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# The New Dawn

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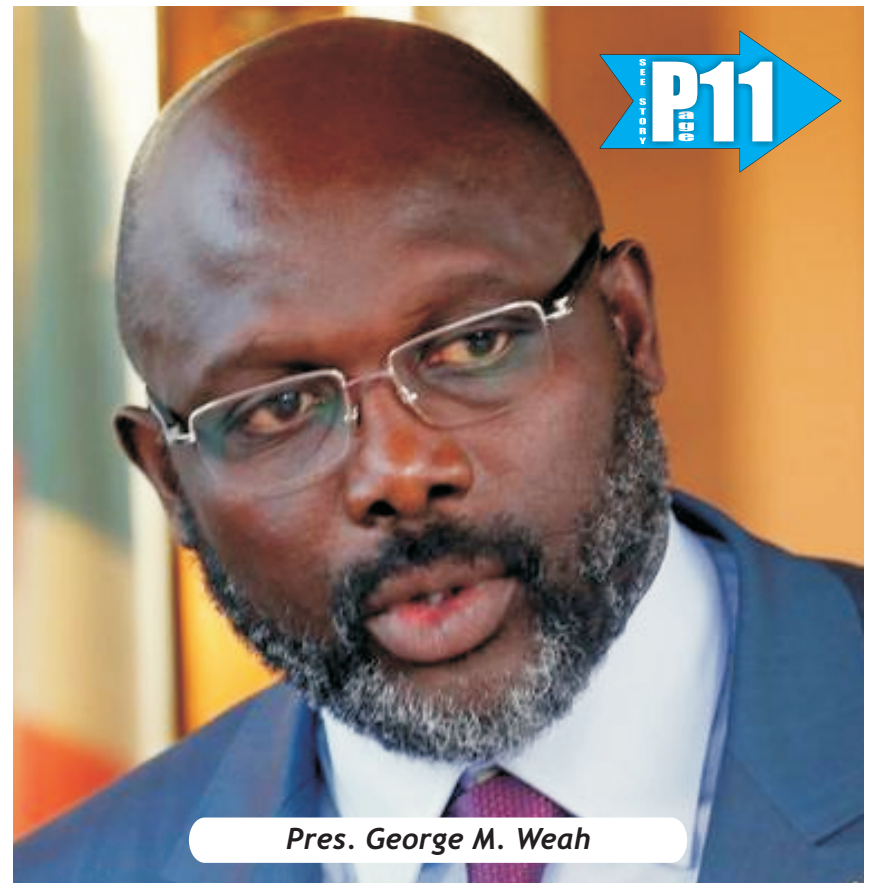
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# Uncertainty over July 26 celebrations



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Pres. George M. Weah



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Rep. Acarous Moses Gray

# You can leave

**-Rep. Gray tells GSM companies**

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# Continental News

## SA eases restrictions as coronavirus cases rise

In the face of a deteriorating economic situation, South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa has opted to ease lockdown restrictions further even though coronavirus cases are beginning to rise rapidly.

In the past week alone, the number has increased by 37%.

But in a frank address to the nation, the president highlighted the need to preserve peoples' livelihoods. As a result, he said that parts of the leisure industry will reopen soon.

At the end of March, the country entered into one of the strictest lockdown regimes in the world, almost all movement outside was restricted and the sale of cigarettes and alcohol was banned. Those measures have been credited with slowing the initial spread of Covid-19 and, as Mr Ramaphosa said, gave the health sector valuable time to prepare for an influx of patients. But, he warned "this task is far from complete. Even after 100 days, we are still near the beginning of this epidemic and it will remain with us for

many more months, possibly years".

Nevertheless, sit-down restaurants, casinos, hotels and hair-dressers, among other businesses, will now be able to reopen, which could see half a million people going back to work. But no date was set for when the change will happen. At the beginning of the month, the key mining sector as well as manufacturing businesses were

allowed to return to normal production levels. People were also allowed outside and the ban on the sale of alcohol was lifted.

South Africa's economy has taken a massive knock as a result of months of lockdown and the further easing of restrictions will be welcome relief to struggling small business owners, BBC business reporter Vumani

Mkhize says.

The country has recorded more than 80,000 cases of coronavirus and there have been 1,674 deaths. But research carried out by the BBC suggests that between 25 March, just before the first death from coronavirus was recorded, to 2 June the number of deaths in South Africa has actually been 9% lower than average from other years, with about 7,400 fewer people dying than usual.

This is different to most other countries. With people confined to their homes, South Africa saw fewer reported deaths from common incidents such as traffic accidents.

Also, epidemiologist Professor Debbie Bradshaw from the South African Medical Research Council said that "homicides almost halved" when alcohol sales were banned.

"But at the same time we think the other infectious diseases were probably affected as well; the more usual flu or severe pneumonias that come about in winter were also slowed down."

As restrictions have eased,

weekly deaths have begun to climb back to normal levels. The Western Cape province, which includes Cape Town, the seat of parliament, is the hardest hit place in the country with nearly 60% of all the cases of coronavirus.

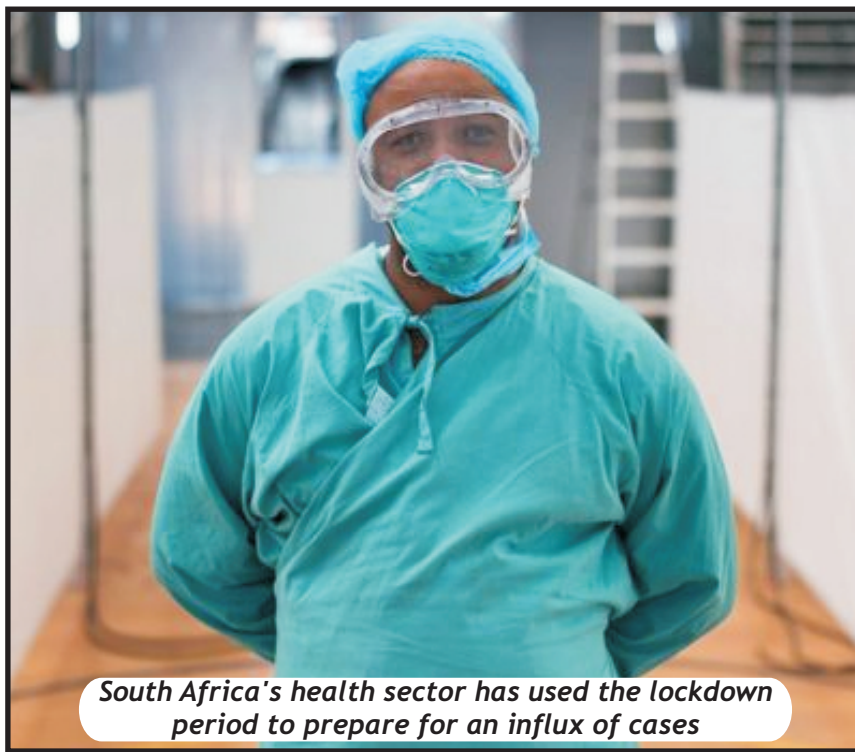
But cases are also rising rapidly in the Eastern Cape province, the president warned.

A Catholic convent in that province has been particularly hard hit.

Five nuns at the Mother House Convent in Mthatha have died from the virus, Eyewitness News reports. Seventeen others have tested positive and the local health authority has said it is taking measures to manage the outbreak there.

Some health workers have also been complaining of a lack of space and equipment, the AFP news agency reports. It quotes a nurse at Livingstone Hospital in Eastern Cape as saying that the management of the hospital has been chaotic.

"Last time I went on duty I got eight gloves," she said. "How do I work with eight pairs of gloves for a 12-hour shift?" BBC



South Africa's health sector has used the lockdown period to prepare for an influx of cases

## The president vowing to defeat coronavirus and imperialism

Tanzania's President John Magufuli has been criticised over his repeated attacks on "imperialists" and his recent declaration that prayers had ended coronavirus in the East African state.

But this is unlikely to bother him as, throughout his presidency of more than five years, he has styled himself as

a stout African nationalist and a devout Catholic waging war against foreign powers seeking to exploit the East African nation.

"I want you Tanzanians to believe that you have a real president, a real rock. I cannot be threatened and I am not threatened," Mr Magufuli said in March 2018.

He hopes that he has

cemented this reputation over the last two years, and it will secure him a second term in elections due in October. One of Mr Magufuli's biggest battles was against Canadian mining giant Barrick Gold Corp.

He demanded a 60% stake for the government in three of its gold mines to end the "exploitation" of Tanzania's resources.

The 60-year-old president cast the negotiations as a clash between a cow and a rabbit and, although the government eventually settled for a 16% share, the talks signalled that it was no longer business as usual. As Barrick boss Mark Bristow walked from the lectern to shake Mr Magufuli's hand at the signing ceremony in January, he said: "What it's done is challenge the mining industry and all of us to embark on something where we win together or lose together."

In his response, Mr Magufuli not only burnished his nationalist credentials,

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but also his religious credentials, saying: "I thank God for the success of this agreement."

He has also cancelled two deals with China: the building of Tanzania's first electric railway line linking the main commercial city Dar es Salaam to the capital, Dodoma, about 500km (310 miles) away and the construction of East Africa's biggest port in Bagamoyo, once the capital of German East Africa, at a cost of \$10bn (£8bn).

Mr Magufuli said only a "madman" would accept the financial terms negotiated by his predecessor Jakaya Kikwete's government for the building of the port. He has long blamed selfish leadership and a failure to put the nation first for Tanzania's underdevelopment. But it is Western powers that Mr Magufuli is most suspicious of, and he accuses local "puppets"

- usually a cast of opposition politicians, rights activists and critical journalists - of championing the interests of their "masters". "This healthy suspicion sometimes fuels paranoia, which is strange for a president who has consolidated so much power," Tanzanian analyst Thabit Jacob told the BBC.

"His nationalism has also turned illiberal and populist. He is squeezing the opposition, narrowing civic space, cracking down on the media and increasing surveillance." Tanzanian writer Elsie Eyakuze said he had a "brutal pragmatism that leans on a particular world view of strong leadership."

"It does not allow for discussion or dissent about methods or outcomes as this would ostensibly weaken the government or introduce an element of chaos." Mr Magufuli has revived use of the Swahili





# EDITORIAL

## Easing lockdown amid virus upsurge

**LIBERIA IS GRADUALLY**, but seriously slipping into a dilemma, as the country embarks on easing some restrictions, for eventual resumption of normal activities amid a rapid increase of new infections.

**WHILE TOTAL COVID-19** related deaths is officially at 33, the country has experienced a wave of new confirmed cases in the past two weeks, putting total confirmed cases of the virus at 516, according to the National Public Health Institute of Liberia.

**WHAT IS EVEN** more worrisome, is that the virus has hit the 54th Legislature, specifically infecting the assistant secretary at the Liberian Senate, Madam Jannave Verdier-Massaquoi, who is currently seeking medical attention at the 14th Military Hospital outside Monrovia.

**IT REMAINS UNCLEAR** whether Madam Massaquoi had contact with senators on Capitol Hill prior to testing positive. But the Legislature has lockdown for a week to observe the situation.

**HOWEVER, THE NATIONAL** Public Health Institute of Liberia is reporting strings of new infections in communities across Montserrado County, including King Kray, ELWA, Duport Road and Thinkers Village. Other affected communities are Clara Town, Caldwell, Bardnerville and Gardnersville, respectively - areas that were not highlighted during the 60-day State of Emergency and previous lockdowns imposed by President George Manneh Weah.

**JANNAVE VERDIER-MASSAQUOI MIGHT** have surely come in contact with so many persons both at home and in the Liberian Senate, who may now become potential contacts that should be traced immediately to avoid continues spread of the virus.

**AS PRESIDENT WEAH** had already ordered 12th graders across the country to return classes in preparation to write the 2020 WASSCE, the regional exams administered by the West African Examination Council, the latest upsurge of new infections, particularly in Montserrado County and parts adjacent poses serious threat to the entire population that should not be overlooked.

**THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL DESIGNATE** of NPHIL Dr. Mosoka Fallah, recently alarmed that there are about three hundred active Corona-virus carriers freely roaming Monrovia and its environs.

**HE SAID TO** break the chain of transmission and beat back the looming danger, the country needs to implement more stringent measures, which include a total lock-down, especially in most impacted counties, with no one leaving his or her home, stressing that it is necessary to take the virus off the streets into the communities where they can be contained, traced and isolated.

**THE ADVICE OF** the NPHIL boss should be heeded to avoid leading this country into a quandary that could present unforeseen devastation.

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

# COMMENTARY

By Elizabeth Drew

## America's Calamity

*Many now protesting against racism and police brutality in the US won't be satisfied unless the result of this national spasm is improved schools, health care, and job opportunities for minorities - a fair shake for black people. What will happen when America once again falls short of honoring its professed values?*

**W**ASHINGTON, DC - It has been a calamity for the United States that, when two national tragedies - the COVID-19 crisis and the country's legacy of racism - collided this spring, the occupant of the White House was an unstable person, totally unfit to govern.

President Donald Trump's inability to cope with the pandemic has so far led to more than 112,000 deaths, one of the world's highest per capita mortality rates for COVID-19, with the coronavirus still spreading to areas not previously hit. The public-health crisis has also triggered the worst economic downturn in the US since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

As subsequent events have unfolded, it is no exaggeration to say that the American experiment - 244 years old next month - is in serious danger, even more so than during the constitutional crisis caused by the Watergate scandal of the 1970s. The pandemic coincided with the latest in a long series of race-related outrages, and it has caused the country to explode.

Millions of cooped-up Americans watched, over and over, the cold-blooded killing of an unarmed, handcuffed black man, George Floyd, by four Minneapolis police officers. One, Derek Chauvin, casually kneeled on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes until he lost consciousness; two others sat on Floyd's back, further depriving him of oxygen; the fourth looked on, keeping appalled bystanders at bay as Floyd, struggling to live, cried out, "Please, I can't breathe."

Floyd's killing shocked the country's conscience. It provided Americans with an unambiguous picture of the true meaning of "police brutality." After being shut in for weeks by lockdowns and social-distancing rules, people had considerable pent-up energy, which the recordings of Floyd's death unleashed. Protests began in Minneapolis the next day and quickly spread across the country. Tens of thousands of people of all races and ages participated.

Demonstrators who engaged in violence, looting, and property destruction (including setting police cars on fire) were catnip for Trump, whose brand of politics depends on stoking his supporters' outrage. His Nixon-like "law and order" rhetoric aimed to erase the distinction between the violent protesters and the far larger number of peaceful ones.

US Attorney General William Barr was, as always, ready to help Trump exploit the situation and accrue more power. Because Washington, DC, is not a state, Trump and Barr had leeway to impose their own solution. They used various state national guards, the military-like arms of federal agencies, and, unnervingly, some unidentifiable forces. Washington became an occupied city.

Trump pretends to be a tough guy and is authoritarian to the bone. Yet, as the protests swelled outside the White House, he decided, or so he claimed, that it was time to "inspect" the

president's mammoth underground bunker. The White House itself had already become a bunker: during the chaos after Floyd's murder, the height of the fence surrounding its grounds was nearly doubled. True to his inclination to stir things up, Trump tweeted that, had demonstrators breached that fence, "they would have been greeted with the most vicious dogs, and most ominous weapons, I have ever seen."

The deeply disturbing use of force to clear peaceful demonstrators from Lafayette Square across from the White House - a violation of their rights for which Barr initially took credit - also shocked the national conscience. Trump's less-than-brilliant advisers - most prominent, his daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Jared Kushner - had concocted a political stunt that involved Trump walking across the square to the boarded-up St John's church, the basement of which had been set on fire. But they failed to think through what he would do when he got there. Trump awkwardly waved a Bible, sometimes holding it upside down, for photos that only made him look foolish.

Moreover, Trump's advocacy of flooding America's cities with active-duty US troops was met with widespread antipathy and scorn. A cascade of former high-ranking military officials, including James Mattis, the retired Marine general who was Trump's defense secretary until last year, openly denounced the president. Mattis, who described himself as "angry and appalled" at the idea of using the troops to put down the demonstrations, said Americans were "witnessing the consequences of three years without mature leadership."

But those who saw in such statements the unraveling of Trump's presidency didn't factor in Republicans' continued fealty. Faced with the choice between Mattis and Trump, nearly all elected Republicans stuck with the president. They had defended him for so long, shared so many of his views, and become so dependent on him and his donors that they weren't ready to break with him, despite knowing that current polls suggest he might go down in November's election - and take them down with him.

While the national uprising against racist policing will lead to some reforms, such as improved training and the prohibition of choke holds and neck restraints like the one that killed Floyd, rethinking the role of the police alone, no matter how radical the results are, cannot eliminate racism, the great stain left on America by the founders' compromise with slavery.

Governments can do nothing about the quotidian offenses of living as a black person in America - the empty taxis that refuse to stop, being mistaken for employees in supermarkets, the myriad intentional and unintentional insults. Many now in the streets won't be satisfied unless the result of this national spasm is improved schools, health care, and job opportunities for minorities - a fair shake for black people. What will happen when America once again falls short of honoring its professed values?





## Lord, da scapegoat he looking for now?

Dear Father:

Hmm, wonder shall never end ya. So you want to tell me the popular Country Giant is looking for people to blame for his failures? This big Brabie get dry face too ya.

You say whatin?

Oh Father, you haven't heard? The man says if he failed to deliver on his promises to our village, the people should hold all the big mouth chiefs from the other side of the village. He says it will be their fault. Can you imagine? Like seriously?

Bor da na small thing oo.

I tell you oo Father. The village people should blame the people from the other side of the river for him building houses with our money, acquiring wealth all over the place with some of his Kitchen Cabinet members, and sending their tiny, tiny girlfriends them to go work in places they know nothing about. Bor he say we moh blame the lousy people from the other side.

Hmm. dis yor man really get dry face ehn?

Yesoo, Father, me I will na jerk on that one sef. The village people will blame the people from the other side of the river and those noisy Chiefs at the Traditional Council who continue to remind him of the bad ways he leading our village for his failures. Oh yes, we will blame them for all his failures, lies and deceptions.

So that the people from the other side of the village tell him to build big, big mansions around the village and bring all his friends to steal right and give Ogayor village position.

No, leave him Father. Ehn the Big Brabie says, the village people should hold them because they are to be blamed for his failures-even when he refused to do his coronavirus test, da the people from the other side stopped him-nonsense!

How bor the 25 million and 16 billion all the money that went into the breeze? And not to forget the monthly shipping fees collection that travel in brown envelopes at night or the too much begging that is running investors from our village, we should blame the people too right? Loka his face there.

You know, it reminds me of some people in Uncle Sam's village-when they are caught as drug addicts, they blame their parents' divorce. When they go on shooting rampage and kill other people, they blame it on childhood abuse. I mean nothing they do is their own fault, somebody's action down the line put them up to it.

But again that is exactly what happens when you give boys men job to do-they will always find excuses why they failed. "I can't do this because the people will talk. We can't share the food because the money we had the chiefs told me to bribe them with it etc." See your life!

Bor wait oo, he forced to talk?

Father, the Footballer wants to be heard. The man wants people to know da he trying his best to steal from us and blame the people from the other side of doing the stealing.

Da the other leader I know who thinks the village is the inheritance of he and his followers so they can do whatever they please and go free-lie, lie. They will pay.

So why he can't blame the people who can be advising him na-I mean the people who can be telling him not to mind the village people that they will just talk and get tire. Those are the people to blame, because they are the architects of your failure chief, not the ones from the other side of the river.

In fact, the men and women from the other side of the river want you to succeed more than those you get closest to you. So please next time look around your area when you are looking for people to blame for your failure and your inability to lead our village.

## OPINION

By Yanghee Lee

### Will Hong Kong Be Tiananmen 2.0?

The conflict between the Chinese authorities and Hong Kong's citizens will continue to escalate as China implements its new security law on the territory, which is why international action has become urgent. The United Nations should not wait until all that is left to be done is clean the blood off the streets.

**S**EOUL - Hong Kong is on a knife's edge. Once one of Asia's freest and most open cities, it now faces the specter of a new China-imposed security law that would curtail its people's liberties and create a climate of fear. The law is in flagrant breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, which is registered at the United Nations, and would open the way for widespread human-rights violations. The UN cannot let this stand.

The United Kingdom returned Hong Kong to China 23 years ago on the promise that the territory would enjoy a "high degree of autonomy" under the "one country, two systems" principle for at least 50 years. For the first decade or so, China largely fulfilled that promise. But its commitment to doing so soon began to wane.

By 2014, Hong Kong's people were protesting the government's failure to deliver on the guarantee, included in the Basic Law, that the city's chief executive would be elected by "universal suffrage." In the ensuing years, booksellers offering titles critical of China's rulers were abducted to mainland China. Pro-democracy legislators and candidates were harassed and disqualified from elections. Foreign journalists and high-profile human-rights advocates were expelled from Hong Kong or denied entry. Simon Cheng, a Hong Kong citizen who worked for the UK government, was detained for 15 days after a trip to mainland China, where he was tortured until he "confessed" to soliciting prostitution.

When Hong Kong's citizens pushed back, they paid a steep price. The 2014 "umbrella movement" earned its name from the shields protesters used against tear gas. When even larger protests erupted last year, they were met with more extreme violence by the security forces.

Though the demonstrations were largely peaceful, especially early on, police deployed all manner of weapons - including batons and, in a few cases, live ammunition - with impunity. This past January, two UN special rapporteurs issued a communication alleging the "inappropriate use of chemical agents," including "hazardous substances such as tear gas, pepper spray, pepper balls, and irritating chemical constituents dispersed from water cannons."

Moreover, in February, four UN human-rights experts wrote to the Chinese government detailing evidence of harassment, intimidation, and detention of health-care workers during the protests. According to the report, "large numbers" of such workers were arrested and "hand-cuffed with zip-cords." Even after providing identification, they were arrested for "taking part in a riot" and detained for 24 hours with no access to legal counsel, before being released on bail, pending charges. The report also highlighted "the misuse of health-care transport, facilities, and confidential information."

The Hong Kong authorities - and the Chinese rulers who back them - have not backed down. In April, they arrested 15 of the city's most respected pro-democracy leaders, including the "father" of the movement, the 82-year-old barrister Martin Lee. And in late May, China's rubber-stamp legislature, the National People's Congress, approved - by a 2,878-1 vote - the new security law for Hong Kong.

While the details of the new law have not been announced, it is known to contain provisions barring "subversion," "secession," or "collusion with foreign political forces" - vaguely defined crimes that offer China's rulers legal cover to crack down on any form of dissent. For example, Hong Kong citizens who brief foreign parliamentarians, human-rights groups, or journalists could be deemed to be committing a crime. The law would also allow China's government to set up "security organs" in Hong Kong.

Both the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales warn that the security law would severely undermine fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, assembly, association, and religion or belief. As nearly 900 international leaders - from former prime ministers to prominent legal and human-rights experts - noted in a joint declaration, the law amounts to a "comprehensive assault" on Hong Kong's "autonomy, rule of law, and fundamental freedoms" and a "flagrant breach" of the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

Chris Patten, the last British governor of Hong Kong and a leading organizer of the joint declaration, has declared that "defenders of liberal democracy must not stand idly by." But what should they do? One possibility would be for the UN to establish a special envoy or a special rapporteur for human rights in Hong Kong (or both). Neither is likely to change the situation overnight, but each could provide some semblance of support or protection to the people of Hong Kong.

As a former UN special rapporteur, I know that both models have their advantages and disadvantages. A special rapporteur, appointed through a resolution by the Human Rights Council, focuses on exposing human-rights violations, and could help to achieve a kind of accountability through transparency. A special envoy is typically less vocal on human rights, but may be able to advance a political or diplomatic solution. Though China would resist - and the country has considerable clout - UN Secretary-General António Guterres could appoint an envoy on his own initiative.

The idea of creating a special envoy has wide support, including from Patten. The chairs of the foreign affairs committees in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the UK have written a letter calling for Guterres to heed this call. He should listen - and fast.

The conflict between the Chinese authorities and Hong Kong's citizens will continue to escalate, which is why international action has become urgent. Thirty-one years after the Tiananmen Square massacre, Hong Kong is facing the real threat of Tiananmen 2.0. The UN should not wait until all that is left to be done is clean the blood off the streets.

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## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# IFC appoints new Regional Manager for the Caribbean

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, has appointed Judith Green as the Regional Manager for the Caribbean, overseeing operations in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and the English-speaking Caribbean.

Senior Manager for Central America and the Caribbean, who managed IFC's operations in the region successfully for the past 5 years and recently was appointed as Chief Operations Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean based at IFC headquarters in Washington.

advisory opportunities for IFC and enhancing our impact in the cluster of countries. Specific focus will be provided to promoting financial inclusion for SMEs and women entrepreneurs and working hand in hand with the private and public sector to provide solutions for the region to improve infrastructure and public services through public-private partnerships.

In announcing her appointment, Gabriel Goldschmidt, IFC's Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, assured that "Judith brings tremendous professional experience and a deep knowledge of the Caribbean market. Through her leadership, we look forward to continuing our strong track record in the region, serving our clients and creating new markets and opportunities where they are needed most."

As of February 2020, IFC's committed investment portfolio in the Caribbean stood at nearly \$900 million across a broad range of sectors, including financial markets, infrastructure, information and communication technology,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 6



Based in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, IFC's hub for the Caribbean, Judith Green will also manage IFC's relationships with regional governments, donors and private sector stakeholders. She is taking over the position from Luc Grillet, previously

Judith Green, a Jamaican national, has worked as Head for the English-speaking Caribbean since 2016, expanding IFC's operations in the sub-region. As Country Manager, she will play a critical role in building our portfolio, developing new investment and

# VP Taylor hints major street pavement in Gbarnga

By Joseph Titus  
Yekeryan in Bong

Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor has disclosed plans by the Government of Liberia to begin the pavement of major streets in Gbarnga, Bong County.

Speaking recently, Vice President Taylor said the project is part of the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) - led government's street pavement project in various county capitals across Liberia.

She however felt short of stating the exact date for the commencement of the street pavement in Gbarnga, as she narrates that similar project is being implemented in Bopolu City, Gbarpolu County.

She calls on the Gbarnga City Council headed by Mayor Lucia Hubert to work



cohesively with the county to ensure that major streets across the 19 zones of Gbarnga are layout.

Vice President Taylor also stresses the need for the Bong Legislative Caucus to put its

house in order and put aside political differences, calling on the caucus to work with the ruling establishment for more sustained development in the county.

Meanwhile, Madam Taylor

# 'Sick man' dies -after rejection at JFK hospital

By Emmanuel Mondaye

A homeless sickman in the heart of Monrovia, who appealed to Indian Consul General to Liberia Shri Upjit Singh Sachdeva to take him to hospital for medication, has died finally after authorities at the J.F.K. Hospital in Monrovia turned him away, for lack of bed.

He died Tuesday, 16 June on Center Street after ambulance conveying him to the John F. Kennedy Medical Center (JFK) was turned back by medical

on Center Street.

Some colleagues who accompanied the Konlakonto the JFK hospital for medical attention disclosed that upon arrival at the premises of the JFK, the ambulance that took them there was rejected and turned back, while the deceased cried for help.

When contacted, some workers at the hospital said the director of communication was indisposed or not in office.

However, a colleague of the deceased at the Pennoh



Indian Consul General to Liberia, Shri Upjit Singh Sachdeva (Jeety) presents a plate of cooked food to the late Alhaji Konlakon on Center Street, Monrovia before his demise

authorities there.

Information gathered by this paper indicates that the late AlhajiKonlakon was taken to the hospital through the kind intervention of Consul General Sachdeva, widely known in Liberia as 'Jeety' who provided money to facilitate the medical expense of the deceased.

The intervention of the Indian businessman followed an appeal by the deceased during one of Jeety's COVID-19 Hot Cooked Food distribution

Building in Monrovia Mohammed Fahnbulleh, who also accompanied him to the hospital lamented that the late Konlakon along with them were onboard an ambulance to the JFK but workers there complained of lack of bed.

Fahnbullah explained that following the rejection, they returned to Center Street with the sick man only to find his dead body the next day where he usually slept in the street. He said they were left with no

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

has underscored unity and respect for each other as the hallmark for sustained development in Bong County.

The formal Bong County Senator indicates that Bong will be far from developing when its leaders and inhabitants are at odds with each other on political and personal issues.

She observes that citizens of the county have over the years been greatly interested in criticizing the weaknesses of their leaders with no regards to the gains they are making.

"Sometimes it is good for us to see the good things the

leaders are doing and praise them instead of looking at the bad ones and criticizing the leaders every time," Madam Taylor cautions.

She notes that Bong County can only be developed, when citizens put aside their political differences and front for the improvement of the county.

She admonishes leaders of the county to gravitate from a state of complacency and rise to the pace of breeding of future leaders that will take on the mantle of leadership in the near future.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



# You can leave

By Bridgett Milton

**R**uling Coalition for Democratic Change lawmaker, Acarous Moses Gray says GSM companies operating in the country may leave if they want to, but insists the operators must pay surcharge fees, as they earlier agreed with the government through the Liberia Telecommunications

Rep. Gray notes that concerns of the operators are just mere bluffs and if they left today, there are hundreds of GSM operators waiting to come invest in Liberia.

Addressing a news conference Thursday, June 18, at the Capitol in Monrovia, he maintains that it is unthinkable for GSM companies operating here to argue that surcharge fees should be passed over to

MTN LoneStar have generated about 14 percent increment in revenue, but both companies are allegedly reneging to pay to government.

Gray threatens that if the companies failed to pay as was earlier agreed, he would introduce bills that will restrict GSM companies from imposing further fees on services without knowledge of government especially, the Liberian Legislature.

He notes that in 2016, during the administration of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, an executive of Lonestar Cell MTN, Mr. Benoni Urey wrote Madam Sirleaf for the surcharge which points to the three days free call being cutoff but that was not enforced until the Coalition for Democrat Change administration took office, when MTN LoneStar was on the verge of closure due to lack of revenue generation.

Gray explains that as a result of that, the government is not willing to accept monopoly in these contemporary times and therefore, modified the model to 45 minutes for three days, suggesting that surcharge fees were already being captured.

He further threatens that if the companies reneged in adhering to the agreement signed, he would lobby for its revocation, noting that the operators are not fair in the process, which is unacceptable. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



Rep. Acarous Moses Gray

Authority, LTA.

Mr. Gray is Montserrado County Electoral District #8 Representative, and vice chairman of President Weah's governing CDC.

The two operators of GSM companies here, Orange and Lonestar Cell MTN had allegedly threatened to pull out if the government pushes for the surcharge to be paid by them instead of customers.

customers.

He adds that the Liberia Telecommunications Authority and the two GSM operators reached an agreement which put an end to the three days free call in order for the companies to generate more revenue so that they can pay the surcharge and that agreement stands.

According to him, since the enforcement of that agreement, both Orange and

# Jeety donates jerseys, footballs

By Emmanuel Mondaye

**I**ndian Consul General to Liberia Shri Upjit Singh Sachdeva, popularly known in Liberia as 'Jeety', has donated a set of track jerseys and two footballs to a soccer team of less-fortunate Liberians on Carey Street, Monrovia as part of his ongoing COVID-19 hot cooked food distribution to vulnerable communities, including hospitals and prisons.

The hot food distribution is being carried out here by Jeety Trading Corporation, under the auspices of Consul General Sachdeva, to help ease economic burden of less-fortunate residents in the wake of the global pandemic.

The presentation of jerseys and footballs followed an appeal from mainly waywards youth in the streets to the Indian Consul General

during one of his COVID-19 hot cooked food distribution in Central Monrovia recently.

Presenting the sporting materials to the leader of the

group, Mohammed Fahnbulleh a.k.a 'Five Star' and team captain Tom

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Mr. Jeety along with recipients of the set of jerseys

# IFC appoints new

Cont'd from page 5

manufacturing and services, and education. This includes about \$200 million mobilized from partnering institutions.

"IFC's role in the Caribbean is important now more than ever and I look forward to working with our long-term partners and forging new relationships to support the development of the region", Green stated, adding she aims to "lead IFC's operations to provide private sector investments that drive sustainable growth, as well as leveraging our advisory services to improve the investment climate and support regional governments capital expenditure programs through the successful structuring of public-private partnerships".

Green previously worked with IFC from 2011 - 2013 as a Senior Investment Officer in Jamaica. From 2013 - 2016, worked with Jamaica's Ministry of Finance and Planning, as a member of the Economic Programme Oversight Committee where she headed the Government of Jamaica's Coordination and Implementation Unit, overseeing the successful implementation of the 2013 four-year Extended Fund Facility with the International

Monetary Fund. Judith also has extensive capital markets and corporate banking experience, having held senior management positions in RBC Bank Jamaica Limited, Citigroup Global Markets Inc. (New York), and Citibank N.A. Jamaica. She holds a BSc in Accounting from the University of the West Indies and is a Fellow of both the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (United Kingdom) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Jamaica.

About IFC

IFC—a sister organization of the World Bank and member of the World Bank Group—is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. We work with more than 2,000 businesses worldwide, using our capital, expertise, and influence to create markets and opportunities where they are needed most. In fiscal year 2019, we delivered more than \$19 billion in long-term financing for developing countries, leveraging the power of the private sector to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. For more information, visit [www.ifc.org](http://www.ifc.org). **-Press release**

# A staff at ArcelorMittal Liberia tests positive for Coronavirus

**A**rcelorMittal Liberia (AML) on Wednesday announced that a member of its school staff in Yekepa who had prior health issues and died recently in Monrovia, was tested (posthumously) for the Coronavirus and the result came back positive.

The staff member has not been at work since March 2020 when the schools closed. He was recently admitted in AML's Yekepa hospital for non-COVID related causes and was transferred to another hospital in Monrovia a day later for continuation of no-COVID related treatment.

Unfortunately, he passed away in Monrovia. "We express our sincere condolences to the family, friends and co-workers for their sad loss. Contact tracing has been launched to track those with whom the staff might have encountered in Yekepa, and a few staff have been asked to isolate at home.

Currently none of the staff or family members are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 and the family is in isolation. The relevant county and national health authorities are closely involved, and the County Health Team is overseeing management of the

case," the release said.

The company said it continues to enforce strict adherence to all COVID-19 preventive measures released by the Government of Liberia and instituted additional measures for its staff and those accessing its concession areas.

It added that a review of the precautions and controls will be carried out immediately with a view to implement additional measures to limit any potential spread.

"As a responsible business partner to Liberia and a company that places high importance on the safety and wellbeing of its workforce and the public, we will continue to work closely with our partners and stakeholders throughout this crisis," the release added.

About ArcelorMittal

ArcelorMittal is the world's leading steel and mining company, with a presence in 60 countries and primary steelmaking facilities in 18 countries. In 2019, ArcelorMittal had revenues of \$70.6 billion and crude steel production of 89.8 million metric tonnes, while iron ore production reached 57.1 million metric tonnes. Our goal is to help build a better world with smarter steels.



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Carter Center Supports Liberia's COVID-19 Efforts

As COVID-19 continues to spread in Liberia, The Carter Center has answered the request of the government to assist with prevention efforts and mental health support.

The Center is working with the National Incident

Management System; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection; Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ministry of Justice; the National Council of Chiefs and Elders; and civil society partners to raise awareness about COVID-19 prevention measures and to ensure that information about COVID-19 reaches all persons. The Center will

facilitate dissemination of Ministry of Health messages through local partners. The Center's Mental Health Program supports the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support pillar of Liberia's national COVID-19 response. It provides technical support to

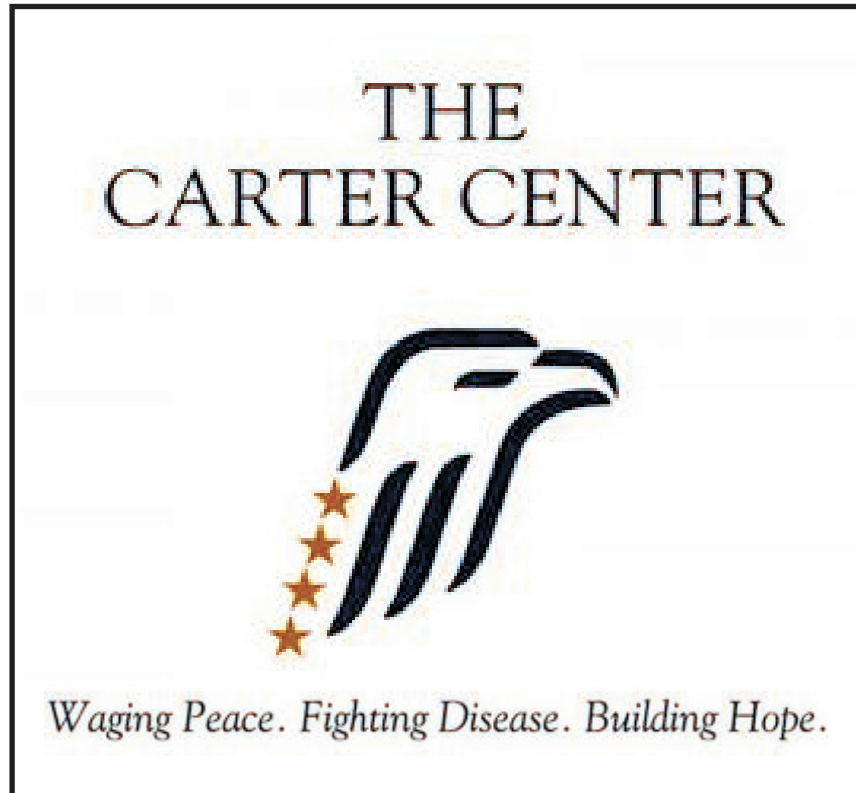
approved methods and, along with other partners, conducted a rapid assessment of the COVID-19 treatment and observation centers in Montserrado County, aiding efforts to identify the needs of people in isolation as well as gaps in mental health service delivery.

Importantly, the Center is working with the national mental health services user organization Cultivation for Users Hope to provide continuous mental health support to persons living with mental illnesses across the country and to highlight their needs related to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Rule of Law Program is helping to distribute messages through its network of traditional leaders and town criers, as well as community radio. Additionally, because the pandemic and "Stay at Home" orders have exacerbated domestic violence, the program and its partners will work to spread awareness on domestic violence as a crime and citizens' rights and remedies and continue to support meaningful access to justice for victims.

The Center's Democracy Program is supporting its partner, the Liberia Election Observation Network (LEON), as it responds to a request from the Ministry of Health and the National Public Health Institute of Liberia to

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social workers and mental health clinicians in outbreak counties, including clinicians specializing in child and adolescent mental health, and underwrites mental health training within the context of COVID-19 for clinicians and social workers in all 15 counties in collaboration with government and U.N. partners. It also has helped train 100 contact tracers with WHO-

social workers and mental health clinicians in outbreak counties, including clinicians specializing in child and adolescent mental health, and underwrites mental health training within the context of COVID-19 for clinicians and social workers in all 15 counties in collaboration with government and U.N. partners.

It also has helped train 100 contact tracers with WHO-

## WFP responds

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wasteful, the alleged proposal by the Executive Branch allotting such amount for food distribution cost.

However the global humanitarian body explains that US\$25 million comes directly from the Government of Liberia and US\$5 million from the World Bank, detailing that it understands that the Government here has transferred the amount to WFP's account.

According to WFP, the transfer is done as per the signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP).

WFP indicates that around six percent of the budget goes towards meeting essential minimum costs for WFP to deliver its lifesaving assistance, noting that this is standard across all the countries where WFP works and is in line with international standards of aid delivery.

"These include allocations toward the support costs of the Liberia Country Office directly linked to the execution of the programme (e.g. applicable rental costs, back office staff costs etc) and allocations toward the support costs of WFP Headquarters/Regional Bureau in their oversight and support function, called Indirect Support Costs (ISC)," WFP continues.

Together, WFP says these can be referred to as the administrative costs, detailing that the value of the food is estimated at an approximate total cost of US\$20.4 million, pending the final award of all contracts to suppliers.

Additionally, WFP says the portion of the budget that constitutes the costs of storing, transporting, and delivering the assistance (or operational costs) is estimated at US\$7.8 million.

It says these costs include in-country transport cost, costs for cooperating partners supporting the program, food safety and quality control, casual labour services, and household enumeration/registration, among others.

The world body discloses that the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) enumeration exercise will cover over 500,000 households at less than US\$ 3.4 per household.

Further, WFP says

government entities will receive resources for specific food-related tasks, such as enumeration, which LISGIS is leading, or communications and security through WFP's accounting and financial management systems.

WFP states that LISGIS data will be the primary basis for beneficiary selection, particularly for community-based distributions.

Based on various criteria agreed among stakeholders for which data is being collected through the LISGIS enumeration, WFP says the most vulnerable households will be determined and selected to ensure the program reaches around 2.5 million people, including the first responders and vulnerable groups.

It says the program is providing a month's supply of food (50 kg of rice, 10 kg of beans and 1 gallon of vegetable oil per household) for around 2.5 million most vulnerable people across all of Liberia, adding that transportation and distribution will cost approximately US\$3.60 per person and are covered under the WFP budget.

WFP continues that the COHSFP has established a Finance and Budget Committee chaired by the World Bank that approves expenditures, noting that WFP will provide a financial report on expenditures accrued for the implementation of the COHSFP to the government through the Steering Committee.

WFP Representative and Country Director, Ms. Karla Hershey, says: "WFP recognizes that challenging times like the COVID-19 emergency require strong collaboration and we are proud to support a programme that is for the people and by the people, whilst assisting the Government of Liberia to respond to and recover from this crisis."

WFP notes that it has a long history of using local food procurement to support smallholder farmers and other actors along agricultural value chains in Liberia.

In 2008, WFP says it commenced activities in Liberia related to its Purchase for Progress (P4P) pilot initiative, noting that through P4P, it supported smallholder farmers to increase their production and productivity.

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## Capitol lockdown

including 33 deaths and 240 recoveries. The National Public Health Institute of Liberia or NPHIL recorded seven (7) new cases as of 10:00PM, 16 June.

A 60-day State of Emergency declared by President George Manneh Weah has elapsed with no plan for renewal as the country gradually opens up with the Roberts International Airport poised to resume flights and restaurants, hotels and other entertainment centers ordered opened.

President Weah also ordered churches, mosques and other worship centers reopened, including schools, beginning with 12th graders in preparation for the regional West African Senior School Certificate Exams (WASSCE) administered annually by the West African Examination

Council, WAEC.

Meanwhile, the Secretary of the Senate J. Nanborlor F. SingbeSr, has closed the Secretariat for two weeks, beginning June 16, 2020. In recent days, new cases of the deadly virus have increased dramatically.

In a rare public revelation, health authorities last Tuesday made an embarrassing disclosure that an estimated 300 persons who are carriers of the COVID-19 are roaming Monrovia and its environs undetected.

The Director-General designate of NPHIL Dr. MosokaFallah, said, "There are about three hundred active Corona-virus carriers who are freely roaming Monrovia and its environs and we need to get them."

He said to break the chain of transmission and beat back the

looming danger, the country needs to implement more stringent measures, which include a total lock-down, especially in most impacted counties, with no one leaving his or her home.

Such measures, Dr. Fallah said, is necessary to take the virus off the streets and into the communities where they can be contained, traced and isolated.

Statistics released by the NPHIL identified hot spots in Montserrado County, including King Gray, ELWA, Duport Road and Thinkers Village. Other affected communities are Clara Town, Caldwell, Bardnerville and Gardnersville, respectively. The county has a total of 440 confirmed cases and 20 deaths. -Editing by Jonathan Browne



# Français

## COVID-19 : Le Ministre Tarpehse défend au sujet des 9 millions de dollars

Le président du comité directeur de la distribution alimentaire du COVID-19, le ministre du Commerce Wilson Tarpeh, fait un virage à 90 degrés, niant avoir déclaré au Sénat libérien que le Programme Alimentaire Mondial (PAM) avait demandé au gouvernement du Libéria de payer 9 millions de dollars pour procéder à la distribution de la ration alimentaire aux

je leur ai fourni le résumé du coût du programme alimentaire ; je leur ai dit que le montant total était de 30 millions de dollars."

Il a indiqué que les 30 millions de dollars proviennent de deux sources, 25 millions de dollars proviennent du gouvernement du Libéria et 5 millions de la Banque mondiale.

« J'ai donné des conseils au sénat parce que je n'avais pas les détails sur moi et le PAM qui

professeur d'université, a fait savoir que les informations que le PAM a données au rédacteur en chef du journal FrontpageAfrica mardi sont exactement les mêmes que celle qu'il a remises au Sénat lors de sa comparution.

Le responsable de la communication du PAM, James Belgrave, a déclaré à FPA qu'un quotidien libérien a affirmé que l'agence alimentaire des Nations Unies a demandé au Libéria de payer 9 millions de dollars pour distribuer la nourriture dans le pays. Cette information est infondée et contraire à l'explication que Tarpeha donnée au Sénat jeudi dernier.

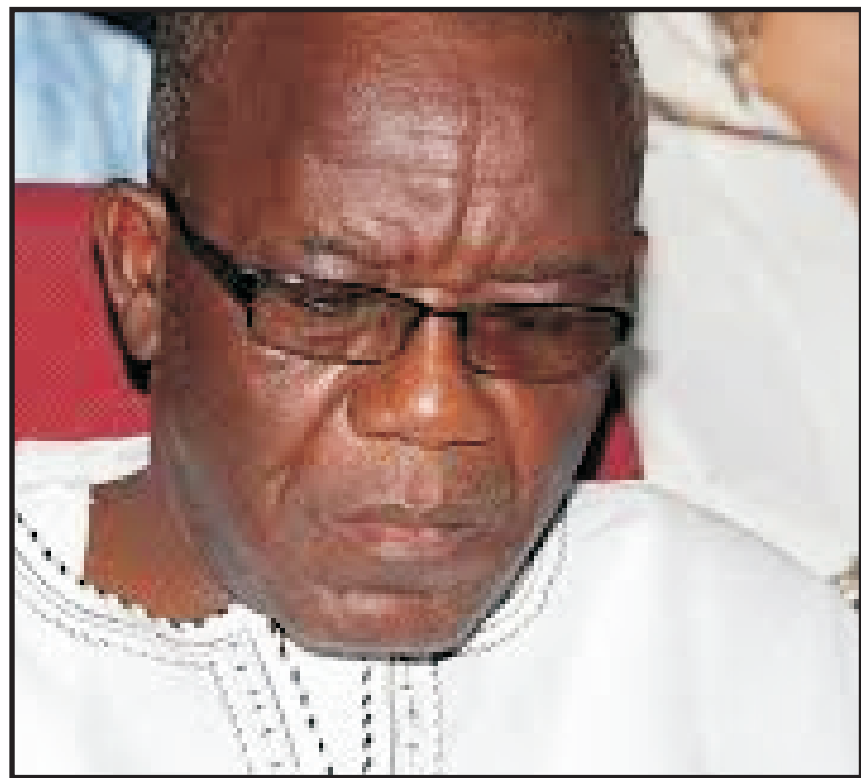
M. Belgrave a précisé que le PAM s'est vu allouer environ 6% des 30 millions de dollars, soit 1,8 million et non 9 millions de dollars, pour procéder à la distribution de la nourriture.

Le ministre Tarpeh a promis de fournir les détails quant aux 9 millions de dollars américains de sorte que « vous soyez en mesure de faire le bon commentaire ; c'est ce que j'ai conseillé aux honorables sénateurs, attendez qu'on vous donne les détails des frais administratifs et opérationnels avant de faire des commentaires et ce que vous en pensez, mais encore une fois, la situation est différente », a-t-il expliqué.

Il a dit avoir informé les membres du Sénat libérien que le coût de l'opération avait été estimé par le PAM,

aurait dû comparaître avec moi ne l'avait pas fait. Nous en assumons la responsabilité. Donc, lors de cette audition, en aucun cas nous avons suggéré que le PAM avait réclamé 9 millions de dollars au gouvernement du Libéria ; non ! C'est clair dans le rapport que je leur ai remis ; il disait "frais administratifs et opérationnels".

Tarpeh, également



Libériens vulnérables à travers le pays.

S'exprimant par téléphone sur une radio de la place au cours d'une émission-débat en direct, Tarpeha fait volte-face, disant : "Il s'agit de la propagande, mais je vais donner la clarté. Lorsque je me suis présenté à l'Assemblée législative (Chambre du Sénat) jeudi,

## Procès du secrétaire du Sénat : Le ministre de la Justice et d'autres responsables se mettent à l'écart

Le ministre libérien de la Justice, Frank Musah Dean, le procureur général Saymah Syrenius Cephas et le procureur du comté de Montserrado Edwin K. Martin se sont mis à l'écart dans le procès du secrétaire du Sénat Narbolor F. Singbeh accusé de sabotage économique. La récusation s'est faite à la demande du ministre de la Justice.

Singbeh et plusieurs autres ont été inculpés de plusieurs chefs d'accusations pour avoir escroqué deux frères tchèques, Pavel et Martin Miloschewsky, et extorqué la bagatelle de 5.062. 419\$ US sous le prétexte de créer une société de concassage de pierres, MHM Eko - Liberia. Les victimes devraient détenir la plus grande part (70%).

« Nous vous présentons nos

accusés dont Othello Z.B. Karr, Karel Socher, Ales Sranmek, Sherman Longan, Jan Holask, Barry F. Tequah et Ousman Fofana Gloria Cain, Sylvester Selvkpoh, Patrick Saah Siaphia, Mulbah Kenneh et Patrick Siaphe.

Ce quotidien n'a pas encore eu possession de l'acte d'accusation, mais le mandat d'arrêt émis contre eux intervient après plusieurs mois de bataille judiciaire entre le secrétaire du Sénat, M. Singbeh, et les responsables d'une société de concassage de pierres MHM Eko-Liberia, qui appartiendrait en grande partie à deux frères tchèques, Martin et Pavel Miloschewsk.

Les accusés font face à des accusations de sabotage économique, de vol de biens, de faux et de complot criminel.

Le ressortissant britannique



Cllr. Frank Musah Dean



Cllr. Saymah Syrenius Cephas



Cllr. Edwin K. Martin

compliments et écrivons pour vous informer qu'à la demande de Me Frank Musah Dean, ministre de la justice et procureur général du Libéria, Me Saymah S. Cephus, solliciteur général du Libéria et Edwin K. Martin et le ministre lui-même se sont récusés de l'affaire mentionnée ci-dessus », a indiqué le courrier adressé au greffier.

Le secrétaire du Sénat libérien Narbolor F. Singbeh et plusieurs autres, dont l'ancien patron de la Commission nationale d'investissement (NIC), George W. Wisner, ont été arrêtés sur ordre du tribunal pénal «C » de Monrovia à la suite de leur inculpation de sabotage économique et de multiples chefs d'accusations.

Le mandat d'arrêt qui date du 12 juin nomme d'autres

Hans Armstrong est l'avocat de deux frères tchèques dans l'entreprise de concassage de pierres située dans le comté de Margibi.

Martin et Pavel Miloschewsk s'étaient plaints d'avoir cherché à créer une entreprise de concassage de roches au Libéria. À en croire les plaignants, le défendeur Singbeh les a rassurés qu'il rendrait cela possible pourvu qu'il obtint 30% des parts.

Les plaignants ont affirmé avoir transféré respectivement 2 495 109 \$ US et 102 000 \$ US dans des comptes que l'accusé a créés dans deux banques privées différentes, conformément déjà à l'accord trouvé lors des prétendues discussions.

Mais, à leur insu, ont-t-ils fait savoir, Singbeh aurait retiré tout l'argent des deux

**NATIONAL PATRIOTIC PARTY (NPP)**  
BEHIND TOTAL GAS STATION, TARR TOWN, OLDEST CONGO TOWN  
Monrovia, Liberia  
Tel: 0886-532-123  
0770-662-842

Office of the Secretary General

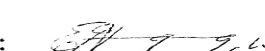
### Announcement

Following the successful meeting of the National Executive Committee of the National Patriotic Party (NPP), held at the Corina Hotel on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, 2020, the National Executive Committee of the Party has unanimously mandated the National Secretariat of the Party to conduct the restructuring of NPP's Chapters in the fifteen (15) counties of Liberia.

In compliance with the mandate of the National Executive Committee of the National Patriotic Party (NPP), two teams headed by the National Secretary General and the Vice Chairman for operations of the Party will lead the restructuring exercises.

The first phase of the county restructuring is as follows:

- Margibi County June 26-27, 2020
- Bomi County July 1, 2020
- Grand Cape Mount County July 2, 2020
- Grand Bassa County July 3-4, 2020
- Rivercess County July 5, 2020
- Sinoe County July 7-8, 2020

Signed:   
Andrew Peters  
National Secretary General

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# Français

## COVID-19 : Le Ministre

avec des informations détaillées. Le montant total de l'opération est de 9 millions de dollars. En clair, en aucun cas le PAM n'a demandé au gouvernement de payer 9 dollars million de dollars comme main d'œuvre.

"Laissez-nous vous fournir quelques informations ici, le coût opérationnel comprend le coût du transport, car il s'agit de couvrir tout le pays. L'on a besoin de camions et pour le sud-est, des bateaux. Il faut des gens pour assurer la sécurité, il faut un personnel de la santé, du carburant, des frais de réparations en cas de panne quelconque. Ce coût total s'élève à environ 2,1 millions de dollars. Je l'arrondis mais nous publierons les détails dans les journaux parce qu'il est important de clarifier cela. Nous avons également le coût de la chaîne d'approvisionnement car nous avons fait recours à des ONG pour faire la distribution. Le coût est de 485 461 dollars. A cela il faut ajouter la rémunération des travailleurs occasionnels qui totalise 121 000 dollars et d'autres équipements dont les services GPS, tout cela est détaillé", a dit Tarpeh.

Certains membres du Sénat libérien avaient qualifié de gaspillage le fait de payer 9 millions de dollars américains soient destinés aux « frais opérationnels et administratifs » pour la distribution de la ration alimentaire dont le coût estimatif est de 21 millions de dollars US.

Pour les sénateurs le chiffre de 9 millions de dollars représente une partie très énorme du petit budget de 30 millions de dollars destiné à distribuer de la nourriture aux populations vulnérables touchées par la crise sanitaire.

Un débat avait éclaté vendredi dernier en séance plénière du Sénat lorsque le ministre du Commerce, le professeur Wilson Tarpeh, qui préside le comité directeur, avait indiqué que l'argent était désormais à la disposition du Programme alimentaire mondial (PAM) pour la distribution de la nourriture dans les différents comtés et communautés.

À la suite de la mise à jour du professeur Tarpeh, le

sénateur du comté de Margibi, Oscar Cooper, avait déclaré que les 9 millions de dollars US étaient excessifs. Il fallait, selon lui, réduire ce coût opérationnel et administratif afin que les personnes vulnérables puissent obtenir quelque chose.

Le sénateur de Margibi avait fait valoir que les personnes vulnérables ne sont pas seulement celles qui souffrent d'un handicap physique. « Les vulnérables c'est aussi les gens qui étaient obligés de rester chez eux et qui n'ont plus de sources de revenue à cause de l'état d'urgence.

Reprenant le même argument, le sénateur du comté de Gbarpolu, Daniel Naathan, avait déclaré que le comité était sur le point de procéder à des dépenses inutiles.

Il avait dit penser que la distribution des articles alimentaires se ferait par le biais des coupons qui auraient dû être distribués à chaque chef de famille qui n'aurait qu'à se rendre dans les magasins pour s'acheter du riz ou d'autres produits alimentaires avec les coupons.

Il a estimé que les 9 millions de dollars américains pouvait servir à obtenir plus de nourriture pour tout le monde, y compris ceux que le gouvernement considère comme non vulnérables.

En outre, le sénateur du comté de Montserrado, Abraham Darius Dillon, avait exhorté le ministre du Commerce à soumettre au Sénat libérien le contrat entre le gouvernement libérien et le Programme alimentaire mondial.

Lors de la rencontre d'information du sénat, le professeur Tarpeh avait expliqué que le montant total confirmé pour la distribution de nourriture était de 30 millions de dollars.

Selon le professeur Tarpeh, sur les 30 millions de dollars, 21 millions de dollars étaient destinés à l'achat de nourriture tandis que 9 millions de dollars aux frais opérationnels et administratifs.

Le ministre du Commerce avait déclaré au Sénat qu'en raison de la difficulté à se rendre dans le sud-est et dans d'autres pays difficiles d'accès, ils organisaient la logistique et utiliseraient à la fois le transport maritime et terrestre pour y transporter la nourriture.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Elizabeth Drew

### Trump, une calamité pour les États-Unis

WASHINGTON, DC - C'est un véritable désastre pour les États-Unis que le locataire de la Maison Blanche se soit révélé être une personne instable et totalement inapte à gouverner au moment où deux tragédies nationales - la crise du Covid-19 et l'héritage historique du racisme - se sont conjuguées ce printemps.

L'incapacité du président Donald Trump à faire face à la pandémie a jusqu'à présent causé la mort de plus de 114.000 personnes, l'un des taux de mortalité par habitant le plus élevé au monde, et entraîné une propagation du coronavirus dans des régions où il n'était pas présent auparavant. La crise de santé publique a également provoqué la pire récession économique aux États-Unis depuis la Grande Dépression des années 1930.

Comme en témoignent les événements survenus par la suite, il n'est pas exagéré de dire que la nation américaine - qui célébrera son 244e anniversaire le mois prochain - est en grand péril, plus encore que lors de la crise constitutionnelle provoquée par le scandale du Watergate dans les années 1970. La pandémie a coïncidé avec la dernière d'une longue série de violences policières de nature raciale et le pays s'est embrasé.

Des millions d'Américains confinés ont regardé en boucle la vidéo du meurtre de sang-froid d'un homme noir, plaqué au sol, menotté et non armé, George Floyd, aux mains de quatre policiers de Minneapolis. L'un d'entre eux, Derek Chauvin, appuie avec son genou sur le cou de Floyd pendant près de 9 minutes, jusqu'à ce que ce dernier perde connaissance ; deux autres policiers sont agenouillés sur son dos et sur ses jambes, le privant encore plus d'oxygène ; le quatrième assiste à la scène, tenant les passants horrifiés à distance tandis que Floyd, luttant pour sa vie, répète « Please, I can't breathe » (S'il-vous-plaît, je ne peux pas respirer.).

Le meurtre de Floyd a choqué le pays. Il a donné aux Américains une image sans équivoque de ce que signifient vraiment les « brutalités policières ». Après des semaines de confinement et de distanciation sociale, ils avaient de l'énergie à revendre et les vidéos de l'agonie de Floyd ont été le déclencheur. Les manifestations ont commencé à Minneapolis le jour suivant et se sont rapidement étendues à tout le pays, et ailleurs dans le monde. Des centaines de milliers de personnes de toutes races et de tous âges y ont pris part.

Les manifestants qui se sont livrés à des actes de violence, au pillage et à la destruction de biens (dont l'incendie de voitures de police), ont été du pain béni pour Trump, dont la conception de la politique consiste essentiellement à attiser la colère de ses partisans. Sa rhétorique nixonienne de « la loi et l'ordre » a pour but d'effacer la distinction entre les quelques manifestants violents et le nombre incomparablement plus grand de manifestants pacifiques.

Le ministre de la Justice américain William Barr a, comme d'habitude, été prêt à aider Trump à exploiter la situation et renforcer ses pouvoirs. Étant donné que Washington, DC, n'est pas un État, Trump et Barr ont eu toute latitude pour imposer leur solution, qui était de recourir à la Garde nationale, aux forces de l'ordre des agences fédérales et, chose troublante, à des forces non identifiables contre les manifestants. Washington devint une ville occupée.

Trump se veut un vrai dur et il est un homme autoritaire dans l'âme. Pourtant, alors que les manifestants se massaient devant la Maison Blanche, il a décidé, du moins l'a-t-il affirmé, que

c'était le moment « d'inspecter » le bunker souterrain géant de la résidence présidentielle. La Maison Blanche est elle-même devenue un camp retranché durant la période de chaos qui a suivi l'assassinat de Floyd, avec une palissade érigée en urgence et deux fois plus haute que l'enceinte habituelle. Fidèle à son habitude de jeter de l'huile sur le feu, Trump a tweeté que si les manifestants franchissaient cette clôture, « ils auraient été accueillis par les chiens les plus féroces et les armes les plus terrifiantes que j'aie jamais vues ».

L'usage profondément inquiétant de la force pour disperser les manifestants qui occupaient pacifiquement Lafayette Square, près de la Maison Blanche - une violation de leur droit dont Barr s'est initialement attribué le mérite - a également choqué la nation. Les conseillers vraiment peu futés de Trump - au premier chef sa fille Ivanka et son gendre Jared Kushner - avaient concocté un effet d'annonce politique qui consistait pour Trump à traverser à pied le square jusqu'à l'église épiscopale St John, partiellement incendiée la veille. Mais ils n'avaient pas vraiment réfléchi à ce que ferait Trump une fois sur place. Le président a vaguement agité une bible, la tenant par moment à l'envers, pour une séance photo qui n'a servi qu'à le ridiculiser.

La menace brandie par Trump de faire intervenir l'armée contre les manifestants dans les villes américaines a en outre été accueillie par une aversion et un mépris généralisés. Une succession de hauts responsables militaires ont publiquement dénoncé le président, dont James Mattis, le général des Marines à la retraite qui était jusqu'à l'an dernier le secrétaire à la Défense de l'administration Trump, qui a prononcé un réquisitoire au vitriol contre le président. Mattis, qui s'est dit « en colère et consterné » à l'idée de déployer l'armée pour mater la rue, a également estimé que « Nous payons les conséquences de trois années sans adultes aux commandes ».

Mais ceux pour qui ces déclarations augurent de la déliquescence de la présidence Trump ne tiennent pas compte de l'allégeance persistante des Républicains. Contraints de choisir entre Mattis et Trump, quasiment tous les élus républicains se sont rangés aux côtés du président. Ils l'ont défendu si longtemps, ont partagé tant de ses points de vue et sont devenus si dépendants de l'ancien homme d'affaires et de ses donateurs qu'ils n'ont pas le courage de se démarquer de lui, en dépit du fait que les sondages d'opinion laissent entrevoir la possibilité qu'il soit battu lors de l'élection de novembre prochain, et qu'il les entraîne dans sa chute.

Si le soulèvement national contre les violences policières et le racisme entraînera sans doute des réformes, comme une meilleure formation des forces de police et l'interdiction des prises d'étranglement et des techniques d'immobilisation au niveau du cou comme celle qui a tué Floyd, simplement revoir le rôle de la police, aussi radicales que soient les mesures prises, ne suffira pas pour éliminer le racisme systémique aux États-Unis, cette sombre tache issue du compromis des pères fondateurs avec l'esclavage.

Les gouvernements ne peuvent rien faire contre les outrages subis quotidiennement par les Afro-Américains - les taxis vides qui refusent de s'arrêter, être pris pour des employés dans les supermarchés, les myriades d'insultes intentionnelles et involontaires. De nombreux manifestants ne seront pas satisfaits tant que le soulèvement national actuel ne se traduira pas par une amélioration du système scolaire et des soins de santé et par des possibilités d'emploi pour les minorités - et l'égalité des chances pour les Afro-Américains. Que se passera-t-il si les États-Unis échouent une fois de plus à se montrer à la hauteur des valeurs qu'ils professent ?



# Gov't Emergency Food Distribution In Full Swing





# Uncertainty over July 26 celebrations

As the Weah Administration moves deep into its third year, the government seems to be unenthusiastic about early preparations that would lead to official celebrations of Liberia's 173rd Independence on July 26, barely a month away.

By now, the administration should have announced to the public entry for an Independent Day Orator like it did in its first year in power, which landed the Minister of Finance and Development Planning Samuel Tweah, as the government's ultimate choice for the occasion.

President George Manneh Weah spent half million United States Dollars

time to reduce huge expenditures in some areas of the government that are not profitable, stressing that the best option for the government is to reduce the budgetary allotment for the celebrations.

He argued that if past administrations had spent one million United States dollars on celebrations, the Weah administration should consider US\$300,000 for the Independence celebrations.

"The economy globally is tight, almost many of the regional countries around us are facing similar economic challenges but, what I can recommend to our government is cut down some spending, interestingly, there are some

difficulty.

One source explains that the financial situation is even being exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic that has brought the world's economy on its knees.

But another source notes that if the government would celebrate the country's 173rd Independence Day celebrations this year, it is highly unlikely the festivity would be elaborate.

Making remarks during his first Independence Day celebration after coming to power, President George Manneh Weah rallied Liberians to join him in helping to build Liberia, stressing that Liberians need a strong union and the peace that abides in their hearts for the prosperity of the Motherland.

"No matter who you are and where you are, opposition or not, in the rural parts of the country or in the Diaspora, in the towns or villages or in the city; so as long as you are a Liberian, it is your patriotic and nationalistic duty to put your hands on deck to help us build our country," the President said on Thursday, 26 July 2018 at Liberia's 171st Independence Day celebration in Monrovia.

But the 2019 (171st Independence Day) Orator Madam Leymah Roberta Gbowee underscored that when the needs of the citizenry are met, it is easier for people to vision and dream together, peace becomes a collective reality and then reconciliation comes more naturally.

"We must address the harsh economic conditions because families can barely find food to pay their children's school fees or buy basic necessities... For us to be stronger together, we must agree on a set of collective values that we will live by and teach to the next generation - Values that will guide our national politics as well as our everyday life. It will be near to impossible for us to be stronger together if we have not agreed on the values of the journey of togetherness", Madam Gbowee noted. **-Story by Jonathan Browne**



Pres. George M. Weah

(US\$500,000) in the 2019 July 26 celebrations, inviting scores of foreign guests, including Heads of States and governments to grace the ceremonies that were characterized by pageantry in the midst of serious economic challenges and unpaid salaries for civil servants.

Plea from ordinary Liberians and even members of the President's ruling Coalition for Democratic Change to cut down expenditure for the festivity in the face of economic reality went unheeded.

Chief Cyril Allen, who chairs the governing council of the ruling CDC advised the Weah administration at the

expenditures of government that do not worth spending a cent on. For example, cut down travels, gasoline for the three branches of government, recharge cards and other areas that I think are not bringing anything in return to the country and its people," Chief Allen recommended via mobile phone to this paper on Sunday, 21 July 2019.

The government did expend the amount as was budgeted despite the warning to exercise prudence, given the dismal state of the economy.

However, sources within the corridor of government are hinting this paper that the 2020 July 26 Independence Day celebrations might not be held due to serious financial

# Carter Center

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assess citizens' opinions and knowledge about COVID-19.

In late May and early June, LEON surveyed 2,250 people throughout the country and conducted 11 focus groups. Findings have been shared with the Ministry of Health and released in a public report to inform messaging to combat further spread of the disease.

LEON has also been monitoring social media for rumors and misinformation as well as monitoring how the state of emergency is affecting people around the country. LEON's research has identified important findings, including concerns about COVID-19 testing, a lack of information on how - beyond handwashing - to prevent the spread of the disease, concern about the

impact of the state of emergency and curfew on local economies, and an increase in domestic violence.

The Carter Center has been a partner with Liberia since 1997 and has worked with Liberians on a range of challenges, including Ebola. It is honored to once again work with key Liberian government and civil society partners to assure the health and well-being of all.

With support from our development partners, including the government of Sweden and the U.S. Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the Center stands ready to support ongoing COVID-19 efforts.

# 'Sick man' dies

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alternative but to immediately bury the deceased.

He forwined at the attitude of hospital authorities in rejecting the victim under the pretext of lack of bed.

He expressed gratitude to the Indian Consul General to Liberia for his timely intervention and financial assistance that enabled them to take the late Konlakon to hospital, but unfortunately, he died.

Forty-five years old Alhaji Konlakon was living rotten with maggots pouring out his legs at the Pennoh Building on Center Street, Monrovia.

Prior to his demise, Konlakon lamented that he spent sleepless nights because of severe pain, coupled with rain and cold, adding that due to the current health challenge, he has lost weight.

He pleaded that he did not want to die in the street and hoped that Mr. Jeety would

have quickly come to his rescue.

As a direct result of the man's physical condition, the Indian Consul General promised to transfer Konlakon from the Pennoh Building to a referral hospital for medication.

Mr. Sachdeva warned him not to return to the street after he shall had received medication and subsequently discharged from hospital, but Konlakon finally passed without benefiting from the gesture.

The India Consul General has been involved in distribution of hot meals to less fortunate Liberians from various communities in Monrovia, including hospitals and prison centers to ease challenges associated with the global COVID-19 pandemic in the country. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

# Jeety donates jerseys

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Jugbeh, Mr. Sachdeva said the gesture is aimed at creating awareness about the plight of underprivileged people in the country.

He urged the beneficiaries to use the materials to exercise their physical body through sports, as a mean of refreshing their abilities to doing something positive in the society.

Receiving the items on behalf of the team, Mohammed Fahnbulleh and Tom Jugbeh thanked the Indian businessmen for identifying with them.

They noted that the materials will enable them to play friendly football matches

with colleagues from other communities across Monrovia, which will encourage them to return to the society.

Meanwhile, plan is underway by the Center Street less fortunate soccer team to play their counterpart of Central Monrovia in honor of a female officer of the Liberia National Police (LNP) whose birthday comes on 24 June.

In preparation for the pending friendly encounter, Consul General Sachdeva officially took a free kick on goal during practice session of the team on Center Street witnessed by passers-by and ordinary Liberians. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**





# Capitol lockdown

## -following Covid-19 infection



By **E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor**

Following the first confirmed case of the coronavirus on Capitol Hill, the leadership of the 54th Legislature (the House of Representatives and the Liberian Senate) has lockdown the Capitol,

sending lawmakers home.

The Assistant Secretary of the Liberian Senate JannaveVerdier-Massaquoi, tested positive here Wednesday, June 17 for the virus and has been transferred to the 14th Military Hospital, the government's main

treatment center for medical attention.

The Senate has suspended its sittings for this Session for one week, beginning June 16, 2020 to observe the situation.

A determination to either resume session next week will be reached this weekend. Madam JannaveVerdier-Massaquoi is lively in speech, hopeful in prayer and trusting God as a Christian and deaconess to recover soon.

The President of the Senate, Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor, Senate President Pro-Tempore Albert T. Chie and other members of the senate are in deep sorrow and have wished her speedy recovery.

News of the first Covid-19 confirmed case at the First Branch of the Liberian government comes here as the country records a total of 516 confirmed cases,

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# WFP responds to food package

By **Winston W. Parley**

Amid controversies surrounding Liberia's coronavirus stimulus package food supply, the World Food Program (WFP) says it independently manages resources from the Liberian Government's COVID-19 Household Food Support Program (COHFSP) budget, and not the Government managing the resources.

Through a statement

released Wednesday, 17 June, WFP says the total budget of the COHFSP is US\$30 million, comprising the cost of the food basket comprising rice, beans and vegetable oil, as well as costs of storing, transporting and delivering the assistance to vulnerable households targeted through this program.

WFP's statement comes at a time the chairman of the COVID-19 food distribution steering committee and Commerce Minister Prof. Wilson



WFP Rep. and Country Director, Ms. Karla Hershey

Tarpeh denies telling the Liberian Senate that WFP charged the government here US\$9 million in "administrative and operational cost" to distribute food to vulnerable Liberians across the country.

Prior to the WFP releasing the statement Wednesday, there have been public condemnations of the alleged US\$9 million administrative and operational cost, with some Senators terming as

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