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New Dawn

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VOL.10 NO. 72

THURSDAY, MAY 07, 2020

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Min. Tweah



Prof. Tarpeh

P11

Who do we listen to?

Tweah Vs. Prof. Tarpeh on COVID-19 food

Nwabudike fate looms at LACC?

-As citizenship pins him down



P7

Mr. Nwabudike

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Continental News

Kenya floods kill 194 people

Floods and landslides in Kenya have killed nearly 200 people, displaced 100,000 and strained critical infrastructure, with unprecedentedly high water levels at two dams forcing the evacuation of villagers at risk, officials said on Wednesday.

The heavy rain, which accelerated in mid-April, is expected to continue in already hard-hit areas in the coming weeks, the Kenya Meteorological Department said in its most recent forecast. May usually marks the end of the rainy season.

In Budalangi, western Kenya, residents have had to carry their belongings away from their submerged houses using boats and motorbikes, after the River Nzoia burst its banks, spilling over the land for miles around.

Government spokesman Cyrus Oguna said on Twitter that over the past three weeks, floods had displaced 100,000 people --

complicating efforts to protect against the spread of the coronavirus, which has killed 24 people in the country.

The government is providing food and water to the displaced people and has also requested the Health Ministry to provide them with masks as a

precautionary measure.

The floods and landslides have been concentrated in western Kenya and have so far killed 194 people, Eugene Wamalwa, the minister in charge of relations between the regional leadership and the national government,



A man carries a sofa near flood water as he evacuates from his home after River Nzoia burst

said. "Yesterday alone, we have lost 30 people in a matter of 24 hours," Wamalwa said.

Energy Minister Charles Keter said the water levels at two major Kenyan dams were unprecedentedly high.

The two dams, Masinga and Turkwel, have a combined installed electricity generation capacity of 140 MW, representing about 6% of Kenya's total installed capacity.

As Masinga also feeds into several other dams, officials advised people living near those downstream reservoirs to evacuate. "We are telling people who are downstream, Garissa all the way to Tana River - things are worsening," Keter said about residents of the two eastern counties. "We are asking them to move. Let

them not wait for water, because this is historical."

Security officials were already evacuating residents in high-risk areas, Interior Minister Fred Matiang'i added.

"We are not waiting for people to move - we are moving some people away from danger," he said.

The floods have also destroyed 8,000 acres of rice fields, the cabinet secretary for water and irrigation, Sicily Kariuki, said.

Kenya was already facing a looming rice shortage due to shipping disruptions caused by the coronavirus outbreak.

The heavy rains and landslides could also lead to water shortages, Kariuki said.

"The infrastructure to deliver water has been washed away ... pipelines have been clogged," said Kariuki, asking residents of several cities including the capital of Nairobi to use their water in a "rational" manner. AFP

Nigeria's death penalty by Zoom 'inhumane'

The sentencing to death of a Nigerian driver via Zoom is "inherently cruel and inhumane", Human Rights Watch says.

The rights group was reacting to one of Nigeria's first court rulings made using the video chat app because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Lagos judge Mojisola Dada sentenced Olalekan Hameed to death by hanging for the murder of his employer's

mother. The hearing lasted almost three hours and was virtually attended by lawyers, including the attorney general. They all participated in Monday's session from different locations as part of efforts to stop the spread of Covid-19.

It was the first day of the easing of lockdown restrictions in Lagos, allowing people to go back to work - although all but urgent court sittings have been suspended.

The judge was in the Lagos High Court in Ikeja, Hameed was at Kirikiri Maximum Security Prison and the lawyers joined from elsewhere.

Hameed had pleaded not guilty to killing 76-year-old Jolasun Okunsanya in December 2018.

"The sentence of this court upon you, Olalekan Hameed, is that you be hanged by the neck until you be pronounced dead and may the Lord have mercy upon your soul. This is the virtual judgment of the court," Justice Dada is quoted as saying.

It is not clear if Hameed will appeal against the sentence. The BBC's Celestina Olulode says under Nigerian law, state governors must approve death sentences before they can be carried out. The death penalty is not commonly carried out in Nigeria - although courts continue to impose the sentence. According to Amnesty International, there are still more than 2,000 people on death row and the last three executions took place in 2016. Human Rights Watch told the BBC the creation of the virtual court during the coronavirus outbreak showed a commitment to accessing

Doctor dies of coronavirus in northern Nigeria



The Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) in Kano, in the north of the country, says that one doctor has died after testing positive for coronavirus.

State NMA chairman, Dr Sanusi Mohammad Bala, told the BBC that 33 other doctors had also tested positive, but they were in a stable condition. There are around 1,500 doctors in all in Kano state.

Private hospitals provide over half of all healthcare in the state. But they have been

closed due to coronavirus fears, placing a large strain on the public facilities.

Nigeria's Centre for Disease Control has sent a support team to Kano after gravediggers reported a higher than usual number of people dying. The investigation is ongoing.

Kano now has the 397 confirmed cases of coronavirus, the second highest number in Nigeria. Thirty-two cases have been confirmed in the northern state in the past 24 hours. BBC



State governors in Nigeria must approve death sentences before they can be carried out q q

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justice. However, the judiciary was moving in the wrong direction by sentencing a person to death by hanging, it said. "The irreversible punishment is archaic,

inherently cruel and inhuman, it should be abolished," Human Rights Watch said.

Nigeria has recorded just under 3,000 coronavirus cases and nearly 100 deaths. BBC

EDITORIAL

Minister Samuel Tweah and the US\$190,000 to senators

SOME UNSCRUPULOUS BUSINESS people including foreigners are using this global health crisis to flood the Liberian market with substandard and unsafe commodities, mainly drugs and other products, endangering the lives of our already disadvantaged population.

NEWS THAT THE Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) seized a huge quantity of substandard pharmaceutical products smuggled in to the country recently has drawn our attention.

A RELEASE ISSUED by the LRA last week Thursday detailed the substandard pharmaceutical products, including Vitamin C, Vitamin B-2, Cold Caps and Amoxicillin, among others, were concealed in 18 boxes onboard three Guinean commercial buses with a total cost of US\$10,000.

THEY WERE ILLEGALLY imported into Liberia through the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border post at Bo Waterside in Grand Cape Mount County by four individuals who are not licensed to import medicines, the LRA said.

THE RELEASE SAID the substandard medicines have been turned over to the Liberia Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority (LMHRA) for inter-agency coordination and action.

BESIDES, OFFICERS OF the LRA Anti-Smuggling & Investigation Unit (ASIU) recently intercepted a 20-foot Container with Hazardous Chemical (Sulphuric Acid) imported from the Netherlands without permit, which breached Liberia General Business Law and the Environmental Protection and Management Law of the country.

WE WONDER HOW many other contrabands have succeeded in slipping thru our borders and entering our market, exposing both Liberians and the public generally to health hazard and eventual complications.

IT IS ABOUT time authorities at the Liberia Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority (LMHRA) become more vigilant, particularly during this COVID-19 crisis when our people are desperate in seeking medications for various types of sicknesses.

WE SHOULD NOT sit supinely and allow unscrupulous individuals purporting as honest business people to flood our markets with products that would send them to their early graves.

EVEN PRIOR TO the COVID-19 pandemic, we all are aware of companies out there that manufacture substandard medicines and bring them to countries with weak scrutiny for sale, endangering lives. What's more of a crisis period when everything seems to be upside down?

The New Dawn
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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 /
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COMMENTARY

By William A. Haseltine

Can America Handle a Second Wave?

The United States is not limiting COVID-19 infections enough to avoid a serious second wave of the pandemic later this year. As communities reopen and behavior patterns loosen still further, the country will be forced to face the consequences of its insufficient action to date.

CAMBRIDGE - Like surfers looking out for the next big breaker before the first one has passed, epidemiologists and public-health officials in the United States are bracing themselves for a fresh surge of COVID-19 infections later this year. The fear is that this second wave will coincide with the peak of the 2020-21 US influenza season, triggering a new flood of hospital patients in dire need of respiratory support.

The fear is justified, based on what we know about coronaviruses and influenza. For both, infections begin rising in November and peak at some point in December, January, or February, before subsiding by April.

What is less certain is how high the waves for each infection will be. Although we understand influenza infection patterns much better than that of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19, influenza remains a known unknown. Its strains vary from year to year in terms of both transmissibility and severity. In some years, the number of lives lost to influenza in the US can be as low as 12,000. But during the 2017-18 winter, a particularly lethal strain led to the death of an estimated 80,000 Americans - the highest such toll in at least 40 years.

The annual variation in influenza strains means that we need to create a new vaccine each year. But there's a catch: the vaccine needs to be prepared well in advance of peak flu season - and often before the new influenza strain even appears. If the vaccine matches fairly accurately, it limits both the severity of an illness due to infection and the number of deaths due to complications from the disease.

But our 2017-18 vaccine was not a good match. By January 2018, hospitals were overwhelmed, emergency rooms were turning away ambulances, and medical centers were implementing now-familiar measures such as setting up triage tents in parking lots, restricting visits by friends and family, and canceling elective surgeries.

The severity of the 2020-21 influenza season will therefore depend on how well our vaccine matches the strain of the virus, and on the particular strain itself. But it will also depend on our own behavior and how readily we spread the infection to others.

Compared to influenza viruses, the behavior of SARS-CoV-2 is a much greater unknown. What we infer is mostly based on the behavior of the four cold-causing coronaviruses that have been circulating in the US since at least the 1960s, when they were first discovered.

The seasonal appearance of these viruses closely resembles that of influenza, except that infections do not disappear in the summer months; instead, they continue at a

reduced frequency. Indeed, the notion that heat and humidity will eliminate SARS-CoV-2 is belied by ongoing infections in Singapore and coastal West Africa.

In fact, the seasonality of viral infections overall remains a mystery. Some think that viruses like influenza and coronavirus peak in winter because cold, dry weather dries our mucous membranes, rendering us more susceptible to viral infections. Others observe that, in winter, we gather more closely together indoors, facilitating transmission.

These theories seem plausible until one considers other viruses, like polio and cold-causing rhinoviruses, which peak in summer. And the mystery only deepens when we come to viruses that are seasonal in temperate climates and maintain a near-constant (albeit lower) infection rate in the tropics.

With SARS-CoV-2 unlikely to disappear on its own, and absent an effective vaccine or prophylactic drug, the main factor influencing the magnitude of a second wave of infections is how well we control the epidemic between now and then. The number of people actively infected by the virus in October - the so-called human reservoir - will determine the size and speed of the expected second wave. Limiting the number of infections now will reduce the number of infections later.

Unfortunately, the US is not limiting COVID-19 infections enough to avoid a severe second wave. Our current control measures - limited testing and largely voluntary self-isolation for those known to be infected or exposed - are unlikely to eliminate the virus from the population. Countries that so far have tackled the disease successfully have much broader testing regimes and have implemented exhaustive contact-tracing programs that identify all those potentially infected and move them to supervised facilities, often at a local hotel, where they are monitored for symptoms.

As US communities reopen and behavior patterns loosen still further, we will be forced to face the consequences of our insufficient action. Come October, I expect that we will be on the brink of another deadly round of COVID-19 infections. And if a significant wave of influenza infections crashes down upon us at the same time, even more people will die.

But the question is when. To have an impact on a second wave of US infections this autumn, a vaccine or prophylactic drug must be widely available by the very beginning of the season. That will require maximum coordinated efforts by researchers, manufacturers, and regulators.

Although such a scenario is possible, we will need to be both smart and lucky to avoid what nature has in store for us come winter. And without a medical breakthrough, we will have to prepare for the worst.

O-PED

By Ilona Szabó

Brazil Needs Intensive Care

Like other authoritarian leaders around the world, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has deployed the tools of the digital age to undermine his country's democratic institutions and sow social division. Now that COVID-19 has brought Brazil to the brink of a new disaster, the costs of corrupt populism are becoming clear.

NEW YORK - Following the recent ouster of Brazil's popular justice minister, Sergio Moro, the world's fourth-largest democracy is on the brink of plunging into even deeper instability. In his resignation speech, Moro criticized the president, Jair Bolsonaro, for interfering in the nomination of federal police and their investigations. For many Brazilians, such meddling is all the more galling given that two of Bolsonaro's sons are under investigation for multiple crimes.

In a rambling, defiant rebuttal on live television, Bolsonaro denied any wrongdoing, then singled me out by name. Labeling me a pro-abortion, pro-gay, gun-regulation advocate, his toxic mix of misogyny, homophobia, and contempt for democracy was on full display for Brazil's 210 million citizens. The country's health system is collapsing and its economy is in free fall as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but its president thinks his most important task is to attack his critics.

There is a backstory here. The last time Bolsonaro publicly attacked me was in early 2019, just after a meeting between me and Moro, who had previously established a strong reputation as a corruption-fighting judge. Moro had invited me to join a voluntary council on criminal justice, and I warily accepted. My hope was to convince the new justice minister that, in a country with more than 6,000 police-related killings per year, the Bolsonaro administration's controversial proposal to expand police discretion was ill advised.

Moro began our meeting by apologizing: he would need to cut it short, because the president had just sent an urgent message asking to speak. I couldn't help but wonder if my nomination to the council would be among the topics of their conversation. During the 2018 presidential election campaign, Bolsonaro had made it clear that he intended to crack down on Brazilian civil society, including independent think tanks like mine. Throughout his three decades in politics, Bolsonaro has consistently gone out of his way to attack human-rights advocates, independent media, intellectuals, indigenous and environment organizations, and women. Those who had previously crossed paths with him knew exactly what was coming when he was elected in 2018.

My nomination to the council had been announced that morning, and within hours, Brazil's leading gun lobbyist and an obscure right-wing blogger had launched a campaign to have me removed. By the time Moro and I sat down to talk, the hashtag #ilonanao ("Ilona no") was the top trending topic on Twitter in Brazil. A swarm of bots and trolls, including one of Bolsonaro's sons, quickly piled on, arguing that my widely publicized views on gun control and criminal-justice reform were unwelcome, even dangerous.

I was dismissed from the council the following day, on Bolsonaro's orders. In his letter rescinding my nomination, Moro praised my think tank's work, and lamented the influence of "some elements" of Brazilian society.

This episode is emblematic of the tragedy that has befallen Brazilian democracy under Bolsonaro. At the time, the Brazilian media correctly described my spiked nomination as merely the opening act of a long, lurid show. It was clear that Bolsonaro and his children would govern in the same spirit of intolerance that had animated their election campaign.

I am not alone in becoming the target of waves of online attacks and threats. Bolsonaro and his followers rely heavily on online intimidation, harassment, and defamation in their war against freedom of expression, civil liberties, and climate action. What has come to be known as the president's "hate cabinet" - a group of hardline advisers (including his sons) who orchestrate the administration's coordinated attacks on its critics - has real-life consequences.

Bolsonaro is hardly the only populist leader using social media to wage war on his political opponents and evade democratic rules and norms. From the United States, India, and the Philippines to Hungary and Russia, authoritarian leaders are deploying the tools of the digital age to commandeer civic space and crush civil society. By flooding the online zone with misinformation and divisive rhetoric, they are undermining government accountability, subverting freedom of speech and the press, and stoking violence.

Shuttering the space for civic participation and coherent deliberation is ruinous for public policymaking and the collective good. In the context of COVID-19, authoritarian assaults on independent media, science, and opposition voices are literally deadly, because they directly undermine public health and foment social unrest. Under Bolsonaro, Brazil is becoming the new epicenter of the global pandemic, and cities that voted for the president are reporting significantly higher levels of infection.

In Brazil and other democracies in distress, civil-society groups and ordinary citizens must reclaim civic space before it has been completely closed off. That starts by raising awareness of what authoritarian leaders and their followers are doing, particularly now, when all governments are waging a "war on COVID-19." Far from justifying a suspension of democratic rules and processes, emergencies are when we need these institutions the most.

But re-opening civic space also will require political leadership, which nowadays is in woefully short supply. Having utterly failed to unite Brazilians in the face of the current crisis, Bolsonaro and his government could be the first to be toppled by the coronavirus. There are at least three ways he could potentially be ousted before the 2022 election: impeachment by Congress, conviction by the Supreme Court for common crimes, or ejection by the national electoral tribunal for alleged misconduct during the 2018 campaign.

Thousands of Brazilians are dying needlessly from COVID-19, the country is heading for a severe recession, and deforestation in the Amazon is reaching levels not seen since 2015. Making matters worse for the president, the Supreme Court has now opened a criminal investigation into Moro's allegations of political interference in the federal police.

Despite all this, Bolsonaro's only response has been to double down on bullying and bombast. With neither the will nor the ability to support democracy, he is instead flirting with a return to dictatorship. Crises such as this one demand focused, competent leadership. Bolsonaro and his fellow populist demagogues around the world are incapable of that, and the longer they remain in power, the more people will die.

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OPINION

By Kemal Dervis & Sebastián Strauss

The Carbon-Tax Opportunity

The pandemic-related collapse in oil prices will likely make renewable energy less competitive, just at a time when the world should be engineering a climate-friendly recovery. In fact, policymakers have an excellent opportunity to advance the transition to a zero-carbon economy.

WASHINGTON, DC - The COVID-19 pandemic has brought economic and social activity around the world to a near standstill. As a result, carbon dioxide emissions have declined sharply, and the skies above some large cities are clean and clear for the first time in decades.

But "degrowth" is not a sustainable strategy for averting environmental disaster. Humanity should protect itself from climate change not by reducing economic activity, but rather by making it more resilient, robust, and sustainable.

The ongoing pandemic has powerfully demonstrated the cost of neglecting catastrophic tail risks. The risks tied to climate change, while unfolding more gradually, are at least as great as those posed by COVID-19. Although the international community is rightly focusing its efforts on the immediate health and economic crisis, it should not lose sight of this threat.

Encouragingly, the rapid reduction in the cost of green technologies in recent years has increased the competitiveness of clean energy generated from sources such as solar and wind. As long as policymakers create a credible expectation of long-term profits by committing to strong environmental standards and providing a long-term framework for eliminating fossil-fuel subsidies, investors will likely be willing to incur the fixed costs of green investments.

Indeed, these technological advances imply that the tradeoff between climate protection and economic progress has become much smaller than we previously thought. Even when the cost-benefit calculus excludes the immediate negative externalities, such as air pollution, that arise from CO2 emissions, green investment has clearly become economically viable even without subsidies. In fact, renewable energy sources like solar and onshore wind power, recently became the cheapest option for much of the world.

But it remains to be seen whether this competitiveness can be sustained in the face of the collapse in fossil-fuel prices caused by the pandemic. US benchmark crude fell below \$20 per barrel in late April, its lowest level since 1999. The price of natural gas also is cratering. And although oil prices may recover slightly as producers cut output, they are likely to remain depressed for quite some time.

While lower oil prices will give consumers' finances a welcome boost - with lower-income households benefiting more in relative terms - they will make renewables less competitive, just at a time when the world should be engineering a climate-friendly recovery. Moreover, a prolonged period of low oil and gas prices would also make green energy sources less competitive in the future by discouraging investment in clean-technology research and development.

But it doesn't have to be that way. In fact, the oil-price collapse presents an excellent opportunity to advance climate policies by levying or increasing carbon taxes at a reduced political cost. In late 2014, when oil prices had declined to \$45 per barrel from a high of \$108 that June, one of us suggested that policymakers waste no time and introduce carbon taxes. Because taxes affecting politically sensitive oil products like gasoline would only partly offset the steep decline in oil prices, such measures would face less resistance than before.

The case is even stronger today, because oil prices have fallen far below their level then. While the user price of fossil fuels would remain historically low even with a substantial carbon tax, such a levy would blunt the negative impact of these extremely low prices on the competitiveness of renewables, thus making a climate-friendly recovery easier to achieve.

This opportunity should not be lost, because the world is at a crucial juncture regarding climate change. Recovering from the pandemic-induced economic collapse will require large new investments around the world. Whether these investments replicate the past in a rush to return to "normalcy" or lay the foundation for sustainable and resilient growth will determine the planet's future.

To illustrate, a tax of \$200 per metric ton of carbon (equivalent to \$54 per metric ton of CO2) would result in an increase of less than 50 cents per gallon for gasoline in the United States, which currently costs less than \$1.80 per gallon on average. At about \$2.30 per gallon, the price of gas at the pump - the most politically sensitive variable in most countries, as demonstrated by the "Yellow Vest" protests in France - would remain at historically low levels in the aftermath of COVID-19 despite a sizable carbon tax. Moreover, making the carbon tax flexible by tying it to the price of oil could enable it to function as an automatic stabilizer. For example, for every \$5-per-barrel increase in the oil price, the carbon tax could be lowered, but by a smaller amount, in order partly to mitigate the increased cost to consumers. Likewise, for every \$5-per-barrel decrease in the oil price, the tax could be raised by a somewhat larger (but still small) amount.

This way, the carbon price would increase over time in line with the overall progress of climate policies, while buffering consumers from oil-price volatility and boosting fiscal revenues. As one of us explained in 2016, once such a carbon tax is in place, "it will become a little-noticed, politically uncontroversial part of pricing for gasoline (and other products) - one that produces far-reaching benefits."

Of course, carbon pricing would have to be in effect across sectors and economies in order to provide a direct price incentive for climate-change mitigation efforts and to complement regulatory standards and other measures. For example, while oil remains dominant in the transport sector, natural gas is now the primary source of electric-power generation. But natural gas, though a lot cleaner than fuel oil, still emits CO2 and must be replaced by renewables to achieve net-zero emissions. Even if electric vehicles fully replace gasoline-powered cars and trucks, they will still only be as clean as the electricity that powers them.

Climate policies must address many other related issues and use an array of instruments. Carbon pricing is no silver bullet. But today's ultra-low oil prices, rather than discouraging investment in clean energy, offer an ideal opportunity to strengthen the pricing component of the toolkit and ensure that the post-pandemic recovery helps create a climate-resilient economy for the long term.

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PERSPECTIVES PERSPECTIVES

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

LEADERS OF THE UNION OF LIBERIAN ASSOCIATIONS IN THE AMERICAS (ULAA) MUST BE ONLY LIBERIAN CITIZENS PART ONE

The Reasons for this Requirement are crucial and critical because:

- ULAA was founded, organized and incorporated by *Liberians for Liberia and Liberians at home*, in the Americas and elsewhere, and chartered by the sovereign State of the United States of America not only as a socio-cultural fellowship forum/organization, but also, mainly, as a political advocacy/action institution, designed and dedicated to seek, secure, protect and preserve the political well-being of Liberians through defined, peaceful activities for democratic, socio-economic and political transformation of Liberia;
- That such individuals seeking election of and appointment to ULAA leadership positions must be only Liberian citizens, given the scope, level and political nature of their required duties and responsibilities, particularly, during these critical, rapidly-changing, 21st century, socio-economic and political conditions now prevailing in Liberia and the World; and
- Now, some 14 years later in 2020 those discussions/arguments have become passionate, divisive and demands/proposals tearing the nation apart and on the brink of political, economic collapse, as shown during the 2017 elections.

Our position is in support of and draws upon ULAA's historical, socio-political evolution, including World political development with profound impact on our country, Liberia.

Response to our Position

The responses to our position were many, as expected - supportive/encouraging as they were vicious, false, and irrelevant to our argument and disappointing. Disappointing and unfortunate, because traditional Liberian political culture and some members of its intellectual members, apparently, tend to dishonor nor observe the doctrine of rational debate - **relevance, truth, logic & civility** - by not restricting critical analysis to the issues raised or "at hand", but resort to convenient approaches of **personality attacks - character assassinations, falsehoods and ethnic/tribal profiling robed in the discredited "guilt-by-association"**, also, linked to convenient ethnic/tribal considerations.

Elsewhere, we observed that we welcome, indeed, encourage comments, including criticisms/critiques of our ideas/opinions and public policy behavior because such intellectual, logical analysis contributes refinement of thought to the development, formulation and exposition of ideas in terms of logic, coherence and clarity. But, "we are disappointed and painfully troubled by the digression . . . of some of the responses". We submit that **BaiGbala** is not on trial here; **it is the issue of Liberian citizenship, non-citizenship and dual citizenship for ULAA leadership that is the defendant in the dock.** "Therefore, the compelling obligation is on the prosecution and defense to present a convincing case against or for the defendant so that the judge or jury may decide the outcome, rather than engage in irrelevant, illogical, false, divisive and destructive personal attacks against each other".

And lastly, on the issue of the allegation that "BaiGbala is a naturalized, United States citizen", Mr. Garnett Gbarmokollie and associates failed to provide support for their allegation. Therefore, we

challenge Mr. Gbarmokollie and company to present the supporting evidence. In that, the USA being a country of records, it can be shown whether or not BaiGbala is such a citizen. The Liberian "they say" approach will not play here without validated evidence.

ULAA Historical Perspective

In our Remarks at the October 2006 ULAA National Conference we stated that the founding and establishment of the ULAA was in response to several and compelling, critical needs.

First and foremost, at the time and period, was the **need for socio-cultural fellowship forum for many young and older Liberians - men and women - who found themselves in a distant, foreign land in search of education. Second, this forum was or is to provide access for academic/intellectual fellowship with other Liberians through debates, presentations and exchanges of ideas, views and experiences gained from their various, respective communities, schools, colleges and universities, in the USA. The need was felt, also, for a program of financial aid to assist needy, qualified Liberian students in order to succeed in school.** All of these, basically then, were social needs.

Liberians - students as well as non-students - then in the



USA, though individually-committed to educational goals, but were loosely held together and **in need of political ideological clarity.** It is important to note that they were, mostly, the descendants of indigenous, Liberian citizens who were excluded, historically and systematically, from political participation, denied access to basic constitutional rights - health, education, civil liberties, protection of the law, and viciously suppressed and oppressed.

This group of Liberians included, also, the descendants of some of the "unconnected Congo- and Americo-Liberians" - *poor, un-educated, un-represented, voiceless and disadvantaged.* These citizens were subjected, also, to socio-economic class discrimination and exclusion, with all the political ills and tyranny that were meted out by the Congo- and Americo-Liberian ruling groups. Both elements of the disadvantaged and oppressed Liberians "fled" our country for the same reason - **to seek and acquire quality education, training and experience in preparation to challenge the status quo and to build a democratic nation for a better life than that of their parents.**

Increase of Liberians, USA

As time went by during the 1970's, more and more Liberians - students and non-students - arrived in the United States; more and more Liberians studied, including the academic requirement of **comparative, analysis of**

world political systems and graduated from some of the prestigious colleges and universities of the United States; they also observed and experienced the efficient/effective management of advanced and progressive, democratic political systems of the developed West. These Liberians observed, experienced and noted, further, that their home Nation, the **Republic of Liberia**, was or is a founding, member-state of the World Body, the United Nations, a high-profile position on the world stage with leading, progressive western nations that advocate the principles of democratic governance.

Significantly, these Liberians noted that the United Nations Charter to which Liberia is a willing signatory, prescribes, among other provisions, that member-states adhere to the principles and values of democratic practice, **including non-discrimination against race, tribe, gender, age, religion, national origin, etc.** But our nation, in flagrant violation of this provision of the UN Charter, continues to discriminate against non-Negroid descendants from acquisition of Liberian citizenship solely on the basis of race.

Liberia's Political Tragedy

Simultaneously, during this period of the early '70s, "adding insult to injury", if you will, the winds of political change that engulfed the political world turned its spotlight on Liberia. The 27-year reign of Dr. William V. S. Tubman as President of our country ended by his death at a London Clinic in the United Kingdom in 1971. His 19-year Vice President, Dr. William R. Tolbert, Jr., ascended to the presidential throne as President of Liberia.

An ordained minister of the Gospel, Vice President, Dr. Tolbert was viewed as the proper agent for political **reform and change by political observers/analysts and the newly-organized and budding, pro-democracy groups in Liberia.** But noting the Unitary Structure of the Liberian Government defined by rigidly-enforced constitutional prescriptions, Liberian political observers/analysts reasoned that there would be no real, meaningful change or reform by the conservative, True Whig Party policies which characterized Liberia's turbulent, historic past since independence in 1847 and the Tubman Era.

Pro-Democracy Groups organized in Liberia

This reasonable/expectation that there will be "**no real, meaningful change**" came to pass, unfortunately, although Dr. Tolbert, now President of Liberia, went through series of persuasive, propaganda motions by preaching political slogans of "**higher heights, from mats to mattresses**", etc., to signify reformed, policy plans and action for social, economic and political developments.

Notwithstanding these political propaganda obstacles, **Pro-Democracy Groups** active on the ground in Liberia - **Susu-Ku, Movement for Justice In Africa (MOJA), the Liberian Student Union (LINSU) of the University of Liberia, The Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL), the legendary Public School Teacher, Mr. Albert Porte, a socio-political activist and pamphleteer, others and ULAA advocacy activities USA,** took the proverbial "**bull by the horns**". Together, they undertook and continued concerted political action for change which was rapidly gaining ground. **These actors were, in fact, the children of the older generation, a different breed of political animals as compared to their parents who, apparently and painfully, accepted their fate by their failure to challenge their despotic rulers.**

Please stay tuned for Part two, the conclusions of our analysis in this newspaper.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Gov't fails on Yekeh Kolubah

-As Court clears lawmaker of kidnapping charge

By Winston W. Parley

The Criminal Court "A" in Monrovia has acquitted opposition lawmaker Rep. Yekeh Kolubah of a charge of kidnapping, ruling Wednesday, 6 May at the Temple of Justice that

to claim that bodyguards of Mr. Kolubah, a staunch critic of President George Manneh Weah in the House of Representatives, had acted on the lawmaker's instruction to kidnap and brutalize Emmanuel Freeman for refusing a T - Shirt

and his witness Mohammed S. Kaba narrate that the incident occurred while the bodyguards including state witness Abu Keita were trying to retrieve from Freeman, witness Kaba's stolen phone based on the latter's request.

Under the legal principle of vicarious liability, Judge Roosevelt Willie rules that for an accused to be held liable under this principle, there must exist three critical elements.

Explaining the three critical elements of vicarious liability, Judge Willie states that there must be a relationship of employer and employee; a tortious act of negligence must be committed; and the act must be committed within the course of employment.

From the facts and circumstances in the case, Judge Willie finds that Rep. Kolubah's bodyguards did not commit the act in their course of duty.

Besides, the judge notes that the government did not disprove or rebut testimonies by Rep. Kolubah and witness Mohammed S. Kaba that the lawmaker's bodyguards acted on their own based on the

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Rep. Yekeh Kolubah

there is doubt in prosecution's evidence based on the legal principle of vicarious liability.

Prosecutors used the legal principle of vicarious liability

printed to protest against the regime.

But Kolubah insists he had no hand in what transpired between Freeman and the bodyguards, as the lawmaker

GOLSAO takes COVID-19 awareness to communities

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Good Legacy Social & Athletic Organization (GOLSAO) a local group, has embarked on a COVID-19 awareness campaign here, donating hands washing buckets, detergents, and facemasks, among others to buttress government's effort in fighting the novel Corona

Prevent its spread now!" "Follow the regulations set by the Health Authorities by washing your hands frequently", "Maintain social distancing", "Use hand sanitizers", "Avoid touching your face", "Wear your facemask", and "Seek medical care early" or "Call the hotline

in case of emergency 4455", respectively.

The campaign was also extended to Old Road Community in Monrovia where community dwellers embraced the idea of seeing young people taking such

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



the virus such as "Let's

Sea erosion threatens New Kru Town estate

By Emmanuel Mondaye

A newly constructed estate by the Government of Liberia in the densely populated New Kru Town community risks not being occupied due to sea erosion.

Residents caution that if urgent steps were not taken to erect a costal defense in specifically Corner West Popo Beach community, where the second phase of the government housing estate is located, the project could become meaningless due to threat from sea erosion.

A visit by the New Dawn to the estate recently discovered that would-be occupants of the facility are currently finding it difficult if not impossible to sleep because of delay by relevant authority to distribute the houses to individuals that should

to sleep since the project started last year.

She recalls they were previously informed by the community leadership that only those residents whose houses were destroyed by the sea erosion, would be placed in the housing units under a specific agreement with the government, but since then, nothing has been done about their plight and now the rainy season is here.

Madam Koffa calls on President George Weah and authorities of the National Housing Authority (NHA) to quickly do something about their plight to prevent their children from fallen sick from the cold breeze.

The costal defense of the Municipal Borough of New Kru Town which started under former President Ellen Johnson



occupied them.

The nearly one hundred housing units were constructed by the Government of Liberia (GoL) through the Liberia Agency for Community Development after previous makeshift structures there were completely destroyed by erosion.

Currently, the sea is about less than four minutes' walk away from the estate, a situation that seriously worries residents of the community for fear that the raging sea could consume the remaining portion of land left in front of the estate.

One of the would-be occupants Ma Mary WlehKoffa laments they are going through a very difficult time with their children due to lack of shelters

Sirleaf is yet to reach the Popo Beach community, as the firm executing the project only placed rocks at the end of the Corner West community thereby, leaving a very large portion without any costal defense to protect the newly constructed units meant for under-privileged Liberians.

During an inspection of the Costal Defense project first phase, President George M. Weah expressed dislike for manner in which work on the project was proceeding, requesting the contractor to further push back the sea to create more land space for use by the inhabitants of the Borough of New Kru Town, something that is yet to be done. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Senator considers probe into Weah's properties

By Winston W. Parley

Opposition Senator Darius Dillon announced a plan to request a Senate investigation into whether President George Manneh Weah is using his own money to acquire properties here or the state's money.

Mr. Dillon's pronouncement came via a local radio Wednesday morning, 6 May less than 24

hours after the Executive Mansion admitted that President George Manneh Weah owns the 9th Street, Sinkor property that has caused wide public criticism over its construction during the coronavirus crisis.

"I am announcing this morning that I will make it an agenda for the Senate to take siege of it," Mr. Dillon says, disclosing his plan to put the issue on the agenda so that the

Senate can begin investigating whether the president is using his own money to acquire these properties or the state's money.

"We can't continue to sit and allow people to go with impunity because you are a president," he adds, arguing that the Executive Mansion tried to run away from the president's ownership of the property because they know the source of the funding has been raising eyebrows and questions.

He claims that the Executive has now realized that attaching ownership of the property to President Weah's son Timothy Weah was putting young Timothy against American laws, thereby allegedly compelling the Executive to clarify that the president still owns the property since he was the original owner.

Concerning Timothy's citizenship, Dillon argues that technically Timothy is still a Liberian citizen until he reaches the maturity age of 23.

Mr. Dillon's comment comes after Deputy

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Senator Darius Dillon

RSF concern over SG threats to close media under state of emergency

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is alarmed by the Liberian solicitor general's threats to shut down media outlets that spread "fake news" during a state of emergency to combat the Covid-19 epidemic.

The execution of such vaguely-worded threats could result in unwarranted and disproportionate curbs on the freedom to inform, RSF warned.

At a press conference on 29 April, solicitor general Sayma Syrenius Cephas threatened to seize the equipment and revoke the licenses of media outlets publishing or broadcasting "fake news." Individuals spreading lies on social media, including Facebook, would also be hunted down and prosecuted during the state of emergency, he said.

"There will be no more warning," he added, threatening to confiscate equipment and shut media "until the end of the

pandemic." Cephas also claimed that the state of emergency declared under article 87 of the constitution curtailed basic rights including the right to free speech and freedom of assembly.

"A public health crisis does not justify any restriction on the right to information," said

Assane Diagne, the director of RSF's West Africa office. "On the contrary, combatting an epidemic requires providing the public with accurate and extensive information. Vague threats about 'fake news' are also worrying. Who decides

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Nwabudike fate looms at LACC?

By Winston W. Parley

Barely 24 hours after the Self-proclaimed Nigerian born naturalized Liberian, withdrew his petition from the Monrovia Civil Law Court where he had sought that court to uphold his citizenship claims here, questions abound as to whether President George Weah will maintain a foreigner at the country's anti-graft commission.

His citizenship here came under heavy scrutiny when Mr. Weah appointed him in March to head the country's National Elections Commission (NEC) as chair. Before his appointment as NEC Chair, he has been serving as the Liberian Anti-Corruption Commission chair.

On Tuesday the disgraced Nigerian - born Nwabudike notified the Civil Law Court in Monrovia of the withdrawal of a petition he filed against the

right to [refile] with amendments as to the parties and content.

Further, Nwabudike tells the court that he is an employee of the government and that the government has not in any way or manner threatened or query the standing of the petitioner as a qualified Counsellor - at - law with all the rights and privileges appertaining, saying he named government as party respondent in the case in error.

In his withdrawn petition, Nwabudike had requested the court to restate, affirm and uphold the ruling of the Court of June 21, 2002, by which he says the Civil Law Court admitted him as Attorney - at - Law, consistent with Section 17 of the New Judiciary Law, to practice law before all the



Cllr. Nwabudike

Liberian government, after a Senate confirmation hearing exposed long - held deep controversies surrounding his claim that he is a naturalized Liberian.

"That Petition of the Petitioner for Declaratory Judgment shall and same is hereby withdrawn with immediate effect, without prejudice," Cllr. Nwabudike says in the notice of voluntary discontinuance filed with the Civil Law Court on 5 May.

The withdrawal comes as the Liberian National Bar Association-LNBA, a legal institution for lawyers here filed an intervener motion before the court, in which it as the government to prosecute and deport him (Nwabudike).

He, however, informs the court that he reserves the

circuit and inferior courts here.

Further, he had requested the court to uphold the mandate of the Supreme Court of Liberia admitting him in 2006, as Counsellor - at - Law of the Supreme Court Bar.

The disgraced presidential nominee Cllr. Nwabudike had also requested that the Civil Law Court in Monrovia declare his citizenship right to enable him continue his law practice here, as lawyers launched a probe into controversies surrounding his Liberian citizenship same which denied him the privilege to chair the National Elections Commission (NEC).

Having worked at Good Governance Commission (GC),

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Français

LIBERIA : LOURD BILAN HUMAIN EN VUE DANS L'EFFONDREMENT D'UNE MINE

Plusieurs personnes ont été tuées dans l'effondrement d'une mine lundi soir dans le nord-ouest du Liberia, un responsable gouvernemental sur place évoquant un bilan pouvant atteindre une cinquantaine de morts.

Le porte-parole adjoint de la présidence a pour sa part fait état de plusieurs victimes décédées, sans en donner le nombre, les informations remontant difficilement du comté de Grand Cape Mount, à l'extrémité du pays. Aucune

précision n'a été fournie sur la mine en question.

Mais le Liberia, l'un des pays les plus pauvres de la planète, est confronté de longue date aux activités clandestines de recherche d'or ou de diamants, face auxquelles il est dépourvu de moyens. "Environ 50 personnes ont été tuées et les secours continuent à rechercher les disparus", a dit mardi à l'AFP MilliasSherrif, ministre adjoint de la Jeunesse et des Sports, originaire de la région.

Il a indiqué par téléphone qu'il se trouvait sur place et

avait dénombré des dizaines de morts. Le porte-parole adjoint de la présidence Smith Tobey n'a pas confirmé ni infirmé ces chiffres et dit attendre les remontées de responsables dépêchés sur place.

"Il y a des gens qui disent 50, certains même plus de 50. Des responsables du ministère de l'Intérieur et du ministère des Terres, des Mines et de l'Energie ont été envoyés, mais nous n'avons pas de leurs nouvelles", a-t-il dit.



COVID-19 : Le Liberia reçoit des échantillons du remède malgache

Le président George Weah a reçu lundi à l'aéroport international Roberts, à Harbel, dans le comté de Margibi, des échantillons du Covid-Organics, une solution à base de plantes développée à Madagascar, qui pourrait prévenir et guérir le coronavirus.

Le remède à base de plantes médicinales, délivré par un fonctionnaire de la Guinée-Bissau, a été introduit dans le pays sur la demande du président Weah après de son homologue Bissau Guinéen, le président Umaro Sissoco Embaló, il y a quelques jours, alors que ce pays avait passé une commande pour son propre approvisionnement en traitement anti-coronavirus.

Si le médicament s'avère efficace ici, le gouvernement libérien pourra alors se ravitailler, selon le vice-secrétaire de

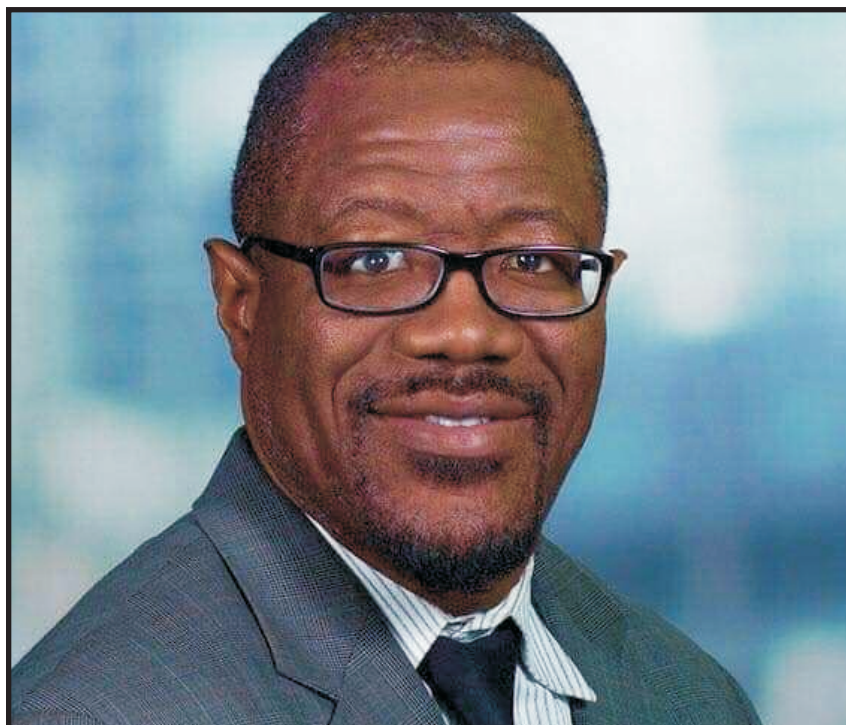
presse Smith Toby. Les échantillons actuels comprennent deux boîtes de prévention et une boîte de traitement.

Le Covid-Organics a été développé par un médecin congolais, le Dr Jerome Munyagi en partenariat avec l'Institut malgache de

recherche appliquée et sous la marque COVID Organics, selon la BBC. La solution à base de plantes contient de l'Artemisia, une plante cultivée à Madagascar pour traiter le paludisme.

L'échantillon de traitement est arrivé dans le

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Il est temps que l'on fasse preuve de vigilance

Certains hommes d'affaires sans scrupules, dont des ressortissants étrangers, profitent de cette crise sanitaire mondiale pour inonder le marché libérien de produits toxiques, principalement des médicaments et d'autres produits de base, mettant en danger la vie de notre population déjà défavorisée.

L'information selon laquelle l'Autorité Libérienne des Revenus (LRA) a saisi une énorme quantité de produits pharmaceutiques de qualité inférieure introduits en contrebande dans le pays récemment a attiré notre attention.

Dans un communiqué de presse publié la semaine dernière, la LRA a fait état de produits pharmaceutiques de qualité inférieure, dont la vitamine C, la vitamine B-2, les bouchons froids et l'amoxicilline, entre autres, qui avaient été dissimulés dans 18 boîtes à bord de trois bus en provenance de la Guinée. Le coût total serait de 10000 \$ US.

Ils avaient été importés illégalement au Libéria par quatre personnes qui ne sont pas autorisées à importer des médicaments, a indiqué la LRA. Ces personnes seraient passées par la frontière libéro-sierraléonaise de Bo Waterside, dans le comté de Grand Cape Mount.

Ces médicaments, selon le communiqué, ont été remis à l'Autorité de réglementation des médicaments et des produits de santé du Libéria (LMHRA) pour en faire un examen approfondi et prendre une action inter-institutionnelle.

En outre, des agents de l'Unité anti-contrebande et d'investigation de la LRA (ASIU) ont récemment intercepté un conteneur de 20 pieds contenant des produits chimiques dangereux (acide sulfurique) importé des Pays-Bas, sans permis ni autorisation, en violation des lois libériennes.

Nous nous demandons combien d'autres produits de contrebande ont réussi à franchir nos frontières et à pénétrer notre marché, exposant les Libériens et le public en général à des risques pour la santé et à d'éventuelles complications.

Il est grand temps que les responsables de l'Autorité de réglementation des médicaments et des produits de santé du Libéria (LMHRA) fassent preuve de vigilance accrue, en particulier pendant cette crise du COVID-19, où notre peuple cherche désespérément des médicaments pour divers types de maladies.

Il ne faut pas que nous nous croisions les mains pendant que des individus sans scrupules qui se font passer pour des hommes ou des femmes d'affaires honnêtes inondent nos marchés de produits qui enverraient les libériens dans leurs premières demeures de manière précoce.

Même avant la pandémie du COVID-19, des entreprises fabriquaient des médicaments de qualité inférieure et les importaient dans des pays où le contrôle est moins renforcé, mettant en danger des vies, à plus forte raison en ces temps de crise, d'où la nécessité, dois-je le répéter, de faire preuve de vigilance.

Français

COVID-19 : Le Liberia reçoit

pays au moment où le Libéria a confirmé 166 cas de coronavirus avec 18 décès et 58 guérisons.

Madagascar, qui a développé le remède à base de plantes, a enregistré 133 cas avec 97 guérisons et zéro décès.

Le remède à base de plantes a été apporté sur un vol lundi. Selon le responsable Bissau Guinéen qui a présenté la solution à base de plantes, depuis l'application des herbes à Madagascar, il n'y a pas eu de mort à ce jour.

Recevant le médicament au nom du gouvernement du Libéria, le président George Manneh Weah a remercié tout particulièrement son homologue et a félicité le président malgache Andry Rajoelina pour leurs efforts dans ces découvertes.

S'adressant aux journalistes lors de la cérémonie, le ministre d'État chargé des Affaires présidentielles, Nathaniel McGill, a déclaré que le médicament est la solution à la crise actuelle.

"Nous sommes reconnaissants au gouvernement de Madagascar d'être venu à notre aide. Nous traiterons certains de nos malades avec ce médicament", a-t-il dit.

Lorsqu'on lui a demandé si les médicaments avaient été approuvés par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, M. McGill a répondu disant qu'on n'a pas besoin que l'OMS approuve les médicaments faits à base de plantes médicinales.

"Nous qui sommes venus de l'intérieur, nous buvons nos racines amères et l'OMS n'a pas à approuver ces racines avant de les [prendre]", a-t-il dit.

McGill soutient en outre que l'OMS n'approuve pas les médicaments antipaludiques que les gens traditionnels prennent pour éliminer le paludisme de leur corps.

Depuis le lancement officiel Covid-Organics, une quinzaine de pays africains ont décidé de soigner leurs malades atteints du coronavirus avec ce produit. Mais Corine Karema,

médecin et consultante en paludisme et maladies infectieuses, appelle à la prudence.

"Ça serait très important que tous ces produits passent par les essais cliniques. Il faut que ça soit confirmé par des études cliniques qui vont stipuler qu'effectivement les guérisons des malades sont liées au traitement qui a été donné. Et je pense que l'OMS est là pour nous donner les directives de traitement des maladies comme le coronavirus", estime Corine Karema.

L'OMS a en effet déclaré qu'il n'existe aucune preuve scientifique que le Covid-Organics soit efficace contre la pandémie du coronavirus. Une mise en garde réitérée par l'Académie nationale de médecine de Madagascar et par l'ancien président, devenu opposant, Marc

"Remède-miracle"

Sur le continent, le remède malgache est perçu par beaucoup comme étant le "remède-miracle" africain contre le Covid-19. Le traitement à base d'injection d'artémisia séduit également de nombreux dirigeants africains. John Magufuli, le président de Tanzanie, a déjà annoncé son intention d'en importer. Le Togo, le Tchad, le Cameroun ont eux-aussi déjà envoyé des avions pour venir chercher des lots sur la Grande île. Les présidents du Congo, de Guinée, et des Comores se disent eux aussi intéressés.

Pour sa part, la Guinée-Bissau a réceptionné samedi (02.05.20) des cartons d'une potion promue par le président de Madagascar. Selon les deux dirigeants, les produits doivent être distribués dans 14 autres membres de la Cédéao (Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest).

La Guinée-Bissau et la Guinée-Equatoriale sont les deux premiers pays à avoir officiellement pris livraison de Covid-Organics.

Selon le ministre de la Santé de Guinée-Equatoriale, Salomon Nguema Owono, le Covid-Organics serait distribuée sous sa forme préventive aux personnes saines et sous sa forme curative, à titre expérimental pendant 14 jours, aux patients hospitalisés.

COMMENTAIRE

Par William A. Haseltine

L'Amérique peut-elle faire face à la seconde vague?

CAMBRIDGE - Comme des adeptes du surf qui jaugent la prochaine grande vague avant que la première ait déferlé, les épidémiologistes et les responsables de la santé publique aux États-Unis se préparent à une recrudescence des infections de COVID-19 plus tard dans l'année. Ils appréhendent une seconde vague qui coïnciderait avec le point culminant de la saison de la grippe 2020-21 aux États-Unis, déclenchant une nouvelle vague d'hospitalisation de patients en besoin urgent d'assistance respiratoire.

La crainte est justifiée, selon ce que l'on sait des coronavirus et de la grippe. Dans les deux cas, les infections ont amorcé leur montée en novembre et ont atteint le sommet à un certain point en décembre, en janvier ou en février, avant de perdre de leur intensité en avril.

Ce qui est moins sûr, c'est la hauteur des crêtes que chaque infection atteindra. Même si nous en savons beaucoup plus sur la courbe d'infection de la grippe que sur celle du virus du SRAS-CoV-2 qui provoque la COVID-19, la grippe demeure une maladie relativement connue, mais méconnue sous bien des aspects. Ses souches varient d'une année à l'autre sur le plan de la transmissibilité et de la virulence. Certaines années, le nombre de pertes de vies causées par la grippe aux États-Unis peut être aussi faible que 127 000. Mais durant l'hiver 2017-18, une souche particulièrement létale a entraîné la mort d'environ 80 000 Américains – le taux de mortalité le plus élevé depuis au moins 40 ans.

Les variations annuelles des souches de la grippe sont telles qu'il faut mettre au point un nouveau vaccin chaque année. La difficulté réside dans le fait que le vaccin doit être préparé bien en avance du sommet de la saison de la grippe et souvent avant même que la nouvelle souche fasse son apparition. Si le vaccin correspond assez précisément à la souche, il atténue la virulence d'une maladie infectieuse ainsi que le nombre de décès résultant de complications de la maladie.

Mais le vaccin 2017-18 ne correspondait pas bien au virus de l'influenza. En janvier 2018, les hôpitaux ont été submergés, des urgences refusaient des patients arrivés par ambulance et des centres médicaux mettaient en œuvre des mesures maintenant courantes comme l'installation de tentes de triage dans les stationnements, l'interdiction de visites par les amis et la famille et l'annulation des opérations chirurgicales non urgentes.

La gravité de la saison de la grippe de 2020-21 dépendra donc de la façon dont notre vaccin correspond à la souche du virus et de sa virulence intrinsèque. Mais elle dépendra des attitudes de tout le monde et de la fréquence à laquelle nous transmettons l'infection aux autres.

Par rapport aux virus de la grippe, le mode de propagation du SRAS-CoV-2 est beaucoup moins connu. Nous nous basons surtout sur les données recueillies pour quatre coronavirus provoquant le rhume qui circulaient aux États-Unis depuis au moins les années soixante, l'époque à laquelle ils ont été découverts.

L'apparition saisonnière de ces virus ressemble à celle de la grippe, sauf que les infections ne disparaissent pas vraiment en été; elles continuent leur progression, bien qu'à une cadence réduite. En fait, la notion que la chaleur et l'humidité éliminera le SRAS-CoV-2 est contredite par les infections actuelles recensées à Singapour et dans les pays côtiers de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.

En fait, la saisonnalité des infections virales demeure en général un mystère. Certains estiment que les

virus comme la grippe et les coronavirus atteignent leur point culminant en hiver, car le temps froid et sec assèche nos muqueuses, nous rendant plus susceptibles d'attraper des infections virales. D'autres font remarquer qu'en hiver, les festivités offrent plus d'occasions de rapprochements à l'intérieur, facilitant ainsi la transmission.

Ces théories semblent plausibles jusqu'à ce que l'on considère d'autres virus, comme la poliomyélite et les rhinovirus responsables du rhume, qui culminent en été. Et le mystère ne fait que s'épaissir lorsque l'on étudie les virus qui sont saisonniers dans des climats tempérés et qui maintiennent un taux d'infection quasi constant (bien qu'inférieur) sous les tropiques.

Le SRAS-CoV-2 ne risque pas de disparaître de lui-même et, à moins d'un vaccin efficace ou d'un traitement prophylactique, le principal facteur influençant l'ampleur d'une seconde vague d'infections dépend du degré de maîtrise de l'épidémie atteint jusque-là. Le nombre de personnes qui ont été infectées par le virus jusqu'en octobre – le réservoir infectieux dans la population humaine – détermine l'ampleur et la vitesse de la deuxième vague anticipée. La réduction du nombre actuel d'infections atténuera le nombre d'infections plus tard dans l'année.

Malheureusement, les infections de la COVID-19 ne sont pas assez freinées aux États-Unis pour éviter une deuxième vague encore plus grave. Les mesures de contrôle actuelles – des tests de dépistage en nombre limité et un confinement en grande partie volontaire de ceux qu'on sait infectés ou exposés – ont peu de chance d'éliminer le virus dans la population. Les pays qui ont jusqu'ici obtenu de meilleurs résultats contre la maladie ont adopté des régimes de test beaucoup plus étendus et ont mis en place des programmes exhaustifs de traçage des contacts qui répertorient tous ceux qui sont potentiellement infectés afin de les confiner dans des installations supervisées, souvent dans un hôtel proche, où l'on vérifie s'ils présentent des symptômes.

À mesure que les collectivités des États-Unis reprennent leurs activités et que les attitudes se relâchent encore plus, il faudra faire face aux conséquences d'une intervention déficiente. En octobre, j'anticipe que le pays sera à la veille d'une autre série noire d'infections mortelles de la COVID-19. Et si une vague importante d'infections d'influenza s'abat sur la population en même temps, plus de personnes mourront encore.

Détenir les moyens médicaux de prévenir la transmission du SRAS-CoV-2 diminuera l'ampleur et les répercussions de la seconde vague de COVID-19. D'ailleurs, grâce à un appui massif des autorités publiques, des sociétés pharmaceutiques, des entreprises de biotechnologie et des fondations caritatives, les initiatives de mise au point de vaccins et de médicaments qui pourraient bloquer la transmission du virus sont passées en vitesse supérieure dans les laboratoires du monde entier. Avec sept vaccins et au moins un médicament avec un potentiel prophylactique faisant actuellement l'objet d'essais cliniques, je suis convaincu que nous serons en mesure de freiner la propagation du SRAS-CoV-2 dans un avenir proche.

Mais la question est de savoir quand. Pour atténuer la seconde vague des infections aux États-Unis cet automne, un vaccin ou un traitement prophylactique doit être accessible au plus grand nombre dès le début de la saison. Ceci nécessitera d'optimiser les efforts coordonnés des chercheurs, des fabricants et des autorités réglementaires.

Même si un tel scénario est plausible, il faudra beaucoup de chance et d'intelligence pour éviter ce que la nature nous réserve pour l'hiver qui vient. Et sans une percée médicale, il faut nous préparer au pire.

WASH Commission, Rotary Club donate to PUL

In an effort to buttress journalists' work in the fight against the Coronavirus pandemic, several institutions have identified with the Press Union of Liberia (PUL). Journalists across the

Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) donated fifty (50) hands washing buckets, one carton of chlora and one carton of soap to the Press Union of Liberia. The materials were presented to the PUL at the WASH commission office in



PUL Pres. Charles Coffey

country continue to be at the forefront, risking their lives to inform and educate the public about the pandemic. According to a press release, on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, the national commission on Water,

Sinkor, Monrovia by its Chief Executive Officer, Bobby Whitefield. Mr. Whitefield said the materials were his organisation's way of buttressing the PUL's effort in informing and educating the public about

the pandemic. He lauded the Liberian Media for the hard work.

Similarly on Monday this week, the Rotary Club of Sinkor donated two hundred and fifty (250) pieces of nose masks to the PUL. Judge Evan Mappy Morgan presented the materials on behalf of her organisation.

Judge Morgan said the leadership of the Sinkor Rotary Club recognised the pivotal role of the press in the fight against the Coronavirus pandemic, and that the donation was part of the Club's support to the PUL.

She called on other stakeholders to support the PUL in the current fight.

The Sinkor Rotary Club is part of the Rotary International, which is an international service organisation with the sole purpose of bringing together business and professional leaders to provide humanitarian services and advance goodwill and peace around the world.

It is a non-political and non-religious with 35,000 member clubs worldwide and 1.2 million individuals known as Romanians. At the same time Bridge Radio Africa donated fifty (50) pieces of nose masks to the PUL on Monday. **-Press Release**

Senator considers

Cont'd from page 7

Presidential Press Secretary Smith Toby on Tuesday, 5 May faced the challenging task of saying his previous pronouncement that Timothy owned the 9th Street property was untrue as the real owner of the property remains the president.

Toby's statement on Tuesday differed with his initial pronouncement on Monday this week that President Weah had turned over the 9th Street, Sinkor property to his son Timothy Weah when he (President Weah) took over as president of Liberia.

Toby had claimed that all the things being used on the project were long imported before the coronavirus crisis, and that the project is being spearheaded by the First Lady Madam Clar Weah as Timothy had transformed the property to his own liking.

In an apparent effort to

divert the public's attention from the president concerning the property's ownership, Toby further claimed on Monday that President Weah is not spending a dime on that project, saying contractors are being paid by the supervisor of the project - the First Lady.

He detailed that Timothy is the sole financier of that property, asking the talk show host at OK FM to wait a little bit to get the transfer document to be convinced.

But on Tuesday, Toby returned with a completely different version as to the ownership of the 9th Street property, saying the property on 9th Street is not owned by Timothy Weah as he (Toby) had said.

Professionally, Toby says he had to apologize to the public, saying the previous information on that property was not the right information.

RSF concern over SG

Cont'd from page 7

what is and what is not 'fake news'? The need to combat disinformation must not be used as a pretext for persecuting journalists and censoring media outlets that annoy the authorities."

The solicitor general issued these threats after it was rumoured that President George Weah had tested positive to Covid-19. The

rumours went viral on Facebook a few days after several senior officials reportedly tested positive. They included the information and justice ministers, who had recently been in close contact with President Weah.

Liberia is ranked 95th out of 180 countries in RSF's 2020 World Press Freedom Index.

Cont'd from page 6

Gov't fails on

order from their friend Mohammed S. Kaba.

"As earlier stated, the failure of the Prosecution to have disproved Defendant Yekeh Kolubah and Mohammed S. Kaba averments as herein above stated creates doubt on the Prosecution's theory of vicarious liability, for which the Defendant should be held for the crime of Kidnapping," the judge rules.

According to Judge Willie, prosecution failed to rebut defense witness Kaba's testimony that state witness Abu Keita is his friend, and that Keita knew that his (Kaba's) samsung galaxy note phone valued US\$850, being assigned to Kaba by his employer Plan International Liberia.

Judge Willie continues that prosecution should have called Keita to rebut Rep. Kolubah's statement that while Abu Keita and others were in police detention, Keita called him (lawmaker), informing him that they were being detained because Freeman got hurt while they were assisting their friend

Kaba to retrieve his phone from the victim.

The judge determines that the true reason why Freeman was kidnapped was for an alleged stolen phone.

To further authenticate the issue of theft, Judge Willie recalls that prosecution's second witness Naomi Johnson who was sitting with Freeman when the group shouted at Freeman: "Where is the Iphone you stole," informed the court that she told the group of men including Abu Keita that the stolen phone matter was not for them to handle, but for the police.

After securing separate trial, Kolubah became a lone defendant in the case because prosecution nolleprosequi his co- indictees Abu Keita, Johnson Kpor, Oliver Kanneh, Levi Blackie, Mohammed S. Kabah, Mohammed A. Kabah and Frank O. Morgan and subsequently used the bodyguards as state witnesses against the opposition lawmaker.

Following Kolubah's request for acquittal in the middle of the trial in April, Judge Roosevelt Z. Willie dropped

almost all the charges in the indictment including aggravated assault, criminal attempt to commit murder, criminal solicitation and criminal facilitation, leaving only the charge of kidnapping which the State also fails to prove.

Kolubah's lawyers insist that prosecution presented about 10 witnesses throughout the trial of the case who have failed to prove that he was linked to kidnapping Freeman.

Interviewed by journalists following the ruling, Solicitor General SyreniusCephas says the prosecution is not bitter about the court's ruling on the kidnapping charge and they cannot appeal against it after a full trial.

However, he says they already have an appeal before the Supreme Court against the judge's initial decision dropping multiple charges against Rep. Kolubah, saying the matter is not over yet, but it has just begun.

Yekeh's supporters were seen jubilating outside the court after the ruling as he walked out in victory.

GOLSAO takes

Cont'd from page 6

initiative during difficulty period of the country's history.

Emmanuel notes the initiative is just the beginning, adding that he looks forward to identifying with more vulnerable communities that have no access to food, hand sanitizers or buckets and facemasks to protect themselves.

He expresses appreciation to partners such as Alley Printing Press, Tenf-18, Get Empowerment Inc., and the Searchlight Communications Inc., for supporting the endeavor, while calling on other well-meaning Liberians, government officials, NGOs, INGOs, and philanthropic organizations to join the campaign to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

He pleads with Liberians to adhere to government Stay-At-Home order, as much as possible to put an end to the

spread of the virus.

Emmanuel stresses that this is the organization's way of giving back to society and underprivileged citizens, adding that when the society is happy, the nation is bound to succeed.

GOLSAO was established in 2016 under the leadership of young Liberians with the aims of incorporating less fortunate youth in society to partake in nation building through sports and education to tap their potentials for future leadership.

Since its foundation, the organization has carried out several initiatives such as community clean-up campaign, outreach, youth retreat, and back to school campaign characterized by distribution copybooks to less fortunate students, amongst others. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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Who do we listen to?

The Government of Liberia appears to be confusing its citizens here in terms of the group of people qualified to receive food ration under the it's stimulus package.

Over the weekend and repeated on Wednesday during a Senate oversight hearing, Commerce Minister Prof. Wilson Tarpeh who

However, contrary to his pronouncement, Finance and Development Planning Minister Samuel Tweah says every household will benefit.

Tweah assures the public that every household will benefit amid anxiety among Monrovia residents that government was only targeting vulnerable groups, such as the disabled community, Group of

He also disclosed that hazard pay for health workers, including nurses, doctors and the Joint Security will be paid besides regular salary for leading the fight against the new coronavirus in the country.

However, the Minister clarified that neither government nor the World Food Program has started enumerating residents or households, adding that if that were happening it was not with government's knowledge.

Several residents, who called on the live talk show claimed people had carried out enumeration in their communities for the pending food distribution.

The 54th Liberian Legislature recently endorsed a State of Emergency for 60 days and a US\$25 Million stimulus package submitted by President Weah, including 21-day lockdown in four affected counties namely; Montserado, Margibi, Nimba and Grand Kru, respectively, as part of measures to curb spread of the virus that has killed 20 persons with 176 confirmed cases.

The President had suggested that the stimulus package be directed at the affected counties but the lawmakers, thru a joint resolution, extended it to all 15 counties. **-Story by Jonathan Browne**



Min. Tweah



Prof. Tarpeh

chairs the food distribution Steering Committee said government will target vulnerable groups and people living in slum communities here.

Prof. Tarpeh stated that the distribution which will begin on May 23, will start in the four index counties- Montserrado, Margibi, Nimba and Grand Kru.

77 and orphanages, among others.

Speaking Wednesday in a live simulcast with several radio stations in Monrovia, the Finance boss said the government is committed to the exercise and is collaborating with the World Food Programme of the United Nations to commence the food distribution.

Starts from back page

Senators differ

indicated the entire country.

On 18 April, the Liberian Legislature passed a Joint Resolution which approved the initial request for US\$25 million by the Executive for the Food Support Program.

The Legislature made a modification in passing the resolution that all of the 15 counties within the Republic shall be covered as affected counties for food support and additional amounts needed shall be submitted for re-appropriation.

It says procurement under this program must first accommodate locally produced food, adding that the food distribution program must prioritize the vulnerable population and the first responder population.

It specifically names the disadvantaged youth, the homeless, orphanages, senior citizens, people with disabilities, health workers and security personnel deployed in the frontline of

the enforcement of the State of Emergency as those that must be prioritized.

The Legislature further approved all restrictions imposed by the president pertaining to the movement of persons and hours applicable, and modified only to the extent that all persons appearing in public, streets and buildings must wear a protective device that covers at least the nose

and mouth. Explaining further, Professor Tarpeh notes that the food basket will contain both imported and locally produced rice, palm, imported oil and other food related items.

Meanwhile, Minister Tarpeh is expected to reappear this Friday, 8 May to provide further explanation. **-Edited by Winston W. Parley**



Nwabudike fate

Cont'd from page 7

the Nigerian - born Cllr. Nwabudike who insists he naturalized in 1982 as Liberian, was serving a tenure as Liberia Anti - Corruption Commission (LACC) chair when President George Manneh Weah appointed him this year to head the NEC, his third job in less than two years.

Until his nomination by President Weah to chair the NEC, Cllr. Nwabudike's previous confirmation by the Liberian Senate as LACC chair seemed to have gone smoothly without Liberia's weak system detecting or questioning his acquisition of his Liberian citizenship.

The withdrawal of his petition comes after the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) recently amended its motion filed as an intervener to help the Liberian Government's fight at the Civil Law Court to dismiss Nwabudike's petition filed to request the court to declare his Liberian citizenship right.

In the LNBA's amended motion filed at the Civil Law Court Wednesday, 29 April, the Bar Association insisted that the court lacks the legal capacity to determine Nwabudike's citizenship because citizenship in the Republic of Liberia cannot be determined by the Civil Law Court or any court sitting in its civil division here.

"Movant now files this Amended Motion to dismiss Respondent/Petitioner's Petition for Lack of Subject Matter Jurisdiction by this Honorable Court on grounds that this Honorable Court cannot exercise any jurisdiction this ...," the LNBA wrote.

Other than the Civil Law Court lacking subject matter jurisdiction over nationalization and citizenship of aliens, the LNBA further contended that Nwabudike's petition should be dismissed because he has shown no rights that have been withdrawn from him either by the government, the LNBA or any other entity here.

Previously the LNBA filed a motion before the Civil Law Court arguing that Cllr. Nwabudike has justified sufficiently that he has never been a citizen of Liberia but rather a fake individual and should not be allowed a day in Liberia to be considered a citizen.

The Bar's contention was that Cllr. Nwabudike has failed and neglected to prove his citizenship before the House of Senate during his confirmation hearing and up to present, has still failed to do so.

It stated that Nwabudike's Curriculum Vitae is a product of big fraud, thus recommending that he must be penalized by being prosecuted and deported to his native land, Nigeria by the Attorney General of Liberia consistent with Chapter 21, Section 21.10 of the Alien and Nationality Law of Liberia.

Prior to filing its amended motion on Wednesday, the LNBA had filed another communication dated 29 April, 2020, informing the Civil Law Court of the Bar's withdrawal of its previous intervener's returns, motion to dismiss and motion to dismiss, reserving the right to amend [and] refile.

The LNBA reminded the Civil Law Court that the Supreme Court has held over and over that every court, including the Supreme Court, is duty - bound to first determine its jurisdiction over a given matter because where jurisdiction is wanting, every action taken by the court is null and void ab initio.

Further, the intervener LNBA said the Alien and Nationality Law of Liberia provides that exclusive jurisdiction to naturalize persons as citizens of Liberia is conferred upon the circuit courts.

In Montserrado County, the LNBA continued, the first judicial circuit shall exercise such jurisdiction, concluding that the Civil Law Court therefore lacks jurisdiction to pass on the nationality of Nwabudike.

During his confirmation hearing at the Senate for the NEC top job, Nwabudike consented that his passport carries October 2, 1963 while his records at the University of Liberia have October 2, 1965, insisting that he did not have control over what is written about him at UL.

Senators and members of the public were concerned that even after naturalization, Nigerians do not forfeit their Nigerian citizenship until they make a declaration renouncing their Nigerian citizenship, and the president registers such declaration in accordance to Article 29 of Nigeria's Constitution.

His failure to present to the Liberian Senate an evidence that he had renounced his Nigerian citizenship and to show proof that his declaration had been registered by the president of Nigeria appeared to have given the confirmation hearing a suggestion that he may still be enjoying Nigerian citizenship while he carries a Liberian passport. **-Editing by Othello B. Garblah**

Senators differ on stimulus package



Sen. Saah Joseph

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Members of the Liberian Senate have strongly differed with the Executive branch of government on the distribution of the US\$25 million stimulus package as announced by President George Manneh Weah in the fight against the Coronavirus here.

Speaking in plenary

Wednesday, 6 May, ruling party senator for Montserrado County Sen. Saah Joseph warned that the Senate will not accept that the stimulus package be given to 'vulnerable communities' and only four counties that were earlier affected.

The debate came about when Commerce Minister, Professor Wilson Tarpeh appeared before the Senate to provide details on how the

distribution of the food items will be carried out among Liberians.

Minister Tarpeh informs Senators that the government and its partners, especially the World Bank, have considered distributing the food package to vulnerable communities and four counties that were earlier affected by coronavirus before extending to other counties.

The counties targeted by the government for distribution include Montserrado, Margibi, Nimba and Grand Kru Counties. However, health officials here say four new counties have now been affected by the virus, bringing the total to eight counties.

Senators argue that the resolution passed by the House of Representatives and the Liberian Senate did not state four counties and vulnerable communities as beneficiaries of the stimulus package, as they instead

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



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Arteta felt 'a lot of disconnection' at Arsenal when he arrived

Mikel Arteta felt there was "a lot of disconnection" when he took over at Arsenal late last year.

A former captain of Arsenal, Arteta was named head coach in December last year, replacing Unai Emery.

Arteta, who oversaw eight wins and six draws from 16 games in charge before the season was suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic, said it was difficult to find the club in the position it was in.

"Obviously coming into the

club in that moment wasn't easy, but you mentioned a key word which is energy," he told club great Ian Wright in an interview for Adidas.

"I felt that the energy at the training ground, the stadium, wasn't right for this magnificent club and I've been here.

"I was lucky to play here so everybody has to feel first of all in that way and there was a lot of disconnection in many areas and I wanted to bring everybody together.

"First, to understand how lucky we are to be here and then



a very clear direction of where we want to be."

Arsenal were ninth in the table, eight points adrift of fourth, when the Premier League season was suspended due to COVID-19.

Arteta said he was eager to return to action, but feels education around coronavirus would be key.

"I think the hardest thing is going to be to educate the players and everybody involved at the training grounds and matchdays that this is different," he said.

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