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Continental News

US says Russia sent jets to Libya 'mercenaries'

The US military has accused Russia of sending fighter jets to Libya to support Russian mercenaries there.

There was no immediate response from the Russian Defence Ministry to the US Africa command (Africom) allegation.

Earlier this month a leaked UN report spoke of hundreds of mercenaries from the shadowy Wagner Group operating in Libya. Russia backs renegade Gen Khalifa Haftar's army.

The country has issued a new call for a Libya ceasefire and political talks.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov discussed the conflict with an ally of Gen Haftar by phone on Tuesday, the foreign ministry said.

He told Aguila Saleh Issa, a parliament speaker, that "there needs to be a constructive dialogue involving all the Libyan political forces" and "an immediate ceasefire". Russia has not confirmed the presence of Wagner mercenaries in Libya. There have been many reports - though not from Russian officials - about Wagner deployments in Syria, eastern Ukraine and other hotspots, including the Central African Republic.

The Russian government denies any state involvement in the militant group.

On 18 May forces of the UN-recognised Tripoli government, fighting Gen Haftar's army, were photographed at a captured airbase, al-Watiya, just south of the Libyan capital.

According to the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA), more than 1,000 Wagner fighters fled an area south of Tripoli aboard Russian transport planes, having been pushed back by GNA troops.

That evacuation was not confirmed by Gen Haftar's

eastern-based Libyan National Army (LNA), nor by Russia. The US Africom statement on Tuesday said: "Moscow recently deployed military fighter aircraft to Libya in order to support Russian state-sponsored private military contractors (PMCs) operating on the ground there."

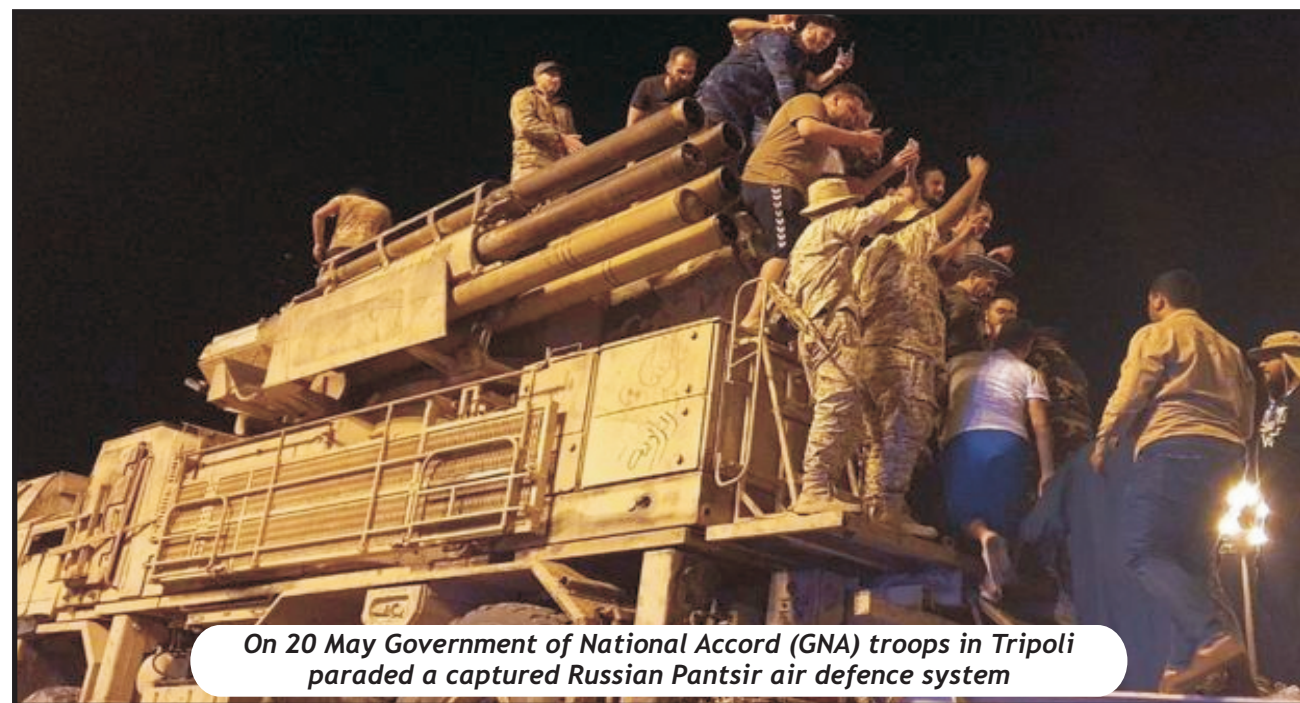
"Russian military aircraft are likely to provide close air support and offensive fires for the Wagner Group PMC that is supporting the Libyan National Army's fight," it said.

"The Russian fighter aircraft arrived in Libya, from an airbase in Russia, after transiting Syria where it is assessed they were repainted to camouflage their Russian origin." Turkey is supporting the GNA in Tripoli, and Turkey's

Sabah newspaper earlier reported that eight Russian MiG-29 and Su-24 warplanes had flown from Syria to Libya to help the LNA. That report quoted GNA Interior Minister Fathi Bashagha.

US Army Gen Stephen Townsend, commanding Africom, said: "Russia is clearly trying to tip the scales in its favour in Libya... using government-supported mercenary groups like Wagner".

"We watched as Russia flew fourth generation jet fighters to Libya - every step of the way. Neither the LNA nor private military companies can arm, operate and sustain these fighters without state support - support they are getting from Russia." BBC



On 20 May Government of National Accord (GNA) troops in Tripoli paraded a captured Russian Pantsir air defence system

South Africa to reopen places of worship

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa has announced that places of worship will be reopened on 1 June with strict guidelines to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Churches, mosques, temples and other recognised places of worship will be required to ensure worshippers keep distance.

Only 50 or less people will be allowed to attend worship

depending on the size of the worship place.

All worshippers will be required to wear masks and sanitise.

President Ramaphosa acknowledged the roles religious leaders play in the community, including counselling and prayers.

He said the pandemic had taken a toll on the religious well-being of many people hence the need to reopen places of worship as the country moves to level three of easing lockdown restrictions.

The president announced a national prayer day to be held on 31 May.

Places of worship closed in March when the country went into lockdown. Some religious leaders have been streaming worship services online.

South Africa has so far recorded 24,264 cases of coronavirus. BBC



Worship places were closed in March at the start of a nationwide lockdown

Africa's confirmed COVID-19 cases surpass 115,000

The number of confirmed Covid-19 cases across the African continent surpassed 115,616 as the death toll from the ongoing pandemic surged to 3,479 on Tuesday afternoon, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) said.

The Africa CDC, in its latest

continent, the most highly affected countries include South Africa with 23,615 confirmed cases, Egypt with 17,967 confirmed cases, Algeria with 8,503 confirmed cases, Nigeria with 8,063 confirmed cases and Morocco with 7,556 confirmed cases.

The Africa CDC said that the Northern African region is the



continental situation update report issued on Tuesday, said that some 46,630 people who have been infected with the Covid-19 have recovered across the continent. Figures from the Africa CDC also showed that amid the rapid spread of the virus across the

most affected area across the continent, both in terms of positive Covid-19 cases as well as the number of deaths.

The continental disease control and prevention agency added that the Covid-19 pandemic has spread across all 54 African countries. AFP

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EDITORIAL

Bracing ourselves for uncertainty

LIKE THE WORDINGS of President George MannehWeah's COVID-19 awareness song says, "What kind of world we live in today; there is no security; everything is possible", Liberia is at the crossroads in its novel coronavirus fight with uncertainty looming over the nation.

WITH CURRENT TOTAL deaths at 23 and total active cases at 85 plus 125 recoveries, the country, like many other states in Africa, is still in its embryonic stage of this rapidly devastating virus that has wrecked many western countries in both human capital and economic terms.

HEALTH AUTHORITIES HERE, including the Minister of Health doctor WilheminaJallah and her deputy, as well as the Country Representative of W.H.O. doctor Peter Clement and his colleague of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, doctor Desmond Williams, reported for testing Sunday, 17 May at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in move to encourage the public to go for testing. The director-general for the National Public Health Institute of Liberia, doctor MosokaFallah led his staff for testing Wednesday, 20th May.

BUT IN THE past two months (March 16th to May 16th) the Government of Liberia has been unable to move ahead of the curve or contain number of deaths in 14 or 21 days, which is very worrisome and scaring.

DESPITE A STATE of Emergency and lockdown, the country continues to incur new deaths from COVID-19 nearly every week, and the metrics is not reversing at all.

CURRENTLY, THERE IS a huge anxiety among the public for a pending food stimulus package from the government that may precede total lockdowns in communities to allow health authorities to conduct mass testing of residents.

AT THE SAME time, writings on the wall indicate the authorities are preparing to return to status quo ante or business as usual, which has already begun with the re-opening of churches, mosques and other worship centers across the country, while schools and businesses are watching to follow.

THIS COULD RAPIDLY increase infections among the population and correspondingly swell the present death toll, given the fact that doctors globally have found no cure for COVID-19.

WE WONDER THEN, what statistics or progress from the fight that is informing our leaders to desire easing the lockdown and resume full economic activities or are we copying from other countries when our own situation is completely unique.

THE MINISTER OF Education Dao AnsuSonii, said this week he looks forward to the Ministry of Health for green-light to re-open schools throughout the country, but with strict observance of health protocols.

DO WE REALLY mean this as a country? President Weah declared a State of Emergency and lockdown, which took effect on 10th April, 2020 when we had only 31 confirmed cases, including four deaths. How in the world could we resume normal activities at currently 233 total confirmed cases and 23 deaths? The government should rethink its strategy in this COVID-19 fight.

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COMMENTARY

By Joschka Fischer

The Future of Global Power

Although the Sino-American rivalry was escalating long before the COVID-19 crisis erupted, it has since been thrown into overdrive. But while both countries are pursuing a zero-sum vision of the future, only one is doing so with a long-term strategy.

BERLIN - The COVID-19 pandemic is arguably the first truly global crisis of the twenty-first century. The only modern historical parallels to the economic disruption triggered by a microscopic pathogen are to the last century's world wars.

The start of World War I, in August 1914, not only ended a long period of peace, but also suspended an earlier epoch of economic integration and globalization. As governments around the world pursued new protectionist agendas, economic growth collapsed across the board. A generation later, another world war followed, after which the Cold War began immediately.

The world, and global politics, looked very different at the end of this period of constant conflict and power politics, from 1914 until 1989, than it did at the beginning. Prior to World War I, the British Empire was the dominant economic and military power. After World War II, it was supplanted by the United States, whose hegemonic position was further strengthened following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The question, then, is how the distribution of global power will change as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Whether the pandemic's impact will be comparable to that of either world war remains to be seen. Clearly, a global economic crisis on this scale will bring serious geopolitical shocks. America, the incumbent superpower, may well cling to its position at the top of the global pecking order. But most signs suggest that China, the emerging superpower, will prevail, inaugurating an East Asian century.

The Sino-American rivalry was shaping up to be the twenty-first century's defining hegemonic conflict long before the COVID-19 crisis. Nonetheless, the pandemic, along with election-year politics in the US, seems to be amplifying and accelerating the confrontation. For US President Donald Trump, everything is at stake in November's election. Having mismanaged the pandemic and presided over an unprecedented domestic economic crisis, he needs a scapegoat, and China is the obvious choice.

After all, while most of Trump's policies have, as a general rule, divided American society, his approach to China is a major exception. In going on the offensive against China, he can count on broad bipartisan support. Even deep into liberal Democratic ranks, American attitudes toward China have soured substantially in recent years.

Many US objections are hard to dismiss. The People's Republic is indeed an authoritarian - even totalitarian - state under the exclusive control of a Leninist party. It has engaged in economic and technological espionage against the US on a grand scale, resorted to unfair trade practices, and violently asserted

territorial claims vis-à-vis India, Taiwan, and in the South China Sea. From its persecution of ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang and recent move to consolidate control over Hong Kong to its initial mishandling of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China's government has done little to inspire trust.

Nonetheless, the Trump administration persistent efforts to repudiate America's global leadership role raises a fundamental question about its approach: what does the US under Trump want? To lead without taking responsibility?

That is unlikely to work. While the US remains mired in short-term thinking, China is establishing itself as an alternative source of global leadership and investment, patiently pursuing a long-term strategy to exploit the geopolitical vacuum created by America's inward turn.

In any case, the blow to America's international image, especially following the Trump administration's disastrous failure in the face of COVID-19, will be hard to repair. The pandemic is reinforcing the general impression that the US is a decadent superpower, soon to be supplanted by a strategically deft and economically dynamic China. The age-old story of the rise and fall of great powers is now being written by a virus. We can only hope that this chapter plays out peacefully.

Against the backdrop of the Sino-American confrontation, Europe finds itself caught uncomfortably between two opposing geopolitical forces - and left in the dark about America's true intentions toward China. Does the US want to pursue containment or all-out confrontation - up to and including military conflict - to block or even reverse China's ascent? The second strategy, reprising the West's approach to China during the late nineteenth century, would be extremely dangerous, to say the least.

The alternative for the West is to pursue long-term containment on the basis of strategic rivalry. Europe would be well advised to choose this option. In a Chinese-led world order, Europe, situated at the western end of the Eurasian supercontinent, would be the loser. As a totalitarian one-party state, China can never be a genuine partner to Europe in normative terms. Even after three years of Trump, Europe's relationship with the US remains much closer than the relationship it could ever expect with China.

But China is already too big, too successful, and too important to ignore. The facts on the ground call for cooperation. The key is to distinguish between strategic engagement with China and submission to it. And maintaining that crucial distinction will require Europe to avoid becoming economically or technologically dependent on the West's rival.

O-PED

By Lucrezia Reichlin

One Giant Leap for Europe?

The Franco-German proposal for a COVID-19 recovery fund is not quite the “Hamiltonian moment” that some have claimed. But, by reshaping the debate on risk mutualization and the benefits of transfers, it could set the stage for one.

LONDON - The €500 billion (\$547 billion) COVID-19 recovery fund proposed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron has been hailed as a turning point for the European Union - and for good reason. Beyond its concrete economic implications, the proposal reaffirms a commitment to solidarity by the EU's two largest economies, thereby setting the stage for genuine progress toward fiscal union.

The basic proposition is straightforward. The EU would borrow in the market at long maturities with an implicit guarantee from the common budget. It would then channel borrowed funds to regions and sectors hardest-hit by the COVID-19 crisis.

There is plenty left to be negotiated, such as where to offer loans versus grants, what kind of conditionality to apply to projects, and the extent to which aggregate fiscal capacity should be increased. Opposition from the so-called Frugal Four - Austria, the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden - will undoubtedly necessitate some compromise.

But, leaving these considerations aside, and while we wait for the proposal due from the European Commission this week, it is important to consider the potential long-term implications for the EU if some version of the Franco-German proposal is implemented.

In particular, where does this leave the debate about European fiscal capacity, and monetary- and fiscal-policy coordination in the eurozone? Is this a decisive step in that direction - a moment as consequential as the declaration in 2012 by then-European Central Bank President Mario Draghi that the ECB would do “whatever it takes” to save the euro? Or is it a pragmatic response to today's crisis, which defines the limits of risk-sharing that is possible to achieve, under current conditions?

The proposal crosses several historical red lines, from the assumption of European-level debt to transfers based on need, rather than contributions to the EU budget and in forms of grants rather than loans. In principle, it would finally achieve the much-touted objective of “solidarity.”

Moreover, though not a stated objective, the proposal's implementation would ultimately result in some creation of EU fiscal capacity for stabilization purposes. Disbursing money for projects that are aligned with EU priorities, such as sustainability and digitalization, would affirm the principle of a common EU purpose, potentially galvanizing popular support for greater integration.

A recent interview with German Minister of Finance Olaf Scholz suggests even a broader agenda for the future, including the creation of EU taxation capability and some degree of fiscal harmonization. This is not yet a fiscal federation, but it is a clear signal that we are moving in that direction - the first such signal since the Five Presidents' Report on completing Europe's economic and monetary union in 2015. (That proposition went nowhere.)

Crucially, this is not just an agenda supported by technocrats in the EU institutions, but one endorsed by the political powers of France and Germany. Like with Draghi's “whatever it takes” moment, the key to progress was German political support.

In 2012, Germany's support came with conditions, including the creation of the European Stability Mechanism (to ensure that ECB intervention in the sovereign-bond market would be based on the principle of conditionality) and a banking union (to serve as a risk-mitigation tool). Germany's support for the COVID-19 recovery fund is predicated on another grand bargain: EU-funded projects must be consistent with shared objectives, and monitored collectively.

So, does the Franco-German initiative suggest a path towards shared fiscal capacity? Not necessarily.

The recovery fund's stated goals do not include demand management. The fund is meant for the EU, not the eurozone, and is therefore not designed to address the challenges that arise from having a common central bank without a corresponding fiscal authority.

Those challenges were laid bare during the eurozone crisis of 2011-12, when eurozone policymakers struggled with a “flight to safety” toward northern Europe, which led to large differentials in the costs of government financing and a breakdown in monetary-policy transmission. This put irresistible pressure on the ECB to introduce policies with a quasi-fiscal dimension, provoking accusations that the ECB was exceeding its mandate.

To address these problems, the eurozone needs a budgetary tool to serve as an insurance mechanism in severe crises (automatic fiscal stabilizers) and to support the monetary- and fiscal-policy coordination that effective demand management requires, especially when interest rates are near-zero or negative. The proposed COVID-19 recovery fund could fulfil that purpose.

Aligning the eurozone's monetary and fiscal institutional capabilities will be no easy task. It will require a high degree of risk-sharing and the surrender of some national sovereignty. So it would most likely necessitate treaty changes.

The decision not to address this problem in the Franco-German proposal was a pragmatic one. However ambitious its objectives, they are easier to digest politically than reforms to the eurozone's architecture aimed at upholding the euro's stability.

Yet the proposed recovery fund could buy time for action to address these longer-term challenges. Despite not being designed to do so, it could create enough EU fiscal capacity to ease pressure on the ECB. And it could allow sufficiently large temporary transfers to cope with the asymmetric effects of the COVID-19 crisis in the short run.

But, if the downturn persists, debt-to-GDP ratios will inevitably rise, underscoring, yet again, the need for eurozone reform. The fund's more fundamental contribution may be to shift the ground in the debate, removing - or, at least, redrawing - some of the red lines surrounding risk mutualization and the benefits of transfers.

Another crisis has meant another step forward for the European federalist project. But this is not quite the “Hamiltonian moment” that some have claimed. Sooner or later, EU treaty revisions will be needed to build a framework for effective monetary- and fiscal-policy coordination, while preserving ECB independence.

The German Federal Constitutional Court's recent ruling that the country's government and legislature had violated the constitution by failing to monitor the ECB properly is a reminder that progress will be difficult to achieve without revising the EU's legal and institutional foundations. And the political conditions for that step do not yet exist.

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OPINION

By Mark Leonard

The End of Europe's Chinese Dream

The COVID-19 crisis has pushed Europeans' strategic thinking about China - already shifting because of three developments - past the tipping point. After years of pursuing closer bilateral economic ties, Europeans suddenly realize that they have become dangerously dependent on Chinese trade and investment.

BERLIN - A paradigm shift is taking place in relations between the European Union and China. The COVID-19 crisis has triggered a new debate within Europe about the need for greater supply-chain “diversification,” and thus for a managed disengagement from China. That will not be easy, and it won't happen quickly. But, clearly, Europe has abandoned its previous ambition for a more closely integrated bilateral economic relationship with China.

In the past, when Europeans sought trade, economic-, and foreign-policy reforms vis-à-vis China, their hope was always to increase contact with the country while making the relationship fairer and more reciprocal. The basic goal was to expand bilateral trade and pry open the Chinese market for European investments. Even when the European Union toughened its approach toward China, its objective was still to deepen economic ties with the country. The creation of new EU instruments to screen investments and enforce antitrust measures were presented as regrettable but necessary measures to create the political conditions for closer cooperation.

In a report published earlier this month, Andrew Small of the European Council on Foreign Relations argues that the EU's engagement with China will henceforth have a new purpose: to structure the Sino-European relationship in a way that reduces Europe's dependence on Chinese trade and investment. The new consensus is that Europeans should be more insulated from the whims of unreliable or overbearing foreign governments, whether in Beijing or Washington, DC.

This new thinking is evident in statements from the EU's top officials. For example, Josep Borrell, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, recently called on Europeans to shorten and diversify their supply chains, and to consider shifting their trade ties from Asia to Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and Africa. Sounding a similar note, the EU's competition czar, Margrethe Vestager, wants to change state aid rules to protect European companies from Chinese takeovers.

For their part, most European governments did not want a change in strategy. Until now, they have been heavily invested in developing a cooperative relationship with China; on a practical level, they are desperate for Chinese-made medical supplies to get them through the pandemic.

Nonetheless, three factors have altered Europe's strategic calculus. The first is a long-term change within China. The EU's previous China policy was based on the so-called convergence wager, which held that China would gradually become a more responsible global citizen if it was welcomed into international global markets and institutions.

Instead, the opposite has happened. Under President Xi Jinping, China has become more authoritarian. As the Chinese state has increased its role in the economy and Chinese markets have become less hospitable to European companies, Xi's signature policies - Made in China 2025, China Standards 2035, and the Belt and Road Initiative - have not only forced European companies out of the Chinese market, but have also exported China's model abroad. China is no longer merely competing for a share of low-value-added production. It is quickly climbing up the global value chain, and penetrating the very sectors that Europeans regard as central to their own economic future.

Second, the United States has increasingly adopted a more hawkish view of China, particularly since US President Donald Trump entered the White House. Well before the pandemic, a broader “decoupling” of the US and Chinese economies seemed to be underway. This change came rather abruptly, and was a shock to Europeans, who suddenly had to worry about becoming roadkill in a Sino-American game of chicken.

Consider the way many European states are struggling to placate both the US and China over the Chinese tech giant Huawei's role in building European 5G networks. In theory, Europe's new skepticism toward China should have paved the way for closer transatlantic cooperation on this issue. But by assailing Europe with tariffs, secondary sanctions, and other unprovoked attacks, the Trump administration has muddied what should have been a clear choice.

But the third (and most surprising) development has been China's behavior during the pandemic. After the 2008 global financial crisis, China seemed to rise to the occasion as a responsible global power, participating in coordinated stimulus efforts and even buying up euros and investing in cash-strapped economies. Not this time.

Consider one telling episode from the pandemic. Early this year, as the coronavirus was raging through Wuhan, EU member states shipped nearly 60 tons of medical equipment to China. Much of this came from national strategic stockpiles, and it was sent discreetly, at China's behest. By contrast, when the pandemic arrived in Europe, the Chinese government made a big show of offering “aid” to Europe - much of which actually came with a price tag.

Worse, China has been using the cover of the COVID-19 crisis to pursue politically controversial economic deals, such as a Chinese-financed Belgrade-Budapest railway plan that was smuggled through Hungary's legislature as a part of its COVID-19 emergency package. Similarly, Huawei has been loudly making the case for why the crisis justifies an even faster 5G rollout. And in the United Kingdom, a Chinese state-owned venture-capital fund recently tried to take control of one of the country's top chipmakers, Imagination Technologies.

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ARTICLE

ARTICLE

CPP Framework is a "Carte Blanche" for Patronage and Protectionism – A Critique

By Martin K. N. Kollie
Liberian activist and columnist

Article 10 Section 10:11 of "The CPP Framework" seemingly defeats the purpose and the genuineness of a viable opposition collaboration that is based on ideological conviction and philosophical belief(s). The framework is contentious, contagious, and undemocratic. It needs a careful relook and a critical readjustment. Like I said, this framework is a "carte blanche" for patronage and protectionism. Here's why.

Liberians are overly desperate for a more genuine alternative after 24 months under the failing regime of footballing President George M. Weah. Such unquenched desperation has largely been triggered by entrenched corruption and the abuse of power. Is CPP a dependable option? Can CPP nexus this desperation with corresponding CHANGE and real hope?

The Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), which is a composition of CDC, NPP, and LPDP, has already lost public confidence and trust. The Weah-led government has become so unpopular in a relatively short period as a result of governance breakdown and poor leadership. It is a fact that most Liberians are now turning to "The Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)", which includes UP, ANC, LP, and ALP. The CPP has positioned itself and is seen in some quarters as a viable alternative ahead of 2020 and 2023 polls.

The CPP is not perfect, but it seems better than CDC. It has somehow shown responsible and accountable leadership. Can CPP maintain such morale and guarantee public trust? The latest "CPP Framework" saying something else and it is a cause for concern. Though there are some major actors within the CPP with good intentions to redeem Liberia and inspire the lost hope of Liberians, but there are some with bad intentions mainly to parochially pursue self-interest and self-indulgence.

The CPP must be cautious and vigilant to weed elements with such ulterior motive out of their ranks. I read through self-centered "CPP Framework" during the weekend. While I applaud the CPP for achieving this milestone and sealing a deal for a possible political marriage ahead of 2020 and 2023, but any course of such nature must place the overwhelming interest of Liberia and Liberians above competing individualistic interests.

While the 25-page Framework of the CPP may look good, but certain provisions have rendered the entire document as a "Carte Blanche" for Political Patronage and Protectionism. The framework is more of a breeding ground for "job-seeking" and "power sharing". The CPP must be different from the CDC and it must demonstrate such difference through intents, words, and deeds. Section 10:11 to Section 10:11.10 of this framework is problematic or contentious in our opinion.

The Issues:

Section 10:11: Guidelines for Presidential Appointments - Executive Branch of Government:

Section 10:11.1 of CPP Framework:

"All Constituent Political Parties shall be represented in the Cabinet. Cabinet positions shall be allocated among the constituent political parties and all other qualified Liberians whether or not they are members of the Alliance."

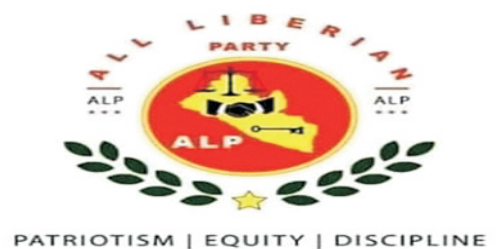
Critique #1: This provision points to a "power sharing deal". It is similar to the following peace agreements or peace accords that were signed by ex-warring factions to share governmental positions among them:

- 1) The December 21, 1990 Banjul III Peace Accord between NPFL, INPFL, and Bowen (Remnants of Doe's Army);
- 2) The July 25, 1993 Contonou Peace Accord between NPFL, ULIMO, and LPC;
- 3) The August 12, 1994 Akosombo Peace Accord between NPFL, ULIMO, and AFL;
- 4) The August 18, 2003 Comprehensive Peace

Accord between LURD, MODEL, GOL, and Political Parties.

Critique #2: The CPP must position itself as a viable opposition and an honest alternative, and not as a collaboration of job seekers and power sharers. It is not compelling or binding for all political parties to be represented in the Cabinet or for cabinet positions to be allocated among constituent political parties. The CPP has a lot to appreciate and consider from "The Adama Barrow's Promise and The Opposition" in Gambia. This pattern does not only usurp the constitutional function of the President, but it directly infringes on Article 54, Article 55, and Article 56(a) of the 1986 of Liberia.

- 1) **Article 54:** The President shall nominate and, with the consent of the Senate, appoint and commission:
 - a) cabinet ministers, deputy and assistant cabinet ministers;
 - b) ambassadors, ministers, consuls; and
 - c) the Chief Justice and Associate Justice of the Supreme Court and judges of subordinate courts;
 - d) Superintendents, other county officials and officials of other political sub-divisions; e members of the military from the rank of lieutenant of its equivalent and above; and f marshals, deputy marshals, and sheriffs.
- 2) **Article 55:** The President shall appoint and



commission Notaries Public and Justices of the Peace who shall hold office for a term of two years but may be removed by the President for cause. They shall be eligible for appointment.

Section 10:11.2 of CPP Framework: "Constituent Political Parties shall recommend qualified members for appointment to Cabinet, junior cabinet, technical level positions, local government administration subject to all applicable laws."

Critique #1: The question of loyalty comes in if political parties are going to recommend their parties' faithful or adherents for appointment. Who will those appointees be loyal to? Their various political parties or the government? Their various Political Leaders or the President? At whose pleasure are they going to hold their respectful offices? This course of proceeding does undermine the intent and the essence of Article 56 of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia.

1) **Article 56(a)** "All cabinet ministers, deputy and assistant cabinet ministers, ambassadors, ministers and consuls, superintendents of counties and other government officials, both military and civilian, appointed by the President pursuant to this Constitution shall hold their offices at the pleasure of the President."

Furthermore, let it be known that the President reserves every right to reject or consider any recommendation of appointee(s) according to the Constitution. What if the presumptive president of the CPP does reject a preferred

nominee from any of the collaborating political parties? This could breed disintegration and brouhaha.

Section 10:11.1 "provides a compelling ground for all political parties to be represented in the Cabinet while **Section 10:11.2** provides a non-compelling ground (recommendation) for the consideration of political representation. Isn't this a contradiction and doesn't this suggest vagueness?"

Section 10:11.3 of CPP Framework:

"Only known, active, and visible members of Constituent Political Parties shall be recommended by the parties."

Critique #1: This specific provision is a "carte blanche" for patronage and protectionism. Whose interest is CPP trying to protect in this framework? So, only a few "known, active, and visible members" should be privileged to hold governmental positions? What about those who are not "known" but active and visible? What about those who are only active but not known and visible? What about those who are only visible but not known and active? What about those who are not even members of CPP but are Liberians? **Section 10:11.3** of this framework renders the entire CPP inequitable and inconsiderate. It was based on similar reasoning and bad precedent that some of us condemned the "CDC Blacklist" in January 2018.

Critique #2: Liberia belongs to all Liberians regardless of political affiliation. Whether one is in the CPP or the CDC, every Liberian has the right to work in government and out of government. **Section 10:11.3** defeats the purpose of national integration and unity. It is a breeding ground for sectionalism, tribalism, abuse of power, nepotism and corrupt practices.

Critique #3: **Section 10:11.3** undermines **Article 5** of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia:

Article 5: The Republic shall:

- a) aim at strengthening the national integration and unity of the people of Liberia, regardless of ethnic, regional or other differences, into one body politic; and the Legislature shall enact laws promoting national unification and the encouragement of all citizens to participate in government;
- b) preserve, protect and promote positive Liberian culture, ensuring that traditional values which are compatible with public policy and national progress are adopted and developed as an integral part of the growing needs of the Liberian society;
- c) take steps, by appropriate legislation and executive orders, to eliminate sectionalism and tribalism, and such abuses of power as the misuse of government resources, nepotism and all other corrupt practices.

Critique #4: **Section 10:11.3** also grossly contravenes **Article 18** of the Liberian Constitution.

Article 18: All Liberian citizens shall have equal opportunity for work and employment regardless of sex, creed, religion, ethnic background, place of origin or political affiliation, and all shall be entitled to equal pay for equal work.

The CPP has to understand that there are scores of qualified and competent Liberians who are willing and able to work, but they are not attached to any political party. Also, there are skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled Liberians that are non-partisans. Shouldn't this group of Liberians work because they aren't "known, active, and visible" members of the CPP? To even uplift such a provision which points toward "protectionism" or "protecting" CPP's "known, active, and visible members" is not only disturbing but it unravels a concealed motive of patronage and witch-hunt. I encourage the CPP to focus more on creating decent jobs or employment opportunities for unprivileged Liberians and not to deprive other Liberians from accessing employment based on political grounds. **Section 10:11.3** even contradicts **Section 10:11.2** and **Section 10.11.1**.

Section 10:11.4

"Constituent Political Parties shall recommend members in the counties for local government positions. Only known, active and visible members in the county shall be recommended by the parties for local government positions."

TO BE CONT'D

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

No intention to downsize

-NPA boss

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Amid speculation of an imminent redundancy at the National Port Authority, the Managing Director of the NPA, Bill Tweahway clarifies there is no such plan to downsize the workforce, noting that he

Authority, dubbed gateway to Liberia's economy, is among major revenue generation arms of government that are drastically hit by the spread of the virus.

The Freeport of Monrovia and other ports under the Management of Mr. Tweahway hosted over 31 vessels prior to the pandemic, which was its

staffs) to join him in chipping in by accepting reduction in benefits, and adhering to a more responsible expense measures which saw cut in unnecessary spending to accommodate everyone.

Early this year when the IMF proposed to the Government of Liberia to reduce both salaries and workforce under a harmonization program which saw hundreds of employees of the Central Bank of Liberia downsized as a way of reducing the wage bill, Mr. Tweahway was able to work out a deal with the international body which saw the NPA increased its support national budget, as a precondition to maintaining the current workforce.

Managing Director Tweahway urged employees that in other to help him maintain them at their respective jobs, they should increase performance, productivity, and honesty on the job, and avoid malfeasance practices, which could undermine the port's capacity to meet its financial obligations both to government and them, a win-win policy that seems to be working. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*



Mr. Bill Tweahway

has used people-driven economy approach to ensure that hundreds of employees keep their jobs in the face of the devastating impact of the novel coronavirus on the world's economy.

The National Port

main source of revenue generation.

However, director Tweahway insists to senior staffs that he cannot take food from the table of ordinary employees during difficult time, rallying them (senior

LRA receives testing kits

The Customs Department of the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) has received a donation of testing kits for precursor chemicals and explosives from the World Customs Organization (WCO).

The LRA says the equipment will be used by Customs to uncover smuggling of narcotic drugs, dangerous chemicals and other harmful substances into the country. The donation, valued at over US\$20,000, contains 600 boxes of devices that will be distributed at Customs Business Offices (CBOs).

Presenting the consignment to Commissioner General Thomas Doe Nah, on behalf of the WCO, Liberia's Customs Commissioner SaaSaamoi said the donation is under the World Customs Organization's Program Global Shield (PGS) initiative aimed at combating illicit diversion and trafficking of high-risk commodities used to manufacture Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

LRA Commissioner General

Nah described the Authority's engagement with the WCO "as very important" for the advancement of Liberia's customs program.

He said the testing equipment will play a useful role in helping to boost the LRA customs border management operations in detecting dangerous chemicals.

"This donation is very laudable and shows that we are going beyond just training. Getting the tools to work with is critical to the transformation of customs", Mr. Nah noted.

He urged customs officers to remain vigilant in their line of duty, especially, by



Dangote, MTN emerge most admired African brands

For the third time in a row, Dangote Group (<https://Dangote.com/>) has emerged as the most admired African brand, of African continent origin, by consumers, paired with the telecommunication giant, MTN in a survey of 100 Africa best brands announced in a novel global virtual event that incorporated the market openings of Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria.

GT Bank returns to the top spot in financial services and the United Kingdom's BBC retains its media category ranking as the most admired media brand in separate category sub-surveys of the most admired financial services and media brands in

competitiveness and transforming the continent's promise into a real change. It's concerning that in the 10 years since the triumphant FIFA World Cup in South Africa which globally highlighted the promise and capability of Africa, and despite the vibrant entrepreneurial environment, Africa is not creating more competitive brands to meet the needs of its growing consumer market." Global Client Development Manager, GeoPoll, Caitlin van Niekerk said: "The reach and accessibility of mobile across the continent enabled us to survey respondents across a representative sample of countries quickly and effectively, giving us vital and



Africa. African brands only occupy 13 of the 100 entries, seven less from last year.

Established 10 years ago, to coincide with the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the world's biggest single sporting event, the Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands survey and rankings have established themselves as the most authoritative survey, analysis, and metric of brands in Africa.

African brands only occupied 13 of the 100 entries, 7 less from last year's. Founder and Chairman of Brand Africa and Brand Leadership, Thebe Ikalafeng during an online interactive session via Zoom said: "African brands have an important role in helping to build the image,

timely results at a critical time. Kantar has been the insight lead for Brand Africa since inception in 2010."

It is a consumer-led survey which seeks to establish brand preferences across Africa. The survey is conducted among a representative sample of respondents 18 years and older, in 27 countries which collectively represent 50 per cent of the continent, covering all economic regions and accounting for an estimated 80 per cent of the population and the GDP of Africa. The 2020 survey was conducted between February and April 2020 and yielded over 15,000 brand mentions and over 2,000 unique brands.

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ensuring safe and secure entry of goods into the country, while stressing the need for strong collaboration with other state security actors to support government's border and security coordination efforts.

The LRA, with WCO's support, has trained at least 70 persons including Customs staff and officers from other border-related security agencies including the Liberia National Police, Liberia Immigration Service and the Liberia Drugs Enforcement

Agency in detecting and halting advanced and illicit chemicals and narcotic drugs from entering the country.

The latest donation is under the WCO's Security project for Central and West Africa, aimed at boosting Liberia's customs operation.

In February, the WCO, under the project, also donated Raman Spectrometer Chemical Database equipment used for chemical threat identification, detection of explosive devices, and narcotics classification. *- Press Release*

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Political parties reject elections delay

By Ethel A. Tweh

Political parties in Liberia have rejected the National Elections Commission (NEC's) plea with the Liberian Senate to push the conduct of the pending special senatorial election to December this year, instead of October, warning that postponing the election will

commission lacked funding to conduct the special senatorial election.

According to Madam Lansana, due to the financial difficulty, the NEC has failed to meet up with a timetable set for the smooth conduct of the 2020 special senatorial poll which is due in October.

The NEC has pleaded with the Liberian Senate to extend the conduct of the midterm

out of the country.

Appearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee chaired by Senator Varney Sherman, Madam Lansana discloses that it will take time for the NEC to order the materials from China or other vendors.

She pleads with the Senate for the senatorial election to be held in December instead of October.

Following the NEC's disclosure last week, the Liberian Senate invited representatives of the political parties here to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee in order to get their views on the request to extend the midterm senatorial elections.

Representing the Alternative National Congress, a constituent party of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Atty. Lafayette Horatio Gould demands that the election should be held in October as constituted.

He argues that the Election Commission and the Government of Liberia should have been prepared ahead of time, taking into consideration that there could have been any outbreak or other circumstance.

Gould claims that the NEC has not been getting the political parties involved with its activities which include the cleaning of the voter roll, among others.

But the NEC acting chair Madam Lansana subsequently

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



cause uncertainties and insecurities in the country.

The political parties voiced their opposition to the proposed delay of the election during a hearing at the Senate Wednesday, 27 May on Capitol Hill after the acting chairperson of NEC's Board of Commissioners Madam Davidetta Lansana disclosed last week that the

senatorial election to December that is to be held October 13, 2020, instead of October.

Making the case for the postponement of the election, NEC Acting Chair of the Board of Commissioners Madam Lansana says the coronavirus pandemic has caused a delay in their workings, noting that most of their materials come from

Lawmaker rebukes Health Minister Jallah

By Bridgett Milton

River Gee County electoral district #3 Representative Francis S. Dopoh, says call by the Minister of Health, Dr. Wilehmina Jallah for officials of government and the public at large to go for voluntary testing is a complete showoff.

According to him, the Minister's call is far from reality because there are no sufficient testing kits in the country, if citizens were to turn out in mass for testing.

Recently, Doctor Jallah led a team of health officials, including Chief Medical Officer, Doctor Francis Kateh and several foreign partners to the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville for voluntary testing, and called on the public to follow suit to know their health status in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We gather this morning to do our specimens collections in order to set examples for our citizens to follow", said the Health Minister.

She cautioned that if the

coronavirus would leave Liberia, every citizen, beginning with officials must go for testing, something, which she noted, would build citizens' trust in the health



Health, Dr. Wilehmina Jallah

Crazyman celebrates

Starts from back page

materials, and dedicated a steel manufacturing company late last year, in a ceremony that was graced by President George Manneh Weah and his officials.

Uncle Bill, like many of his colleagues, will be fed hot meal daily from the Jeety food distribution team led by Mr. Jeety himself to ease hunger of many during the State of Emergency and lockdown.

The Indian Consulate notes

their state of mind.

In a related development, Mr. Jeety's cooked food also targets several holding cells of the Liberia National Police (LNP) including one situated opposite Old Road community, a Monrovia suburb where food and safe-drinking water were provided inmates there.

He empathizes with the inmates for their situation, hoping that they would be rehabilitated and reintegrated



Hungry residents queue for hot meal

that though the food is for everybody, but specific focus is on people who are mentally-illed because they cannot find food for themselves like other Liberians who are in a right frame of mind.

According to him, during these time of health crisis, he was very much concern about the fate of people suffering mental health who need food to eat but don't have the ability to find food because of

into society by the Government of Liberia.

Most of the inmates express gratitude to the Indian Consulate General, who they say is identifying with them at the time the country is lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, which has taken thousands of lives across the world, including Liberia. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

system.

Doctor Jallah explained that the decision to lead an array of health officials, including the Country Representative of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization Country Representative to Liberia, Doctor Peter Clement, Liberia's Chief Medical Officer Doctor Francis Kateh, and the head of the USAID Mission, among others is to encourage the public to come forth to give their specimens for testing.

But Rep. Dopoh says he is no longer in support of total or partial lockdown, noting that the application of the lockdown is not proper, because there is huge turnout at banks and markets and the

moment it is approaching 6:00 pm, they are running home.

Instead, he wants the Joint Security to assign officers at all markets and banks to enforce social distancing and other health measures rather than being in the streets.

Rep. Dopoh notes that banks and markets are overly populated each day, so the Joint Security, which comprises the police, immigration, DEA officers and the military should deploy at those institutions to ensure strict adherence to health protocols, especially social distancing.

The lawmaker argues it is meaningless to have the Joint Security in the streets, enforcing health protocols, while banks and markets are left alone. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Français

Lutte contre le COVID-19 : Le satisfecit de l'ancienne présidente au président Weah

L'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf a fait l'éloge du gouvernement de George Weah pour sa gestion de la pandémie de coronavirus, affirmant qu'il avait tiré les leçons de la crise d'Ebola dans le pays en 2014.

«La réponse du Libéria au COVID-19 est aussi bonne que possible avec les ressources dont ils disposent. Ils ont déjà mis en place les mesures nécessaires, en utilisant les exemples d'Ebola», a déclaré l'ancienne présidente Sirleaf à Christiane Amanpour de la

CNN dans une récente interview.

Mme Sirleaf a en outre déclaré à son hôte que le gouvernement avait mis en place un mécanisme de coordination, comme son régime l'avait fait en 2014 pendant la crise d'Ebola. «Et je crois qu'ils ont commencé à mobiliser le soutien des partenaires en tendant la main à leurs principaux partenaires bilatéraux et multilatéraux qui répondent», a-t-elle poursuivi.

L'ancienne présidente s'est aussi félicitée du fait que le nombre cas confirmés de

coronavirus dans le pays est bas jusqu'à présent comparativement aux autres pays de la sous-régions.

«Nous sommes très heureux que nos chiffres soient restés modestes. Nos efforts malgré nos insuffisances de ressources ont été aussi solides que possible», a dit Mme Sirleaf.

Cependant, Mme Sirleaf craint qu'une explosion du nombre de cas soit une cause de préoccupation.

"Je pense que notre plus grande préoccupation serait si nous avions une propagation comme cela a été prédit dans certains endroits, nous n'aurons pas les moyens de réagir de manière adéquate pour le combattre", a déploré Mme Sirleaf.

Pendant ce temps, Mme Sirleaf estime également qu'un effort mondial peut être une force puissante dans la lutte contre la pandémie de COVID-19.

«Nous devons tous nous unir et appeler à l'équité en ce qui concerne les moyens pour lutter contre le virus. C'était Ebola. Aujourd'hui, c'est COVID. Demain, ce sera probablement autre chose. Un remède mondial qui peut provenir de vaccins d'autres mesures (devrait) être

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Affaire 16 milliards disparus : Le juge s'offusque contre le ministère public

Le juge Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, président de la Cour pénale «C» n'est pas allé par le dos de la cuillère pour critiquer l'accusation dans l'affaires des 16 milliards, l'accusant de se moquer non seulement de sa Cour, mais aussi du système judiciaire.

C'est une requête introduite par les procureurs demandant la suspension du procès de l'ancien gouverneur de la Banque centrale du Libéria (CBL), Milton Weeks, pendant trois semaines afin que les parties procèdent à des pourparlers qui a suscité la colère du juge président de la cour pénal C de Monrovia.

M. Weekes est désormais le seul dans le procès de sabotage économique de 16 milliards de dollars LRD après que les procureurs ont abandonné les charges contre ses complices présumés, y compris Charles E. Sirleaf, Dorbor Hagba, Richard Walker et Joseph Dennis.

Le mardi 26 mai, statuant

sur la requête de l'accusation aux fins de prorogation qui a été introduite plus tôt le lundi 25 mai, le juge Gbeisay s'est demandé pourquoi c'est maintenant que le ministère public introduit une requête en prorogation pour organiser des pourparlers, alors que ça fait presque un an que l'acte

d'accusation a été établi.

«Le comportement des avocats de l'État, auquel la défense a souscrit, semble se moquer de la Cour et du système judiciaire. Que le dossier [montre] que ce juge a été rappelé pour présider cette affaire, parce que le

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Eco Uemoa/Eco Zmao/Eco Cedeao : Trois Prétendants, Un Nom !

Coup de tonnerre ! Le 16 janvier 2020 à Abuja, la ZMAO (Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambie, Guinée) désavoue le projet monétaire de l'Uemoa (Bénin, Burkina, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinée-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Sénégal, Togo) de rebaptiser le FCFA en ECO, l'accusant de non « conforme ». Pourquoi cette volte-face de dernière minute alors que tout semblait en ordre, du moins en apparence, lors du dernier sommet de la Cedeao ? À qui revient la paternité du nom « ECO » ?

Point utile de faire un test ADN. Un bref rappel historique suffit.

- C'est en 2009 que les pays membres de la ZMAO ont adopté le projet d'une monnaie unique en leur sein dénommée « ECO ».

- Le 29 juin 2019, la Cedeao (Uemoa + ZMAO + Cap-Vert) a adopté formellement « ECO » comme nom à la future monnaie unique.

- Le 21 décembre 2019, l'Uemoa par la voix du président ivoirien, en présence du chef d'État français, annonce « unilatéralement » la fin du franc CFA et son remplacement par « ECO » dès 2020.

N'est-ce pas un peu burlesque que des pays francophones adoptent un nom anglophone - ou ce qui en reste - (ECO vient de ECOWAS) pour nommer leur monnaie commune ? L'Uemoa se cherchera-t-elle un autre nom monétaire, étant entendu que la réforme du franc CFA annoncée est devenue, presque, irréversible ?

En creux, se joue la bataille pour le leadership politique, économique et financier de la sous-région entre les axes Abidjan et Abuja. Entre l'Éléphant et l'Aigle. Sur le papier, comme le dirait l'autre, il n'y a pas match. Un habitant sur 2 de la Cedeao est Nigérian. L'ogre nigérian (première économie africaine) produit à lui seul 70% de la richesse de la Cedeao, soit pratiquement 10 fois l'apport de la Côte d'Ivoire.

Mais la géopolitique ne saurait se résumer à une simple arithmétique. La réalité est bien souvent différente de la perception. Un État faible et affaibli peut être le cache-sexe d'un État fort et fortifié. La France pèse 7 fois plus que le Nigeria. La France, avec seulement le tiers de la population nigériane, produit en moins de 2 mois (1,7 mois exactement) la richesse annuelle produite par la première économie du continent africain !

La rivalité entre Anglophones et Francophones pour le contrôle de la Cedeao qui couvait depuis plusieurs années est maintenant révélée au grand

jour. La Côte d'Ivoire, locomotive de l'Uemoa avec 40% du PIB et détentrice ad vitam aeternam du poste de gouverneur de la banque centrale communautaire, voit d'un mauvais œil son positionnement actuel dilué dans le futur ensemble monétaire de la Cedeao (7% du PIB), au point de la reléguer au 3e rang derrière le Nigeria et le Ghana, à jouer les couteaux sans lame. Elle a bien compris cette vérité primaire des paroliers africains : « Ne te laisse pas lécher par qui peut t'avaler ».

Il fallait donc marquer le coup, en jouant des coudes, avant la réalisation de cette méga fusion-absorption que le géant nigérian s'apprêtait à faire avec le véhicule de la Cedeao. Avec une production quatre fois supérieure à celle de l'ensemble des huit pays de l'Uemoa réunis, le Nigeria n'aurait fait qu'une bouchée l'organisation sous-régionale qui disparaîtrait dans les flots et torrents de la « nigélisation ». Le Bénin en sait quelque chose. Il subit depuis le 20 août 2019, grandeur nature, l'expérimentation de l'hégémonie de son géant de voisin.

Un autre enjeu, et non des moindres, est la tenue et le contenu de la future politique monétaire. Le Nigeria, habitué à faire tourner la planche à billets avec peu ou prou de succès, et à laisser flotter sa monnaie avec plus ou moins de succès, n'est pas prêt à tronquer sa liberté monétaire contre un dogmatisme monétaire qui, semble-t-il, a asservi et desservi pendant plusieurs décennies ses voisins francophones. La Côte d'Ivoire, auréolée des 3 S (Solidarité, Solidité, Stabilité) de l'Uemoa, n'est pas aussi prête à se faire embarquer, sans coup férir, dans le yoyo nigérian tout en lâchant le parapluie français. On est dans un parfait imbroglio.

En embuscade, certaines puissances étrangères à la zone ne tirent-elles pas les ficelles, déjà suffisamment distendues entre les membres actuels de la Cedeao ?

Dans cette cavalcade où chacun parle à sa paroisse, la France joue aussi son avenir en Afrique, grandement et dans des proportions jamais égalées. Comment la France qui ambitionne même d'étendre son aire d'influence monétaire à certains pays anglophones et lusophones d'Afrique, sera-t-elle disposer à accepter, avec bienveillance, la suppression pure et simple du lien monétaire avec ses anciennes colonies de l'Uemoa ?

Français

Lutte contre le COVID-19 : Le satisfecit de

également considéré comme un bien mondial, accessible à tous.»

L'ancienne présidente a souligné que la collaboration mondiale était essentielle dans la réponse à Ebola: «Ce fut un effort extraordinaire d'alliance, de coopération, d'action collective et j'espère que c'est ce que nous verrons pour le cas du COVID-19. Que nous allons voir des alliances mondiales s'améliorer, plus de collaboration. Nous vivons aujourd'hui dans un monde inégal. Et COVID-19, j'espère, mènera à la conscience, à des actions prometteuses, pour réduire les inégalités du

monde.»

Mme Sirleaf a également averti que cette coopération mondiale doit se poursuivre à mesure que le monde se rétablit économiquement: «Nous espérons que le monde développé va réagir et voir qu'en aidant l'Afrique à se relever, non seulement de cela, mais aussi des retombées économiques que nous connaissons va être notre plus grand défi, nous nous attendons à ce que leur réponse soit celle qui assurera une meilleure Afrique, mais en retour, et montrera qu'eux aussi sont plus en sécurité dans un monde développé.»

Affaire 16 milliards disparus : Le juge

juge président de cette cour s'était auparavant récusé de cette affaire et qu'un autre juge a été empêché par le ministère public de présider l'affaire », a-t-il déclaré.

Le juge, en dépit de sa colère, a toutefois accordé la requête en prorogation avec modification, leur ordonnant de revenir devant le tribunal dans sept jours, faute de quoi, le tribunal procéderait au rejet de ce dossier en vertu de l'article 18.2 et paierait attention à d'autres dossiers. Le juge Gbeisay a en outre déclaré que l'affaire étant une affaire dite «à profil élevé» sensible, ces demandes d'ajournement continues en disent long et donnent une impression différente de la cour et du juge qui préside et tendent à éroder la confiance du public dans le système judiciaire.

Il a averti que le tribunal ne pouvait pas être pris en otage par l'accusation tant qu'il n'était pas prêt, notant que le tribunal se réservait également le droit de classer l'affaire en vertu de l'article 18.2 du Code de procédure pénale pour un retard inutile comme en l'espèce.

Il a expliqué que dans cette juridiction, les actes d'accusation sont fondés sur des preuves orales et documentaires présentées avant une grande enquête, ce qui signifie qu'avant la publication de l'acte d'accusation, l'État devrait avoir réuni suffisamment de preuves contre un accusé.

Lorsque l'affaire a été appelée au cours du dernier mandat, le juge Gbeisay rappelle que l'État avait prié pour une prolongation de trois semaines, ajoutant qu'elle avait été accordée et

que les trois semaines s'étaient étalées au-delà de six semaines.

Le juge Gbeisay a rappelé que l'accusation avait également informé le tribunal qu'il avait déposé une requête pour abandonner les charges contre Sirleaf, Walker, Hagba et Dennis, à l'exception du défendeur Weeks.

Pour lui, le ministère public donnait l'impression qu'il disposait de preuves convaincantes et matérielles contre le défendeur Weeks. Mais au lieu de cela, il a de nouveau déposé une requête en prorogation le 25 mai 2020, demandant trois semaines supplémentaires pour demander une résolution à l'amiable. Des pourparlers sont actuellement en cours avec l'ancien gouverneur exécutif de la Banque centrale du Libéria (CBL), Milton Weeks, pour trouver un terrain d'entente dans la résolution de son procès pour son rôle présumé dans le scandale de 16 milliards de LRD au Libéria, avait déclaré l'accusation qui avait ainsi demandé au tribunal pénal «C» de suspendre le procès pendant trois semaines. «L'accusation reconnaît que la charge de fournir l'acte d'accusation contre l'accusé incombe à l'accusation et quand l'accusation et l'accusé cherchent à trouver un terrain d'entente sur la voie à suivre pour résoudre la question afin d'économiser du temps, de l'énergie et des ressources, il convient qu'une telle demande soit faite afin que les parties aient suffisamment de temps pour discuter et parvenir à un accord pacifique avant de procéder », lit-on dans la requête du ministère public présentée au tribunal ce lundi 25 mai.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Joschka Fischer

Vers une nouvelle répartition mondiale du pouvoir à l'issue de la crise ?

BERLIN - La pandémie du Covid-19 est sans doute la première crise véritablement mondiale du XXI^e siècle. Les deux guerres mondiales du siècle dernier sont le seul équivalent historique contemporain ayant provoqué des difficultés économiques de la même ampleur que celles engendrées par un agent pathogène microscopique.

Le début de la Seconde guerre mondiale, en août 1914, n'a pas seulement mis fin à une longue période de paix, mais également coupé court à une première période d'intégration et de mondialisation économiques. Avec la mise en place de nouvelles mesures protectionnistes par les gouvernements du monde entier, la croissance économique s'est effondrée globalement. Une nouvelle guerre mondiale éclatait une génération plus tard, immédiatement suivie par la guerre froide.

Le monde, et la politique internationale, avaient un tout autre visage à l'issue de cette période, entre 1914 et 1989, de conflits constants et de politique de puissance. Avant la Première guerre mondiale, l'Empire britannique était la principale puissance économique et militaire. Il a été remplacé par les États-Unis après la Seconde guerre mondiale, dont la position hégémonique s'est encore renforcée après l'effondrement de l'Union soviétique.

La question est donc de savoir comment la répartition mondiale du pouvoir sera modifiée par la crise du Covid-19. Que la pandémie ait des conséquences comparables à l'un ou l'autre des conflits mondiaux reste à déterminer, mais il est évident que la crise économique mondiale qui se profile se traduira par des bouleversements géopolitiques majeurs. Il est possible que les États-Unis, la superpuissance actuelle, se cramponnent à leur première place dans la hiérarchie mondiale. Plusieurs signes laissent toutefois penser que la Chine, la superpuissance émergente, l'emportera, inaugurant le siècle de l'Asie de l'Est.

La rivalité sino-américaine s'annonçait déjà comme l'affrontement hégémonique majeur du XXI^e siècle, bien avant la crise du Covid-19. Il n'en reste pas moins que la pandémie, couplée aux événements politiques de l'année électorale aux États-Unis, semble amplifier et accélérer cette confrontation. Pour le président américain Donald Trump, tout se jouera lors de l'élection de novembre prochain. Après sa gestion catastrophique de la pandémie et l'émergence d'une crise économique intérieure sans précédent, il a besoin d'un bouc émissaire et la Chine est le candidat idéal.

Si les politiques suivies par Trump ont, en règle générale, suscité de profonds clivages au sein de la société américaine, son attitude envers la Chine constitue une exception de taille. En s'attaquant à la Chine, il peut compter sur un large soutien bipartisan. L'hostilité des Américains envers la Chine s'est fortement accentuée ces dernières années, même dans les rangs des démocrates libéraux.

Les raisons de cette animosité ne peuvent pas toutes être ignorées. La République populaire de Chine est effectivement un État autoritaire, voire totalitaire, sous le contrôle exclusif d'un parti léniniste. Elle se livre à un espionnage économique et technologique à grande échelle des États-Unis, a recours à des pratiques commerciales déloyales

et fait appel à la force armée pour faire valoir ses revendications territoriales vis-à-vis de l'Inde, de Taïwan et en mer de Chine méridionale. Qu'il s'agisse de la persécution des minorités ethniques et religieuses au Xinjiang, de leurs récentes manœuvres pour accroître leur emprise sur Hong Kong ou de la mauvaise gestion initiale de l'épidémie du Covid-19 à Wuhan, les autorités chinoises n'ont pas fait grand-chose pour inspirer confiance.

Les efforts persistants déployés par l'administration Trump pour saper le rôle de chef de file mondial des États-Unis soulèvent toutefois une question fondamentale concernant son comportement : Que veulent les États-Unis sous la présidence de Trump ? Diriger le monde sans assumer de responsabilités ?

Il est peu probable que cette stratégie ait du succès. Pendant que les États-Unis restent embourbés dans une vision à court terme, la Chine s'impose progressivement comme un leader mondial, aux plans politique et de l'investissement, suivant patiemment une stratégie à long terme qui exploite le vide géopolitique créé par le repli sur soi de des États-Unis.

Dans tous les cas, le coup sévère porté à l'image des États-Unis dans le monde, en particulier après l'échec désastreux de l'administration Trump face au Covid-19, ne sera pas facilement surmonté. La pandémie a renforcé l'impression générale que les États-Unis sont une superpuissance décadente qui sera bientôt supplantée par une Chine stratégiquement habile et économiquement dynamique. L'histoire millénaire de la grandeur et du déclin des grandes puissances est aujourd'hui écrite par un virus. Nous ne pouvons qu'espérer que ce chapitre se déroulera pacifiquement.

Dans le contexte de l'affrontement sino-américain, l'Europe se retrouve dans une position inconfortable, coincée entre deux forces géopolitiques opposées - tout en ignorant les véritables intentions des États-Unis concernant la Chine. Veulent-ils continuer à contenir son expansion ou tendent-ils vers une confrontation totale, allant jusqu'au conflit armé, pour bloquer ou même inverser la montée en puissance de la Chine ? La deuxième option, reproduisant l'attitude des pays occidentaux envers la Chine à la fin du XIX^e siècle, serait extrêmement dangereuse, à tout le moins.

L'alternative pour l'Occident est de poursuivre une stratégie d'endiguement à long terme sur la base d'une rivalité stratégique. L'Europe serait bien avisée de choisir cette option. Dans un ordre mondial dominé par la Chine, l'Europe, située à la pointe occidentale du supercontinent eurasiatique, serait la grande perdante. En tant qu'État à parti unique totalitaire, la Chine ne pourra jamais être un véritable partenaire de l'Europe en termes normatifs. Même après trois ans de Trump, les relations entre l'Europe et les États-Unis restent bien plus étroites qu'elles ne pourraient jamais l'être avec la Chine.

Mais la Chine est déjà trop grande, trop entreprenante et trop importante pour être ignorée. Les faits sur le terrain appellent à la coopération. Le point important est de faire une distinction entre les relations stratégiques avec la Chine et la soumission à ses diktats. Et il faudra, pour préserver cette distinction capitale, que l'Europe évite de devenir économiquement et technologiquement dépendante de la grande rivale de l'Occident.

PERSPECTIVES PERSPECTIVES

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

ON "TYRANNY OF THE MAJORITY"

A Desktop Research and Education Exercise

"For the form of democracy, see Ochlocracy; for the Flesh Field album, see Tyranny of the Majority; and for the concept in Engineering, see Tyranny of numbers" - Wikipedia, the free

CONT'D from last edition

Public Choice Theory

The notion that, in a democracy, the greatest concern is that the majority will tyrannize and exploit diverse smaller interests, has been criticized by author Mancur Olson in *The Logic of Collective Action*, argues, instead, that narrow and well organized minorities are more likely to assert their interests over those of the majority. Olson continues that "when the benefits of political action (lobbying) are spread over fewer agents, there is a stronger individual incentive to contribute to that political activity. Narrow groups, especially those who can reward active participation to their group goals might, therefore, be able to dominate or distort the political process, a process studied in *Public Choice Theory*".

Class Studies

Tyranny of the majority has also been prevalent in some class studies. Author Rahim Baizidi uses the concept of *Democratic Suppression* to analyze the tyranny of the majority in economic classes. According to this, the majority of the upper and middle classes, together with a small portion of the

sold a great deal of the supplies - hundreds of automobiles and hundreds of millions of US dollars donated. Will the donations of medical supplies and US dollars for the Corona Virus be spared the examples of the Ebola experience?

History of Human Existence

Throughout the ages, the history of human existence - from the *State of Nature* to the prevailing modern *Social State* - had been, and is, characterized by avarice, excessive want and desire for political power, the wealth perceived to be associated therewith and the personal relationships with the High and Mighty, etc., etc.

This historical want and desire involve and are based on conscious distortions of perceptions of democratic pre-conditions by the very few, the ruling political class, apparently, more so in our nation-state of some 17 African tribe- and socio- economic-nation-states.

See Wiki Quotations related to *Tyranny of the Majority*

- Administrative Law

(German) Reichstag's power to the government under Hitler

- General will - Term in political philosophy
- Individualist anarchism - branch of anarchism that emphasize the individual and their will
- Majoritarianism
- Minoritarianism
- Minority rights
- Ochlocracy
- Populism - Political philosophy that supports needs and desires of "the people" over those of "the powerful."
- Social anarchism - branch of anarchism emphasizing communal individuality and mutual aid
- Spiral of silence
- Totalitarianism - Political system in which the state holds total authority
- gainterests
- Utilitarianism

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lower class, form the majority coalition of conservative forces in the society.

Concluding notes

Indeed, this article, as indicated, is a Desktop Exercise for Educational Purpose. In the Liberian context, the subject condition has been, and is, compounded by poverty, lack of information (illiteracy), rapid population growth and unplanned movement. Today, a large number of the citizens of Rural Liberia - able-bodied men and women - moved in droves and are moving from Rural to Urban Liberia with a majority without the required economic qualification for urban survival; hence, the dangerous, city of Monrovia street-selling. Moreover, Liberia depends, now, on the Rice Import Cartel for "processed" rice. We are being shown, daily, hundreds of thousands bags of imported rice with the collusion of some Liberian "politicians".

Characteristically, Liberians expect repeat of the examples of the Ebola experience during which some officials and their business friends/partners

- An Enemy of the People
- Argumentum ad populum - Fallacy of claiming the majority is always correct
- Authoritarian personality - Psychological trait/personality type
- Consensus decision-making - Making decisions based on a group's approval
- Conformity
- Consociationalism
- Criticism of democracy - Issues and problems associated with the democratic political system.
- Dictatorship of the proletariat - Marxist political conceptions - literature
- Democracy
- Dominant minority
- Elective dictatorship
- Enabling Act of 1933 - Transfer of the

Discontent greets food distribution

Thousands of residents across Montserrado County and parts adjacent are bitter with the government here for the selection of most vulnerable citizens to benefit food distribution under a COVID-19 stimulus package approved by the 54th Legislature.

The chairman of the COVID-19 food distribution steering committee Professor Wilson Tarpeh disclosed that a total of US\$30 million has been secured to distribute assorted food among most vulnerable Liberians, targeting 2.5 million people from an entire population of 4.5 million.

But disenchanted citizens say everyone is vulnerable, particularly in

President George Manneh grew up in a slum community in Monrovia and drew his support from slum communities across Montserrado County and impoverished citizens across Liberia to get to the presidency.

Now these impoverished electorate are asking, who among them is considered most vulnerable and should therefore, qualify to benefit from the stimulus package.

“The government is trying to tell us that they are ready for business; President Weah is playing fun with himself”, another angry male caller expressed.

“All of us are vulnerable; we have to



the wake of the novel coronavirus that has brought the economy on its knees, so no one should be left out of the food distribution.

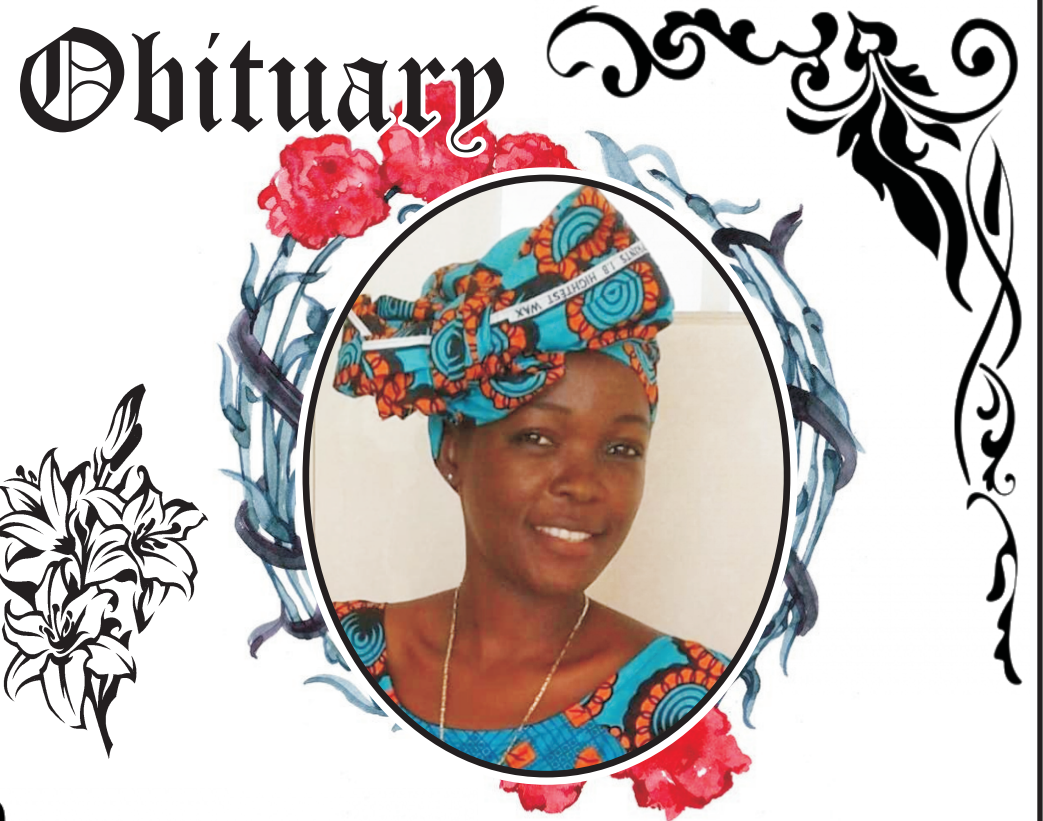
“We all are vulnerable; 90 percent of Liberia’s population lives vulnerable life;” one angry resident expressed in a live broadcast on Joy FM in Monrovia.

The food distribution which began here over the weekend, is targeting orphanages, health centers and physically-challenged Liberians.

But some angry citizens are issuing threats to the government for plan to leave them out, vowing to react at the ballot box. “We will pay them come 2023”, a male caller said.

hustle each day before we eat. The government has put us in lockdown for over a month; how do they expect us to get food?”




The government, in collaboration with the IMF and the World Bank is spending US\$30 million on the food distribution to most vulnerable citizens, but some Liberians note that if this amount were to be distributed in cash among the entire 4.5 million population, each citizen would benefit at least US\$100, so there should no reason for anyone to be left out under the pretext of not being most vulnerable. *-Story by Jonathan Browne*



The Management of the Searchlight Communications, Inc. publisher of the New Dawn newspaper regrets to announce the death of its Sports Reporter, Sally Gaye, who passed on Sunday, May 17, 2020 reportedly at the ELWA Hospital in Paynesville following a protracted illness.

Family meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 23, at the family residence behind the 72nd Barracks in Paynesville.

Funeral rites and burial are being scheduled for Saturday, May 30th.

Reintegration and Recovery Programme Phase IV addendum – Ebola Support Programme II
LBR 1053-17 KfW ESP-II

A Development Programme of the Republic of Liberia co-financed by the Federal Government of Germany through KfW, in Collaboration with MoFDP.

Invitation for Bids

Liberia
Reintegration and Recovery Programme - V,
Addendum Ebola Support Programme II

May 25, 2020
LBR1053-17 KfW ESP-II, Tender.xxx

The Welthungerhilfe Liberia has received financing from KfW towards the cost of the Ebola Support Programme (ESP) Phase II and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the construction of incinerators at the Karquekpo Clinic in Karquekpo Town, Dugbeh River District, Sinoe County and Konobo Health Centre in Konobo District, Grand Gedeh County Liberia. Welthungerhilfe Liberia now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for:

BID DOCUMENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF INCINERATORS FOR KARQUEKPO CLINIC IN KARQUEKPO TOWN, DUGBEH RIVER DISTRICT, SINOE COUNTY
And
FOR KONOBO HEALTH CENTER IN ZIAH TOWN, ZIAH DISTRICT, GRAND GEDEH COUNTY

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL BID MAY 2020

Bidding will be conducted by means of a single stage National Competitive Bidding procedure with integrated post qualification (one envelope) as specified in the KfW Guidelines for the Procurement of Consulting Services, Works, Plant, Goods and Non-Consulting Services in Financial Cooperation with Partner Countries (“KfW Guidelines”) and in line with Welthungerhilfe Rules and Regulations for Award of Contracts and evaluation and award criteria as set out in this bidding document. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Welthungerhilfe Liberia
Jacqueline Harris, Head of Project-ESP-II
Jacqueline.Harris@welthungerhilfe.de

A complete set of bidding documents is available to interested Bidders at Welthungerhilfe Offices in Greenville and Monrovia in soft copies on CDs. The Bidding documents in English are free of charge and will be issued to interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below at section II, B, Bidding Documents.

Bids must be delivered to the address indicated in the clause ITB 22.1 of the bidding document on or before 4:00 pm Tuesday, June 9, 2020. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the bidders’ designated representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 10:00am, Tuesday June 12, 2020. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security. n/a

There shall be a site visit in Sinoe County (WHH Greenville office) between 11:00am and 16:00GMT on the Wednesday, 19th May 2020, and dates indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.

(a) Documents may be inspected at: Welthungerhilfe Liberia Country Offices, Opposite Fish Market, Adjacent the Blue Crest University, Tubman Boulevard, Monrovia. Contact Nasser S. Baki (Head of Logistics), Nasser.Baki@welthungerhilfe.de +231 888 145 940

(b) Documents will be issued from:
Welthungerhilfe Liberia Greenville Office, Sinoe County. Contact Abraham Raynes (Logistics Administrator), abraham.raynes@welthungerhilfe.de +231 886 688 461 OR
Welthungerhilfe Liberia Country Offices, Opposite Fish Market, Adjacent the Blue Crest University, Tubman Boulevard, Monrovia. Contact Nasser S. Baki (Area Logistics Officer), Nasser.Baki@welthungerhilfe.de +231 888 145 940

(c) Bids must be delivered to: Welthungerhilfe Liberia Country Offices, Opposite Fish Market, Adjacent the Blue Crest University, Tubman Boulevard, Monrovia. Contact Nasser S Baki (Area Head of Logistics), Nasser.Baki@welthungerhilfe.de +231 888 145 940
And
Welthungerhilfe Liberia Greenville Office, Farmersville, Contact Abraham Raynes (Logistics Administrator), abraham.raynes@welthungerhilfe.de +231 886 688 461

(d) Address of bid opening:
Welthungerhilfe Liberia Country Offices, Opposite Fish Market, Adjacent the Blue Crest University, Tubman Boulevard, Monrovia. Contact Nasser S Baki (Area Head of Logistics), Nasser.Baki@welthungerhilfe.de +231 888 145 940

The Planned Procurement Schedule (subject to changes) is as follows:

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	May 25, 2020
b. Site visit where applicable	June 2, 2020
c. Bid closing date	June 9, 2020
d. Public Bid Opening	June 12, 2020
e. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	(Within 5 working days from Contracts Committee award)
f. Contract signature	June 19, 2020

Signature:
Name: Jacqueline Harris
Position of Authorized Official: Head of Project

Cont’d from page 7 Political parties reject

refutes Gould’s claim that the political parties have not been involved in the NEC’s activities, noting that NEC trained political parties’ agents, and involved political parties in the cleaning of the 2017 voter roll and the Montserrado bye - elections.

Notwithstanding, Atty. Gould contends that postponement of the election will cause uncertainties and insecurities in the country, maintaining that the election should be held October 13, 2020.

He expresses a fear that the Elections Commission wants to use the Legislature to violate the Constitution, saying: “NEC is up for trouble and we are not prepared for that.”

Atty. Cole Bangalore who represented the Unity Party, a CPP constituent party, says insists that the election should be held on October 13

this year, cautioning that the Senate will be setting a bad precedent in the country if there is any attempt to extend the election date.

Also representing another CPP constituent party, Mr. Theodore Momo who chairs the All Liberian Party (ALP) rejects the proposal for the postponement of the senatorial midterm election.

Meanwhile, the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) chairman MulbahMorlu says the CDC is ready and prepared for any date the election falls on within 2020, but notes that it shouldn’t extend beyond 2020.

Mr. Morlu indicates that if NEC is unable to hold election in October, the CDC is prepared for December, but it shouldn’t extend beyond 2020.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

Crazymen celebrates Jeety -for hot meal



By Emmanuel Mondaye

The ongoing distribution of hot meals to residents by the Consulate General of India to Liberia has no borders, as even mentally-challenged people in the streets are being fed.

Consulate General Shri Upjit Singh Sachdeva, prepares hot meals each day and takes them into various communities for distribution in a campaign code-named, "Stay Home, Stay Safe" to assist less fortunate Liberians in the wake of the novel coronavirus fight in the

country, mired by lockdown and a State of Emergency.

The Government of Liberia declared the lockdown and State of Emergency as part of regulations to ensure social distancing among the population.

On Tuesday, 27 May, Mr. Sachdeva fed several insane people, including 60-year-old 'Uncle Bill' on Water Street, a crazy woman stationed at the intersection of Slipway Community and another crazy man on Broad Street in Monrovia, among others.

Beaming with smile after receiving a plate of delicious meal, Bill could no longer hold his appetite, as he gutted several spoon filled of the dish immediately.

The meals are being prepared by the Jeety Trading Corporation, owned and operated by the Indian Consulate General, popularly known in Liberia as "Mr. Jeety."

He runs a chain of stores across Monrovia that specialized in building

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



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LaLiga gets green light for Monday, Friday matches

The Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) has told LaLiga it will permit matches being played on Mondays and Fridays to facilitate the 2019-20 season's conclusion.

The announcement came despite the country's commercial courts ruling in favour of RFEF in their long-running legal battle with LaLiga over Monday and Friday night matches, the federation previously arguing that the scheduling of games

on those days required their approval.

A temporary measure had been put in place this season whereby Friday night matches were allowed, but fixtures on Mondays were not.

However, RFEF said in a statement that it wishes to "show its good will" by allowing LaLiga to play on both days this season, should 2019-20 resume after the suspension enforced by the coronavirus pandemic.

It also reminded LaLiga that the judge urged any future



negotiations regarding the staging of matches on the days in question be conducted "in good faith".

The statement said: "The RFEF shows its maximum satisfaction for the sentence issued this morning by the commercial judge number two of Madrid, in which it dismisses the demand of LaLiga and declares that the dispute of matches on Friday and Monday requires the approval of the RFEF."

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