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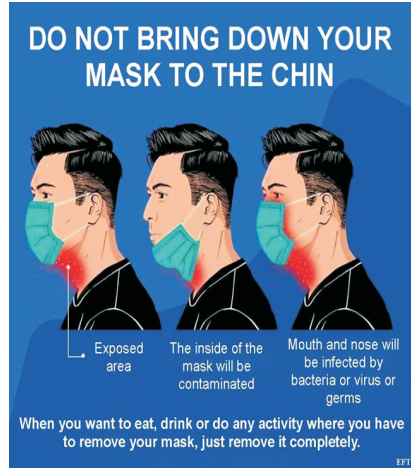
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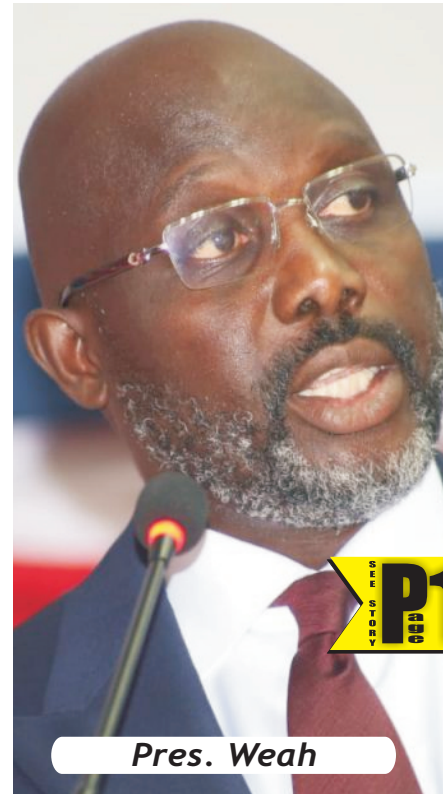


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Empty talk



Pres. Weah



Sen. Dillon

-CDC replies Dillon



NEC begins voter roll update

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Continental News

Zimbabwe president vows to 'flush out' opponents

Zimbabwe's president has vowed to "flush out" his opponents as anger with his government grows over alleged corruption and economic mismanagement.

Attempts by "a few rogue Zimbabweans" to destabilise the country in "league with foreign detractors" would be overcome, Emmerson Mnangagwa added.

More than 20 people have been arrested since last week when an anti-government protest was blocked, lawyers say. Images of security forces beating civilians have prompted global outrage. #ZimbabweanLivesMatter has trended on Twitter, with celebrities - including South African rapper Kiernan Forbes, who is popularly known as AKA - supporting the campaign.

Award-winning Zimbabwean author Tsitsi Dangarembga, a nominee for this year's Booker Prize, was among those detained for taking part in a protest on Friday in defiance of a police ban. She was released on bail after being charged with incitement to commit violence and for breaching

health regulations introduced to curb the spread of coronavirus.

Journalist Hopewell Chin'ono is still in detention after being arrested and charged last month with inciting public violence.

He had exposed alleged corruption in the health ministry during the purchase of medical supplies to tackle the virus.

His arrest was condemned by the US government and UN officials. In a televised address on Tuesday, Mr Mnangagwa condemned the "machinations of destructive, terrorist opposition groupings".

"Those who promote hate and disharmony will never win. The bad apples that have attempted to divide our people and to weaken our

systems will be flushed out. Good shall triumph over evil," he said.

Mr Mnangagwa added that his government had faced many hurdles since taking office following the ousting of long-time leader Robert Mugabe in 2017, but it would remain resolute.

"We will defeat the attack and stop the bleeding of our economy. We will overcome attempts at the destabilisation of our society," he said. Zimbabwe's economy is in deep crisis, with inflation rising to more than 700%.

Last month, the World Food Programme (WFP) said nearly two-thirds of the population will need food aid by the end of this year.

The WFP said the Covid-19 lockdown has led to massive

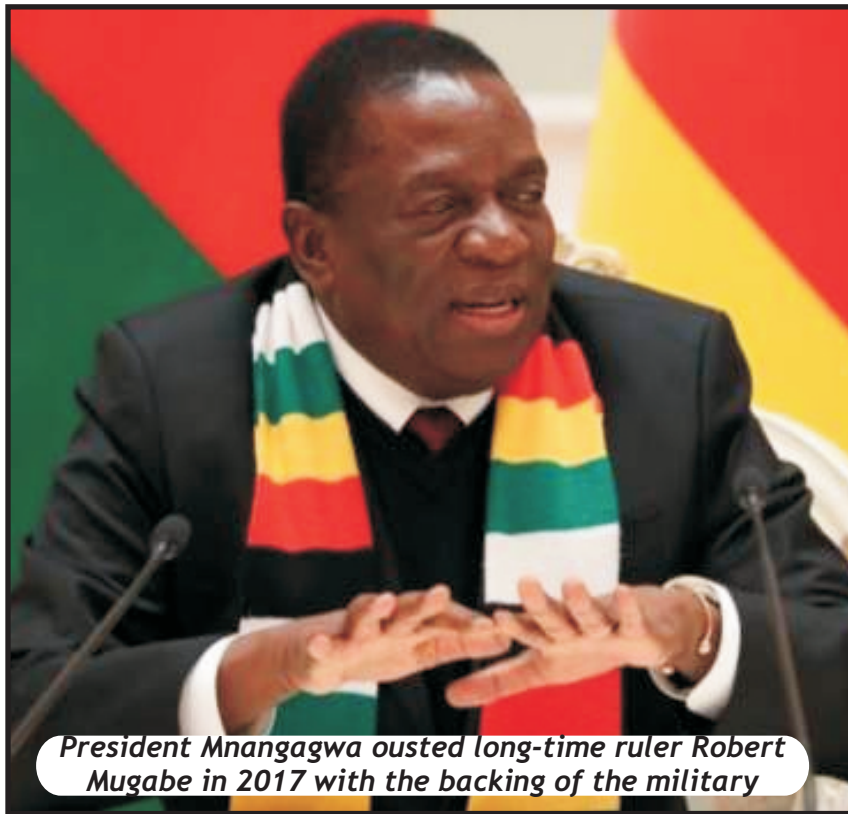
unemployment and rural hunger as urban migrants are returning to their villages, where there is little to eat. It was an unexpected early morning address by President Mnangagwa, some say damage control prompted by growing global criticism.

The president's tone was part conciliatory, calling for patriotism, assuring the nation that political and economic goals are on course.

But it was the warnings that raised concerns about repression.

Many have already been arrested for demonstrating against alleged corruption.

And Zimbabwe's economy has been in a slide. The government blames it on currency manipulation and western sanctions. BBC



President Mnangagwa ousted long-time ruler Robert Mugabe in 2017 with the backing of the military

Tanzanian miner earns millions after second rare find

A Tanzanian small-scale miner, who became an overnight millionaire in June for selling two rough Tanzanite stones valued at \$3.4m (£2.6m), has sold another gem for \$2m.

The third discovery by Saniniu Laizer weighed 6.3kg (14lb).

Tanzanite is only found in northern Tanzania and is used to make ornaments.

It is one of the rarest gemstones on Earth, and one local geologist estimates its supply may be entirely depleted within the next 20 years.

The precious stone's appeal

lies in its variety of hues, including green, red, purple and blue.

Its value is determined by rarity - the finer the colour or clarity, the higher the price.

Mr Lazier urged his fellow small-scale miners to work with the government, saying that his experience was a good example.

"Selling to the government means there are no shortcuts... they are transparent," he said in his remarks at a ceremony in the northern Mirerani mine.

Artisanal miners often complain about late payments of their royalties by mine owners, the BBC's Aboubakar Famau reports from the capital, Dodoma. After his June sale of two rocks weighing 9.2kg and 5.8kg, Mr Laizer - a father of more than 30 children - told the BBC that he would hold a party.

But on Monday he said the money will be used to build a school and a health facility in his community in Simanjiro district in northern Manyara

Threatened Mali heritage gets \$1m boost

Activists aiming to maintain traditional culture have pledged \$1m (£767,000) to help the people of central Mali's Mopti region restore parts of their vital heritage which has been under threat from armed conflict in recent years.

The UN's cultural organisation, Unesco, is working with the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (Aliph), to support the rehabilitation of the Cliff of Bandiagara (also known as the Land of the Dogons), which has been a World Heritage Site since 1989.

The area is known for its homes carved into the limestone rock and the architecture, as well as the traditional way of life.

The fighting in Mali has led to the partial or total destruction of 30 of the area's 289 villages, Unesco says in a statement. Both buildings and cultural objects have been lost

resulting in the "deterioration of cultural practices and traditions of the Dogon, Peuls, Bozo, Bambara and Sonrhay groups", according to Unesco.

It also argues that the disappearance of certain traditions has fuelled inter-communal conflict. While historically there had often been conflict between the more settled communities and the pastoralists, this began to become more violent after the militant jihadist uprising in northern Mali in 2012.

The \$1m will be spent over the next three years on restoring the damaged architectural heritage "notably housing, granaries and sites dedicated to traditional culture, as well as to restore the production of cultural objects, and safeguard ceremonial objects in a memorial collection", Unesco says. BBC



Mr Laizer said he will use the money to build a school and a health centre in his community

region. He told the BBC two months ago that the windfall would not change his lifestyle, and that he planned to continue looking after his 2,000 cows, adding that he did not need to take any extra precautions despite his newfound riches. Some small-scale miners like Mr Laizer acquire government licences to prospect for Tanzanite, but illegal mining is prevalent especially near mines owned

by big companies.

In 2017, President Magufuli ordered the military to build a 24km (14-mile) perimeter wall around the Merelani mining site in Manyara, believed to be the world's only source of Tanzanite.

A year later, the government reported an increase in revenue in the mining sector and attributed the rise to the construction of the wall. 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 Raghuram G. Rajan

Should Governments Spend Away?

With sovereign-bond markets still showing little concern for the massive levels of borrowing and spending across advanced economies, it is tempting to think that there is effectively no limit to further stimulus. But we owe it to future generations to recognize how spending today could affect investment tomorrow.

CHICAGO - Advanced economies have already spent enormous amounts providing pandemic relief to households and small- and medium-size businesses. The International Monetary Fund's June outlook estimates that, including fiscal measures and credit guarantees, spending reached approximately 20 percentage points of GDP. In the United States, Congress is considering new spending ranging from 5% of GDP (Republicans) to 15% (Democrats). And still more government spending, and thus borrowing, will be needed by the time the pandemic is behind us.

Economists have argued that current low interest rates mean that sovereign debt remains sustainable at much higher levels than in the past. They are right, provided that nominal GDP growth returns to a reasonable level, interest rates stay low, and future governments limit their spending. Even if the first two assumptions hold true, the third behooves us to assess the quality of current spending.

In normal times, responsible governments aim for a balance over the course of the business cycle, repaying in upturns what they borrow in downturns, with the cohorts that benefit during the first phase repaying during the second. There is, however, no chance that the massive debts accumulated during the current crisis will be repaid soon. Even with higher taxes on the rich - a policy that will meet with intense opposition and arguments against growth-stifling austerity - a large share of the accumulated debt will be passed on to future generations.

In the past, such debt was easier to repay. Because strong growth meant that each successive generation was richer, past debts shrank relative to incomes. Yet today, societal aging, low public investment, and tepid productivity growth all militate against our children being much richer than we are.

After all, we are already bequeathing to them two enormous challenges: looking after us when our entitlements run out of funding, and addressing climate change, which we have done almost nothing to combat. Worse, having limited our investments in their health and education, we have left much of the next generation under-equipped to lead productive lives.¹

By further limiting the next generation's ability to make public investments, the debt that we pass on will likely weigh down future incomes. And if we deplete overall borrowing capacity now, future generations will be unable to spend as needed if they encounter another "once-in-a-century" catastrophe like the two we have experienced in the last 12 years. Intergenerational fairness should be as important as intra-societal fairness for those alive today.

In practical terms, this means that the notion that anyone should be made whole because the pandemic "wasn't their fault" immediately becomes untenable. While many countries do compensate uninsured homeowners hit by a localized flood or an earthquake, people in unaffected parts of the country pay willingly

(through higher taxes) because they know that they would receive the same treatment. With a shock as large as the pandemic, this calculus no longer works; the burden inevitably must fall on future generations, who obviously bear no responsibility for the pandemic or the response to it.

Therefore, we must target our spending carefully. As the pandemic and its consequences persist, we must shift to protecting workers, not every job. All laid-off workers should, of course, be provided a decent level of public assistance, certainly until overall employment starts to recover. It is morally right for a rich society to provide a safety net for all, and it is in everyone's interest that workers and their children retain - or even enhance - their capabilities during the pandemic.

Having done that, authorities should be more discriminating in the firms they support, allowing the market to do most of their job. For example, in normally flourishing neighborhoods, small businesses start up and shut down all the time. While failure is painful for the proprietor, there is little permanent damage to the economy. If there is sufficient demand for flowers when the economy recovers, a new florist can start up at the site of the old one. Consequently, it is not cost-effective for the authorities to freeze the old florist in place by paying her landlord, her bank, and her workers indefinitely.

Similarly, authorities should not offer grants or subsidized loans so that distressed large businesses like airlines and hotel chains can retain their employees. These businesses will keep excess employees only as long as they get the subsidies. It will be far cheaper for the government to support laid-off workers through unemployment insurance than to pay employers to retain them indefinitely when their work has clearly disappeared.

Large corporations that need money to stay afloat can borrow from markets, made buoyant by central banks. If they are so indebted that no one will lend to them, they can restructure their debts in bankruptcy and get a fresh start.

In some situations, however, firms may be unable to deal with market forces unaided. In economically disadvantaged communities, where a few small hard-to-restart businesses are vital to community life, support is desirable for both economic and social reasons. Similarly, while markets treat large firms reasonably, mid-size firms may find it harder to get funding even when viable. If an economically viable firm, employing 100 workers, closes because it has had no revenue over much of the year, its specialized workers will be dispersed, its equipment will be sold in liquidation, and the norms and routines that enable it to function will be lost forever. Even if its exit leaves a big economic hole, a start-up would not easily step in and fill it.

But here, too, public support should not be a free lunch. Wherever possible, the government should ensure that existing capital, whether from bondholders or stockholders, absorbs a fair share of the losses before government support kicks in and the burden passes to future generations.

O-PED

By Mitchell A. Orenstein
& Valery Yakubovich**Will Women Overthrow Europe's Last Dictator?**

Since 1994, Belarus's quinquennial presidential election spectacles have invariably begun with hope for change, only to end with opposition candidates jailed and Aleksandr Lukashenko re-elected by a wide margin. But maybe - just maybe - not this year.

PHILADELPHIA - Aleksandr Lukashenko, Belarus's first and only president since 1994, claims to love women. But, like most conservative dictators in the former Soviet bloc, he thinks they have a specific role in society, as mothers or arm candy. In his bid for a sixth consecutive term on August 9, Lukashenko may find that he underestimated Belarusian women, a triumvirate of whom are gunning for his job.

Like US President Donald Trump, Lukashenko does not hide his fondness for attractive women, whom he believes he may treat or favor with impunity. After he was seen dancing at the State Ball with a former Belarusian Miss World contestant, she won a seat in Belarus's rubber-stamp parliament. Meanwhile, Lukashenko never appears with his wife in public and does not feel the need to inform the electorate of the identity of the mother of his teenage son and presumed successor, Nikolai, who accompanies him to public events.

But while Lukashenko frequently boasts of Belarus's "beautiful" women, Belarus's women are angry this year. After the #MeToo movement, Lukashenko's terrible performance on containing COVID-19, a decade of economic stagnation, and the jailing or disqualification of three leading male candidates for the presidency, women stepped up to lead this year's revolt.

Someone had to. Since 1994, Belarus's quinquennial presidential election spectacles have invariably begun with hope for change, only to end with opposition candidates jailed and Lukashenko re-elected by a wide margin.

This year, blogger Siarhei Tsikhanousky led the opposition in a creative way, traveling to economically depressed areas to interview people and outlining an anti-establishment program under the slogan, "Stop the Cockroach!" His campaign symbol, a giant bug-crushing slipper, became the opposition meme of the year. With most forms of political protest banned, thousands of people brought slippers into the streets and waved them menacingly.

Not one to take a joke, Lukashenko had Tsikhanousky locked up and denied permission to collect signatures in support of his candidacy. So his wife, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, put herself forward instead. Tsikhanouskaya, a housewife and qualified English teacher with no previous political experience, successfully collected 100,000 required signatures and became an official presidential candidate on July 14.

Lukashenko apparently thought that allowing Tsikhanouskaya to register was a low-risk move. He had previously explained why no woman can be president: "Our Constitution is such that even a man can hardly bear the burden [of the office]. And if you load it onto a woman, she will collapse, poor girl."

Of course, no other man can win the presidency, either, even if they come from Lukashenko's own establishment, as two other candidates did: Victor Babariko, the former CEO of a major bank, and Valery Tsepikalo, a former deputy foreign minister and ambassador to the United States. When people stood in line for hours to sign up to support these candidates, Babariko was imprisoned for suddenly discovered criminal offenses, and Tsepikalo's hundreds of thousands of collected signatures were ruled forgeries. With three male frontrunners out, Lukashenko thought he had the election sewn up.

But at a remarkable joint press conference on July 16, the Babariko and Tsepikalo campaigns threw their support behind Tsikhanouskaya, with all three represented by women displaying their campaigns' symbols: a raised fist for Tsikhanouskaya, a heart for Mariya Kolesnikova, Babariko's campaign chief, and a "V" for victory for Tsepikalo's wife, Veronika. By uniting, the trio achieved what few opposition politicians have in Belarus's short history. Their program: Release all political prisoners, restore the rule of law, and quickly organize a new, honest presidential election. They continue to campaign together, under the new slogan "We love, we can, we'll win," attracting thousands of enthusiastic voters, even in remote towns.

Under constant threat of official violence, with imprisoned husbands who are liable to be tortured, and children who are vulnerable to being seized and bundled into state care, Tsikhanouskaya, Kolesnikova, and Tsepikalo have resorted to creative, powerful, and - to Lukashenko's consternation - totally lawful improvisations. One recent gathering took the form of a long queue (with social distancing) of people waiting to file a written complaint with the Central Election Commission. The women also promoted a worldwide hackathon to design new digital tools for monitoring electoral fraud (one of Belarus's leading exports is highly skilled computer programmers). The winner is a digital platform enabling voters to upload a photo of their ballot for an independent count. To demonstrate their participation, supporters are asked to wear a white bracelet while casting their vote.

Tsikhanouskaya is being transformed from a humble housewife into a Belarusian Joan of Arc, as some local media call her. With her and Tsepikalo's children now safely abroad, she declared her resolve to free her husband and her country from a dictator's grip. "No one can stop a woman who defends a family, just like no one can stop a woman who demands justice," she says. The odds against her remain high, but, whatever the election's outcome, it is already clear that Lukashenko underestimated Belarusian women at his peril.

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OPINION

By Kaushik Basu

COVID and Common Sense

Social norms are often more effective than government mandates, because they allow a degree of flexibility that statutes cannot provide. As the world learns more about the new coronavirus and how it spreads, people should have more leeway to modify their behavior where appropriate.

ITHACA - As the COVID-19 pandemic rages on, our understanding of it is improving. Through a combination of epidemiology and physics - including knowledge of the virus's character and how aerosols float in the air - we are learning more about how the microbe infects new hosts.

This understanding is fueling hopes that we will soon be able to counter the pandemic more effectively. But it has also led to some contentious exchanges regarding the social sciences and the interaction between social norms and the law.

Ever since the pandemic began to spread beyond Wuhan and around the world, there has been an increasingly acrimonious debate regarding which preventive measures should be decreed by government and enforced by public officials and the police, and which should be promoted as social norms. Unfortunately, this debate has become so polarized that people are immediately classified as right-wing or left-wing depending on their view. Because people often do not like to be categorized in this way, and certainly not wrongly, many are reluctant to express themselves on this important question.

In fact, on many coronavirus-related matters, we need enforceable laws. Especially in the early days of the pandemic, when people understood little about the virus, treating public-health measures as matters of personal choice was folly. Because some people decided to gather in large groups and not wear face masks, the disease became widespread in some countries, with Brazil under President Jair Bolsonaro and the United States under President Donald Trump being prime examples.

But it would be equally dangerous to swing to the other extreme and make governments solely responsible for changing our behavior. Autocratic regimes, in particular, are liable to use the pandemic as a pretext to arrest opponents and silence dissent. Furthermore, excessive government control is often the first step toward crony capitalism, whereby a few big firms use the levers of state power to stifle competition and repress wages.

Social norms are often more effective than government mandates, because they allow a degree of flexibility that statutes cannot provide. In Ithaca, for example, there is a bridge on Forest Home Drive that has featured in studies of games and social norms, including in William Ferguson's book *Collective Action and Exchange*. The bridge is so narrow that cars can pass only in one direction.

Regulating the traffic flow by law might entail making it a one-way bridge, or requiring cars to travel from left to right in the morning and right to left in the evening. Or the law might require drivers to alternate, with one crossing from left to right and the next in the opposite direction, resulting in wasted space behind each car.

What happens in the absence of legal regulation is far better. There is a norm whereby three or four cars cross in one direction, and then the drivers behind them stop, allowing three or four cars to come from the other side. Because the norm, unlike a law, is flexible, you might, if you are in a hurry, decide to cross the bridge as the fifth or sixth car, delaying those waiting on the other side by a few seconds.

As we understand more about COVID-19 and how the virus spreads, we can decide when we should socially distance ourselves, and by how much. The six-foot (1.8-meter) rule may need to be interpreted flexibly. For example, if you are talking to a much taller person, or someone who holds their chin very high, you may need to move back an extra foot in order to allow any infected aerosol to complete its arcing journey from face to floor.

What we need are guidelines with an articulated rationale, so that people can adjust their behavior to the context. In a widely cited recent paper, for example, the University of California, San Francisco's Monica Gandhi and her co-authors show that face masks not only protect others from your COVID-19 germs, should you be carrying them, but also protect you from other people who may be infected.

There is thus both a social and a selfish reason for you to wear a mask. But if you are walking alone on a beach, you have every reason not to wear one. It is also reasonable not to wear a face mask in the company of people with whom you cohabit, given the likelihood that either all or none of you have the virus.

As we learn more about COVID-19, we will develop better rules for ourselves. But two caveats are in order. First, many epidemiological studies warn that, for certain findings, causality has not yet been established. In fact, we can never establish causality definitively. We must regard all such claims with a dose of skepticism and the awareness that we may revise them later.

This is another reason to prefer the greater flexibility of social norms to the heavy hand of the law. For example, we now know that up to 40% of people infected with the coronavirus are asymptomatic. In societies where only some people wear masks, the share of asymptomatic carriers could be as high as 90%, as happened during one outbreak in Oregon. If they are not wearing a mask, their lack of symptoms puts us off guard, implying that wearing a mask may indirectly cause COVID-19 to spread more.

This is of course not an argument for disregarding masks. Rather, it is a reminder that all ideas, whether rooted in folklore or science, must be combined with common sense to optimize our behavior.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Starts from back page

Security threat

you no one speaks to national security issues more than Zargo," he explains.

According to Zargo, if you go to the counties, you will see dredging on Liberian waters and gold mines, warning that these are places where crime is breeding from and fundamentalisms start from.

He warns that if fundamentalism starts and nothing happens to correct it, no sooner or later you will find what is happening in Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast starting here in the various counties of Liberia.

Zargo cautions that security issues are porous, noting that as Liberia goes towards election, it is known that the threat level has increased given the huge anxiety by everyone's desire to win elected seats.

"So against this background, we need to ensure that all of our

and an additional one in Bomi, totaling either three or four hubs across the country to enhance rapid response.

"There's no reason why up to now we cannot ensure those things that are written on the book as part of our security sector reform, there's no reason why we're not doing them," he says, adding that if these things were being done, there would have been sufficient police deployment to curtail the recent violent incident in Grand Gedeh.

He questions the government as to why it has to bring in the military for a civil issue in Grand Gedeh, arguing that the military is only brought in when there is an escalation and there are rules of engagement and the para - military is incapacitated to respond.

"Why should you make the para - military incapacitated? This thing is intentional," Sen.

out.

He calls on President Weah and the Minister of Justice to ensure that civil law enforcement institutions are visible in all of the counties, warning that what happened in Grand Gedeh is just an example of bigger things that may happen.

Besides the Grand Gedeh incident, Sen. Zargo recalls the recent altercation between opposition Montserrado County District #10 Rep. Yekeh Kolubah and Deputy Police Inspector General for Operations Col. Marvin Sackor, saying what Col. Sackor did to the lawmaker was very wrong.

Though Sen. Zargo says if he were involved, he could not have used Rep. Kolubah's approach, however he insists that Sackor should have also exercised restraints and used his description in dealing with the issue involving the lawmaker.

He suggests that once Sackor noticed that Yekeh was misbehaving, he simply needed to leave from the scene, approach the Speaker of the House of Representatives and take advantage of the remedy at law, noting that two wrongs cannot make a right.

Zargo insists that Yekeh and Sackor owe the public apology for their conduct, saying both of them had remedies under the law and therefore they should not have done what they did.

Additionally, Mr. Zargo notes that if President Weah had accepted his proposal to serve as an extended National Security Advisor, he could have advised the president that before appointing anyone as Police Inspector General or Deputy Police Inspector General, that person must have gone through the Liberia National Police Training Academy.

He notes that his colleagues in the Senate may be regretting by now on their decision to confirm Col. Sackor while he (Zargo) was away in Senegal.

"I tell you one thing, if you had Mickey Gray there, or if you had Godfrey or if you had Abraham Kromah, they would never had done what Sackor had done because Sackor did not go to the Liberia [National Police] Training Academy," Sen. Zargo claims, adding that Sackor's behavior was uncalled for.

He argues that Sackor got

43-year-old inmate dies in prison

While serving a court sentenced, a 43-year-old man has been discovered dead in prison by authorities of the Harper Prison in Maryland County.

The late Thomas Williams, according to reports, was formally tried, convicted and sentenced for the commission of Theft of Property by the Harper City Court for three months and ten days. Speaking to reporters in Harper City, Prison Superintendent Chrispin T. Doe said, he was lately informed by Correction Officers who slept on duty on Wednesday night, July 29, 2020 about the sudden death of the late inmate in prison.

Superintendent Doe

The prison chief disclosed that since he took over the prison center, it has had about 96 prisoners, including convicts and pretrial detainees, while the total number of inmates currently is 109.

Superintendent Doe added that the death of Williams is the second of such incident at the prison this year, noting, "It is very much regrettable for what actually happening."

On behalf of the Harper Prison, he extended special condolence to family of the deceased and prayed for God's protection upon family members during the period of bereavement.

Doe called on all inmates to please inform prison



Senator Stephen Zargo

[Security] Hubs are up and running, and don't wait until the incident happens before you respond to it," he says.

Before reaching this point today, Sen. Zargo, an opposition lawmaker recalls that Liberia had a lot of reforms in the security sector and a lot of benchmarks were set when the international partners were here [during former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's regime].

According to the Lofa county Senator, the regional hubs were established to ensure rapid response to unfolding events, noting that by now, there should have been a hub in Gbarnga, Bong County for the police, immigration and the military to respond to situations in Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties.

Also, he says there should have been another one either in Grand Gedeh or Maryland

Zargo suggests.

"So coming back to what transpired in Grand Gedeh, I have been following with interest, it's regrettable, it's uncalled for, and it's uncivil. I hear the president has constituted a team to investigate, but the president himself is responsible for what has transpired," Sen. Zargo alleges.

He expresses hope that President George Manneh Weah will act on the recommendation that will be made by the Justice Minister following investigation into the Grand Gedeh incident, noting that several investigations have been done but the president sits on them.

The Lofa Senator says the joint security and national security actors here will have to explain to the Senate on the status of the various hubs and what prompted the decision that led to bringing the military



The Harper Prison

explained that though it was pitiful to have informed the public, but the Crime Service Division (CSD) of the Liberia National Police, and the County Health Team were quickly informed about the death of inmate Williams, while serving his sentence.

He added that the following day, Thursday, July 30, the Police and the County Health Team examined the body and officially pronounced the late William dead.

He said health workers in the county are yet to establish the actual cause of death, something, Superintendent Doe described as worrisome situation for authorities of the Harper Prison.

He noted that the late Thomas Williams didn't complain about any illness before his sudden death.

his military background from America so he didn't have the Liberian culture embedded in his training, noting that every law enforcement training has its own culture and tradition.

authorities in case of any illness to avoid a reoccurrence of such unfortunate situation.

Meanwhile, the people of Maryland have described as worrisome, frequent deaths in the county.

Cross section citizens speaking recently on a community radio station in the county, recounted that since the beginning of the year, there have been several mysterious deaths ranging from a 54-year-old man who died in a bathtub at his residence in Harper City recently, a 52-year-old man who passed sometime ago in his bedroom in Pleebo, the death of a motorcyclist along the Harper road and last week's bike accident that led to the death of two persons. They asked for God's mercy on the county.

He notes that the culture and tradition at the Liberia National Police Training Academy tells you that you can take insult and not assault.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

"Chea must leave" -LIBTELCO workers demand

By Ethel A Tweh

Agrieved workers at the Liberia Telecommunication Corporation (LIBTELCO) on Monday, 3 August assembled at the entrance of the corporation's facility, demanding LIBTELCO Deputy Managing Director Anderson Slober Chea to leave the institution.

The protesters are also demanding payment of their

salaries for the months of June and July 2020 as part of the protest.

The protesters wore T-shirts bearing inscriptions: "Chea must leave" and "We can't breathe."

Other placards read: "Pay our June and July salaries, LIBTELCO workers' lives matter," and "Please pay our US\$40 deduction."

Johnson Massaquoi, an engineer at LIBTELCO says he

and the rest of the protesting workers are all CDCians, but they've been marginalized by certain people in the entity.

He complains that they have been experiencing a US\$40 deduction from their salaries for months, noting that their entity is an autonomous agency and therefore employees supposedly did not get affected by the government's harmonization program.

Mr. Massaquoi believes that since LIBTELCO is a multi-million dollars agency, it should be able to pay its workers on time.

He indicates that they met with the management on these problems, but the same situation is still ongoing without any justification.

The protesting LIBTELCO workers are calling on the President of Liberia, their CDC lawmakers to intervene in the situation promptly.

But LIBTELCO Deputy Managing Director Anderson Slober Chea rejects the protesters' claim, saying it is true that there has been a delay in salary payment, but it's affecting everyone at the



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NEC begins voter roll update

Despite calls by opposition political parties to clean-up the voter Roll, the National Elections Commission (NEC) has announced Voter Roll Update, ahead of the midterm senatorial election, while unveiling calendar of events leading to the December 8, 2020 polls.

NEC chairperson, Davidetta Brown-Lassanah, Tuesday, August 04, said revision of the 2017 Voter Roll Update is in compliance with joint resolution by the 54th Legislature to ensure authenticity of the past and current elections.

"In the joint resolution signed by the 54th legislature which authorizes the special elections and Referendum for Dec. 8, 2020 senatorial

to have achieved this. On that note, the Board of Directors of the NEC and staff, launch this review of the Voter Roll Update today" she added.

Commissioner Brown-Lassanah also indicated that update of the voter Roll is mandated by the Supreme Court of Liberia.

NEC also mandated each registered political party to submit a name of its technicians who will today, Wednesday, form party of the process that is expected to last for two weeks.

The Voter Roll was challenged by the late standard bearer of the Liberty Party, Cllr. Charles Walker Brumskine and the Unity Party, describing the voters roll as a source of fraud in the 2017 presidential and



elections, in that resolution counts 4 and 5 NEC mandated the commission to put in place the mechanism to have major stakeholders to review Voter Roll Update process", Madam Brown-Lassanah said.

In count 4, the Commissioner said, considering the authenticity and credibility of the 2017 Final Registration Roll(FRR)should be conducted by NEC to involve stakeholders political parties technicians to ensure legitimacy and authentic of 2017 to be used for the Dec 8,2020 and Referendum,"

In count five: "that the Voter Registration Roll Update shall be conducted for the ensuring senatorial elections without delay to ensure the possibility of the election."

"Today, We are very glad and

representative polls.

Speaking on behalf of the political parties, Ciapha Gbolie, Vice Chair for Political Affairs, National Democratic Coalition, applauded NEC for what he referred to as good beginning of the process by making the Voter Roll update.

"As we have complained about the Voter Roll Clean-up, we want to say you got our fullest support. We are going to send our representatives to ensure that the Voter Roll is in place for the Special senatorial race. Without this process, the election will not be credible", Mr. Gbolie said.

The midterm senatorial elections are intended to elect 15 of the 30 senators in the Liberia before presidential election in 2023. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Nwabudike runs back to Civil Law Court

By Winston W. Parley

Controversial Nigerian - born A. Ndubusi Nwabudike is back at the Civil Law Court in Monrovia, requesting it to set aside the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA's) decision expelling him from the organization, days after Chambers Justice Jamesetta Howard Wolokollie declined to issue an Alternative Writ of Prohibition to prevent his expulsion from the LNBA.

In his petition before the Civil Law Court, Cllr. Nwabudike complains that since his admission as member of the Supreme Bar as Counsellor - At - Law on 21 June 2002, he has been and continues to be in good standing, serving the LNBA as its Secretary General.

The LNBA expelled Cllr. Nwabudike's membership on 19 June this year, revealing to the public that a perusal of his various passports showed his birth dates as October 19, 1960, October 2, 1963, October 2, 1965 and October 2, 1969.

Besides, the LNBA said it

gathered that Nwabudike's marriage certificate dated 22 January 1992 filed by himself in handwriting identified him as a Nigerian born 19 October 1960, and not a Liberian, opposed to the New Judiciary Law providing that persons applying for membership to the Bar as Attorney - At - Law must be citizen of Liberia.

In addition to practicing law here, Nwabudike tells the Civil Law Court in his petition that he

served the government as chairman of the Good Governance Commission and Liberia Anti - Corruption Commission (LACC) chair, respectively.

However, he tells the Civil Law Court that while he was serving as LACC Chair [in a tenure position which had not expired], he was again nominated as chairman of the

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Cllr. Ndubuisi Nwabudike

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printing of five billion that had been previously printed.

Earlier on Monday, 3 August, Weeks said it was absurd, an allegation that the CBL's Board of Governor, which he was a part of, was aware that LD\$13 billion plus was in circulation here and yet the CBL printed LD\$10 billion.

Weeks recalled a number of issues that necessitated the printing of the LD\$10 billion, saying in late 2016, the government through the Finance Ministry informed the CBL it would be unable to continue to sell USD to CBL due to acute foreign exchange constraints.

"However, the indictment claims that we were aware that the 13 billion plus was [the] currency in circulation, yet we only printed 10 billion. To me, with all due respect, the allegation is absurd and the reason is that the Board of Governors was looking at total legacy notes, not total currency in currency," he says.

Mr. Weeks who boasts of working in the banking sector for 26 years in top positions in Liberia, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa and Nigeria, recounts that when he assumed the position of CBL's Executive Governor in 2016, the first contract to print LD\$5 billion had already been executed by CBL management headed by Mr. Charles E. Sirleaf, ex-President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's son.

Weeks and other CBL board members David Fahart, Elsie Dossen Bardio and Kollie Tamba are on trial for theft of property; economic sabotage; fraud on the internal revenue of Liberia; misuse of public money, property or record; theft or illegal disbursement of public money; criminal conspiracy and criminal facilitation.

The government indicted the officials for allegedly printing and shipping to Liberia L\$13,004,750,000.00 without authorization between 2016 and 2018 and allegedly understating the printed amount as L\$10,359,750,000.00, giving a variance of L\$2,645,000,000.00.

Defendant Weeks informs the court that all foreign exchange that the CBL utilized came from the foreign exchange that was sold to the CBL by the government, but the government had said it would

Faulty calculation



be unable to continue to sell USD to CBL due to acute foreign exchange constraints.

Following this decision of the government, defendant Weeks explains that the CBL introduced "25% surrender on inward remittance," a category of money that he says is transferred into Liberia that are related to individuals through the banking system but use international money transfer companies such as Western Union, MoneyGram and Nobel, among others.

According to him, total inward remittances were averaging about US\$240m per annum, and the 25% surrender translated into roughly US\$60M or US\$5m per month which had to be paid to individuals receiving inward remittances by the commercial banks.

"The commercial banks were strained in being able to pay [their] customers due to the fact that roughly only 20% of the total currency in circulation was in the banking system. Most of the currency never made it to the banks. The commercial banks here, were constantly agitating for the CBL to [make] currency available," Mr. Weeks testifies.

Besides the commercial banks, defendant Weeks tells the court that the CBL began to also have significant agitation from the public and the Legislature, complaining about the use of three currencies in Liberia in reference to the USD, the Old or Legacy notes and the Newly Printed Enhanced Banknotes.

Weeks says the CBL wrote the Senate President Pro - tempore in May 2017 and similarly informed the House Speaker that LD\$10 billion should be printed at the estimated cost of US\$10.4m following the Senate's request

for the bank to advise the Senate on how much LD would be printed to replace all the legacy notes.

He adds that the CBL received assurances that its advocacy would be considered, adding that by July 19, 2017, the CBL received a letter from the Legislature signed by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate, instructing the CBL to maintain the USD, replace all legacy banknotes and introduce coins.

Giving a background earlier as to how Crane Currency got the contract to print the five billion, defendant Weeks recalls that French company Oberthur Fiduciaire, which had printed the Legacy note, declined at the last minute to take the contract to print the five billion Liberian Dollars.

On account of this Mr. Weeks says Crane Currency which was then chosen over one other company called De La Rue, had indicated that it did not have the right to print the exact design that Oberthur had used, thereby using a new design while trying to retain some of the features of the legacy notes.

"However, the first print run was better than the expected and they advised CBL that they had this amount of banknotes in excess of the 5 billion and offered to make it available to CBL at cost that is the cost of the notes plus transport," he testifies.

The four defendants on trial have pleaded not guilty for the charges levied against them, but the fifth defendant Melisa A. Emeh is said to be out of the bailiwick of Liberia and has not been brought to

COVID-19 food support makes significant impact

-Assist. Minister Thomas

Assistant Information Minister Daniel Nuxe Thomas says the ongoing COVID 19 Household Food Support program is making significant impact on the vulnerable population across Liberia.

He said the World Food Programme (WFP) is collaborating with the Government of Liberia (GOL) for the successful execution of the GOL COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme (COHFSP) as an important safety net for people affected by COVID-19 in Liberia.

The programme is providing

According to him, the residents expressed thanks and appreciation to the Government for what they called a timely intervention especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Assistant Minister further mentioned that the program is part of the Government's strategy to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, and WFP was delegated with the responsibility of implementing the COHFSP, given its capacity, experience and expertise in managing emergency relief programmes.

President George Manneh Weah has appointed a National Steering Committee (SC) as an



Some recipients walking away with food items

a month's supply of food (50 kg of rice, 10 kg of beans and 1 gallon of vegetable oil household) for around 2.5 million most vulnerable people across the country.

Speaking Monday in a special press briefing at the Ministry of Information, he noted that the COHFSP started the food distribution within the Township of West Point last Wednesday, July 29, 2020 and has completed the West Point Community that has seven blocks and 35 zones.

Minister Thomas said over thousands of residents received rice, beans and oil.

oversight mechanism to ensure the COHFSP is implemented in the best interest of the affected populations. The SC provides broad terms of reference for the food support programme; strategic oversight and operational guidance and offers advice to WFP.

The package which includes two 25kg bags of rice, 28 cups of beans and 1 gallon of vegetable oil were distributed by a team from the Steering Committee that is represented by the WFP and the Government of Liberia.

court.

Charles Sirleaf was included in the previous two indictments for this same case, but prosecutors did not include in this third indictment after they nolleprosequi the former Deputy CBL Governor for Operations with prejudice in May this year.

Besides Mr. Sirleaf, the prosecution here also entered a nolleprosequi (dropped charges) in favor of defendants Richard H. Walker, Dorbor M. Hagba and Joseph Dennis.

According to Mr. Weeks' testimony, the purpose of printing the five billion was to assist in the replacement of mutilated Liberian Dollars banknotes, but he suggests that the five billion was inadequate to fully replace all of the mutilated banknotes.

He testifies that LD\$146,250,000 was printed in excess "over and above" the five billion Liberian Dollars in the first printing done by Crane Currency.

Français

Impression non autorisée de 10 milliards : L'ancien Gouverneur de la BCL s'explique

L'ancien gouverneur exécutif de la Banque centrale du Libéria (CBL), Milton A. Weeks, a qualifié d'absurdes les propos selon lesquels le conseil d'administration de la CBL, dont il faisait partie, a fait imprimer 10 milliards de dollars libériens, pourtant il savait que plus de 13 milliards de dollars libériens étaient en circulation.

Dans son témoignage le lundi 3 août, le défendeur Weeks a rappelé un certain nombre de problèmes qui nécessitaient l'impression de 10 milliards de dollars libériens. Il a affirmé qu'à la fin de 2016, le gouvernement, par la voix du ministre des Finances, avait informé la CBL de ce qu'il ne serait pas en mesure de continuer à vendre des devises à la banque en raison de fortes

contraintes de change.

«Cependant, l'acte d'accusation prétend que nous savions que 13 milliards et plus étaient en circulation, alors que nous n'avons imprimé que 10 milliards. Pour moi, avec tout le respect que je vous dois, l'allégation est absurde et la raison en est que le Conseil des gouverneurs n'a fait qu'examiner le total des billets mutilés, et non le total d'argent en circulation », a-t-il dit.

M. Weeks, qui a vantés ses mérites pour avoir travaillé dans le secteur bancaire pendant 26 ans à des postes de haute responsabilité au Libéria, en Zambie, au Malawi, en Afrique du Sud et au Nigéria, a indiqué que lorsqu'il est arrivé aux affaires en tant que gouverneur exécutif de la CBL en 2016, le premier contrat pour imprimer 5 milliards de dollars libériens avait déjà été signé par la direction de la CBL sous l'égide de M. Charles E. Sirleaf, fils de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson-



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Côte d'Ivoire : le parti unifié RHDP accuse de défections dans ses rangs

Alors que le RHDP attend toujours la décision du président Alassane Ouattara sur son éventuelle candidature à l'élection d'octobre, le parti au pouvoir a connu ce week-end une nouvelle défection dans ses rangs. Celle de l'UDPCI d'Albert Toikeusse Mabri, qui entre aussi dans la course à la fonction suprême. À moins de trois mois du scrutin, le parti unifié semble se réduire à peau de chagrin.

C'était le grand projet d'Alassane Ouattara : réunir autour de son parti RDR plusieurs formations politiques pour donner naissance à un seul et unique grand parti : le Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix. La solution selon le président pour mettre définitivement fin aux querelles régionalistes et politiques qui pèsent sur la Côte d'Ivoire depuis la mort du père de la nation Félix Houphouët-Boigny.

La solution a fait recette jusqu'en 2018, avant que le PDCI d'Henri Konan Bédié ne bascule dans l'opposition.

Avec la candidature d'Albert Toikeusse Mabri sous les couleurs de l'UDPCI, c'est un autre allié qui déserte les rangs du RHDP. Pour le professeur de sociologie Francis Akindès, cette dernière défection n'est pas forcément de nature à affaiblir le parti au pouvoir. L'UDPCI est un parti satellitaire de la galaxie RHDP, il pèse dans les régions de l'ouest mais pas au niveau national.

Contrairement au PDCI, la formation historique du pays.

Malgré tout, le passage au RHDP a fracturé les forces alliées. Du côté de l'UDPCI comme du PDCI, plusieurs cadres ont choisi de se maintenir auprès d'Alassane Ouattara. De quoi contribuer à l'encrage local du parti au pouvoir, qui espère ainsi rogner l'électorat de ses partenaires.



Le COVID-19 a mis à mal le système éducatif du Libéria, selon le Ministre Sonii

Le Ministre libérien de l'éducation, le professeur Ansu Sonii, a déclaré que la pandémie mondiale de coronavirus a mis à mal le système éducatif du pays.

"Comme vous le savez peut-être, le développement des jeunes, et notre système éducatif ont sérieusement été mis à mal et nous devons tous unir nos forces", a-t-il dit.

La ministre Sonii, qui animait un point de presse le lundi 3 août 2020 dans la salle de conférence Charles Gbeyonau ministère de l'Information à Capitol Hill, a expliqué que la décision de rouvrir les écoles est le résultat d'énormes progrès réalisés dans la lutte contre le COVID-19 et d'une série de consultations avec les autorités sanitaires et le président George Weah, qui pensaient qu'il était important de permettre aux élèves du secondaire de reprendre le chemin de l'école, surtout les élèves en fin de cycle secondaire.

Le professeur Sonii en outre

cérémonies de remise des diplômes à tous les niveaux. L'état du risque pour la santé dictera la marche à suivre, tandis que les options seront annoncées à mesure que le temps approche.

Dans le même temps, le professeur Sonii a ajouté que les élèves de 6e, 7e, 8e et 9e année auront cours à compter du 10 août 2020 jusqu'au 3 octobre 2020. Il sera question de se concentrer sur les quatre matières de base : les mathématiques, l'anglais, les Sciences et l'histoire-géo pour compléter le calendrier scolaire 2019/2020.

Les écoles sont également encouragées à mener une évaluation continue conformément au contenu couvert pendant les cours de rattrapage par le biais des devoirs, des projets et des interrogations pour obtenir des notes pour la 4e période.

Quant aux élèves de la 10e et de la 11e années, ils vont reprendre les cours le 5 octobre 2020 pour finir le 4 novembre



fait savoir que les élèves du primaire et de la maternelle ne sont pas concernés par cette réouverture. Ils doivent patiemment attendre la prochaine année scolaire. Cependant, les écoles sont instamment priées de préparer des devoirs de maison à leur intention car cela servira d'évaluation ponctuelle pour cette année scolaire.

Les cours des classes de la 12e année qui ont commencé le 29 juin, cesseront le 14 août 2020. L'examen régional de fin d'année doit commencer au Libéria le 17 août 2020 et se terminer le 2 septembre 2020, pour marquer ainsi la fermeture du calendrier académique pour les élèves de la 12e année.

Les écoles sont invitées à terminer l'évaluation interne d'ici le 3 au 7 août 2020 et à finaliser les bulletins de notes pour procéder à leur distribution du 26 au 30 octobre 2020.

Sauf avis contraire du ministère de la Santé, il n'y aura pas d'assemblées pour les

2020. Ils devront eux aussi se concentrer sur les quatre matières de base.

Le professeur Sonii a indiqué que tous les bulletins de note des classes de la 1e à la 11e doivent être disponibles avant le 16 novembre 2020 et ceux de la 12e année le 26 octobre 2020.

Le ministère de l'Éducation a tenu à souligner que si l'application des règles et des pratiques d'hygiène pour un environnement scolaire sûr relève de la responsabilité des administrateurs de l'école, les élèves, les familles et les communautés ont également un rôle important à jouer pour garantir le respect des mesures barrières. Les parents sont donc tenus d'observer en permanence leurs enfants et d'interdire à tout enfant présentant des symptômes du COVID-19 d'assister aux cours et de contacter immédiatement l'équipe de santé.

Français

Impression non autorisée

Sirleaf.

Weeks et d'autres membres du conseil d'administration de la CBL, dont David Fahart, Elsie DossenBardio et Kollie Tamba, sont jugés pour vol de propriété, sabotage économique, fraude sur les revenus internes du Libéria, utilisation abusive des fonds publics, des biens ou des archives, vol ou décaissement illégal d'argent public, complot criminel et facilitation criminelle.

Ils ont été inculpés pour avoir prétendument imprimé 13 004 750 000 dollars libériens sans autorisation entre 2016 et 2018 et n'auraient déclaré que 10 359 750 000,00 L \$, soit un écart de 2 645 000 000 L \$.

Selon le défendeur Weeks, toutes les devises utilisées par la CBL provenaient des devises qui lui sont vendues par le gouvernement, mais ce dernier avait déclaré qu'il n'était plus en mesure de continuer à lui vendre le dollar américain en raison de fortes contraintes de change.

La CBL, a en croire l'accusé, aurait introduit «25% de remise sur les transferts entrants », une catégorie d'argent qui, selon lui, est transférée au Libéria et qui est liée à des particuliers via le système bancaire mais utilise des sociétés internationales de transfert d'argent telles que Western Union, MoneyGram et Nobel, entre autres.

Selon lui, le total des envois de fonds entrants s'élevait en moyenne à environ 240 millions de dollars US par an, et les 25% correspondaient à environ 60 millions USD, soit 5 millions de dollars américains par mois. Cet argent est versé aux personnes qui reçoivent des transferts d'argent par le biais des banques commerciales.

« Les banques commerciales étaient contraintes de pouvoir payer [leurs] clients en raison du fait qu'environ 20% seulement de la monnaie totale en circulation se trouvait dans le système bancaire. La plupart de l'argent en circulation n'est jamais arrivé au niveau des banques. Les banques commerciales ici, faisaient constamment des démarches pour que la CBL mettent l'argent à leur disposition », a témoigné M. Weeks.

M. Weeks a déclaré qu'outre les banques commerciales, le public et l'Assemblée législative ont commencé à exercer de la

pression sur la CBL, se plaignant de l'utilisation de trois devises au Libéria, dont notamment le dollar américain, les anciennes et les nouvelles coupures du dollar libérien. La CBL a ainsi écrit au président Pro-tempore du Sénat en mai 2017 et a également informé le président de la Chambre des représentants de ce que 10 milliards de dollars libériens devraient être imprimés au coût estimatif de 10,4 millions de dollars américains, ceci en réponse à une demande du Sénat qui voulait savoir combien fallait-il imprimer pour remplacer tous les anciens billets.

Il a ajouté que la CBL a reçu l'assurance que son plaidoyer serait pris en considération et que le 19 juillet 2017, la CBL a reçu une lettre de la part de l'Assemblée législative signée par le greffier en chef de la Chambre des représentants et le secrétaire du Sénat.

La lettre donnait instruction à la CBL de maintenir le dollar américain sur le marché, de remplacer tous les anciens billets et d'introduire des pièces de monnaie (métal).

Expliquant plus tôt comment Crane Currency a été choisie pour imprimer les cinq milliards, le défendeur Weeks a fait savoir que la société française Oberthur Fiduciaire, qui avait imprimé les anciennes coupures, avait refusé à la dernière minute de prendre le contrat d'impression des cinq milliards de dollars libériens.

Et Crane Currency, qui avait ensuite été choisie, avait indiqué qu'elle n'avait pas le droit d'imprimer le dessin exact qu'Oberthur avait utilisé, utilisant ainsi un nouveau dessin tout en essayant de conserver certaines des caractéristiques des anciens billets, selon Weeks.

« Cependant, le premier tirage a été meilleur que prévu et ils ont informé la CBL de ce qu'ils avaient imprimé plus de 5 milliards et ont proposé de les mettre à la disposition de la banque », a-t-il dit.

Les quatre accusés en procès ont plaidé non coupables des charges retenues contre eux. La cinquième accusée Melisa A. Emeh serait hors du Libéria et n'a pas été traduite en justice.

Quant à Charles Sirleaf, qui fut gouverneur adjoint de la CBL pendant des années, les charges retenues contre lui dans les deux précédents actes d'accusation ont été abandonnées pour non-lieu.

Outre M. Sirleaf, les accusés Richard H. Walker, Dorbor M. Hagba et Joseph Dennis ont été blanchis.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Raghuram G. Rajan

Les gouvernements doivent-ils continuer de dépenser ?

CHICAGO - Les économies développées ont d'ores et déjà dépensé des montants considérables dans l'aide aux ménages ainsi qu'aux petites et moyennes entreprises face à la pandémie. D'après les perspectives du FMI pour le mois de juin, ces dépenses ont représenté environ 20 points de pourcentage du PIB, mesures budgétaires et garanties de crédit incluses. Aux États-Unis, le Congrès envisage à nouveau de déboursier 5% (chez les Républicains) à 15% du PIB (chez les Démocrates), sachant que d'autres dépenses, et par conséquent davantage d'emprunts, seront encore nécessaires avant que la pandémie soit enfin derrière nous.

Les économistes estiment qu'en raison des faibles taux d'intérêts actuels, la dette souveraine demeure aujourd'hui soutenable à des niveaux bien supérieurs à ceux d'hier. Ils ont raison, à condition que la croissance du PIB nominal retrouve un niveau raisonnable, que les taux d'intérêts restent faibles, et que les futurs gouvernements limitent leurs dépenses. Même si les deux premières hypothèses se vérifient, la troisième nous contraints à examiner la qualité des dépenses actuelles.

En temps normal, les gouvernements qui font preuve de responsabilité visent l'équilibre au cours du cycle économique, remboursant en période de reprise ce qu'ils empruntent en période de ralentissement, les groupes bénéficiaires pendant la première phase remboursant pour leur part pendant la deuxième. Seulement voilà, il est impossible que les dettes massives accumulées pendant la crise actuelle soient remboursées de sitôt. Même en cas d'augmentation des impôts pour les plus fortunés - politique qui rencontrerait une opposition intense, et se heurterait à des arguments contre une austérité néfaste pour la croissance - une large part de la dette accumulée sera transmise aux générations futures.

Par le passé, cette dette était plus facile à rembourser. Chaque génération étant plus riche que la précédente grâce à une croissance forte, les dettes passées diminuaient par rapport aux revenus. Or, aujourd'hui, le vieillissement de la société ainsi que le faible niveau d'investissement public et de croissance de la productivité nous orientent vers un avenir dans lequel nos enfants ne seront pas nécessairement plus riches que nous l'avons été.

En effet, nous leur léguons d'ores et déjà deux défis immenses : s'occuper de nous lorsque nos retraites manqueront de financements, et remédier à un changement climatique contre lequel nous n'avons quasiment pas agi. Pire encore, en limitant nos investissements dans la santé et l'éducation de cette prochaine génération, celle-ci se retrouve en grande partie insuffisamment équipée pour vivre une existence productive.

Si nous limitons encore davantage la capacité d'investissement public de cette prochaine génération, la dette que nous lui léguons pèsera très certainement sur les revenus futurs. Et si nous épuisons aujourd'hui la capacité globale d'emprunt, les générations futures ne pourront pas dépenser autant que nécessaire si elles rencontrent une catastrophe « unique dans un siècle », telle que les deux que nous avons connues ces 12 dernières années. L'équité intergénérationnelle doit être aussi importante que l'équité intrasociétale qui concernent les vivants d'aujourd'hui.

Cela signifie concrètement que l'idée selon laquelle chacun devrait pouvoir être rétabli dans sa situation initiale, dans la mesure où la pandémie était indépendante de sa volonté, devient immédiatement intenable. Dans les nombreux pays qui viennent financièrement en aide aux propriétaires non assurés frappés par une crue ou un séisme au niveau local, les habitants des régions épargnées mettent volontiers la main au portefeuille (via des impôts plus élevés) parce qu'ils savent qu'ils bénéficieraient du

même traitement. Or, face à un choc aussi global qu'une pandémie, ce calcul ne tient plus ; la charge pèsera inévitablement sur les générations futures, qui à l'évidence ne sont pas responsables de la pandémie ou des réponses apportées à celle-ci.

C'est pourquoi nous devons cibler consciencieusement nos dépenses. À mesure que persistent la pandémie et ses conséquences, nous devons nous concentrer sur la protection des travailleurs, et non de l'ensemble des emplois. Il est bien entendu nécessaire que tous les travailleurs licenciés bénéficient d'une aide publique décente, certainement jusqu'à ce que l'emploi connaisse une reprise. Il est moralement juste qu'une société riche fournisse un filet de sécurité sociale à chacun, et il est dans l'intérêt de chacun que les travailleurs et leurs enfants conservent - voire améliorent - leurs capacités durant la pandémie.

Une fois cette nécessité gérée, les pouvoirs publics doivent pour autant se montrer plus sélectifs dans les entreprises qu'ils soutiennent, et laisser ainsi le marché accomplir l'essentiel de leur travail. Dans les zones habituellement prospères, par exemple, de petites entreprises naissent et meurent chaque jour. Bien que ces échecs soient douloureux pour leurs propriétaires, ils n'entraînent pas de dommages permanents pour l'économie. Si la demande en fleurs est suffisante lorsque l'économie reprendra, un nouveau fleuriste ouvrira sur les lieux de l'ancien. Il n'est pas conséquent pas judicieux en termes de coûts que l'État maintienne l'ancien fleuriste dans sa capacité, en s'occupant de payer indéfiniment son bailleur, sa banque et ses employés.

De la même manière, l'État ne doit pas accorder de versements ou prêts subventionnés permettant à de grandes entreprises en détresse, telles que les compagnies aériennes et les chaînes hôtelières, de conserver leurs employés, dans la mesure où ces sociétés maintiendront un nombre excédentaire d'employés tant qu'elles percevront ces aides. Il serait beaucoup moins coûteux pour l'État de soutenir les employés licenciés via une couverture chômage, plutôt que de payer les employeurs pour que ceux-ci maintiennent indéfiniment leurs employés à des postes pour lesquels il n'existe clairement plus aucun travail.

Les grandes sociétés qui ont besoin de fonds pour demeurer à flots peuvent emprunter sur les marchés, dont la flottaison est assurée par les banques centrales. Celles qui se trouvent si endettées que personne n'accepte de leur prêter de l'argent peuvent également restructurer leurs dettes dans le cadre d'une faillite, et connaître un nouveau départ.

Dans certaines situations, les entreprises ne peuvent toutefois pas faire appel aux forces du marché sans aide. Dans les communautés économiquement défavorisées, où les quelques petites entreprises difficiles à relancer sont vitales pour l'existence quotidienne, une aide est nécessaire pour des raisons à la fois économiques et sociales. De même, si les marchés traitent généralement raisonnablement les grandes sociétés, les entreprises de taille moyenne peuvent éprouver des difficultés à obtenir des fonds, même lorsqu'elles demeurent viables. Or, si une entreprise économiquement viable, qui emploie 100 salariés, ferme en raison de revenus inexistantes sur la majeure partie de l'année, ses employés spécialisés se retrouveront dispersés, ses équipements vendus en liquidation, et les normes et usages qui lui permettaient de fonctionner disparaîtront pour toujours. Et même si sa disparition laisse derrière elle un trou économique béant, il ne sera pas facile pour une nouvelle startup d'entrer en scène pour le combler.

Les dépenses publiques sont aujourd'hui nécessaires. Mais ce n'est pas parce que les marchés de la dette souveraine n'ont pas encore réagi négativement aux niveaux extrêmement élevés d'emprunt et de dépense que nous devons faire fi de toute prudence. Le bien de nos enfants est en jeu.

ARTICLE

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Moment of Truth for BRICS: Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward

Cont'd from last edition

Having said the above, I am more than prepared to embark on a project that will help BRICS to understand the effects of Brics partnership on mineral beneficiation in South Africa and within the Southern African Development Community. In this connection, I think South Africa has a lot to offer to the BRICS. There must also be a consensus with other African countries. Understandably, South Africa can be an investment gateway to Africa. As the presiding head of the African Union, South Africa represents the interests of the AU in BRICS.

On beneficiation, South Africa has a tremendous experience on nuclear power that, if used for energy, could help the beneficiation industry in the country. One needs to be cautious of deviations in that regard, not that I am suggesting South Africa would deviate, but care needs to be observed by all member countries on that issue. As a pacifist, I would advise that African countries look at alternative, renewable energy sources. A gradual approach to beneficiation and a dialogue between trade partners will take the BRICS partnership to another level as far as South Africa is concerned in the BRICS.

How do you assess the current coronavirus spread and its impact, especially among BRICS, (Brazil, India, Russia and South Africa) and allegedly (yet to be proved) virus originated from China (BRICS member)?

The BRICS are hit by the COVID-19 crisis just like any other country. As we know, the COVID-19 started in Wuhan, China, and then spread in no time to all the continents. It is however important to note that China closed its borders and cooperated with the World Health Organization (WHO) to alert other countries. On the other hand, in Africa, we saw China helping the African Union (AU) with PPEs and other test equipment. This should be appreciated.

Whether the alert came late or not, I do not have any means to determine that. Why would China want to do that? Instead of pointing fingers to others, I think it is time the world learns from the threat we face together as humans and find a common ground to halt (stop) the spread of COVID-19. It should be an opportunity to re-engineer our health facilities and capabilities for a better tomorrow for all. Personally, I would call for cooperation between BRICS and non-BRICS countries (the United States and Europe for example to get involved). Failing to do that will be a recipe for more complications.

What do you think of BRICS collaborating on COVID-19 vaccine? Do you see "cooperation or competition" among its members (China, India and Russia) racing for global market with the vaccine?

Interestingly, I see both cooperation and competition. But I think we need more cooperation and sharing of the information. The BRICS must remember what they owe the world. Cooperation should be on all aspects of life. We hear stories of people of color being ill-treated in China for example. I think the authorities should investigate that and take appropriate actions to care for others with dignity.

In South Africa as well, the refugee community was



Dr. Byelongo Elisee Isheloke

almost neglected in the management of the COVID-19. I am glad the government decided to do something about it. BRICS scientists, as well, need collaboration to come up successfully with a solution or vaccine. Efforts by other scientists need to be taken into account. And as regards Africa, an African solution to Africa's problem approach should not be neglected or relegated to the backyard. BRICS are partners, they can help each other but they should not replace own efforts towards security and safety. Vaccine or solutions to the pandemic should not be profit-orientated. In Africa, we believe in Ubuntu. I think our BRICS leaders will not do such a mistake. I am highly optimistic on that.

Generally, what would you consider as the key challenges amid the coronavirus pandemic that has shattered the economy, and how do you see the future of BRICS?

The pandemic has, indeed taken a heavy toll on the global economy. As reported by the World Health Organization (WHO), Brazil, India, Russia, China, and of course, South Africa have high infections after the United States. The key challenges during the COVID-19 era are: Unpreparedness of the BRICS countries. It came as a surprise and BRICS were caught pants down in most instances. We should view the COVID-19 as an opportunity for better planning, re-engineering of our health facilities and capabilities for prevention.

Lack of financial resources. The poor countries in a dire situation. Most countries had no financial muscles to acquire respirators and PPEs. Russia and China managed to build specialized hospitals within a short time to contain the situation. This is an area where the BRICS Development Bank could make the stark difference if

steered in the right direction.

Insufficient coordination. As for the case of South Africa, it is good that the government took the scientific approach in managing the situation. Coordination with public-private partnership could enhance the ability of the state apparatus to serve everybody regardless of their origin. There is still time to ensure that poor including refugees and asylum seekers are humanly served. We cannot be selective in enforcing human rights. Medical assistance, in time of coronavirus, be regarded as basic human right for all. A better coordination will therefore help not only South Africa, but all the countries.

Last but not the least, a holistic approach to fighting the pandemic should be promoted. A human being is not just a body, but it is also a spirit. While scientists and decision makers propose solutions, it must be done in conjunction with means that uplift the spirit as well. Faith based organizations should equally have a role to play to help the government and to provide interventions of psychological and spiritual nature. A healthy body in a healthy spirit is what we need. Otherwise, any solution will be half-baked and unsustainable. All the stakeholders must work together. This is not only for South Africa or for the BRICS, but it is also for the entire world. There are a lot of negative news on TV and Radio channels about the corona. It is time the media grasps the opportunity to serve humanity by focusing on giving hope rather than destroying hope. A balance needs to be set in this regard as well. Media have to exhibit a more constructive role for a better world.

Empty talk

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The ruling Coalition for Democratic Change describes the recent statement by Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon that if President George Manneh Weah tempered with the pending midterm senatorial elections in December, his administration would abruptly end, as 'cheap propaganda and empty talks that have no weight'.

Addressing a news conference in Monrovia on August 04, at the CDC's headquarters in Congo Town, national chairman Mulbah Morlu notes that the insinuation by the Montserrado County Senator is clear indication of sign of defeat, ahead of the December 08 Special Senatorial elections.

Morlu says Senator Dillon is smelling defeat and the only option he has is to spread lies,

group of religious leaders who had gone to seek clarity on the Senator's statement about the President's tenure in office being cut short if the election is tempered with.

Chairman Morlu continues that Senator Dillon's constant drumbeat of war is understandable, as he's afraid and already feels badly defeated before the political battle even begins.

He says no threats can save Dillon now, as he's way behind battle lines, adding, the opposition senator will feel the wrath of CDCians and independent-minded Liberians, who can remember nothing he has achieved as senator except to organize violent protests and keep threatening peace with war.

"We must not take his threats for granted; while he lacks the capacity to remove this government, but he and his cohorts are able to cause major disturbances that may cause

towards justice in every situation pertaining to expression of grievances in the country, then it must be done through the rule of law, not violence.

"Violence is antithetical to the CDC; we must all embrace tolerance to freedom of speech. Yet, insults and blatant indiscipline against the president and leaders of our country, chiefs, elders and people in public service do not fall within the contexts and definition of freedom of speech. Insulting national leaders is not only anti-peace, but is also anti-cultural and violates all social norms and taboos. This irresponsible behavior pattern is called deviancy and must be condemned and halted. So, while we all hasten to condemn violence, we are all under moral compulsion to equally condemn deviancy, actions that go against social norms and standards, leading



mislead the people through cheap propaganda.

According to Morlu, the Liberty Party senator has no capacity to disrupt the peace of the country as the CDC is prepared to politically dislodge him on December 08.

Senator Abraham Darius Dillon last week Wednesday increased the volume of his war drum, saying that President George Manneh Weah will not end his tenure if he tempers with the will of the people.

Liberians are expected to head for the poll on December 8 in midterm senatorial elections that will also see the country voting in a referendum.

But members of the opposition are apprehensive the ruling party has plans to rig the polls. "We know what tempering with elections have caused us," Dillon told a

the loss of innocent lives and destroy properties of poor citizens as they attempted recently through violent urban Arson attacks. Nevertheless, CDCEANS must continue to remain peaceful and focused and not follow destructive path of violence. As I've often said, if anyone slap your right ear, turn the left, nothing justifies violence," he said.

Commenting on the recent violence in Grand Gedeh County, where opposition leader Alexander Cummings and Representative Kekeh Kolubah came under attack from stone-throwing youths believed to be from the youth league of the CDC, Morlu said rule of law must at all times remain the only recourse to resolving differences, political or otherwise, adding, nothing justifies violence.

He stressed that if the arc of the moral universe will bend

negative public reactions," he told the news conference.

He pointed out that within this context, CDC will all clearly agree that while the situation that occurred in the southeast cannot be justified, yet it is an exaggerated act of provocation, especially when one starts calling south-easterners 'chickens to be butchered', with CPP's leader Alexander Cummings present and allegedly gave tacit approval.

Last Thursday's violence in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County has received widespread condemnation from Liberians both at home and abroad, including members of the Grand Gedeh Legislative who described the act as "shameful and embarrassing." -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Nwabudike runs back

Cont'd from page 6

National Elections Commission (NEC), another tenure position, subject to confirmation by the Liberian Senate.

But Nwabudike notes that during his confirmation hearing for the NEC top job, some senators raised concern about alleged inconsistency of his passport, university records and naturalization certificate which had prolonged his confirmation hearing for which President Weah withdrew the nomination "for reasons not expressed."

Meanwhile, the LNBA expelled Nwabudike because it said its investigation found that "he became a member of the Liberian National Bar Association through fraudulent means," and the Bar's decision followed his controversial Senate confirmation hearing.

Following months of investigation into his Liberian citizenship, the LNBA announced on 19 June this year it discovered at least four different birthdates and four years of births on Nwabudike's various passports.

Nwabudike says the Grievance and Ethics Committee of the LNBA proceeded with its investigation against him without his participation.

Further, he laments that following the Grievance and Ethics Committee's

investigation, the Bar issued a press release expelling his membership without serving him copies of the findings and conclusion of its investigation.

He therefore requests the Civil Law Court to review, correct, set aside and deny and dismiss the decision of the LNBA expelling his membership.

Up to the time of his expulsion from the LNBA Friday, 19 June, the disgraced official continued to chair the LACC, a position reserved for Liberians, despite failing to prove he is a naturalized Liberian during Senate confirmation hearing to chair the NEC.

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

Until his nomination by President Weah to chair the NEC, Cllr. Nwabudike's previous confirmation by the Liberian Senate as LACC chair seemed to have gone smoothly without Liberia's weak system detecting any issues surrounding how he acquired Liberian citizenship which enabled him to practice law here.

"Chea must leave"

Cont'd from page 6

entity as well.

Mr. Chea says most of those making the allegations are not with the corporation, noting that salaries were on time when he went to the corporation, but things have changed because coronavirus has made most customers to leave Liberia.

"Those that are protesting are not protesting because they want me to stay or leave, they're protesting because they've been used. I didn't buy a car worth \$35,000, I took a car from a dealer for less than \$9,000 and I'm still paying for it from my salary." Chea claims.

He notes that the issue if payroll is not in his department, noting that it is

run singlehandedly by the Managing Director of the corporation.

"They've been used for something selfish by some individuals, but we're doing our investigation to unearth it," he adds.

According to Mr. Chea, the General Auditing Commission (GAC) has over the past eight years tried to audit LIBTELCO, but it hasn't been successful, alleging that there are people within the system, ranging from the board that have been stalling the process.

He concludes that it is far from the truth for workers to say that he's the reason salaries have been delayed.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

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Faulty calculation

-Milton Weeks explains printing of L\$10bn



By **Winston W. Parley**

Former Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) Executive Governor Milton A. Weeks says it appears that prosecution's witness Baba M. Boakai may have been using a faulty calculation.

Mr. Weeks argues that Baba's assertion that the CBL

received 13bn plus, yet the documents he submitted as evidence shows CBL received 10.359bn.

Testifying Tuesday, 4 August, Mr. Weeks agreed with the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) Program Manager for Enforcement and Investigation Mr. Baba on one point that under his (Weeks')

administration, the CBL could only account for 10bn plus, saying it is correct because it was LD\$10.359bn plus that was received.

But he disagrees with Mr. Baba's testimony that the CBL received 13bn plus, insisting that Baba's assertion is not backed by the document he submitted as exhibited in the Presidential Investigative Team (PIT) report because the documents submitted show that CBL received 10.359bn.

"Once again, it appears Mr. Baba may have been using a faulty calculation ...," Mr. Weeks says.

Further, he says he finds it difficult to reconcile former House Speaker Emmanuel Nuquay's assertion that the Legislature's letter requesting the CBL to advise on the amount of banknotes to be printed to replace the legacy notes was referring to the

▶ **CONT'D ON PAGE 7**



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Security threat looms

-Sen. Zargo warns Weah

By **Winston W. Parley**

Lofa County Senator Steve Zargo, a former senior police officer, is warning of a looming national security threat as Liberia goes toward election due in part to placement of wrong persons in the security force, weakening civil law enforcement agencies and vulnerability of some counties here to illegal gold

mines that breed fundamentalism.

Mr. Zargo told local broadcaster OK FM in Monrovia Tuesday, 4 August that prior to the Senate's closure, he forwarded to the Senate's leadership 10 different issues, some bordering on the country's survival and the looming national security threat that has the propensity to lead to problems if not dealt

with. "Even before we were closing, I forwarded to them 10 counts, 10 different issues that I raised. Some of them bordered on the survival of this country, national security threat, looming national security threat that if not handled, it has the propensity ...," he says.

"If you call the President Pro - tempore and leadership of the Senate, they will tell

▶ **CONT'D ON PAGE 5**

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.

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