Liberia's index case who traveled abroad and returned home, avoiding to be taken for quarantine.

The Minister of Transport, Samuel Wulue and the Mayor of Monrovia Jefferson Kojee are among some officials who returned from abroad and avoided quarantine.

Speaking to OK FM from Nimba County, where he claims to be in self-quarantine currently, the lawmaker frowns on social media report that disclosed his decision not to submit himself for quarantine.

He also frowns on call received from the Ministry of Justice in Monrovia about his decision not to report to health authorities, saying, "They can come and test me."

Report says he had traveled to Burkina Faso for a traditional wedding

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Importers dispel rice shortage fear

Several rice importers, United Commodity Incorporated (UCI), Fouani Brothers, Fouta Corporation and Supplying West Africa Trade Incorporated (SWAT) on Wednesday March 24, told Commerce Ministry officials here that there was no need to panic about the supply of the nation's stable.

The Importers gave the assurances during a tour of their warehouses at the Free Port of Monrovia following

speculations that the product would be scarce on the market—something which have triggered panic buying among the population with some retailers increasing the prices.

The speculations prompted Commerce Minister Wilson Tarpeh and his team of inspectors to visit the port and see at first hand the quantity of rice being store at the warehouses of suppliers.

During a tour of the port, this writer along with another viewed security cameras which



depicted the offloading of 34 metric tons of rice (i.4 million bags) from the Ocean Falcon which is ducked at the port.

The importers said the supply of rice, Liberia's stable could last between 4 to 6 months, this includes the 1.4 million bags being offloaded and the ones already stockpiled at their warehouses.

The companies jointly imported the current consignment and further

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