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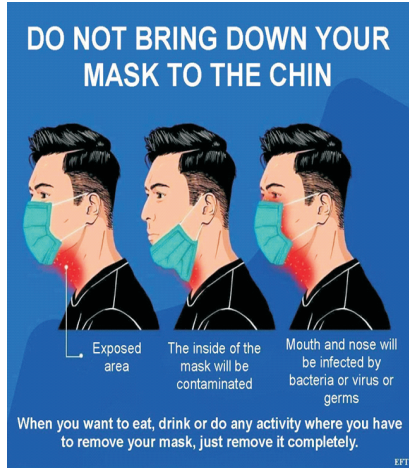
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# The New Dawn

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# 2020 is toughest battle



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# Continental News

## South African virus cases pass half million mark

More than half a million coronavirus cases have been confirmed in South Africa, according to the country's health minister.

Zweli Mkhize announced 10,107 new cases on Saturday, bringing the tally to 503,290, along with 8,153 deaths.

South Africa is the hardest-hit country on the continent and accounts for half of all reported infections in Africa.

It also has the fifth-highest number of cases in the world after the US, Brazil, Russia and India.

Researchers have said the true number of deaths in the country may be far higher.

South African health authorities have said the rate of infection is increasing rapidly, with cases currently concentrated around the capital, Pretoria. More than a third of all infections have been

reported in Gauteng - South Africa's financial hub, and a province that has quickly become the epicentre of the national outbreak.

Infections are not expected to peak for another month.

Responding to the new figures, President Cyril Ramaphosa called on citizens to remain vigilant.

"We have to continue to work together to reduce the

number of new infections. As with many other countries across the world, we need to continually adjust the measures we take to prevent new outbreaks or to safeguard our health system", he said.

South Africa imposed a strict lockdown in April and May that slowed the spread of the coronavirus. It began a gradual reopening in June but restrictions - including a ban on alcohol sales - were reintroduced last month as infection rates began to rise again. A state of emergency is also in force until 15 August. Last week the World

Health Organization (WHO) warned that South Africa's experience was a likely a precursor to what would happen across the rest of the continent.

So far African countries have generally reported low death rates per capita compared to other parts of the world.

The WHO says this could be partly because of the relatively young population in Africa - more than 60% are under the age of 25. Covid-19 is known to have a higher mortality rate for older age groups. BBC



Coronavirus in South Africa: A day in the life of a contact tracer

## Zimbabwe Booker Prize nominee 'incited violence'

Award-winning Zimbabwean author Tsitsi Dangarembga, a nominee for this year's Booker Prize, has been released on bail after her arrest on Friday during an anti-government

demonstration.

She and Fadzayi Mahere, spokesperson for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party, appeared in court on Saturday on charges of inciting public violence and unnecessary travel during the

coronavirus lockdown.

They were arrested in separate incidents near their homes during solo or small demonstrations denouncing alleged human rights abuses and corruption.

Most people had stayed at home on Friday amidst a heavy presence of security forces across cities nationwide. The two women were in good spirits during their court appearance in the capital, Harare, but complained of squalid and unsanitary conditions in prison. The government has accused the opposition of aiming to use protests to try and overthrow it, amidst a deepening economic crisis and rising discontent.

Rights group Amnesty International described the arrests as a continuation of the abductions and arbitrary detentions of those who are critical of the government.

Local human rights groups say dozens of people - including opposition



Tsitsi Dangarembga was protesting by the roadside when she was arrested

## Churches and mosques to reopen in Lagos



Many religious services have been conducted online in deeply religious Nigeria

Nigeria's commercial hub of Lagos - Africa's biggest city - is to reopen places of worship in the coming week.

Babajide Sanwo-Olu, the state's governor, said worshippers would be allowed back into mosques on Friday and churches next Sunday.

Religious centres have been closed since March because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The governor hailed the reopening as a sign of progress in Nigeria's fight against Covid-19.

But restrictions will be in place - the mosques and churches will only be able to open once a week and operate at 50% capacity.

There have been more than 43,000 coronavirus infections in Nigeria and nearly 900 deaths. BBC

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supporters, activists and journalists - have been arrested, assaulted and abducted in the last few weeks. Security forces continue to patrol the capital, Harare.

Last Tuesday, it was

announced that Dangarembga's novel This Mournable Body was among the books longlisted for this year's prestigious Booker Prize.

The list will be whittled down from 13 to a shortlist of six in September. BBC



# EDITORIAL

## Political violence is not the answer

LAST WEEK THURSDAY'S (July 30) violence in Zwedru City, Grand Gedeh County, southeast Liberia by stone-throwing youths against opposition leader Alexander B. Cummings of the Collaborating Political Parties/Alternative National Congress, Montserrado County District#10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah and delegation, forcing them to hurriedly depart the county threatens peace and democracy in Liberia.

**NOT ONLY THAT**, it sets a very bad tone for the pending midterm senatorial elections across the country in December. It shows clearly that critical voices against the government or President George Manneh Weah would not be tolerated in areas considered stronghold of the governing Coalition for Democratic Change, CDC.

**FOR MORE THAN** four hours, thugs, including youths throwing stones and wielding machetes and sticks laid siege on a local entertainment center, B-2 Guest House in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh where the opposition leader and his entourage, including Representative Kolubah had spent the night, specifically threatening to mob the Montserrado District#10 lawmaker, if he came out of the premises.

**THEY TOOK THE** action on grounds that Rep. Kolubah is in the habit of publicly insulting President Weah, so Grand Gedeh County is a no-go area for him. However, the Joint Security led by troops of the Armed Forces of Liberia subsequently moved in and bundled the opposition politicians out of the county for safety of their lives.

**THE VIOLENCE RECEIVED** widespread condemnation from Liberians, including members of the Grand Gedeh County Legislative Caucus and the Indomitable National Youth League of the Alternative National Congress headed by Mr. Cummings. The caucus described the action as "shameful and embarrassing", while the ANC youth league notes that the woeful, undemocratic, appalling, dreadful and repulsive situation witnessed in Grand Gedeh County does not only roll back fresh memories of the country's bitter past, but shows to Liberians and the world at large that President Weah is either unwilling or unable to execute the duties and responsibilities assigned to the Office of the Presidency.

**ALTHOUGH MR. WEAH**, four days after the incident commented for the first time on Sunday, 2 August while worshipping at his Forky Kloh Jlah Family Fellowship Inc. along the Robertsfield Highway, telling supporters and Grand Gedeans: "If you love me, if you support me, please be peaceful and developmental," but the government's rather lukewarm response indicates complacency.

**BARELY THREE MONTHS** to the senatorial elections, the ruling CDC has vowed to retake Montserrado County from opposition Senator Abraham Darius Dillon at all cost, and already begun dishing out millions of Liberian Dollars to voters across the county for its candidate, incumbent Representative Thomas Fallah.

**NOT ONLY SO**, the administration is threatening employees in government who do not vote Coalition candidates with dismissal, including Traditional Leaders in Maryland County for recently welcoming the CPP Chairman Alexander B. Cummings to the county.

**CDC CHAIRMAN MULBAH** Morlu, speaking recently at the Pleebo City Hall in Maryland County, threatened to recommend dismissal of government employees who would not support the ruling party. "This government under his excellence George Manneh Weah will not allow any official who is working in government and not supporting the government. We will recommend the dismissal of anyone who will be in this government and then he/she is not supporting the agenda of government; we can't have people in government then they are fighting the government", Morlu threatened.

**WE BELIEVE SUCH** utterance might have contributed to the July 30th violence in Zwedru, and set a tone for what to expect as the nation prepares to go to the poll, creating an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, particularly when previous electoral violence had gone uninvestigated.

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# COMMENTARY

By Robert Watson

## Nature by the Numbers

*Natural systems like the massive Sundarbans mangrove forest in India and Bangladesh are not just home to millions of plant and animal species that deserve protection from human encroachment. They are also crucial sources of economic output and resilience, demanding far more protection than they currently receive.*

**NORWICH** - When Cyclone Amphan came barreling up the Bay of Bengal this past May, South Asia's first named storm of the year appeared to pose a massive threat to the people who live on the coastal floodplains and to the animals and plants - including many endangered species - that rely on these sensitive ecosystems. But nature came to the region's rescue.

The Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, offered better protection than any man-made storm wall could have done. When Amphan's 16-foot storm surge slammed into this 4,000-square-mile national park, the mangroves took the teeth out of it, just as they did with the two other supercharged cyclones, Aila and Sidr, that have made landfall in recent times.

On the other side of the world, natural storm defenses on the lower end of Manhattan have long since been paved over. Real-estate developers have even extended the island into New York Harbor with acres of landfill, neglecting to build up storm surge protections. As a result, when Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy hammered the city in 2011 and 2012, respectively, lower Manhattan, including the city's financial district, was inundated.

City planners have since been working with the US government to plan for the next wave of superstorms. But the price tag of the infrastructure needed - a retractable wall across New York Harbor costing at least \$62 billion - has prevented any plans from being finalized.

As we look to rebuild the global economy following the COVID-19 crisis, conserving our remaining natural assets must be a top priority. If we don't act, we risk losing the plants, animals, and microorganisms needed to keep our air clean, our water pure, and our food supplies plentiful - not to mention the mangrove forests and barrier reefs that stand between us and the superstorms that are becoming more frequent as a result of climate change.

The world has become less wild as we have built and expanded cities, cut down forests for crops and livestock, drained wetlands for roads, and flooded valleys for dams. The economic cost of this ecological damage goes mostly uncounted. But it is prohibitively high, eroding the value of goods and services that nature produces. One million species are now at risk of extinction.

Fortunately, there is a relatively simple initiative underway to curb some of these losses and solve our looming conservation crises. Under the heading of "30x30," it

aims to protect 30% of our planet's land and oceans by 2030 through effective, permanent measures. More than 20 member states in the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity have already committed to supporting this global target.

According to a new report authored by more than 100 scientists and economists from around the world, expanding existing protected areas to 30% of the planet would add \$250 billion to annual global economic output, on average. (The report estimates a range of \$64-454 billion, as the costs and benefits will vary depending on which areas are protected.) Moreover, the study finds that protected areas and the nature-based activities they support are among the world's fastest-growing economic sectors, with 4-6% projected annual revenue growth, compared to less than 1% in agriculture, and negative growth in fisheries.

For countries with large areas of forest and mangroves, embracing 30x30 would prevent the loss of an average of \$350 billion (\$170-534 billion) annually in ecosystem services. These costs stem largely from flooding, soil loss, storm surges, and the release of stored carbon that occurs when natural vegetation is destroyed. By protecting India and Bangladesh over the years, the Sundarbans have provided an extraordinarily valuable service.

Conversely, the environmental destruction in the Brazilian portion of the Amazon rainforest has resulted in major, far-reaching losses. Even the drinking water shortages that afflict São Paulo, the largest city in the Americas, are directly connected to Amazon deforestation.

As governments contemplate how to re-open their economies after the COVID-19 lockdown, they must accommodate the need for greater conservation and restoration of natural resources. Every tropical storm that is strong enough to be named should serve as a reminder of what is at stake if we do nothing. With recent forecasts of an "above-normal 2020 Atlantic hurricane season," the US east coast should already be bracing itself.

India and Bangladesh are fortunate to have the Sundarbans. But no country in the world lacks natural areas that are worth conserving or restoring. Not only is it critical for all countries to adopt the 30x30 target, but each should also look for ways to invest more in its natural areas. By doing so now, governments can ensure that nature-based sectors and ecosystem services will recover at the same pace as the rest of the economy. There's no better time to start than before another storm strikes.



## O-PED

By Andrei Kolesnikov

# The Caudillo of the Kremlin

*By laying the constitutional groundwork to remain president for life, Vladimir Putin is engineering a further "Francoization" of his regime. But while Francisco Franco at least had a successor in King Juan Carlos, Putin has no such thing, which could spell chaos for Russia.*

**M**OSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin has shown his regime's real intentions. By changing the constitution to allow him to remain in office until 2036 and incorporating conservative new language, it has cast off its teetering mask of democratic legitimacy. But just as Putin has sought to entrench his rule, his regime is looking weaker than ever.

In the city of Khabarovsk, tens of thousands of protesters have taken to the streets in recent weeks, chanting, "Putin resign!" They are not alone. While Putin's approval rating may seem high, it is low by Russian standards. In fact, his 59-60% approval rating in recent months is his lowest since October 1999, when he was prime minister. And it is unlikely to improve significantly for a simple reason: Putin tried-and-tested methods to win support have lost their firepower.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Russia hard, in terms of both public health and economic fallout. With oil exports, the mainstay of Russia's economy, down sharply, the government's budget revenues have cratered. As a result, the Kremlin's tacit pact with the public - we ensure your basic wellbeing, and you don't complain - is unraveling.

Putin's regime has long sought to divert public attention from domestic problems by touting its foreign-policy victories and its unrelenting battle against a domestic "fifth column." Putin's annexation of Crimea in 2014 embodied what have long been his most effective tactics for securing support: xenophobia, anti-Western hysteria, and the invocation of a glorious past. His approval rating skyrocketed to more than 85%.

For Putin, however, the impression of broad public support is arguably more important than the support itself. The July 1 plebiscite on the constitutional amendments meant little in practice. The changes had been ratified by the Duma (parliament) and regional legislatures months before.

But the popular vote gave the Kremlin the opportunity to claim that nearly 78% of Russia's citizens supported the changes. And it could cite the 21% who, according to official figures, voted against the changes to refute the many accusations - including from the European Union - that the vote was rigged.

High voter turnout enhanced the façade. But the fact that so many people participated under duress - they often had to report to their employers that they had voted - could end up hurting Putin in regional elections this year and in 2021, when federal parliamentary elections will also be held. Unlike in a plebiscite, people will be able to cast protest votes.

The Kremlin's heavy use of another favorite tactic - firing, arresting, or otherwise removing ideological opponents - could also backfire. In early July, the authorities detained two activists - including Andrei Pivovarov, the executive director of exiled oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky's Open Russia pro-democracy movement - who were campaigning against Putin's plans to prolong his rule. Four others had their homes searched.

Several journalists have also been targeted in recent weeks, including Svetlana Prokopyeva (fined for supposedly inciting terrorism) and Ivan Safronov (charged with treason). Pyotr Verzilov, the publisher of Mediazona, a news site that chronicles abuse in Russia's justice system, has had his home searched repeatedly.

Likewise, the historian Yuri Dmitriev, whose work exposing Stalin's crimes has cast doubt on Kremlin hagiography, received a prison sentence for sexual violence against a minor. And last month, celebrated theater director Kirill Serebrennikov was convicted of embezzlement - part of an effort to crack down on independent theater.

These are proven tactics, but they are also transparent. And, though a loyal segment of society approves, others - including formerly loyal constituencies - are pushing back. The Khabarovsk protests were triggered by the sudden arrest of the popular governor, Sergei Furgal, for his alleged involvement in murders dating back to 2004-05, when he worked in business.

Furgal is no liberal; he is a member of the nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, part of the "systemic opposition" in the Duma. But he won his position in 2018 by defeating a Kremlin-backed candidate. By arresting him, the Kremlin likely wanted to send a message to regional leaders who might try to capitalize on the national government's failures during the COVID-19 crisis. Instead, the arrest immediately tarnished the image of national unity that the plebiscite result was supposed to project.

To be sure, the Khabarovsk protests alone do not pose a threat to Putin's rule. Their effects will be felt nationwide only if they spread to other cities, especially Moscow. But they should worry the Kremlin nonetheless. In Khabarovsk, it is not just professionals who are protesting, as has usually been the case. ? any protesters can hardly be considered politicized intelligentsia from Moscow or Saint Petersburg. Those in the streets previously would have been part of Putin's social base. And they are setting an example for other regions.

What we are witnessing is a further "Francoization" of the Russian political regime: Putin is laying the groundwork to remain head of state for life, as Spain's Francisco Franco did with the 1947 Law of Succession. But as Europe grew wealthy in the postwar era, Spain atrophied decade after decade under Franco's increasingly dozy regime. Putin seems set on achieving the same level of inertia - in politics, the economy, and society.

But Franco at least had a successor in mind. By having the monarchy restored on Franco's death, King Juan Carlos could ascend the throne. Putin, however, is leading Russia into a dead end. After all, he cannot bring back the czar. So he has simply postponed the problem of succession. *Après lui, le déluge.*

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## OPINION

By Diane Coyle

# Tech Titans at Bay?

*Though the tech monopolists may capture significant short-term gains from the accelerating shift online, the recent congressional antitrust hearing showed that they can no longer avoid the harsh glare of the political spotlight. The writing may be on the wall.*

**C**AMBRIDGE - Big Tech is back in the spotlight - and not in a good way. On July 29, the chief executives of Amazon, Apple, Google, and Facebook spent more than five hours fielding tough questions about their overwhelming market power from a bipartisan antitrust panel in the US House of Representatives. Is the end of an era approaching?

In many ways, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a boon for tech companies. As Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Apple's Tim Cook, Google's Sundar Pichai, and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg all noted in their opening statements at the antitrust hearing, people appreciate the services their companies provide. Recent research indicates that the COVID-19 crisis has deepened this appreciation.

This is not surprising. Digital technologies have enabled workers to do their jobs from home, students to continue their classes while schools are closed, and people to stay in touch with loved ones and entertain themselves while sheltering in place.<sup>1</sup>

Tech companies have been reaping enormous benefits from this shift. In the first half of 2020, while the global economy confronted an unprecedented recession, Amazon's share price rose by about 40%, fueled by rising online purchases and increased use of cloud services. Zoom's market value has more than tripled since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, as it became a hub for remote meetings and online socializing.

As for Google and Facebook, they suffered temporary losses from reduced advertising revenues. But they still account for an overwhelming share of the digital-advertising market - four-fifths in the United Kingdom, to cite one example. Moreover, while Google and Facebook are free to use, the UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has concluded that consumers are effectively paying for their services indirectly through advertising revenues, at a rate of £500 (\$656) per household annually - a testament to their market power.<sup>1</sup>

It is too early to say how much of people's lives will move online, or for how long. People may fear COVID-19, but they also suffer from Zoom fatigue. Nonetheless, it seems likely that work and social patterns will undergo some sustained changes, which will have far-reaching policy implications.

For starters, closing the digital divide will become more urgent than ever. Of the many forms of inequality the pandemic is exposing and exacerbating, unequal access to the Internet and digital technologies is among the most prominent.

All the services that have made lives so much better under social-distancing rules - from remote working to online shopping to streaming services - are available only to those with access to a reasonably fast and reliable Internet connection and suitable hardware. Many are also receiving health care and accessing government support online, further highlighting the critical importance of universal access.<sup>1</sup>

In recent years, governments have increasingly recognized this imperative. For example, in 2018, the US Federal Communications Commission made closing the digital divide a high priority. And yet about one in 20 people in the United States still have no high-speed Internet connection. In rural areas, about one-third of households are not connected. The figures are similarly bleak in the UK.

Closing the gap will require large-scale investment in digital infrastructure, including broadband connectivity and 5G for mobile services. In both the US and the UK, governments are working to deliver on the first imperative, by making the low-return rural investments that cannot attract private capital. Progress on the second imperative may be more difficult, owing to political opposition to the Chinese telecoms giant and 5G leader Huawei.

But Huawei may be turn out to be the tip of an iceberg, because the current shift online will lead to greater political and regulatory scrutiny of tech giants. For one thing, regulators are likely to pressure telecommunications companies to increase investment, spurring debates about license obligations and pricing (how much companies must invest, and how they will fund it). Past disputes about where along the value chain costs should fall - from physical network operators to streaming services - may re-emerge.

But, as the recent US antitrust hearing suggests, the most contentious issue will probably be the market power of digital companies. Even in today's highly polarized political environment, growing concern about Big Tech - including the viability of small producers and the economy's dependence on digital market access - is broadly shared. And US regulators have already signaled their concern, with inquiries by both the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice.

The European Union is far ahead of the US when it comes to regulating, taxing, and constraining Big Tech. The European Commission has pursued multiple antitrust cases against the tech giants, as well as broader initiatives such as the proposed Digital Services Act. Margrethe Vestager - previously the European commissioner for competition, and currently Executive Vice President of the European Commission for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age - has led the way on this front.

In the UK, the CMA is working to implement the Furman Review, a government-commissioned report on digital-market competition published in March 2019. The panel recommended subjecting strategically important companies to targeted regulation, including a code of conduct that will likely cover issues such as favoring one's own services, changes in terms and conditions, and pre-notification of all mergers.

It remains to be seen how such efforts will play out, especially in a US headed toward a highly contentious presidential election. But one thing is clear: Though the tech monopolists may capture significant short-term gains from the accelerating shift online, they can no longer avoid the harsh glare of the political spotlight. The writing may be on the wall.

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SUPREME COURT OF LIBERIA

OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR  
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NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING  
Invitation for Bids for Vehicle Repairs.

DATE: August 3, 2020

IFB NO. JUD/NCB/002/2020/2021

- The Judiciary Branch of Government anticipates funding from the Government of Liberia through its 2020/2021 fiscal budget for the procurement of services appertaining to Vehicle Repairs. Therefore, the Judiciary wishes to solicit sealed bids from reputable agencies dealing in the provision of services relating to Vehicle Repairs Maintenance & services. This invitation for bids follows the special procurement notice for this project which appears in two local dailies.
- The Judiciary now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the provision of the services described below. The items will be divided into lots. Bidders are allowed to bid for more than one lot. Bid submission begins on August 3, 2020 from 10:00 AM to 4:00PM daily. The final date of submission is September 3, 2020. Packages: Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance Services

Bid Security

JUD/NCB/002/2020/2021	Lot-1	Mercedes	1unit	US \$150.00
JUD/NCB/002/2020/2021	Lot-2	Repairs of Ford	9 units	US\$ 400.00
JUD/NCB/002/2020/2021	Lot-3	Repairs of Nissan	18 units	US\$ 600.00
JUD/NCB/002/2020/2021	Lot-4	Repairs of Hyundai	6 units	US\$210.00
JUD/NCB/002/2020/2021	Lot-5	Repairs of Toyota	40 units	US \$1,100.00

- Bidding will be conducted through National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures as specified in the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA Amended and Restated Public Procurement and Concession Act (PPCC ACT) published and approved: September 16, 2011. Bidding is opened to all eligible and qualified bidders' source as defined in the guidelines.
- A complete set of bidding documents for the specified Vehicle Repairs and maintenance services, may be obtained by qualified and eligible bidders from the Procurement Unit at the Temple of Justice: (a) Through Inquiry from the Director of Procurement; and, (b) Upon payment of a non-refundable fee of US\$ 50 for each set of bid documents for the aforementioned services for Vehicle Repairs. Bidders are required to submit a bid security in the form of Bank Guarantee along with the Bid Documents.
- Qualification requirements include the following:
  - Current Business Registration Certificate (Liberia Business Registry);
  - Current Tax Clearance Certificate (LRA);
  - Certificate of Incorporation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs);
  - Financial Records of Performance for the past two (2) years with indication of at least two previous or current clients, with their Addresses and Telephone Numbers; (e) Availability of spare parts at all times; and, (e) Demonstrated ability to pre-finance. Additional details are provided in the bidding documents.

(e) All Supplier should have high standard spare parts to meet the demand of the Judiciary.  
 (f) Suppliers should have the capacity of repairing vehicles within the Judiciary fleet.  
 (g) Availability of spare parts.  
 (h) Should be capable of having specific tow truck.  
 (i) Contact duration will be taking into consideration as per our Bidding process.  
 (j) All Suppliers should have professional mechanic that are license within their employed.
- All Submissions must be signed and sealed in an envelope with one original and two duplicates copies all in one envelope and sealed: (1) IFB NO. JUD/NCB/002/2020/2021 – (Lot 1 to lot 5) - CONFIDENTIAL BID for the provision of Vehicle Repairs maintenance Services to the Judiciary for Fiscal Year 2020 – 2021; and shall be addressed to: DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT, TEMPLE OF JUSTICE MAIN BUILDING, FIFTH FLOOR RM. # 501 MONROVIA, LIBERIA
- All Submissions must be delivered to the Procurement Unit on or before August 3, 2020 @ 11:00 A. M. However, no ELECTRONIC BIDS will be accepted and late bids will be rejected.
- A pre-bid opening meeting will be held on September 1, 2020 @ 12: 00 PM in the office of the Director of Procurement in Room #501, to answer questions relevant to the bidding process for Vehicle Repairs and maintenance services, Seven (7) days after which, all further clarification requests would remain unanswered to.
- Sealed bids will be opened in the presence of all bidders or their representatives on Thursday, September 3, 2020 as follows: (a) Vehicle Repairs and maintenance services for Lot 1 @ 11:00 am Lot 2 @ 11:30 am, Lot 3 @ 12:00 am, Lot 4 @ 12:30 am Lot 5 @ 1:30 Pm. All potential bidders are asked to please take note of the time herein stated. Bids shall be valid for a period of sixty (60) days from the deadline of submission.
- Note: The Judiciary reserves the right to reject or accept any bid without incurring any liability or assigning any reason thereof.

Signed: Director of Procurement

Approved: Court Administrator



# LIBERIA POLITICAL HOT-FIRE

With Jones Mallay

fredrickdiamondm@yahoo.com

## A Panorama View on Voodoo and Juju Powers Versus the Sudden Deaths of Innocent Young Liberian Politicians in the Liberian Legislature

Political Hot-Fire has learned from assorted unimpeachable antecedents inside Liberia that Voodoo and Juju dynamism have taken over the entire Liberian Legislature functionaries, with some lawmakers soliciting extraordinary voodoo and juju power to kill, paralyze, poisoned and or willfully throw special spiritual sicknesses and or terrible disease at one another in the Liberian Legislature. The source further lamented that voodoo and juju power are not only utilized among lawmakers on Capitol Hill, but it is also used effectively during elections to subdue, paralyze and kill one's opponents in a representative and or senatorial race with the hope of preventing one's rival from succeeding as representative/senator. Voodoo and juju are used to consolidate perpetual power within multiple power corridors on Capitol Hill.

These narratives do not in any way suggest that some Liberians are not dying from natural causes or under well-known circumstances. Political Hot-Fire wants to remember the late Representatives Munah Pelham Youngblood, Adolph Lawrence, J. NagbeSloh, Geraldine Doe-Sherif, and Edward Dagoseh and all other lawmakers who may have died before them may their souls rest in peace and light perpetual shine on them.

Some Liberian skeptics believe that voodoo and juju power resonate with the body politics in Liberia. It has given rise to countless and contested powers among very poor young Liberian adolescent politicians who had been living in acute systemic impoverished conditions across Liberia for many years. The irony is that the young Liberian adolescent politicians see some of their colleagues come to political prominence and suddenly get rich overnight, while they continued to languish in acute poverty for years.

A case in point can be attributed to the late Samuel Kanyon Doe's era, when he and other little-minded young politicians they took over the affairs of government in the late 80s and vandalized the nation's wealth and quickly amassed wealth for themselves overnight with the assistance of their guns versus some levels of voodoo and juju power according to sources. Such political dramas unfolded under the very eyes of other poor young Liberians who felt that they can also muster the courage to generate some levels of popularity with the help of voodoo and juju power to get to the top and possess the cookies' jars to themselves as well. But some ordinary Liberians are beginning to ask themselves, why the body politics in Liberia is heavily loaded with different types of voodoo and juju power at an unprecedented magnitude especially among young Liberian Lawmakers on Capitol hill?

Though dirty politics may account largely for such a scenario, the question that arose is what is politics within the Liberian setting, especially among poor young Liberians? It is believed that countless definitions of politics have made political science more attractive to the point where Liberians have begun killing one another unmercifully for the sake of elected portfolios, political power, wealth accumulation, name tagging, influence, and affluence. But one useful source also defined politics as a "multifaceted game." Others see politics as: "game of the impossible." Speculatively, Madam Jewel Howard Taylor, the current Vice President of the Republic of Liberia from the Ruling Coalition for Democratic Change, defined politics as "Our Time." Others tried to qualify politics by what they intend to reap out of it that is to lineup their private pockets as quickly as possible through massive wealth accumulation schemes at the back of ordinary poor, poor downtrodden and very sick Liberians whom they claimed to represent in the Liberian Legislature. But politics in the Western world, especially in the United States, is one of the finest things to happen to any decent individual or is one of the best practices in life, given the prevailing circumstance under which it happened. It is also a very wonderful and delicate human engagement' and exchanges about the government and its people.

But in Africa, especially Liberia, the story is completely a different one. It is different because politics in Liberia is a very dangerous and a poisoner game to venture into. It is a dangerous game because it is about life and death game, especially for most very poor young adolescent politicians and a long listing of school dropouts who sacrificed their lives simply to become Representative or Senator. They soon find themselves in the corridor of using dangerous juju and voodoo power to pave their way up the power ladder as lawmakers, which eventually come with a very big price, and mysterious deaths are in the equation as well.

Moreover, most poor Liberians who may be fortunate to contest elected seats often solicit a certain type of reinforcement using voodoo and juju power to win said elected seats and consolidates their power on Capitol Hill as long they continued to seek voodoo and juju intervention. Other Liberians who might for some mysterious motives decide to set their eyes on similar seats could be eliminated or killed quickly with the use of voodoo or juju power.

▶ TO BE CONT'D

## Vacancy Announcement

The Searchlight Communications Inc., Publishers of the New Dawn newspaper is seeking applications from young females between the ages of 18-28 for an internship placement within the business department of the paper as sales agents.

The internship runs for three months. Interns who demonstrate excellent marketing skills will be hired permanently after the three months.

The applicants must be at least high school graduates and above, have good communication skill, must be able to market the New Dawn to potential advertisers etc.

All interested persons should direct their communications to:  
The Management of Searchlight Communications Inc.

P.O. Bo 1266  
UN Drive  
Monrovia-Liberia

Email: info@thenewdawnliberia.com  
For further details call: +2317777529/886484201

The NewDawn Newspaper  
is on the Newsstand Daily.

Grab a copy of today's edition  
or visit: <https://thenewdawnliberia.com/>



MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# NewDawn receives Google journalism emergency relief fund

The New Dawn newspaper has received an emergency funding from the Google News Initiative Journalism Emergency Relief Found (GNI JERF).

is Liberia's truly independent newspaper established on November 26, 2009, with its first hard cop being launched on January 22, 2010.

It can be recalled that during the first month of the State of

the existential threat facing many publishers around the world posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. (<http://newsinitiative.withgoogle.com/journalism-emergency-relief-fund>)

"This is a big relief to us in the short term and we are grateful that we were selected by Google to be a part of this news initiative." Said Mr. Othello B. Garblah, Founder and Managing Editor of the Searchlight Communications Inc., publisher of the New Dawn newspaper.

"The cost of production in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the major challenges facing the New Dawn in the absence of advertisement," said Mr. Garblah.

"With this emergency relief fund, we will be able to in the short term meet up with our production cost-in terms of buying newsprints, inks, plates, films, servicing our press and taking care of both fuel cost to run our generator for production and of course being able to supply data to our journalists to enable them file their stories," Mr. Garblah added.

According to Mr. Garblah, the fund is going to be used in compliance with the funding agreement over the next 180 days.



The funding, which is a grant in the tune of US\$7000.00 (Seven Thousand United States Dollars) will enable the paper to underwrite its production cost for the sole purpose of staying on the market and continuing to provide news services to the people of Liberia and the world at large through its online and hard copies.

The New Dawn newspaper,

Emergency here, the New Dawn was the only newspaper which did not suspend publication of its hard copies despite working with half of its staff during the lockdown period.

The fund is an emergency relief intended to ease the economic hardship posed on the New Dawn by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Google established the program to support production of original journalism during

# Police confirm attack on Bonynan Family

The Liberia National Police (LNP), through its Division of Crime Services, Criminal Investigation and Interpol Affairs, has confirmed report of the June 30, 2020 attack and burglary on the home of the Bunyan Family in Baptist Seminary community on the Roberts International Airport Highway, Margibi County.

A report released by the LNP on July 29, 2020 confirmed earlier accounts given to a team of journalists by Mrs. Marthaline Bunyan that, on June 30, 2020, at about 3:45am, unknown persons broke into her the shop and made away with assorted provisional goods valued at

herein mentioned cash and items and exited through the same route", the police report detailed.

The report revealed further that the shop in question and the premises where it is located do not have any security guard and that, no arrest has yet been made but the police are exerting all efforts to trace, identify and apprehend the perpetrators and retrieve the stolen properties as probe continues.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Marthaline Bunyan has alarmed over what she termed constant harassment and threats on the lives of her family members by unknown people, including



Police Inspector General Patrick Sudue

US\$3,500.00, a cash of US\$2,050.00 and L\$100,000.00.

The police report averred that, while the victims were asleep, they heard a heavy sound and Marthaline immediately woke up, went to the provision shop, met the shop broken into by unknown persons and the above mentioned properties and cash were stolen.

"During crime scene inspection/investigation, it was established that Criminal Mischief, Burglary and Theft of Property were committed in that, the perpetrators gained entry into the affected business center by damaging the padlock to the main steel gate of the provision shop, entered therein, collected the

those who broke into her premises on that fateful morning.

She told journalists that the unknown persons were armed with deadly weapons and were heard making threats on the lives of the family, promising to return into the compound anytime.

Mr. Bobby Bunyan, husband of Marthaline, is currently residing in the United States where he reportedly fled, apparently fearing danger on his life following a major fraud he discovered at a commercial bank in 2013, working as an internal auditor.

The discovery of the fraud, according to family sources, led to constant threats on the life of Mr. Bunyan, which caused him to flee for his life.

# More Liberians troops leave for Mali

## -Gen. Johnson

The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia Major General Prince Charles Johnson, III, has disclosed that the United Nations has asked the Liberian government to increase its military strength in war-torn Mali by 45 percent.

General Johnson declined to clearly state the actual number of soldiers the 45 percent represents on grounds that doing so might compromise the security of the current troop in Timbuktu, Mali.

"The soldiers are doing well. Currently, as I speak to you, the United Nations has asked us to increase by 45% of what we have there. The 45% will be a company plus size. "I can't tell now the number of



soldiers the 45% represents. The issue of stating exact number could compromise the security of the soldiers we currently have on Mission in

Timbuktu, Mali." He said.

According to General Jonson, the Liberian troops will leave for Timbuktu, Mali mid-August to help enforce

the UN Peacekeeping Mission in that West African country.

Speaking over the weekend in an interview, he added that the Liberian government has military staff officers working with the United Nations in Southern Sudan, the newest

country in Africa, including Staff Officers in Sudan.

Gen. Johnson noted that the nation's last peacekeeping mission was in the 1960s in the Congo, now the Democratic



MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Weah tells supporters to seize violence

President George Manneh Weah has asked his supporters from the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) to desist from acts of violence, days after they waged terror against opposition leaders Alexander Cummings and Rep. Yekeh Kolubah in the southeastern city of Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County.

"If you love me, if you support me, please be

peaceful and developmental," the Executive Mansion quotes Mr. Weah as telling his supporters on Sunday, 2 August at his Forky Kloh Jlahleh Family Fellowship Church in Rehab.

The gang of angry folks in their hundreds invaded the lodging place of Mr. Cummings who chairs the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) and Montserrado County District 10 Rep. Yekeh Kolubah and their entourage in Zwedru, stoning

the building that hosted the victims as well as their vehicles.

Joint state security forces failed to make any arrest of a suspect for the mob action carried out against the opposition figures by the ruling party supporters, and it took the intervention of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to disperse the attackers.

The attackers were demanding Mr. Kolubah and Mr. Cummings to leave the county as a way of expressing their anger against Kolubah's criticisms and insults against their political leader Mr. Weah.

But the Executive Mansion says President Weah has reiterated his objection and detestation of violence and unrest in Liberia, reminding his supporters that the country witnessed so much of violence for long at the expense of peace and normalcy.

According to President Weah, everyone has the right to move about freely in any part of the country, telling his

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



# MCA-L completes payment of property owners affected by water pipeline construction

The Millennium Challenge Account-Liberia (MCA-L) has completed payment of US\$160, 869.00 (One hundred sixty thousand eight hundred sixty nine United States dollars) to all 55 persons whose properties fell within

some instances, equal division of funds between husbands and wives.

The last compensation to an individual landowner was made on July 15, 2020, after MCA-L conducted a three-month financial literacy skills training for the beneficiaries to ensure

a variety of crops, including sugar cane and pineapples, used the compensation to invest in ventures that are generating more income for him.

Gooding said he was pleased with the compensation program,



An assortment of equipment-- including a 3,000-Watt audio system, a generator, and pieces of furniture donated to the Harrisburg Township.

the right of way of the Raw Water Pipeline construction.

MCA-L made the payments based on the extent of impact on the affected assets (crops, land and structures) through a process that ensured fairness and protection of the most vulnerable, including in

that they make smart investment choices to improve their quality of life.

EDUCARE, a local NGO, administered the training.

One of the beneficiaries, Wilmot Gooding, whose family had 12.5 acres of land along the route of the pipeline containing

noting, "They are teaching us how to manage the money that were given to us for our farmlands. We also have a savings plan, and I put in L\$500 (US\$2.50) every day."

MCA-L also donated an assortment of equipment for use in the Harrisburg Town

# NDC condemns attacks on Rep. Yekeh Kolubah and Cummings

The National Democratic Coalition (NDC) has condemned in the strongest terms what it described as a government sponsored and instigated attack on opposition leader Alexander Cummings and Representative Yekeh Kolubah in Grand Gedeh County.

On Thursday, angry youths believed to be supporters of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) attacked Mr. Cummings the head of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) and Rep. Yekeh Kolubah, Montserrado County District 10 Representative in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, during their visit there.

an immediate probe into the circumstances and those responsible must be brought to justice," the party added.

In the statement signed by the NDC's National Chairman Prof. Alaric Tokpa, the party noted "This harsh reality underlines the need for broad based cooperation (in the opposition community) that will obstruct the violent interruption that government has introduced in electoral democracy."

The NDC therefore, proposed a national symposium on the protection of the integrity of the ballot to be followed by a big warning demonstration that will assure the George Weah government of its early demise if the trend



The angry youths threw stones and other missiles at the opposition leaders. Grand Gedeh is believed to be one of the strongholds of the ruling CDC. It's the home town of slain President Samuel K. Doe.

"This unprovoked attack signals the trend that government will follow throughout the 2020 legislative and 2023 general and presidential elections," the NDC asserted. "We call for

continues.

The party called for the organization of the National Democratic Front by all opposition political parties and national structures.

The NDC said it is already forming the Gbarpolu Democratic Front, while urging all other counties build similar movements that will empty into the National Democratic Front.

Hall in exchange for a tract of land belonging to the community. The materials included a 3,000-Watt audio system, a generator, and pieces of furniture.

During the presentation ceremony, MCA-L's Environmental and Social Performance Director, Paul Kennedy, urged residents of the town to be good stewards of the equipment. He suggested that they could use

the equipment to rent their town hall for weddings and other events.

"Within less than a year, this town can generate enough income from the equipment to cover the original cost. This is a feature of how MCA-L projects are designed - we intend to leave project-affected communities unharmed or even better than we met them," Kennedy said.



# Français

## Violences politiques : Des leaders politiques de l'opposition attaqués par des pro-Weah à Grand Gedeh

Des centaines de jeunes soupçonnés d'être membres de la ligue des jeunes du Congrès pour le changement démocratique (parti au pouvoir) ont assiégé Jeudi 30 juillet l'hôtel dans lequel le président de l'alliance des partis politiques de l'opposition, Alexander B.

Cummings, et le représentant Yekeh Kolubah ont eu domicile à Zwedru, dans le comté de Grand Gedeh, les empêchant de s'adresser à leurs militants.

À en croire nos correspondants, la situation était si tendue que les activités normales ont été interrompues dans la ville de Zwedru.

M. Cummings, leader

politique du Congrès national alternatif (ANC) et son entourage sont actuellement en tournée dans le sud-est du Libéria, galvanisant les citoyens de cette partie du pays pour soutenir l'alliance des partis politiques de l'opposition lors des élections sénatoriales de mi-mandat

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Le groupe parlementaire du comté de Grand Gedeh condamne les violences de Zwedru

Le groupe parlementaire du comté de Grand Gedeh ont qualifié de honteuses et embarrassantes les violences qui ont éclaté jeudi à Zwedru, la capitale régionale du comté.

Le représentant du comté de Montserrado Yekeh Kolubah et des responsables de la délégation de l'alliance des principaux partis politiques dirigée par son président Alexander Cummings ont été pris à partie et chassés jeudi dernier par des jeunes qui seraient des militants du parti au pouvoir.

Le représentant Alex Grant, dans une déclaration lue le weekend dernier, a indiqué que le caucus législatif du comté de Grand Gedeh considère l'incident comme quelque chose de malheureux, embarrassant et honteux pour le comté et ses populations qui sont éprises de paix.

« Il est assez regrettable et décevant que certains habitants de Zwedru City, une ville communément appelée whisky zoulou, connue pour son hospitalité et son comportement légal au fil des

ans, soit maintenant perçue comme une ville des hooligans, ce qui est complètement contraire à notre culture et à nos valeurs. », a déclaré le représentant Grant.

Selon lui, le caucus législatif du comté de Grand Gedeh condamne dans les termes les plus vifs l'attaque contre M. Cummings et l'ensemble de la délégation de l'alliance des partis politiques qui a été prise à partie dans le malheureux incident.

Le caucus demande aux forces de sécurité d'arrêter et de traduire en justice tous ceux qui ont orchestré et perpétré la violence.

« Le caucus souhaite clairement avertir qu'il ne permettra à aucun individu ou groupe d'individus, pour quelque raison que ce soit, d'utiliser notre comté pour saper la paix et la stabilité dont nous jouissons grâce aux

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### Lutter contre les divisions et l'injustice

L'Orateur national pour le 173<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'indépendance du Libéria, Mgr Simeon Dunbar, a provoqué un sentiment national de prise de conscience chez les Libériens le lundi 27 juillet lorsqu'il a mis à nu les problèmes auxquels ils sont confrontés et proposé des mesures à prendre individuellement et collectivement pour que l'on s'émancipe et ouvre la porte du progrès et de la prospérité.

Le thème de la célébration de la fête nationale de l'indépendance cette année était « DEBOUT ENSEMBLE EN CES TEMPS DE PANDÉMIE », mais Mgr Dunbar a regardé au-delà de la crise COVID-19 et a égrainé les lacunes profondes du Libéria, allant de la corruption systémique au népotisme, en passant par le syndrome de la dépendance, le déficit de gouvernance et la culture de l'impunité, entre autres.

Du gouvernement aux citoyens ordinaires de la rue, chacun a un rôle à jouer pour transformer le pays et faire de lui un lieu où il fait bon vivre. Mais le gouvernement a la responsabilité de prendre les devants conformément au contrat social qu'il a signé avec le peuple lors des élections.

L'orateur de la fête de l'indépendance a souligné : « Nous ne pouvons pas et ne voulons pas nous unir pour gagner une bataille dans une société qui tolère l'injustice, la corruption endémique, la désobéissance ou le non-respect de l'état de droit, le népotisme et le tribalisme, la violence sexuelle, le manque de réconciliation véritable, de patriotisme, de responsabilité, d'intégrité et de crainte de Dieu... »

Nous sommes totalement d'accord avec Mgr Siméon. Oui, le Libéria ne fera aucun progrès sérieux si nous continuons à nourrir ces vices comme d'habitude. Nous avons besoin d'un renouveau national qui nous inciterait à faire la bonne chose.

Pour commencer, les Libériens devraient retrousser leurs manches et se mettre au travail, car il y a de la dignité dans le travail. L'Orateur, qui est un ecclésiastique, nous rappelle la Sainte Bible spécifiquement dans Proverbes 10 : 4, « Devient pauvre, quiconque a la main molle ». Il a dit que la pauvreté est la seule alternative au travail acharné.

Nous devenons progressivement un peuple qui se réveille le matin pour se plaindre toute la journée, qui ne fait qu'accuser le gouvernement d'être responsable de toutes nos difficultés, sans tenter de chercher nous-mêmes à trouver une solution à nos problèmes comme si nous sommes sans savoir qu'avec Dieu, tout est possible.

Il y a des problèmes partout dans le monde. Mais ce qui fait que certains réussissent, tandis que d'autres échouent, c'est la volonté. Si nous n'élevons pas notre foi et ne croyons pas en nous-mêmes en tant que Libériens, notre pays restera longtemps en stagnation.

Le gouvernement devrait s'attaquer aux problèmes de brutalité policière contre les citoyens en appliquant rapidement les lois.

Il est important de respecter la Constitution et de l'appliquer sans favoritisme pour avoir une société stable. Mais lorsque les responsables gardent le silence sur des crimes horribles tels que le viol et le meurtre, le pays sombre dans l'anarchie.

Le président George Weah et son gouvernement devraient écouter attentivement et prendre des mesures pour remédier aux problèmes auxquels nous sommes confrontés, car le rôle des orateurs nationaux est de faire une évaluation honnête de notre vie nationale, nous exhorter à prendre conscience, ce qui nous permettra de jeter un regard introspectif et rassembler le courage de réformer nos habitudes pour une vie meilleure.



# Français

## Violences politiques : Des leaders politiques de

qui auront lieu le 8 décembre sur toute l'étendue du territoire national.

Il a commencé sa tournée la semaine dernière dans son comté natal à Maryland avec le représentant Kolubah, où il a présenté aux électeurs le candidat de l'alliance à l'élection sénatoriale du comté avant de se diriger à Zwedru, dans le comté de Grand Gedeh.

L'alliance, qui réunit le Congrès national alternatif, le Parti de l'unité (ancien au pouvoir), le Parti de la liberté et le Parti de tous les libériens, a choisi Eric Wleah Giko pour être son candidat dans le comté de Maryland.

Il n'est pas clair si M. Cummings était allé présenter de la même manière le candidat de l'alliance pour le comté de Grand Gedeh.

Mais la délégation s'est réveillée dans un chaos jeudi matin. Des jeunes en colère, armés de pierres, de bâtons et de machettes, ont barricadé l'hôtel B-2 au cœur de la ville de Zwedru, où le président Cummings, le représentant Kolubah et les membres de leur délégation étaient logés, menaçant de lyncher le représentant Kolubah pour avoir l'habitude d'insulter le président George Manneh Weah.

Le président Weah bénéficie d'un fort soutien de la population de Grand Gedeh et a régulièrement balayé le comté lors des trois dernières

élections présidentielles, dont celle de 2017 qui l'a porté au pouvoir.

Selon Spoon FM 107.5, les forces de sécurité ont eu du mal à disperser les jeunes qui jetaient des pierres et auraient brisé les pare-brises du véhicule du représentant Kolubah qui, à plusieurs reprises, a tenté de sortir de l'hôtel sans succès, ayant été repoussé chaque fois par les jets de pierres des jeunes en colère qui ne voulaient pas de sa présence dans le comté.

S'exprimant par téléphone depuis Zwedru, le représentant Kolubah a accusé le président Weah et le CDC d'avoir mobilisé les jeunes contre lui. Il a insisté qu'en tant que citoyen et législateur, il a le droit de visiter n'importe quel comté du Libéria sans préavis ni autorisation, jurant d'appeler les gens du comté de Lofa, dont il est natif, à empêcher le président Weah et les fonctionnaires de son parti d'entrer dans le comté.

Les éléments des forces de l'ordre et de sécurité déployés sur les lieux ont du mal à disperser les jeunes.

Il a fallu l'intervention musclée des troupes des forces armées du Libéria pour ramener le calme, ce qui a permis au président Cummings et sa délégation de quitter le comté.

Selon nos informations, des jeunes auraient par la suite pris d'assaut le complexe du surintendant à Zwedru, exigeant une récompense, car la mission avait été accomplie.

## Le groupe parlementaire

sacrifices énormes qu'ont consentis nos partenaires régionaux et internationaux. Le caucus réaffirme son engagement au respect de l'état de droit dans le comté de Grand Gedeh en particulier et par extension dans le pays et souhaite réitérer sa condamnation dans les termes les plus forts de l'incident désagréable survenu hier, jeudi 30 juillet 2020 à Zwedru City, dans le Comté de Grand Gedeh », a conclu le communiqué.

Cependant, le sénateur Marshall Dennis du comté de Grand Gedeh, qui est membre du parti au pouvoir, n'a pas signé ni assisté à la conférence de presse. Ce quotidien a tenté de le contacter par téléphone portable, mais en vain.

Des centaines de jeunes soupçonnés d'être membres de la ligue des jeunes du

Congrès pour le changement démocratique ont assiégé Jeudi 30 juillet l'hôtel dans lequel le président de l'alliance des partis politiques de l'opposition, Alexander B. Cummings, et le représentant Yekeh Kolubah avaient eu domicile à Zwedru, dans le comté de Grand Gedeh, les empêchant de s'adresser à leurs militants.

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## COMMENTAIRE

Par Robert Watson

## La priorité des priorités : protéger les écosystèmes

**N**ORWICH - En mai dernier, Amphan, le cyclone le plus dévastateur depuis des années en Asie du Sud, a frappé le golfe du Bengale. Il a menacé les habitants, les animaux et les plantes (dont plusieurs espèces menacées) des plaines côtières inondables qui comptent pour survivre sur des écosystèmes fragiles. Heureusement la nature est venue à l'aide de la région.

La plus grande forêt de mangrove de la planète, les Sundarbans (un parc national de 1500 km<sup>2</sup>), les a mieux protégés que n'aurait pu le faire toute construction humaine. Elle a absorbé l'essentiel du raz de marée d'une hauteur de 5 mètres provoquée par Amphan, comme elle l'avait fait lors des deux grands cyclones précédents, Aila et Sidr, qui ont eux aussi engendré des raz de marée il y a quelques années.

A l'autre bout de la planète, au sud de Manhattan, les protections naturelles contre les raz-de-marée ont été artificialisées de longue date. Au moyen de remblai, les promoteurs ont même augmenté de plusieurs hectares l'étendue de l'île à l'intérieur du port de New-York, mais sans construire les protections nécessaires pour éviter les inondations. C'est ainsi que lorsque l'ouragan Irène et la méga-tempête Sandy ont frappé la mégapole respectivement en 2011 et en 2012, la pointe sud de Manhattan (notamment le quartier financier) a été inondée.

Depuis, les responsables de la planification urbaine travaillent avec le gouvernement fédéral pour que la ville puisse affronter sans trop de dégâts la prochaine méga-tempête. Mais en raison du coût du mur rétractable qui serait nécessaire pour protéger le port de New-York (au moins 62 milliards de dollars), rien n'a été entrepris.

Au moment où l'on réfléchit à la manière de reconstruire l'économie mondiale à l'issue de la crise du Covid-19, la conservation des ressources naturelles restantes doit être la priorité des priorités. Nombre de plantes, d'animaux et de micro-organismes nécessaires à la protection de l'eau et de l'air et à la production d'une nourriture en quantité suffisante pourraient disparaître si nous n'agissons pas. Il en est de même des mangroves et des barrières de corail qui nous protègent des ouragans de plus en plus fréquents en raison du réchauffement climatique.

La nature recule un peu partout du fait des villes de plus en plus tentaculaires que nous construisons, de l'élimination des forêts pour faire place aux cultures et au bétail, de la destruction des zones humides pour construire des routes et de l'inondation des vallées pour y élever un barrage. On néglige souvent le coût économique de ce désastre écologique, alors qu'il est massif et qu'il altère la valeur des biens et des services issus de la nature. Un million d'espèces sont en voie d'extinction.

Heureusement, une initiative relativement simple est en cours pour diminuer ces pertes et résoudre la crise environnementale qui s'annonce. Il s'agit du projet 30x30 qui vise à protéger 30% des espaces naturels de la planète (dont les zones marines) d'ici 2030. Plus de 20 pays membres de la Convention des Nations unies sur la diversité biologique se sont déjà engagés en faveur de cet objectif.

Selon un nouveau rapport signé par une centaine de scientifiques et d'économistes à travers le monde, l'extension des zones naturelles protégées à 30% de la surface de la planète augmenterait en moyenne de quelques 250 milliards de dollars la production de l'économie mondiale (ce chiffre varie entre 64 et 454 milliards de dollars, car les coûts et bénéfices ne sont pas les mêmes selon le lieu). Cette étude montre également que les zones protégées et les activités basées sur la nature qui s'y déroulent constituent les secteurs économiques qui connaissent la plus forte croissance. Elle devrait atteindre 4 à 6% par an, contre moins de 1% pour l'agriculture, et une décroissance en ce qui concerne la pêche.

Pour les pays qui disposent d'une importante couverture forestière (mangroves incluses), participer à l'initiative 30x30 leur permettrait d'éviter chaque année en moyenne 350 milliards de dollars de pertes (l'intervalle va de 170 à 534 milliards) dues essentiellement aux inondations, à l'érosion, aux raz-de-marée et aux émissions de carbone qui se produisent à l'occasion de la destruction de la végétation. En protégeant l'Inde et le Bangladesh, les Sundarbans fournissent un service extrêmement précieux.

Par contre, la destruction de la forêt amazonienne au Brésil entraîne des pertes inestimables. Même la pénurie d'eau potable qui affecte Sao Paulo, la plus grande ville du continent américain, est directement liée à la déforestation de l'Amazonie.

Au moment où un peu partout les Etats envisagent le redémarrage de l'économie à l'issue du confinement, ils doivent prendre en compte la nécessité de restaurer et de protéger les ressources naturelles. Les tempêtes tropicales assez fortes pour qu'on leur attribue un nom doivent nous rappeler les risques si nous n'agissons pas. Selon les récentes prévisions météo, les tempêtes qui frapperont l'Atlantique pourraient être anormalement puissantes cette année, lors de la saison des ouragans (entre juin et novembre). Aussi la côte Est des USA devrait-elle s'y préparer dès à présent.

L'Inde et le Bangladesh ont certes la chance d'avoir la forêt des Sundarbans, mais tous les pays de la planète ont des zones à protéger ou à restaurer. Il est donc crucial pour chacun d'entre eux qu'il adhère au projet 30x30 et veille à ce que les secteurs et services en rapport avec l'écosystème redémarrent au même rythme que le reste de l'économie. C'est maintenant le moment d'agir, avant que le prochain cyclone ne frappe !



# 2020 is toughest battle

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

As Liberians gear up for the 2020 Special Senatorial elections in all 15 political sub-divisions of the country, this paper has earmarked four counties that are likely to become fierce battle grounds namely; Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Maryland, and Bomi Counties, respectively.

Here, in Montserrado, the senatorial seat is currently being occupied by opposition

defeat the ruling Coalition is yet to recuperate from.

During the 2005, 2011 and 2017 general and presidential elections, the Weah's Congress for Democratic Change topped all political parties that participated not until 2019 when the CPP candidate, Dillon overturned the table by winning over 50 percent of the votes, the highest ever in recent elections for Montserrado.

Now the CDC is in a Coalition with the Liberia People

Ways, Means, Finance and Budget Committee of the House of Representatives and is currently vice chairman for operations of the ruling party.

There are reports that President Weah has instructed all officials of government to ensure that Montserrado County is repossessed at all cost.

The CDC under the leadership of Chairman MulbahMorlu, Chief Cyril Allen, Alex Tyler and Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor, is digging its heels deep into the ground to make a comeback. The political management team of the Coalition is leaving no stone unturned in the impending battle to retake the county in December ahead of the 2023 Presidential election.

But Sen. Dillon currently enjoys the support of the CPP which comprises four political parties: the Unity Party, the Liberty Party, the Alternative National Congress and the All Liberian Party.

Dillon, who has coded himself as the 'light' in the Liberian Senate, is seen here as someone who stands a greater chance of retaining the Montserrado seat. However, the ruling establishment is building up strategies to make him the shortest-serving senator at the Liberian Senate in recent history.

His popularity swelled when he publicly declared his salary, allowance and other benefits to the public, the first ever by any of the 30 senators on Capitol Hill. He also broke the news of

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# Weah tells supporters

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supporters that there are ways under Liberia's democratic system by which citizens reject people whose behaviors or political ideologies don't match theirs.

"Either you stay away from assemblies where they are found or you vote," he says.

"Remember that I promised the people of Liberia that my administration will maintain zero tolerance for violence but will maintain the peace, build roads and improve the lives of all," Mr. Weah is quoted in the release as saying.

According to him, the 14 years civil conflict which left over a half million Liberians and many more traumatized and displaced is sufficient lesson for all Liberians to eschew violence and trouble which got no place in Liberia's fledgling democracy.

According to the Executive Mansion, Mr. Weah's assertions come in the aftermath of reported hostile act carried out by some residents of Zwedru City, Grand Gedeh County, to officials of the opposition Collaborating Political Party, Mr. Alexander Cummings and District #10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah late last week.

The Mansion says the "citizens reportedly went amok in demand of

Representative Kolubah's immediate expulsion from the city-a hostile reaction they justified on the Representative's habitual verbal attacks, including profanities, against President Weah."

During regular worship service at the Forky Kloh Jlahleh Family Fellowship Inc, President Weah called on all Liberians to be peaceful and adhere to the tenants of democracy, as violence is not the answer to Liberia's development challenges.

Further, he describes the recent happenings in Zwedru City undemocratic, saying those culpable will be brought to justice.

"This country witnessed too many instabilities that didn't benefit us as a nation and people. Hostility is not the answer," he says.

"We must focus on maintaining peace, order and adherence to the law. With peace we can develop our country," he continues.

The Mansion says Mr. Weah has asked the Ministry of Justice to quickly investigate the incident in Grand Gedeh County, saying Liberia will never return to its ugly past under his watch as President of the Republic.



Senator Abraham Darius Dillon of the Liberty Party, a constituent party of the Collaborating Political Parties headed by Mr. Alexander Cummings.

The ruling Congress for Democratic Change of President George Manneh Weah had held a firm grip on the county since 2005, but lost one seat to Mr. Dillon last year in a by-election in a

Democratic Party and the National Patriotic Party to face Dillon again.

Following primaries conducted throughout Montserrado County recently, the ruling Coalition has put forward Representative Thomas Fallah, currently enjoying his third term in the House of Representatives, as its candidate for the senate.

Fallah presides over the

# Sen. Wesseh wants

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the Armed Forces of Liberia to escort the peaceful leaders out of a town in their own country." Said Mr. Wesseh.

"Note that the Army and police were not deployed, and the Superintendent and other County officials physically present, to help enforce the right of the leaders to conduct their lawful business in Zwedru; rather it was for the leaders to be "escorted" out of Grand Gedeh County so that the mob would achieve their heinous and unlawful objective."

Sen. Wesseh explained that two days earlier, the unconfirmed and therefore indefinite Acting Mayor of Fishtown, capital of River County, denied the same visiting opposition leaders the use of the City Hall, a publicly funded building, for their lawful meeting.

He said as if that is the trend being adapted by ruling party officials, few days earlier, the Superintendent of

Maryland County declared to an errant crowd of CDCians that the Army and Police are for them to use anyhow, anywhere and anytime for any purpose.

"Sir and Senate Colleagues, all these developments are a call to armed violence again and a threat to peace in our country. For the sake of those of us like George Manneh Weah and many innumerable Liberians who spent 14 years (December 1989 to August 2003) searching for that peace and those of our mainly West African brothers and sisters (ECOMOG and ECOMIL) and the internationals (UNOMIL and UNMIL) who laid down their lives for Liberia to live, and the more than 250000 deaths, we the Legislature are duty bound to prevent the return to that ugly, shameful and ignominious past. The Senate must begin acting now to safe our Country," Sen. Wesseh concluded.

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# More Liberians troops

Republic of Congo and after so many years, in 2013 former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf decided to launch the AFL into peacekeeping.

"I think we will say all credits go to the people of Liberia first, the government under Madame Sirleaf and the current government under President George Manneh Weah for always providing all necessary support for us to be in those countries. The national army then was disbanded and restructured because of activities that

went on during our civil war. If you read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report (TRC) our institution was rated number seven for worst atrocities committed during the civil war among 27 warring factions and just imagine from 2006 to 2013 to launch the army into peacekeeping, I am proud", he expressed.

General Johnson continued progress made by the soldiers in Mali, Sudan and South Sudan, shows how much Liberia is committed to keeping peace across the Africa.

He praised the United Nations for always prioritizing the empowerment of Liberian soldiers and noted it was a good thing to partner with the UN in Mali.

"We are getting a lot of benefits from the United Nations. For now, the soldiers in Mali are receiving 80% allowances form the UN while the 20% goes for operational cost", he disclosed.

Meanwhile, Gen. Johnson is calling on the Government of Liberia to include peacekeeping support in the national budget.

"For now, it is not there, all the time the soldiers being out. It is the 20% we've been using for operational cost, including getting passports, contingency cost - all comes from the same 20%", the Chief of Staff revealed.

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# OHA launches Cleft assistance program

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The Oral Health Advocacy Initiative (OHAI) has launched an assistance program here for cleft patients, aimed at helping people especially, kids with the sickness.

Oral Health Advocacy Initiative is a Pan-African Non - Governmental Organization that was established with a mission to advance the course of oral and dental health delivery in

partnership and treatment of oro-facial diseases.

Mr. Aben stated that OHAI will partner with the government and other stakeholders through the direct implementation of integrated programs, targeting the most vulnerable people and will progressively shift towards building national health capacity to manage and carry out cleft interventions and corrective surgeries for

our aim that everyone would have adequate knowledge on these deformities and desist from harmful practices such as excessive alcohol intake, tobacco and to encourage pregnant women to go for regular medical check-ups”, he said.

According to him, as the launch of OHAI in Liberia, they are also honoring the national cleft and craniofacial awareness and prevention month of July, 2020. The most common birth defects are those that affect the skull or facial bones such as cleft lips and palates.

“These happen when parts of the developing face fail to fuse in the early months of pregnancy. Cleft lip affects the facial appearance of a child and it is not a well-known condition, especially in the rural communities. Often times, when babies are born with any form of deformity, including cleft lip, they are assumed to be cursed. Sometimes they’re accused of being witches, and most often, these children are literally thrown into the jungle to die to avoid the wrath of the gods,” he added.

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives Chairman on Health Joseph Somwarbi thanked the group for its far-sightedness and great relief the program has brought to Liberian children. He expressed the willingness of his committee to working with the group in achieving its goals. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*



Africa, through advocacy, strategic partnership, and community mobilization.

During the launch in the conference room of the House of Representatives Thursday, July 30, Country Director Hilenen Aben said, the mission of OHAI is to create public consciousness about oral health that results in comprehensive health care delivery in Liberia through advocacy, strategic

sustainable health security here. “Children and adults who are living with these defects are confronted with series of difficulties in the communities, including stigma and discrimination by the members of the communities. They are also confronted by direct complications such as difficulties in feeding, ear infections and hearing loss, dental problems, and speech difficulties among others. It is

Starts from back page

# ANC condemns

and dissociate itself from all derogatory and tribalistic statements or comments made on social media or any other forum about the Mandingo and Krahn ethnic groups.

Meanwhile, the party’s National Youth Congress has also joined condemning the act. In a statement the youth wing of the ANC lamented it has watched with utter dismay the unruly behavior of some thugs, hooligans and hoodlums who were hired by CDC government officials and trucked into the county from Monrovia and other parts of the country to demand that the political leader of the Alternative National Congress and chairman of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Mr. Alexander B. Cummings, Hon. Yekeh Kolubah and other high ranking opposition leaders “immediately leave Grand Gedeh County.”

according to the ANC youth wing clearly contravenes Article 13(a) of the Liberian Constitution which states, “Every person lawfully within the Republic shall have the right to move freely throughout Liberia, to reside in any part thereof and to leave there from subject however to the safeguarding of public security, public order, public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others.”

“The woeful, undemocratic, appalling, dreadful and repulsive situation being witnessed in Grand Gedeh does not only remind us of our bitter past as a people, but it shows to Liberians and the world at large that Mr. Weah is either unwilling or unable to execute the duties and responsibilities assigned to the office of president,” the statement read.

The party youths noted that while they in the (ANC/CPP) conduct themselves responsibly and lawfully, they unequivocally condemn and

denounce the distasteful and unacceptable circumstance of lawlessness displayed by the Coalition for Democratic Change hired mobsters.

The youths therefore called on the government of Liberia to immediately arrest the situation to avoid setting a very dangerous roadmap that would threaten the peace we have all worked tirelessly to strengthen over the years.

“Similarly, we want to call on ECOWAS, the African Union, the United Nations, the United States Embassy near Monrovia and all development partners of Liberia to closely monitor the happenings in Grand Gedeh County and also pressure Mr. Weah to safeguard the peace and security of Liberia by ensuring that the rights of every Liberian citizen is protected as enshrined in the Liberian Constitution,” the statement concluded.

# 2020 is toughest

Cont’d from page 10

senators receiving US\$6,500 each as operational funds immediately after endorsing the State of Emergency declared by President Weah in April.

The amount, totaling US\$195,000 was dished out among senators at a time nurses and other health workers leading the Covid-19 fight were crying for incentives and personal protective equipment or PPEs.

Though Dillon said the money for operations, Senator Prince Johnson of Nimba County strongly debunked the Montserrado County Senator when he revealed on a live talk show that the money was lobbying fee from the executive for recalling senators from their Easter Break. Senator George Tengbeh of Lofa County later stated that the amount was understated by Dillon, saying, they actually received US\$8,000 each.

However, for Grand Bassa County, the second oldest county of the Republic will witness the Liberty Party political leader, Senator Nyonblee Karnga Lawrence coming face to face with former Foreign Affairs Minister Gbehzohngar Milton Findley, now of the CDC.

Findley served as Senate President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate as then member of the former ruling Unity Party from 2008 to 2014 but was defeated by current Senator Jonathan Kaipee.

He recently resigned his ministerial post to face Senator Karnga Lawrence in the senatorial election. It is believed that Findley has a firm support base among the youths.

Mr. Findley, who had cordial relationship with former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during her administration reportedly, used his influence and carried Equatorial Palm Oil Company, and ArcelorMittal which increased employment rate of the Bassa people. Today, he is a close associate of the ruling establishment especially, President Weah.

But the CDC is yet to feature candidate against Findley as his relationship with the ruling party has put him in a comfortable place ahead of other senatorial contenders, excluding opposition Senator Karnga Lawrence, who poses a serious political threat to Findley’s quest for the senate.

Senator Karnga Lawrence is daughter of a popular and influential gospel prelate, Rev. Dr. Karnga Lawrence who established and owned the Worldwide Church and the JCCA Bassa singing group. Both religious groups are the most popular in the county. The people of Bassa are

predominantly Christians and adhere to advice from elders.

Grand Bassa County is known to be the stronghold of Liberty Party founded by late standard bearer, Cllr. Charles Walker Brumskine, who was also a native of Bassa. Senator Karnga Lawrence being the current face of the Liberty Party puts her in an advantage point with the Bassa people.

Maryland County and its habitants will witness two sons all partisans of the National Patriotic Party battle each other at the ballot box. Senator H. Dan Morais and former longest served Representative James Biney are currently at each other’s throats for the senatorial seat of the county.

Sen. Morais, who won the ticket of the NPP, has been kicked out of the party because of his refusal to contest in the primary of the Coalition for Democratic Change, which NPP is part of.

But Biney is believed to have closed relationship with among youths of Maryland, while Morais enjoys cordiality among adults and elders of the county. The two are strong intellectuals and have some controllable cash that could be used to move voters around.

The people of Bomi County are currently walloping in political noise and tensions as two former speakers of the House of Representatives battle for the senatorial seat of that county. Representative Edwin Melvin Snowe and political leader of the Liberian People Party, former Speaker Alex Tyler will spend time with the people in persuading electorate, ahead of the 2020 Special Senatorial Elections.

Former Speaker Tyler is contesting on the ticket of the ruling CDC and is a native of the county unlike Snowe, who crossover from Montserrado County Electoral District #6 after two terms and contested in Bomi during the 2017 election and won.

However, Snowe is considered a heavy weight based on establishment of his huge farm, which is currently producing palm oil for export. He just resigned from the former ruling Unity party and is expected to contest as an Independent candidate in the pending election.

At the same time Tyler is also a man with serious cash but he’s blamed for not investing Bomi County, instead, his investment is based both in Monrovia and Margibi County.

Between the two former speakers, is current Senator Sand Johnson, who is seeking reelection on the ticket of the All Liberian Party and the Collaborating Political Parties. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



# ANC condemns tribalism



Chair Sen. Daniel F. Naatehn.

The party's statement comes a after its political leader Mr. Alexander B. Cummings was attacked along with Rep. Yekeh Kolubah in what has been described as an attack by state sponsored thugs.

The attack generated tribalistic comments on social media against both the Mandingo and Krahn ethnic groups here on social media.

"The recent violent incident that occurred in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh on Thursday July 30, 2020 against our political leader and Chairman of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Mr. Alexander B. Cummings and Rep. Yekeh Kolubah and other members of the CPP and ANC is no justification to attack any person or group of people based on their tribe," the ANC noted.

The party acknowledged that it is a political organization for all Liberians

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The Alternative National Congress or ANC has issued a stern warning condemning all forms of tribalism whether practice or exhibited.

"Tribalism whether

practiced or exhibited against a person or group of people is wrong and unacceptable," the ANC said in a statement issued Friday and signed by its National Secretary General Aloysius Toe, JD and its National



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# Sen. Wesseh wants quick Senate intervention

An executive of the former ruling Unity Party, Senator Conmany B. Wesseh has sounded a warning to colleagues in the Senate to act quickly in adverting another blood bath in the country as political violent begins to rear its ugly head.

In a 3-point note to colleague senators on Capitol Hill, Sen. Wesseh anticipates a qucik move by the Legislature, particularly the Senate to prevent the

destruction of the 17 years of hard won peace here following violent displayed against opposition figures in Grand Gedeh County.

Mr. Wesseh's comment comes in the wake of attacks and undemocratic comments coming from officials of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) to attack and at the same time deny opposition figures the right to access state own buildings to hold political rallies.

"The orders should be swift



actions of condemnation and investigation into: 1. What happened today (29 July) in Zwedru - the attack on visiting opposition political leaders (Hon. Alexander B. Cummings, Chairman of the Collaborating Political Parties and former Presidential Candidate of the ANC and Hon. Yekeh Kolubah, Member of the House of Representatives) by apparent state organized and sponsored mob; and the deployment of

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