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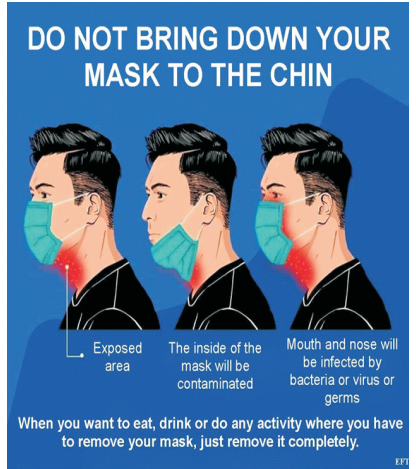
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The New Dawn

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TRULY INDEPENDENT



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Cummings draws punches



Pres. Weah



Minister McGill



CDC Chairman Morlu



Mr. Cummings



-As CDC officials fume over debate

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Continental News

Mali's military promises elections after coup

The soldiers who ousted Mali's President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita say they plan to set up a civilian transitional government and hold new elections.

The spokesman for the soldiers said they acted to prevent the country falling further into chaos.

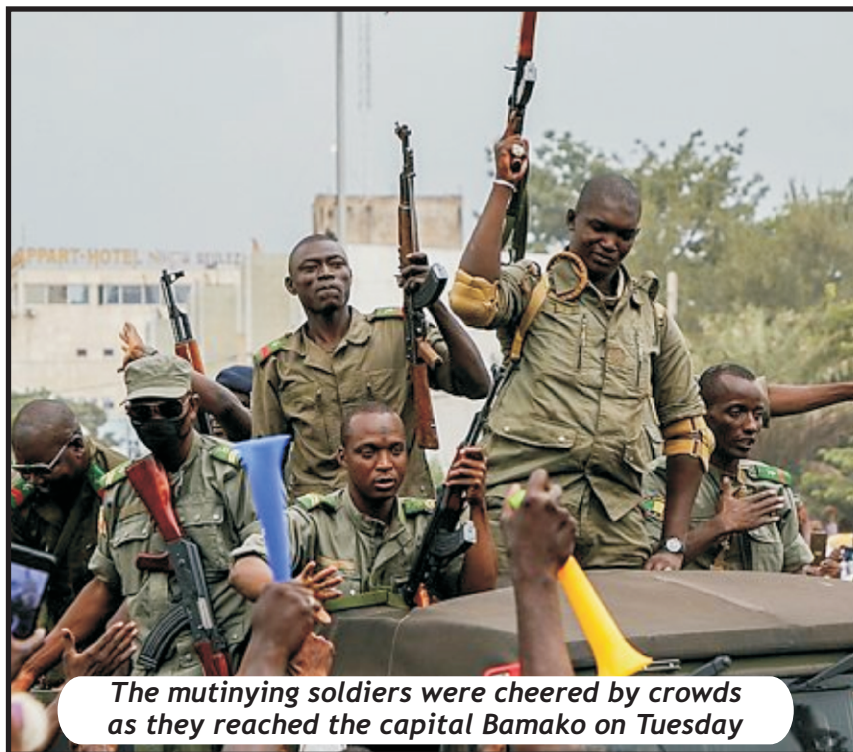
President Keita resigned on Tuesday night saying he did not want "blood to be spilled to keep me in power."

The African Union, regional leaders, and the UN have condemned the coup.

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa, the current African Union (AU) chairperson, urged the soldiers to release President Keita and others government officials being detained.

The UN Security Council is to hold an emergency session on Wednesday to discuss the latest developments.

Mali, a vast country stretching into the Sahara Desert is among the poorest countries in the world and has experienced several military takeovers. It is currently battling to contain a wave of jihadist attacks and ethnic violence. The soldiers, calling



The mutinying soldiers were cheered by crowds as they reached the capital Bamako on Tuesday

themselves the National Committee for the Salvation of the People, said they did not want to stay in power.

"We are keen on the stability of the country, which will allow us to organise general elections to allow Mali to equip itself with strong institutions within the reasonable time limit," said the group's spokesman, Col Ismaël Wagué, the air force deputy chief of staff. On Tuesday night, wearing a surgical mask amid

the coronavirus pandemic, Mr Keita resigned in a brief address on state television.

"If today, certain elements of our armed forces want this to end through their intervention, do I really have a choice?" he asked.

"I hold no hatred towards anyone, my love of my country does not allow me to," he added. "May God save us."

Mr Keita won a second

term in elections in 2018, but since June has faced huge street protest over corruption, the mismanagement of the economy and a dispute over legislative elections.

There has also been anger among troops about pay and the conflict with jihadists. A televised statement was read out early on Wednesday on behalf of the National Committee for the Salvation of the People.

Col-Major Wagué urged Mali's civil and political groups to help create a "political transition leading to credible general elections for the exercise of democracy

through a roadmap that will lay the foundations for a new Mali". He also announced the closure of all air and land borders and a curfew from 21:00 to 05:00. Flanked by soldiers, Col Wagué said: "Our country is sinking into chaos, anarchy and insecurity mostly due to the fault of the people who are in charge of its destiny."

It was the war in Libya, almost a decade ago, that nudged Mali along the path to chaos.

Weapons from Libya flooded across the Sahara Desert, fuelling a separatist conflict in northern Mali, which morphed into an Islamist militant offensive, which prompted a coup in the capital Bamako. BBC

UN Makes \$1.6 Billion Appeal for Sudan

United Nations officials in Sudan have sent out an urgent appeal for \$1.6 billion to provide life-saving assistance to citizens, including hundreds of thousands of people affected by floods. Recent flooding caused by heavy rain has affected 17 of Sudan's 18 states.

More than 20,000 houses were destroyed and another 20,000 were damaged by the floods, according to Saviano Abreu, spokesperson for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Khartoum.

"Here in Sudan we have around 250,000 people affected by floods that started in mid-July but intensified by the end of the month. During the month of August is when we saw most of the rain, concentrated in a short period of time," Abreu told VOA's South Sudan in Focus. About 2,000 drinking water sources are now contaminated or non-functional, which is depriving citizens of access to clean water, said Abreu.

Some states are harder hit



by the floods than others.

"Sinar for example, it's around 42,000 people but the same situation we have in Aljazeera, East Darfur, Kasala, South Darfur, so it's around the whole country, and the problem we have is not going to stop," Abreu told VOA.

Heavy rain is forecast for coming weeks.

Sudan's humanitarian situation was already bad before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Last month, international humanitarian partners released Sudan's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, or IPC, which said close to 10 million Sudanese face acute food insecurity due to a number of factors, including conflict, high inflation and COVID-19. VOA

Battle to move Mauritius oil ship seen by satellite

Satellite images have captured tug boats trying to remove the wreckage of a Japanese-owned ship that ran aground off the coast of Mauritius, spilling tonnes of oil into pristine waters.

The MV Wakashio hit a

coral reef, Pointe d'Esny, on 25 July while carrying 4,000 tonnes of fuel oil.

It is now being towed away from the reef, a sanctuary for rare wildlife.

Meanwhile, a team of experts from Japan is travelling to Mauritius to help with the

clean-up. Most of the oil on board was pumped out before the ship broke apart at the weekend but nearly 1,000 tonnes leaked into the sea causing damage to the rich marine ecosystem. An environment ministry official in Tokyo said the Japanese team would assess the impact on coral reefs. They will also take with them special materials designed to absorb oil. "The oil leak from the stranded ship has caused severe damage to the people of Mauritius, the economy of which largely relies on tourism and the beautiful ocean," said Noriaki Sakaguchi, from the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

"I am terribly distressed. I would like to assess the situation and provide professional advice so that our contribution as an expert team will meet the demands of local people and the government."

The operation to remove the bow has so far been



The ship's bow is being towed away from the reef

hampered by low tides, reports the BBC's Yasmine Mohabuth in Port Louis, but it should progress as surrounding waters deepen.

Meanwhile, experts are trying to decide how to remove the rear section of the vessel, which is still aground on the reef. The ship's captain, 58-year-old Sunil Kumar Nandeshwar, has been

arrested over the incident and charged with endangering safe navigation.

Police said crew members had told them there had been a birthday party on the ship the day it ran aground.

Another theory being investigated is that the ship navigated close to the shore in order to pick up WiFi signal. BBC

EDITORIAL

Minister Samuel Tweah is now campaign manager

IT HAS BECOME very glaring that Liberia's Minister of Finance and Development Planning Samuel Tweah has become campaign manager for the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change senatorial aspirant for Montserrado County, Thomas P. Fallah.

WHILE MINISTER TWEAH has all rights to support a candidate of his choice in the impending December 8th midterm senatorial election, but leaving his basic schedules as Ministry of Finance to personally accompany incumbent Representative Thomas Fallah into communities like he has done recently in Amagashie, Chocolate City, Battery Factory, Plank Field community, and other areas is not only despicable, but officially unnecessary for his status.

WE AGREE THAT the governing CDC, which both Tweah and Fallah are members of, is desperate to reclaim the Montserrado County senatorial seat from incumbent Senator Abraham Darius Dillon of the opposition Liberty Party. But for the Minister of Finance to present himself as the public face of Rep. Fallah, who has suddenly become a philanthropist, dishing out millions of Liberian dollars to various communities, creates room for suspicions and perceptions.

EVEN WORST, THIS is happening at the time when the National Elections Commission has not officially declared campaign open for the midterm senatorial elections. The Minister of Finance has already begun to make campaign promises to residents of communities visited, pledging development that had never been thought of in the three years of this administration.

WITH THE SUDDEN dishing out of cash to voters, even before the official campaign, it is now glaring that Rep. Thomas Fallah will become the most financially prepared candidate in the race for Montserrado County, given the visible involvement of Minister Samuel Tweah.

THE PUBLIC MAY never get to know how many millions are being budgeted by the ruling establishment just to win in Montserrado County and it would be very difficult, if not impossible to clearly distinguish whether such resources are public money or private strength in an election.

HOWEVER, WHAT IS very clear is that the current Tweah-Fallah collaboration is just a tip of the iceberg of things to expect when official campaign shall have started for the senatorial polls.

THIS IS NO joke, Liberians are on the verge of witnessing one of the politically unfair campaign ever in the nation's history, where the ruling party, armed with national resources is gearing up to go against highly disadvantaged and poorly prepared opponents. This is not the kind of democracy the people envisaged under the CDC-led government that is organizing these elections.

IF OUR FINANCE Minister is leading Fallah's campaign at this early stage, what would be the role of the Inspector General of Police, who has been accused consistently of running a partisan police force? Memories are still fresh on our minds of the recent violence in Zwedru City, Grand Gedeh County, a stronghold of the CDC where stone-throwing and machete-wielding youths chased opposition leader Alexander Cummings and Montserrado County District#10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah out of the county.

WE ARE HIGHLIGHTING these concerns so that our leaders should realize that they are no longer in opposition, but now control power and they have a duty to exercise power discretely for the peace and confidence of all within the law.

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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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COMMENTARY

By Sania Nishtar

How Cash Transfers Prevent Lockdown Tragedies

COVID-19 has decimated livelihoods worldwide, squeezing the middle class and pushing low-income households into abject poverty. Social-protection programs such as Pakistan's Ehsaas Emergency Cash offer not only a path forward during the pandemic, but also valuable lessons for the future.

ISLAMABAD - In 2017, I was a candidate to become the next Director-General of the World Health Organization. At the 70th World Health Assembly, I stood before health ministers from around the world and warned that three things could destroy the planet: a celestial event, a third world war, or a pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic may not have destroyed the planet, but it is certainly putting public and private institutions to a harsh test. In addition to its dire health consequences, the pandemic has decimated livelihoods worldwide, squeezing the middle class and pushing low-income households into abject poverty.

In Pakistan - the world's fifth-largest country by population - 24 million breadwinners rely on daily wages or are self-employed in the informal economy. For them, life came to a standstill with the implementation of a lockdown in March, causing a widespread loss of income that began fueling civil unrest and rioting.

To mitigate the pandemic's socioeconomic damage, Pakistan's government created the Ehsaas Emergency Cash program, the largest social-protection program in the country's history. Rolled out ten days after the lockdown began, it is delivering one-time cash grants totaling more than \$1.2 billion to more than 16.9 million households, covering around 109 million people - approximately 50% of the country's population. Recipient families are given Rs12,000 (\$75) to cover their immediate subsistence needs.

Prior to the delivery of Ehsaas cash, I saw unspeakable suffering among people from many walks of life. There were day laborers and hawkers, hotel and restaurant staff, and domestic servants, security guards, and drivers. There were also laid-off public-transport employees, fishermen and miners, beauticians and barbers, and millions of shopkeepers - all on the verge of hunger, with their savings used up. They, along with private-school teachers, electricians, welders, painters, carpenters, plumbers, car mechanics, taxi drivers, and construction workers, did not know where their next meal would come from.

These stories were repeated across industries and regions, with even those used to earning a decent living suddenly wondering if their finances would ever add up again. But the handouts brought stability and comfort to millions of families, and the whole country watched as countless tragedies were averted.

Beyond the immediate crisis, the success of Ehsaas Emergency Cash offers Pakistan and other middle- and low-income countries invaluable experience in speedily delivering a massive national program in a complex and uncertain context. In order to share this knowledge, the government recently released a report describing the knowhow we gained through the program's design and implementation, as well as the operational challenges we encountered and how they were addressed.

The program's end-to-end digital approach, with transparency hardwired into its design, offers lessons about how to leverage personal identification systems. By combining phones, Internet connectivity, and national IDs, a digital, demand-based social-protection system can be created to enable those in distress to seek support during crises. And it demonstrates how cash transfer programs can be deployed to counter the adverse socioeconomic consequences of external shocks, such as COVID-19.

For Pakistan, this was a watershed moment in terms of government functioning. The crisis compelled the government to be more responsive, data-driven, experimental, and ambitious. Cost-effective digital methods of working, new ways to coordinate the activities of multiple stakeholders, and a whole-of-government approach have been institutionalized. These measures will transform policymaking in a post-COVID-19 world.

Finally, the legacy of the program goes beyond short-term relief. Built into its design are long-term goals to strengthen the safety net and increase financial inclusion, both of which will bring lasting benefits to recipients and to Pakistan as a whole. Alongside this is a commitment to transparency and accountability, which is the underlying motivation for the publication of the report. In order for democracies to ensure progress, a culture of integrity and openness must be ingrained in government institutions and processes.

History shows that disasters and their tragic consequences can be a catalyst of large-scale social change. COVID-19 has presented Pakistan with an urgent and unprecedented challenge, which could be met only by a program with the scale and ambition of Ehsaas Emergency Cash.

In the wake of the pandemic, we must embrace the once-in-a-generation chance to replicate this ambition globally and build a fairer world that overcomes poverty, inequality, and the climate crisis, with social protection as a core pillar of that effort.

O-PED

By Mari Pangestu

Harnessing the Power of Digital ID

As countries focus on “building back better” after the pandemic, they have a crucial opportunity to leapfrog to a more digital economy - and to do so responsibly. Whichever model they choose, governments can transform the lives of people everywhere by building digital ID systems designed to maximize privacy, inclusion, and trust.

WASHINGTON, DC - COVID-19 has tested the ability of governments to deliver financial and other forms of support to vulnerable people. Although 200 countries and territories have planned or implemented social-protection measures in response to the pandemic, many governments have struggled to identify informal workers who are not covered by existing welfare programs or social-security schemes for formal-sector employees. Social-distancing rules and quarantines have made it even more challenging to help those in need.

But in some countries, digital ID systems have enabled the authorities to identify populations reliably and remotely, and to make emergency cash transfers to vulnerable groups - such as women and girls, the poor, informal and migrant workers, people living in remote areas, and refugees.

For example, a digital ID system allowed Chile rapidly to pre-enroll millions of new beneficiaries in social programs and enabled people to check and, if necessary, appeal their support status online. In Thailand, where more than 28 million people applied for a new benefit for informal workers affected by the pandemic, the government was able to filter out those who would receive assistance from other schemes. And the Indian authorities recently were able to make quick payments under a financial-inclusion program to more than 200 million women as a result of improved processes that included linking an individual's account to their digital ID.

But digital ID systems alone are not a silver bullet for reaching vulnerable groups. Above all, such schemes require affordable access to digital infrastructure. Where this exists, a digital ID provides a foundation upon which other important applications and systems can be built. Because digital ID systems allow people to make remote transactions, they can also enable digital payments (through cashless transactions) and improved data governance (by enabling paperless transactions while preserving privacy).

Digital ID, digital payments, and data governance are each important individually. Together, they add up to a powerful public good.

This combination is as crucial to today's economies as roads and railways were to those of the twentieth century. For example, countries such as Estonia and Singapore have advanced digital ecosystems that allow people to access government and business services entirely online, thus partly mitigating the economic disruption caused by COVID-19.

As digitalization advances, attitudes toward data protection are undergoing a profound shift. High-profile data breaches and misuses are rightly making people more aware of threats to their privacy. New norms and regulations are giving citizens greater agency over their personal data, and new decentralized online models aim to shift power from third parties to users. Poorly planned digital ID systems can create or exacerbate risks to personal data, but with careful design, systems can promote responsible use and re-use of data by enabling people to exercise control.

Digital ID systems must also be designed with inclusion and trust in mind. Inclusion means not only ensuring that all can register, but also that everyone can use their digital IDs to receive assistance and empower themselves economically - including those with low literacy and limited access to technology. And it is crucial that people have confidence in the integrity of the system, including its ability to preserve privacy and individual rights. This requires effective transparency and accountability mechanisms.

Good digital ID systems not only enhance the capacity of governments and firms to operate, but also benefit and protect the public. A variety of models are emerging that reflect local contexts. While some countries need to start with a foundational ID system so all people can prove their official identity, others, including Australia, Canada, and France, are beginning to create digital ID “ecosystems” that give people a choice of public- and private-sector ID providers.

Whatever form they take, such systems are urgently needed. One billion people around the world still have no official ID, which prevents them from accessing financial systems and social services. Half of them are in Africa. Through the Identification for Development (ID4D) initiative, the World Bank is investing \$1.2 billion across more than 30 developing countries to reduce the number of unregistered people, and to build better digital ID and civil registration systems that can contribute to inclusive economic growth.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for digital ID systems that will allow governments to deliver social assistance and financial support faster and more accountably to households and businesses. To continue the search for innovative solutions, ID4D recently launched its second Mission Billion Challenge - a global call for new ways to enable the world's most vulnerable people to register for and use digital IDs safely.

As countries focus on “building back better” after the pandemic, they have a crucial opportunity to leapfrog to a more digital economy - and to do so responsibly. Whichever model they choose, governments can transform the lives of people everywhere by building digital ID systems designed to maximize privacy, inclusion, and trust.

OPINION

By Slawomir Sierakowski

Lukashenko's Ceaușescu Moment?

Within the space of just a few days, Belarus's dictator-president, Alexander Lukashenko, has lost the support of just about everyone, not least his working-class base. With the last holdouts in his regime surely fearing for their future, Lukashenko is quickly running out of options.

MINSK - At some point, all dictators start to believe their own lies. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko is a case in point: he is now behaving as though he really did win 80% of the vote in an election that he himself ensured was rigged.

With peaceful protests sweeping Belarusian cities and towns, Lukashenko, on August 17, visited the Minsk Wheeled Tractor Plant (MZKT) and the Minsk Automobile Plant (MAZ). Each factory plays a vital role not just in the country's economy but also in its national identity, and both have long served as a foundation for Lukashenko's power. Anyone who has seen the workers' housing complex on Socialist Street in Minsk will understand the quid pro quo. For “a man of everyday life,” as the late Polish dissident Jacek Kuron used to say, these residences are decidedly above average.

Nonetheless, when Lukashenko appealed to these workers this week, he did not hear “We will help,” but rather “Ukhodi!” - “Go away!” or “Get lost!” (Sharper barbs like “Shoot yourself” were also heard). The episode had poignant historical parallels that should concern Lukashenko. When Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu spoke before a huge crowd of protesters in December 1989, he, too, was heckled and mocked. He fell from power soon thereafter.

The jibes hurled at Lukashenko by workers may have fatally undermined his defense strategy, which is to create the impression that only he can control the situation. The message he has been trying to convey is, “I am the guarantor of stability. You don't have such a bad life. Don't risk it.”

This strategy explains why Lukashenko recently made a show of arresting Russian mercenaries in front of television cameras. It is why he has tried to dismiss his electoral challenger and her team as “three girls who have no idea about politics.” And it is why he responded with force to the protests immediately following the election.

But Belarusian society did not succumb to fear. On the contrary, Belarusians from all walks of life have forged a broadening chain of solidarity. As workers have joined with flower-bearing women in white, doctors, and artists, Lukashenko has been caught completely off guard. Equally ominous for his political future, state television workers have joined the mass strikes, and many police officers have cast off their uniforms, with one lieutenant colonel revealing the regime's plans for pacifying the protests.

Lukashenko's cold reception at MZKT and MAZ indicates that the falling dominos have now reached his working-class base. The Potemkin rallies that he has staged to demonstrate his support have been drowned out by much larger opposition rallies. The hundreds of thousands of protesters who have flooded into Belarusian city streets have effectively expelled Lukashenko from the country's most populated areas.

And now, more parts of the country are rebelling, replacing Lukashenko's barely modified Soviet flag with the white-red-white flag favored by the opposition. The latter now flies even at the iconic Nesvizh Castle.

Lukashenko's many mistakes suggest that he is not listening to his advisers, most of whom are probably beginning to fear for their own safety. We may be approaching the moment where they start to abandon him, joining the opposition or fleeing the country before it is too late.

The quickest way to overthrow a dictatorship is to break the bonds of loyalty between the dictator and his security apparatus. Division within the power elite is a necessary precondition for change, and it is possible that Lukashenko's public humiliation before the factory workers has already cost him his credibility with the regime's defenders.

Moreover, in addition to striking, workers are now joining the protests against the authorities, which is also necessary to break the regime's spell of control. Doctors have marched on the health ministry to express their discontent. Workers have appeared at the state television headquarters, at the former KGB headquarters, and even before the country's two most notorious prisons, Valadarka and Okrestina, where political prisoners and detained protesters are locked up. These developments are crucial, because they mean that Lukashenko cannot simply bunker down and wait things out.

The pressure on the regime is now constant and ubiquitous, and the authorities are beginning to panic. When Zviazda, Belarus's oldest newspaper, announced its own protest against censorship, the information minister showed up at its offices to try to mollify the journalists there. At other media outlets, Lukashenko's cronies have started seeking pliable journalists to replace those on strike, offering salaries many times higher than the national average. But such gambits only highlight the government's desperation.

It is important to note that the Belarusian uprising is happening without any clear leaders. Yes, there are influential activists and the opposition presidential candidate, Sviatlana Tikhonovskaya; there is the Telegram blog NEXTA, which is based in Warsaw and has been encouraging steady protests; and there is the opposition leader Maria Kolesnikova, now hiding in Minsk. But the strikes and protests by factory workers, doctors, women in white, and others are all spontaneous initiatives, and it is these organic displays of dissent that have completely undermined the regime's authority.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Liberia's Cultural Ambassador under fire -workers protest for pay

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Aggrieved employees of the Entertainment group, Crusaders for Peace, owned by Cultural Ambassador Julie Endee have protested in Monrovia, demanding pay.

The Crusaders for Peace situated on Capitol Bye-Pass in Monrovia is a private

yellow T-shirts, stood in front of the entrance of their office in demand of salary arrears, which has been long overdue by the management of the organization without any regard for welfare.

Some of the protestors, including Jallah Menson, Wilson Thomas, and Sarah Gibson narrated that they have not received pay for several

group continue to drill them as though they went to beg her for money, which is not the case.

The protestors include traditional culture performers, drummers and dancers, drivers, ticket sellers for the Crusader for Peace raffle draw, who are demanding compensation for their labor.

They added that despite salary not forthcoming, management is asking them to report to work daily without transportation, which is very embarrassing.

"Every time we ask for our salary, they will tell us to go come and go come which we are tired with and today, we are here to demand our money from the management of Crusader for Peace. If we don't get our money, we will not leave from here", the aggrieved workers lamented.

The protestors divided themselves into two groups, one standing in the front of the office of the Crusaders for Peace, while others posted themselves across the street with their backs turned against the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, demanding their salary.

Ambassador Julie Endee was said to be out of her office during the protest with no one there to speak to the issue.

When the New Dawn contacted offices of the group for reaction, this reporter was informed that the proprietress had gone to attend a meeting.

months.

According to them, each time they approached management about their arrears and benefits, they would get no redress despite spending money on transportation to followup with the management about their salary but to no avail.

They said Ambassador Andy who owns and operates the



Ambassador Judee Andy

musical and cultural group that performs at major governmental functions and programs.

It also promotes health campaigns, public education and cross border peace festivals among Mano River Union countries that group Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast.

The protestors dressed in

Agriculture coordinator vows to make Maryland self-sufficient in food

By Patrick N. Mensah. Maryland

Barely days after several marketers in Pleebo, Maryland County Electoral district # 2 vowed to boycott elections due to skyrocketing of commodity prices, County Agriculture Coordinator Christian NeckieNattas promised to work assiduously to make the county self-sufficient in food.

Speaking on a community radio station Wednesday, August 19, Mr. Natt said though his office is faced with several constraints, including logistics, tools and finance, he is optimistic that in few years, the people of Maryland would feed

themselves.

He said the Ministry of Agriculture sub-office in the

county is working closely with local farmers through medium-scale empowering



Govt. to fight piracy

The Liberian Government, through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry will shortly launch a vigorous campaign against piracy in the country.

Commerce and Industry Minister, Wilson K Tarpeh, said the essence of the campaign is to ensure that Liberian artists benefit from their talents.

The Commerce Ministry's statement comes in the wake of concerns being raised about

himself is keen in supporting intellectual property by protecting the work of artists," Prof. Tarpeh emphasized.

The Commerce and Industry Minister gave the assurance Monday, August 17, 2020, in Monrovia, at the official launch of the Copyright Society of Liberia.

The Copyright Society of Liberia was launched by the Liberia Intellectual Property Office (LIPO).

During the ceremony, Prince



Minister Tarpeh

some individuals duplicating the work of local artists, including other negative practices that undermine copyright regulations.

Prof. Tarpeh said Government will make sure that the intellectual property rights of artists in the country are protected through appropriate laws.

He noted that Liberian Chief Executive, Dr. George Manneh Weah, is himself an artist.

"The President, as an artist

Delkar, was inducted as Executive Director of the Copyright Society of Liberia.

Mr. Delkar pledged to work along with relevant stakeholders so as to address piracy-related issues in Liberia.

The Copyright Society of Liberia, will, among other things, register, document and license artists and their works, as well as collect and distribute royalty among artists.

program, providing themseeds,tools, chemical and training.

He added that some lawmakers of the county have made available machinery to farmers to boost their work.

He disclosed that the Ministry of Agriculture has promised to provide vehicles for the County Agriculture Coordinator despite economic hardship facing the government.

However, he noted that the sub-office has received three Honda bikes from the World Food Programme as support to the Ministry of Agriculture.

He said the duty of the Ministry is to assist farmers in growing food across the

country, saying, "Let me tell you what the Ministry does, it empowersfarmers in every county because she can't be the source of empowerment at the same time producing huge quantity that will make buyers not to go after those products being harvested or produced by the farmers themselves.

"So we're encouraging farmers to be more proactive because the government is willing to empower farmers who are prepared or ready to go into the agricultural business."

Mr. Natt disclosed that since his appointment as Agriculture Coordinator for Maryland County, he has conducted

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Senator Dillon challenges McGill

By Ethel A Tweh

Opposition Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon says he wants to take up the challenge to debate with the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Mr.

wrote on his Facebook page Tuesday, 18 August, saying he wants to debate with McGill on bad economy and all the poor governance practices.

"Why not debate with and prosecute crimes of rape against our children. Why not debate with and fight to solve

ruling establishment, days after Mr. McGill requested a debate with Mr. Cummings, chairman of the opposition CPP of which Dillon's Liberty Party (LP) is a constituent party.

Cummings had himself turned down McGill's offer, and rather expressed his interest in debating with President George Manneh Weah if the ruling establishment is serious about a debate.

"The truth is, there is no debate that this Weah-led government is corrupt, incompetent, and that as a result, Liberians are suffering! But if they are serious about a debate, I prefer to debate Pres. Weah himself," Cummings wrote on his Facebook page.

Mr. Cummings' comments came days after State and Presidential Affairs Minister Nathaniel Falo McGill took to social media challenging the CPP chairman to a national debate on the president's performance.

"I want to challenge the opposition chairperson to a debate. Let's go to a debate; let's be very civil, respect

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Senator Abraham Darius Dillon

Nathaniel McGill who had earlier requested a debate with Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) chair Alexander B. Cummings.

Sen. Dillion officially

all the increasing waves of violence and lawlessness under this regime?" Dillon writes.

Mr. Dillon has stepped into the quest for debate between leaders of the opposition the

MNG Gold begins redundancy of employees

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

MNG Gold Liberia, a Turkish gold mining company operating in Kokoyah Statutory District, has begun a redundancy of 250 of its employees in the county.

MNG Gold's Government and Community Relations Supervisor, Eugene J. M. Kollie and the Public Relations Officer, Lloyd Ngwayah say the management at the Turkish gold mining company took the discussion due to closure of the company's open pit mine site in the county.

Speaking on behalf of the company, the two officials say the action of the company is reached between the management of MNG Gold Liberia and the United Workers Union of Liberia, a registered trade union under the Law of Liberia on behalf of employees.

The duo indicate that there were three 310 persons in the employ of the company, but considering the closure of its open pit mining operations in the area, the company has decided to redundant 250

employees, while 110 still remain in the employ till the end of August.

Additionally, Lloyd and Eugene reveal that the management of MNG Gold has decided to put in place measures aimed at safeguarding the workplace and the national employees as well as expats to ensure that the company's operation remains sustainable in the district.

They further disclose that all those redundant will be recalled anytime to work for the company if the business condition improves.

Meanwhile, Eugene Kollie and Lloyd Ngwayah have assured all those being affected by the redundancy of their just benefits as required by the Decent Work Act of 2015.--Edited by Winston W. Parley



Dishonest Liberians

-LWSC describe water theft

By Ben P. Wesee

Liberia Water and Sewer Cooperation (LWSC) Public Relations Officer Mr. Nimpson Todd has branded Liberians that are allegedly in the habit of connecting residents illegally on LWSC pipes and those paying to get illegal connections as dishonest Liberians who don't want to see development in the country.

Speaking to reporters at his LWSC office Tuesday, 18 August on Water Street, Mr. Nimpson Todd noted that since the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus in the country, LWSC has been very effective in making sure the Liberians public have access to water.

According to Mr. Todd, one of the major instruments in the fight against the coronavirus is

management team that one of his priorities in this government is the efficient and uninterrupted supply of water," he says.

"That mandate to the present management team here, we will never have water shortage for even more than two weeks," Todd brags of LWSC readiness.

According to him, they have had a shortage of water that lasted for less than two weeks, explaining that upon dealing with the problem that caused the shortage, the public was duly informed that within ten days water would have been restored in their lines and the problem was solved.

Meanwhile, Mr. Todd cites some old age problems, noting that they currently have a facility that is over 40 years



water that people need to wash their hands in order to keep safe.

Todd explains that the LWSC has successfully carried on the mandate of President George Manneh Weah during the lockdown to supply non-stop water to residents for ninety days and was later renewed.

The LWSC spokesman continues that since the outbreak of the coronavirus, the entity has not had any major problem, narrating that the corporation has restored its damaged 36 pipes and that things are running smoothly with consistent water supply.

"We never had a water shortage for more than two months which will never happen with the present team we have here. Listen, the president tells the current

old.

According to him, the current system from the White Plains or the 36 - inch pipe, was constructed way in the 50s and the corporation is now in a new era.

Given the current system, he says once there is consistent pressure in the line, LWSC experiences [issues] at times. He says since LWSC restored the facility, it is moving to almost six months now with a flow of water.

With support from the World Bank, Mr. Todd says the LWSC has been able to extend and expand its network to 12 new communities, noting that most of those communities are receiving water for the first time.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Tubman University embarks on agriculture program

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland

The President of the William V.S. Tubman University in Harper City, Maryland County, vows to uplift the institution financially through its 500 acres farmland in Barrobo, electoral district#3, Maryland County.

The pronouncement comes in the wake of low budgetary allotment to the University as a result of economic hardship faced by the Weah administration. The university operates with a meager budget of US\$250,000, according to authorities.

Addressing a news conference in the county on Monday, August 17, 2020, Tubman University President Dr. Elliot Wreh Wilson lamented that the institution is engulfed by constraints ranging from low budgetary allocation and delay in payment of funds from donors.

Dr. Wilson names the Cavalla Rubber Plantation (CRC), Maryland Oil Palm Plantation (MOPP) and Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL) as entities sponsoring students at the University.

According to him, since his appointment as President of

the University more than two years ago, there have been financial challenges despite being a state-run university.

He says though the government plays an important role in the University by paying salaries of professors and lecturers, the university administration shouldn't expect government to do everything thus, pointing to agriculture as a remedy.

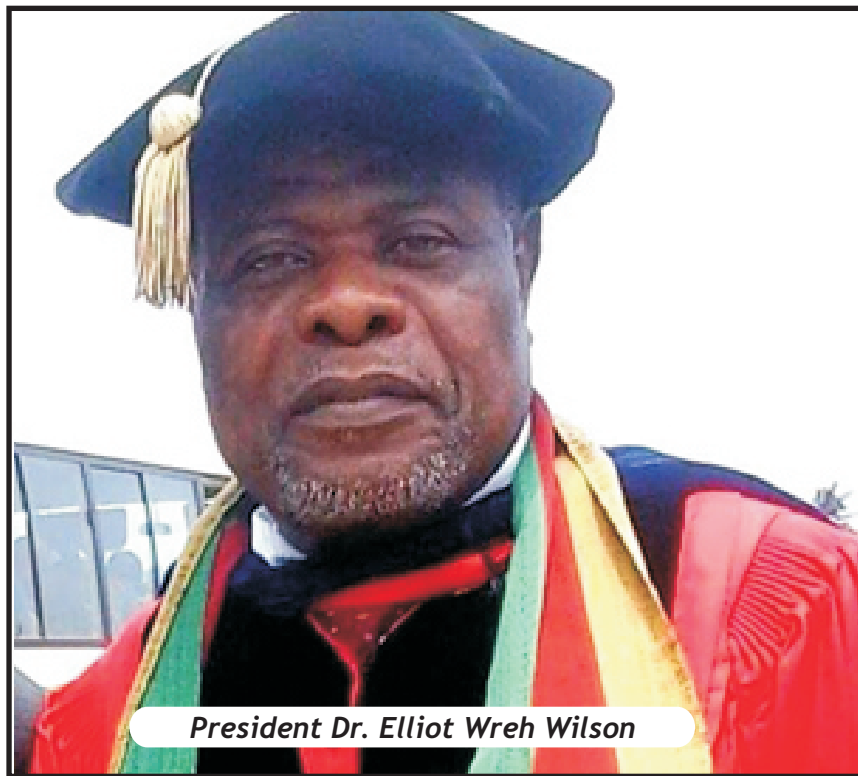
Dr. Wilson noted that the university is blessed to have 500 acres of farmland donated by the people of Barrobo on which cassava and palm apple are

being cultivated currently. However, he reveals that there are plans to move into cocoa production

He recalls that in a recent visit to Monrovia, he held discussion with the Minister of Agriculture Jeanine Cooper, who promised to visit the university's farmland soon. Dr. Wilson says currently, cocoa nurseries covering about two miles have been prepared.

"We have already two miles of cocoa on nurseries and we

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President Dr. Elliot Wreh Wilson

Learning Square Liberia donates to Konjah School

By Lewis S. Teh

An American-based organization, Learning Square Liberia has donated L\$ 23,000 to the Konjah Community School in Sinje District, Grand Cape Mount County, western

Liberia.

Heavy storms unroofed the entire school building recently in the county.

Learning Square Liberia is a nonprofit organization that operates both in the United States and Liberia, with a vision

of providing access to education for young people.

Presenting a check to officials of the school, Learning Square Liberia country manager Alvin M. Freeman, said the organization is troubled by the disaster, saying, "we have students who are on our scholarship and for us we can't sit and watch this school to go down; it is against this backdrop that we thought to make this meaningful contribution."

Mr. Freeman disclosed that Learning Squared Liberia has undertaken series of projects, including its Educational Support Initiative that focuses on providing educational and professional development opportunities for the youth. Its current programs impact an estimated 15,000 communities benefiting local leaders, youth, and women groups.

"We are committed to



"GOL's rape response weak"

--YALDA Representative

By Lewis S. Teh

A rape continues to be on the increase in Montserrado and other parts of Liberia, a group known as Youth Alliance Leadership for Development in Africa (YALDA) has criticized the Government of Liberia for its weakness and poor response in instituting harsh measures to curtail rape.

Speaking to this paper in an exclusive interview Tuesday, 18 August, YALDA Financial Director Ms. Lisa T. Cooper blasted the government for its alleged failure to institute tough measures in curtailing rape.

"For me, anyone [who] is accused and found guilty should be given a death penalty. I think with this punishment we will [have] zero cases on rape matter in this country," Ms. Cooper claims.

Her criticism against the government comes at a time a photo of a suspect who allegedly raped a 3-year-old has been circulating on social media.

The suspect believed to be 18 years old is accused of using a razor blade to the victim's private part to enable him to penetrate the child in Gbarpolu County.

"If our government [is] truly concerned about the future of this country, particularly the young people, they must rise up from their comfortable offices and institute tangible

measures because whenever a child gets raped, that stigma lives with them till they are old. And we don't want this..." Ms. Cooper says.

She alleges that the incarceration of rapists is something that encourages them to get more involved in carrying on the act.

Ms. Cooper notes that Liberians should not send rapists to prison, but recommends a death penalty to deter others who might want to get involved in raping children and destroy their future.

Commenting on her organization, Ms. Lisa T. Cooper says YALDA is an international organization that began at Stanford University in the United States, and has branches in various African countries with headquarters in Uganda.

She explains that the group of young people came together and decided to look at issues affecting the African continent, revealing that YALDA's focus is to improve the wellbeing of various university students who are passionate about making a change in society.

She indicates that her organization is also involved in speaking against sexual and gender-based violence, something she says is undermining the growth of Africa.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

preparing youth to succeed personally and professionally. We envision a Liberia where all citizens are active, empowered and engaged in collectively contributing to a vibrant democracy", he added.

At the same time, Mr. Freeman also used the occasion to reach out to 12 teenage mothers who dropped from the Konjah Community School after getting pregnant, presenting two cartoons of babies' clothes to them.

He said Learning Square Liberia is cognizant of constraints and difficulties faced by the beneficiaries as a result of teenage pregnancy.

Learning Square Liberia has come to help you, and we will continue to do our best in making sure that you get the

best care. This donation you're receiving today comes from our donors; the more we get the more you will receive from us", he told the beneficiaries.

In 2019, the organization implemented programs in five counties here, and is sponsoring 261 students in 11 schools. The direct funding, according to the organization, enables many young children who don't have an opportunity to attend school.

Learning Square Liberia was initially founded as Initiative for Democratic Alternative or IDA Liberia in 2016 by its president, Anthony S. Kolaco, who currently resides in the United States. It was later launched as Learning Square Liberia in July 2019. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Français

Pour avoir déclaré leur soutien à ce régime, des hommes d'affaires étrangers accusés d'ingérence

Au moment où les prix des produits de base montent en flèche et où l'on se dirige vers des élections majeures qui auront lieu dans seulement quatre mois, la société hindoue composée principalement des hommes d'affaires indiens, a organisé

une grande cérémonie à l'honneur des cadres de ce régime, dont le président George Weah, sa vice-présidente Jewel Howard Taylor, le président de la Chambre des représentants Bhofal Chambers et le président temporaire du Sénat Albert Chie, tous membres de la

Coalition au pouvoir.

Mais seul le président de la Chambre des représentants Bhofal Chambers a fait le déplacement. Les images ont été retransmises en direct sur les chaînes de la place. M. Bhafal s'est introduit dans le temple Shree Geeta Ashram comme un roi. La vice-présidente Taylor s'est, quant à elle, fait représenter.

Le recteur et directeur général de la Hindu Society / Faith, l'homme d'affaires Manoj Kumar Vatwani, a déclaré, lors de la présentation du programme qui s'est tenu le dimanche 16 août 2020, qu'il était temps que la communauté indienne du Libéria construise un pont avec les politiciens libériens.

Dans une déclaration préparée qui a été publiée dans quelques quotidiens locaux, il a déclaré : « notre amour et notre engagement envers le président sont une fois de plus renforcés par sa démonstration d'amour et de préoccupation pour nous, et nous voulons promettre notre

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Les Zogoes pourraient devenir le Boko Haram du Libéria si rien n'est fait, prévient l'ONU

La présence massive « des enfants de la rue » communément appelés « Zogo » dans les rues de la capitale politique du Libéria n'est pas passée inaperçue chez M. Uchenne Emelonye, un responsable de l'ONU au Libéria. Il a exhorté les Libériens, en particulier les décideurs politiques, à prendre des mesures dès maintenant afin que ces gens ne deviennent pas le Boko Haram du Libéria. Le fonctionnaire international a cité en exemple son pays, le Nigeria, où, selon lui, des enfants sont jetés dans la rue à l'âge de deux ans pour prendre soin d'eux-mêmes. « Aujourd'hui », regrette-t-il, « le nord-est du Nigeria est l'épicentre de Boko Haram ». Prononçant un discours mardi dernier lors d'une cérémonie de remise de diplômes au campus de l'Université du Libéria à l'honneur de 49 étudiants de l'Institut Kofi Annan pour la résolution des conflits (KAICT), M. Uchenne Emelonye a attiré l'attention des Libériens sur le fait que ces jeunes moins fortunés constituent une bombe à retardement, lesquels jeunes, à

l'entendre, sont d'une manière ou d'une autre victimes d'injustice et de marginalisation, d'où la nécessité de prendre des mesures appropriées. « Par exemple, certains Libériens, en raison de leur apparence et de leur tenue vestimentaire, ne peuvent être autorisés à avoir accès à l'auditorium de l'UL à Capitol Hill où la cérémonie de remise des diplômes se tient. Pourtant, ils n'ont commis aucun crime. Alors, comment regardons-nous les gens qui ne font pas partie de nos priorités ? Nous ne faisons rien parce que

comparativement à eux, nous sommes mieux logés. Et c'est ce qui leur vaut l'appellation populairement au Libéria, 'Zogoes', a-t-il dit.

« Ce sont des Libériens. Et je voudrais dire que ce sont des zogos, pas de leur faute, mais par l'inaction de l'État », a-t-il martelé. Il s'est posé la question de savoir pourquoi dans l'élaboration de sa politique, l'État oublie les zogos, avertissant que « nous ne pouvons pas nous attendre à une paix durable au Libéria pendant que beaucoup de gens sont laissés pour compte.



La Cedeao francophone et le 3ème mandat : L'urgence d'une thérapie de choc sous régionale

Le Togo, la Guinée Conakry puis la Côte d'Ivoire... Mine de rien, la pandémie du troisième mandat et plus fait sa route. Partant de Lomé, ce virus se propage à une vitesse de croisière dans la sous-région ouest africaine. Nécessitant, par conséquent, de profondes réflexions pour une thérapie de choc.

Quattara : un revirement spectaculaire de situation Le jeudi 6 août dernier, dans une adresse solennelle à la Nation, à la veille du soixantième anniversaire de l'indépendance du pays, le Président ivoirien, Alassane Dramane Ouattara (Ado) a annoncé sa candidature pour la présidentielle du 31 octobre prochain en Côte d'Ivoire. Pour ce faire, Ado justifie cette nouvelle candidature qui scellera son troisième mandat à la tête du pays depuis son accession au pouvoir en 2010, par le décès tragique de l'ex Premier ministre Amadou Gon Coulibaly, son dauphin choisi. « En face de ce cas de force majeure, et pour éviter de remettre à plat tous les efforts et réalisations que nous avons faits, j'ai décidé donc d'être candidat à la présidentielle du 31 octobre prochain. Je suis donc candidat ! », dit Ado, renonçant ainsi à sa parole précédemment donnée, celle de ne pas briguer un troisième mandat et passer la main à une jeune génération.

Un revirement spectaculaire de situation qui suscite, depuis lors, tant de réactions. Aussi bien en Côte d'Ivoire que dans la diaspora, nombreux sont les ivoiriens qui, à travers déclarations et manifestations contestent publiquement ce qu'ils estiment une violation flagrante de la constitution ivoirienne qui n'offre pas plus de deux mandats présidentiels à un Chef d'État. Faux, rétorque le régime d'Abidjan qui, par des tours de passe-passe et subterfuges, y voit plutôt le tout premier mandat qu'offre la loi fondamentale à Ado. Ceci, à la faveur de la dernière réforme constitutionnelle.

Condé, la confirmation Comme par enchantement, réunis en congrès à Conakry, les différentes fédérations du parti présidentiel désignent, de leur côté, le Prof Alpha Condé comme leur porte étendard à la prochaine présidentielle en Guinée prévue pour le 18 octobre 2020. Et comme l'on s'y attendait, ce dernier, sans surprise, en a pris acte. Il fallait donc ça pour attester que plus que jamais, les derniers développements de l'actualité politique dans l'espace communautaire corroborent la

thèse d'une Cedeao des chefs d'État syndiqués au détriment de celle des peuples s'avère.

Lomé, l'épicentre d'un mal qui gangrène la sous région En effet, il se souvient que ce virus de manipuler les consciences et tripatouiller la Constitution aux fins d'offrir plus de deux mandats à un Chef d'État en exercice a été détecté à Lomé. Ceci, par les faveurs d'une Assemblée nationale de copains et coquins plutôt nommés qu'élus et d'une Cour constitutionnelle aux ordres. Deux institutions phagocytées qui remettent en scelle Faure Gnassingbé qui était pourtant en difficulté sans pareille en 2017 et dont le régime n'a survécu que grâce à la médiation biaisée de la Cedeao. Dès lors, c'est à juste titre qu'elles ont fait annuler par perte à profit au Prince de Pya, ses trois mandats cumulés entre 2005 et 2020.

C'est donc sans surprise que cette épidémie dont Alpha Condé et Alassane Ouattara se trouve être deux des laborantins ayant fortement travaillé à la fabrication des molécules du virus pathogène atteigne Conakry et Abidjan. Les faits donnent ainsi raison aux observateurs et analystes qui ont toujours vu en la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'ouest, un syndicat des chefs d'État plus soucieux de leurs fauteuils présidentiels et des intérêts qui en découlent que du bien-être de leurs communautés.

L'Afrique francophone aux mains des vallées de l'Occident Cette obsession à s'accrocher indéfiniment au pouvoir, nonobstant les barrières constitutionnelles et paroles données tend, au fil des années, à s'institutionnaliser au point de craindre une contamination des États anglophones jusque-là exemplaires. Plus curieux, elle est l'œuvre d'une nouvelle génération de dirigeants pourtant pris pour des démocrates, intellectuels, nationalistes et modèles mais qui, à l'arrivée, sont loin de l'être. Tout porte à croire qu'ils sont pire que leurs devanciers généralement pris pour garçons de course de la métropole qui profitent de leur limite intellectuelle pour continuer par contrôler les États africains et les dépouiller de leurs richesses en contrepartie du pouvoir et l'honneur pour les sous-fifres geôliers de la France-Afrique. Une servitude qui déjà coûté à des dirigeants nationalistes et panafricanistes comme Sylvanus Olympio du Togo, Thomas Sankara du Burkina Faso et Patrice Lumumba du Congo.

Français

Pour avoir déclaré leur soutien à ce régime, des

foi dans son leadership et sa capacité à diriger le pays dans une direction plus positive et plus prospère ».

« Nous souhaitons promettre un engagement renouvelé envers son leadership, en travaillant avec vous pour le développement des infrastructures, le renforcement des capacités humaines et la croissance économique », a dit le communiqué.

Cependant, depuis la cérémonie, les opinions sont partagées sur les raisons pour lesquelles la communauté indienne a organisé une cérémonie aussi élaborée pour honorer les responsables du parti au pouvoir.

Conseil des Eglises

Le chef du Conseil Libérien des Églises, Mgr Kortur Brown, qui semblait disposé à s'exprimer sur la question, a dit espérer que la cérémonie n'avait rien à voir avec le business et la politique.

La loi libérienne interdit aux étrangers d'injecter de l'argent dans les activités de campagne des partis politiques ou des individus qui briquent des postes politiques.

C'est une incitation

Le leader politique du Parti de la transformation de la Vision pour le Libéria (VOLT), le Dr Jeremiah Z. Whapoe, a décrit la cérémonie comme une incitation. Il a dit que « c'est juste une manière de montrer leur reconnaissance à ce régime pour les difficultés économiques qu'il a volontairement imposées sur le peuple Libérien.

« Il est impensable et déplorable que des hommes d'affaires et des entreprises soient assez audacieuses pour honorer le gouvernement pour un travail bien fait pendant que les Libériens pleurent à cause de la montée en flèche des prix des produits de base », a-t-il dit

M. Whapoe estime que c'est une autre forme d'ingérence dans la politique libérienne et s'en prend au régime Weah pour avoir permis tels actes.

Un membre de l'Association du barreau national du libérien (LNBA) a déclaré que d'un point de vue moral et dans le contexte libérien, cette cérémonie qui a été organisée par des étrangers, principalement par des hommes d'affaires, constitue une ingérence politique, surtout à

l'approche des élections.

Mais le secrétaire général de la LNBA, Me Bobby Livingstone a ajouté qu'en ce le concerne, il n'y a rien de mal à cela à en juger par les informations qui lui avaient été communiquées au moment de l'entrevue.

Pour sa part, le leader politique du mouvement révolutionnaire du peuple unique (OPRM), Moncio Robert WilmotKpadeh, pense que le geste du prêtre hindou, qui est aussi un homme d'affaires, est imbibé de malhonnêteté et « semble être une tentative rusée de sa part de s'attirer les faveurs du gang corrompu au pouvoir ».

« Je suis perplexe quand un homme de Dieu, comme il le prétend, honore des corrompus et des hommes peu recommandables qui ont soumis les pauvres masses libériennes à une humiliation et une misère plus profondes », a noté M. Kpadeh.

« L'hindouisme est une religion de découverte qui modèle l'humanité, la dignité, la probité et la justice. Il ne convoite ni ne tolère la corruption, l'injustice et la barbarie. Par conséquent, je suis stupéfait et glacé dans mon esprit quand l'homme qui représente une si belle religion ici au Libéria choisit de déformer la religion et contredire ses valeurs et ses enseignements de grandeur.

Puis-Je vous informer que j'ai passé un moment incroyablement merveilleux avec mes amis hindous pendant mes études en Angleterre. J'ai également prié avec eux plusieurs fois. La religion est très décente et met l'accent sur l'humanité, la moralité et l'honnêteté au maximum. J'aime et j'honore la religion et j'aime les gens qui la pratiquent.

Ce prêtre hindou recherche simplement un soutien dans le but d'étendre et de solidifier son intérêt commercial au Libéria. Le fait qu'il dise que le Libéria est bien gouverné sous l'establishment au pouvoir et que la paix est maintenue est une honte. Une telle déclaration est un mensonge effronté qui n'a aucune confiance dans l'état socio-économique en développement du pays.

Comment le prêtre hindou et homme d'affaires peut-il prétendre que le Libéria est bien gouverné alors que la mauvaise gestion du pays est flagrante sous ses yeux ? Par quel objectif regarde-t-il ? Est-ce par la lentille de l'intérêt commercial ? »

COMMENTAIRE

Par Sania Nishtar

Des transferts en argent liquide pour prévenir les tragédies du confinement

SLAMABAD - En 2017, j'étais candidate à la succession de la directrice générale de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé. Lors de la 70e Assemblée mondiale de la santé, je me suis adressée aux ministres de la Santé du monde entier pour les mettre en garde contre trois types d'événements susceptibles de détruire la planète : un phénomène céleste, une troisième guerre mondiale, ou une pandémie.

La pandémie de Covid-19 ne détruit peut-être pas la planète, mais elle met assurément à rude épreuve nos institutions publiques ou privées. Outre ses terribles conséquences sur la santé des gens, la pandémie met en péril leur gagne-pain dans le monde entier, pressurant les classes moyennes et précipitant les ménages dont les revenus sont faibles dans l'extrême pauvreté.

Au Pakistan, cinquième pays le plus peuplé du monde, 24 millions de personnes font vivre leur famille avec leur paie quotidienne ou sont auto-entrepreneurs dans l'économie informelle. Avec l'application du confinement, au mois de mars, la vie s'est pour eux mise à l'arrêt, ce qui a occasionné une perte de revenus importante et déclenché des troubles et des émeutes.

Pour atténuer les ravages socio-économiques de la pandémie, le gouvernement pakistanais a mis en place le programme de distribution d'urgence d'argent liquide Ehsaas, la plus vaste initiative de protection sociale de toute l'histoire du pays. Lancée dix jours après le début du confinement, elle a délivré des aides, versées en argent liquide et en une seule fois, totalisant plus de 1,2 milliard de dollars, à 16,9 millions de ménages, regroupant environ 109 millions de personnes - soit presque la moitié de la population du pays. Les familles bénéficiaires ont reçu chacune 12 000 roupies pakistanaises (75 dollars) pour couvrir leurs besoins immédiats de subsistance.

Avant les remises d'argent liquide au titre de l'Ehsaas, j'ai été témoin des souffrances indicibles de personnes de multiples conditions. Il y avait parmi elles des travailleurs journaliers et des colporteurs, des employés de la restauration ou de l'hôtellerie, des domestiques à domicile, des agents de sécurité, des chauffeurs ; il y avait aussi des employés des transports publics au chômage technique, des pêcheurs et des mineurs, des esthéticiennes et des coiffeurs, et des millions de petits commerçants - toutes et tous à la limite de la faim, ayant épuisé leur épargne. Et tout comme les enseignants des écoles privées, les électriciens, les soudeurs, les peintres en bâtiment, les menuisiers et les charpentiers, les plombiers, les garagistes, les chauffeurs de taxi, les travailleurs du bâtiment, ils ne savaient pas comment se procurer leur prochain repas.

Toutes les activités et toutes les régions étaient frappées, et même ceux qui gagnaient décemment leur vie se demandaient soudain si leur budget pourrait jamais se rétablir. Mais les aides financières ont stabilisé la situation de millions de familles et leur ont apporté du réconfort, et le pays tout entier voyait que d'innombrables tragédies étaient évitées.

Au-delà de la réalité immédiate de la crise, l'allocation d'une aide d'urgence en argent liquide fournit au Pakistan et aux autres pays à faible et moyen revenu l'expérience inestimable de la mise en place rapide au niveau national d'un programme d'aide massif dans un environnement

complexe et incertain. Afin d'en partager les enseignements, le gouvernement pakistanais a récemment publié un rapport qui fait le point sur le savoir-faire que nous avons acquis dans la conception et la réalisation de ce programme, tout comme sur les difficultés opérationnelles que nous avons rencontrées et la façon dont elles ont été surmontées.

La démarche, de bout en bout numérique, conçue dans une volonté de totale transparence, offre un bon exemple de la façon dont il est possible de mettre à profit les registres d'identité. En combinant les numéros de téléphone, les liaisons internet et le fichier de l'identité nationale, nous avons pu construire un système de protection sociale à la demande (diEhassgital), permettant à ceux qui sont en situation de détresse de chercher secours en temps de crise. L'initiative montre aussi comment des transferts d'argent liquide peuvent être mis en œuvre afin de remédier aux conséquences socio-économiques de chocs externes, comme le Covid-19.

Ce fut pour le Pakistan et le fonctionnement de son gouvernement un moment charnière. La crise a pressé les pouvoirs publics de s'adapter, d'exploiter les données, de se montrer à la fois pragmatiques et ambitieux. Des procédures numérisées, capables de réduire les coûts, de nouvelles pratiques de coordinations des multiples parties prenantes et une approche intégrée au sein de la puissance publique ont été institutionnalisées. Ces mesures transformeront la façon de concevoir les politiques publiques dans le monde d'après le Covid-19.

Enfin, les retombées du programme vont au-delà d'un secours à court terme. Des objectifs de long terme ont été intégrés à sa conception, afin de renforcer la protection sociale et l'inclusion financière, qui toutes deux amèneront aux bénéficiaires et au Pakistan tout entier des bienfaits durables. Cela représente en même temps un engagement de transparence et de responsabilité, motivation

profonde ayant décidé la publication du rapport. Pour que les démocraties puissent garantir le progrès, une culture d'intégrité et d'ouverture doit s'enraciner dans les institutions et les procédures publiques.

L'histoire montre que les catastrophes et leurs tragiques conséquences peuvent fournir un catalyseur à des changements sociaux de grande ampleur. Le Covid-19 constitue pour le Pakistan un défi impérieux et sans précédent, qui ne peut être relevé que par une initiative de l'ambition et de l'envergure du programme de distribution d'urgence d'argent liquide Ehsaas.

Au lendemain de la pandémie, nous devons saisir la chance, telle qu'elle ne s'offre qu'une fois par génération, de nous inspirer à l'échelle mondiale de cette ambition et de construire un monde plus juste qui vienne à bout de la pauvreté, des inégalités et de la crise climatique, la protection sociale constituant l'un des piliers de cet effort.

Nul défi ne fut plus ardu depuis la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Mais dans les heures les plus sombres, nous pouvons trouver un chemin, en décidant ensemble d'avancer vers un monde plus juste, plus respectueux de son environnement et plus durable pour tous.

Red Cross laments deepening humanitarian challenges

-Honors Lebanese, Indian communities' presidents

By Winston W. Parley

The Liberian National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) says humanitarian challenges are deepening every day, suggesting the need for increased attention and resources to be given to keep humanitarian workers including doctors, nurses and other health workers and volunteers passionate and motivated to the service of humanity.

During the celebration of the World Humanitarian Day in Monrovia Wednesday, 19 August, the LNRCS said the spread of COVID-19 pandemic has also made other existing humanitarian needs in the country more acute and further making the delivery of humanitarian aid even more critical and urgent.

Red Cross' partners if it allowed the day to go without recognizing their immense contributions to the organization.

"So it's in this vein that the management and the board of the National Red Cross deem it necessary to invite the Lebanese and Indian communities in our country today to due diligence to them and recognize them and of course, put them on the pedestal in our own structure that requires them be seen in the public sphere," Mr. Clarke says.

WLCU representative Mr. Khalid Ismail and Madam Jacquie McCritty who also represented the Lebanese community's president Mr. RohitSuji, both applaud LNRCS for the recognition of their bosses' work, and conveyed

workers who continue, despite the odds, to provide life-saving support and protection to people most in need," Mr. Perry continues.

He states that aid workers are overcoming unprecedented access hurdles to assist people in humanitarian crises which have been catapulted into humanitarian needs by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Affected communities, and people with special needs including people with disabilities and other vulnerability are already struggling and could be at even greater risk if nothing is done to address their pressing needs," he warns.

According to Mr. Perry, humanitarian challenges are deepening every day due to limited resources to better deliver and access hard to reach communities, urging



According to the national Red Cross, this year, COVID-19 has been the biggest challenge to humanitarian operations around the world.

During the event held its headquarters down Lynch Street, the president of the LNRCS Mr. Jerome Clarke certificated the presidents of the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU) in Liberia and the Indian community in Liberia as patron members of the LNRCS in recognition of their respective supports to humanitarian works of the national Red Cross.

Mr. Jerome Clarke awarded to representatives of the presidents of WLCU and the Indian community in Liberia the two certificates of membership, stressing that it would be a disservice to the

messages of commitments to continue to work with the Red Cross here.

Earlier, Liberia National Red Cross Secretary General Mr. G. Ambullai Perry said the organization is paying special tribute to the real-life heroes who have committed their lives to helping others in the most extreme circumstances throughout the world.

"Today August 19, marks the eleventh year that we are celebrating World Humanitarian Day after it was formalized in 2009 by the United Nations General Assembly," he says.

"We are therefore pleased to join the rest of the world to commemorate humanitarian workers killed and injured in the course of their work, and we honour all aid and health

the need to respond quickly to the growing needs.

"On this World Humanitarian Day, we are also calling for increasing attention and resources to ensure adequate response to humanitarian needs and appreciation to keep humanitarian workers including doctors, nurses and other health workers and volunteers passionate and motivated to the service of humanity," he urges.

As part of celebration of the World Humanitarian Day on 19 August, the Liberia National Red Cross Society hailed humanitarian and health workers, especially LNRCS volunteers for their bravery and commitment in providing lifesaving support to needy people and fighting the coronavirus disease.

Senator Dillon

Starts from page 6

each other, let's go to a debate. It's an open challenge to Mr. Cummings to a debate on the president's performance, and let's discuss," McGill said.

But Mr. Cummings noted that under no serious government, would a Chief of Staff to the President and cabinet member challenge an opposition leader to a debate on his boss' performance while his boss hides away from his responsibilities.

While Mr. Cummings wishes to take on President Weah in a debate, CPP's Montserrado County Senator Darius Dillon also says he wants to debate with McGill on the establishment of a War and

Economic Crimes Court to begin the end towards the culture of impunity here.

He also seeks a debate on policy plans on rehabilitating the disadvantaged and underprivileged citizens.

Senator Dillon who is seeking reelection in the Liberian Senate, says he wants to debate with Minister McGill on providing solutions to the increasing poverty affecting the lives of the vast majority of people in the country.

"Why not debate with and proffer solutions to issues hampering the growth and inclusion of people with disabilities?" Dillon concludes.

-Edited by Winston W. Parley

Tubman University

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hope in the next three to four years to come, the university will start harvesting cocoa."You know cocoa makes more money than cassava and palm apple."

He further discloses that the government, thru President George Manneh Weah has granted permission to hair few persons after seen the dream of the university, and that administration has hired about eight graduates from the College of Agriculture and Food Science to supervise the farm.

Dr. Wilson says though the farm is established mainly for income generation purpose, it will also serve as a research area for students enrolled in the College of Agriculture and Food Science.

He added that the Commission on Higher Education at the Ministry of Education in Monrovia has granted request to introduce graduate studies at the Tubman University, named in

memory of Liberia's 18th President, the late William V.S. Tubman, who hailed from Maryland County.

Dr. Wilson calls on the national government and meaningful Liberians, including professor and lecturers to dedicate their services in ensuring the agriculture farm programs becomes a reality.

Previously a technical college, the Tubman University was established during the administration of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and its first president was Dr. Elizabeth Davies Russell in 2009. It has graduated over 1,000 students from six colleges namely; the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, College of Engineering and Technology, College of Administration and Management, College of Agriculture and Food Science, College of Education and the College of Health Sciences, respectively. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Agriculture coordinator

Starts from page 6

trainingfor farmers in four agriculture districts in the county and also providedequipment, while maintaining some farm-to-market roads.

He said with farmers'

willingness and the introduction of a three-month rice variety, Marylanders have no cause to worry, as in few years to come the county will be self-sufficient in food.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

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Cummings draws punches

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The ruling Coalition for Democratic Change harshly reacts to opposition leader Alexander Cummings' challenge to debate with President George Manneh Weah on governance issues, rather, asking the chairman of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) to show his contributions towards peace and stability here.

Speaking in a press conference at the CDC headquarters in Congo Town Wednesday, August 19, national chairman Mulbah Morlu said, it is unspeakable that the national chairman of a political party would seek to debate with a sitting president far ahead of electioneering period.

"When have you heard about president going to a

President's surrogates.

"The truth is, there is no debate that this Weah-led government is corrupt, incompetent, and that as a result, Liberians are suffering! But if they are serious about a debate, I prefer to debate Pres. Weah himself," Cummings wrote on his Facebook page.

His comments came days after Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Nathaniel Falo McGill took to social media, challenging the CPP chairman to a national debate on the president's performance.

According to Minister McGill, Cummings should be thinking about holding primaries for the pending senatorial elections and stop handpicking politics, which he said, is affecting some people who are part of the CPP and the ANC as a whole.

"Look at the way the

streets of the United States.

He recalls that during the administration of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Weah, then peace ambassador contributed to the peace process that ended 14 years of bitter civil unrest and later became senator for Montserrado County, but Cummings is yet to show his contributions.

He adds that the only contributions of Cummings since his sudden appearance to politics is to support protest and accompany people who do not respect the rule of law.

"President Sirleaf did what she could do and we give her some credits; but she was a caretaker, assisted heavily by the international community. With President, Weah, he's being assisted but not compared to the 12 yrs of

Treat them equal?

Starts from back page

Governor for Operations when the financial scandal emerged at the bank was not included because he was nolleprosequi 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 Sillah, the government said the LD\$5bn which was first printed [during Sirleaf's leadership] was justified, but not the LD\$10bn [that was printed during Weeks' leadership].

"Why is it good for Charles Sirleaf but it's not good for Milton Weeks? Because there was a modu operandi that Milton Weeks followed. Oh, because Charles Sirleaf is granted immunity?" Cllr. Sillah argues.

The defense counsel insists that the Legislature's communication to the CBL dated 19 July 2017 constitutes an authorization, but it's not a resolution.

He proffers an argument as to why would the Legislature refer to Article 34 (d) when it is not the intent of the Legislature for the CBL to print currency, as suggested by the state.

Quizzed further by Judge Gbeisay if it was not a caveat in the Legislature's 19 July 2017 communication that the CBL should revert to it (Legislature) before printing, Cllr. Sillah says this is not a caveat.

But the judge reminds Cllr. Sillah that the U.S. firm Kroll's report indicated that the instruction for the CBL to revert to the Legislature was a caveat to the CBL.

Notwithstanding Cllr. Sillah insists that this 19 July 2017 letter granted full authority to the CBL to print. In his argument, Sillah attacks former House Speaker Emmanuel Nuquay for allegedly lying under oath to protect his job when he testified that he had no knowledge about the printing of the \$10 billion Liberian Dollars banknotes.

Mr. Nuquay was still serving

as head of the Liberia Aviation Authority (LAA) when he testified in the case on 16 July, but he left the post later.

Nuquay who served as Speaker of the House of Representatives from October 2016 to January 2018 testified that the House of Representatives did not sign any Joint Resolution to print \$10 billion Liberian Dollars, saying: "I have no knowledge about the printing of the 10 billion Liberian Dollars banknotes."

The government here indicted several CBL officials including the bank's Board of Governors, accusing them of printing and shipping to Liberia L\$13,004,750,000.00 without authorization, and allegedly understating the printed amount as L\$10,359,750,000.00, giving a variance of L\$2,645,000,000.00.

However the indictment accuses the CBL Board of mandating defendant Weeks to enter into a contract on 12 June 2019 with Crane Currency to print L\$10,000,000,000 banknotes at the cost of US\$10,121,689.20 before receiving the 19 July 2017 communication [from the Legislature].

At the time of selecting Crane Currency to print L\$5,000,000,000, the indictment says the quantity of Liberian banknotes in circulation at the time was L\$9.940 billion and that a significant number of the banknotes had worn out and mutilated, prompting the need to replace L\$5,000,000,000 approved as the objective of legislative joint resolution.

Further, the indictment notes that defendants Weeks, Dorbor M. Hagba, Richard H. Walker and Joseph Dennis knew or had reasons to know that from packing lists reviewed by the investigation, the total amount printed was L\$13,004,750,000 and not L\$15,506,000,000, but "they maliciously and purposely concealed and understated the actual amount..." because they had criminally connived.



debate with chairman of a political party outside election period? Even if we were in a presidential campaign period, what're your survey statics? See the United States; you don't go to certain debate except you attain certain poll numbers", the ruling party argues.

Morlu claims that Mr. Cummings, who wants to debate with President Weah has failed to manage his political party to the extent that the Alternative National Congress has terribly failed to produce legislators despite millions spent during the past elections and recent by-elections.

Last week, Mr. Cummings, political leader of the Alternative National Congress (ANC) and current chairman of the CPP, said he prefers to have a debate with President George Weah than the

Opposition is run under this life-style conflicted man; under him they don't hold primaries, denying people their fundamental right. Few big boys will sit in a living room and share the political geographical spots among the political parties, ahead of major election, what terrible practice of politics in contemporary time."

He noted that Cummings resides across the Atlantic Ocean and only runs to Monrovia with high expectation of wanting to be president, but questioned the opposition leader's contributions to Liberia since his date of birth.

According to chairman Morlu, President Weah is a senior debater, claiming that Mr. Weah debated actively during the 2005 presidential election when Cummings was still busy selling coo cola drinks in the

Sirleaf because it's an immediate post-conflict era", he argues.

Ahead of midterm senatorial elections in December, the political atmosphere in Liberia is being charged with the ruling Coalition and the opposition CPP taunting each other, sometime evoking violence.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

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Treat them equal?

-Lawyer compares Milton Weeks & Charles Sirleaf over immunity



By **Winston W. Parley**

Former Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) Executive Governor Milton A. Weeks and CBL Board Members David Fahart, Elsie Dossen Bardio and Kollie Tamba's fate lies in one man's hands for now - and that's Judge Yami Quiqui Gbeisay, lawyer representing Mr. Weeks said during his closing

argument.

Cllr. Abraham Sillah, then wonders why it's good to set Charles Sirleaf free, but not Weeks too.

During final arguments from both state and defense lawyers Wednesday, 19 August at Criminal Court "C" in Monrovia, Cllr. Sillah argues that there was a modus operandi that Milton Weeks followed, contending

that the law is blind and everyone is equal before the law.

Cllr. Sillah questions if Mr. Sirleaf's release is because he is granted immunity.

Mr. Charles E. Sirleaf, the son of former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf, was initially among several CBL officials indicted by the government here in 2019 for their alleged roles in the misapplication of billions of Liberian Dollars printed and shipped to Liberia to replace old local currency.

Their indictment in 2019 followed a series of mass protests that led local and international institutions to investigate a claim that the money had gone missing.

However, when prosecution drew its last version of the indictment based on which this case has been heard, Mr. Sirleaf who served as Deputy CBL

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Barcelona officially hires Ronald Koeman as coach

Barcelona will try to end one of the worst crises in club history with Ronald Koeman as its coach.

Barcelona officially announced a deal with Koeman on Wednesday, a day after club president Josep Bartomeu had said the Dutchman accepted the coaching offer and only details needed to be sorted out.

The official announcement comes five days after the

team's humiliating 8-2 loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League quarterfinals.

Barcelona said the former defender's deal runs through June 2022.

Koeman replaces the fired Quique Setién, who stayed only 25 matches on the job after taking over from Ernesto Valverde in January.

Barcelona said Koeman will be officially introduced later Wednesday.

"The Dutchman brings more



than 20 years of experience as manager and eight trophies on his CV," the club said.

Koeman had been coaching the Dutch national team since 2018, and previously coached in the Premier League, the Spanish league, the Dutch league and the Portuguese league.

The 57-year-old Koeman began his coaching career as an assistant with Barcelona in the late 1990s.

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