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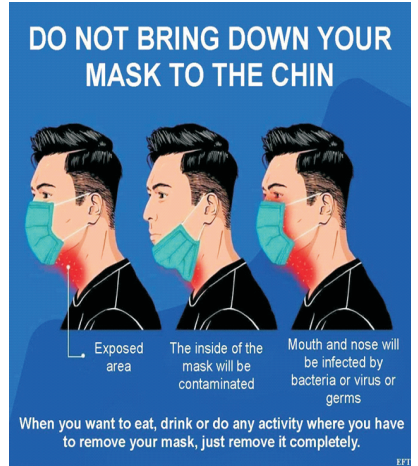
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2020's political risks



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Continental News

Gold diggers bulldoze ancient Sudanese site

Illegal gold diggers have destroyed a 2,000-year-old archaeological site in Sudan in the eastern region of the Sahara desert.

The Jabal Maragha site, which dates from the Meroitic period between 350 BC and 350 AD, is said to have either been a small settlement or a checkpoint.

Officials from Sudan's antiquities and museums

department said when they visited the site, some 270km (170 miles) north of the capital Khartoum, last month they found two mechanical diggers and five men at work.

They had excavated a vast trench about 17 metres (55 feet) deep, and 20 metres long. "They had only one goal in digging here - to find gold... they did something crazy; to save time, they used heavy

machinery," a shocked archaeologist Habab Idriss Ahmed, who has worked at the historic location since 1999, told the AFP news agency.

Sudan's archaeologists warned that the destruction was not unique but part of a growing problem.

At Sai, a 12km-long river island in the Nile, hundreds of graves, some dating back to

the times of the pharaohs, have been raided and destroyed by looters.

"Out of a thousand more or less well-known sites in Sudan, at least a hundred have been destroyed or damaged," said Hatem al-Nour, Sudan's director of antiquities and museums.

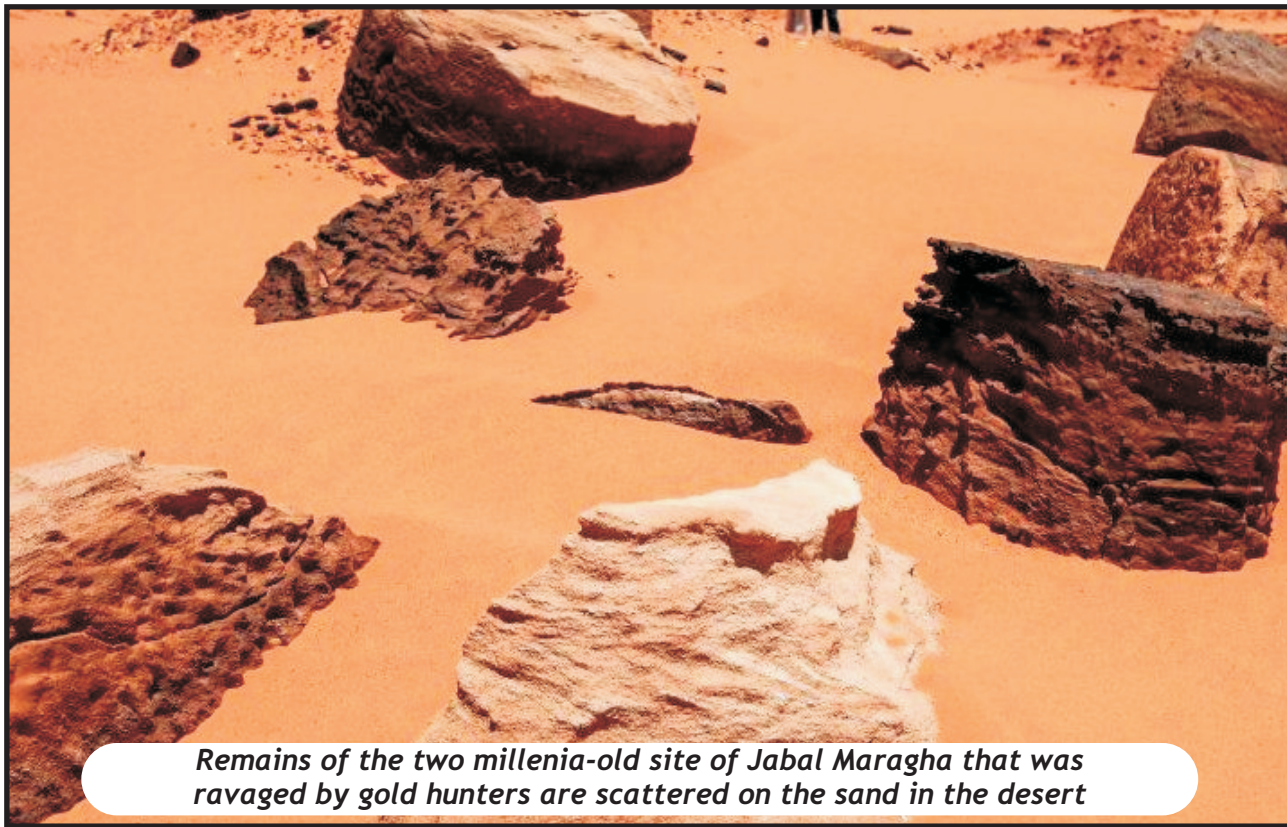
He added that the lack of security at the sites made them easy targets for looters.

Sudan is Africa's third largest producer of gold, after South Africa and Ghana, with commercial mining bringing in \$1.2bn (£900m) to the government last year, AFP reports.

But illegal mining is said to be encouraged by some local authorities and businessmen

who give machines to treasure hunters. Enforcement of laws is also not stringent - the diggers who destroyed the Jabal Maragha, were freed without charge. It is not clear why. "They should have been put in jail and their machines confiscated. There are laws," said Mahmoud al-Tayeb, a former expert from Sudan's antiquities department.

One of the long-term strategies to protect the historical sites is to teach young people about Sudanese history, so that they can cherish their heritage, Prof Habbab Idris Muhammad, the chief inspector at the antiquities and museums department told the Suna news agency. BBC



Remains of the two millenia-old site of Jabal Maragha that was ravaged by gold hunters are scattered on the sand in the desert

Mali coup: No deal on transitional government

Talks in Mali aimed at resolving the political situation in the aftermath of last week's coup have ended without agreement.

West African leaders have said that the deposed President, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, should be reinstated.

But envoys from regional body Ecowas failed to

convince Mali's military leaders that this was the way forward.

Mr Keita faced huge street protests before his overthrow and many in Mali have welcomed his removal.

Military spokesman Col Ismael Wague is quoted by the Reuters news agency as saying after the talks ended that the final decision on any interim administration would be made

by Malians. But the idea that Mr Keita could return to power may have been scuppered by the man himself, AFP news agency reports.

It quotes separate statements from the two sides saying that the president, who has been in detention since the coup last Tuesday, no longer wished to return to office. The mediation team - led by Nigeria's former President Goodluck Jonathan - will now report to regional heads of state on the progress made, Col Wague is quoted as saying.

The talks began with a brief session on Saturday and then continued through both Sunday and Monday.

At the end of Sunday's session Mr Jonathan said: "We have reached a number of agreements but we have not reached agreement on all the issues."

Last week, thousands took to the streets of the capital, Bamako, to celebrate the coup, which sparked global condemnation. Mr Keita won a second term in elections in

SA president lambasts minister over rogue tweets

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa has "strongly reprimanded" his finance minister for tweets criticising the sacking of a top government official in Zambia.

"Presidents in Africa must stop this nonsense of waking up in the morning and fire a central bank governor," Tito Mboweni tweeted.

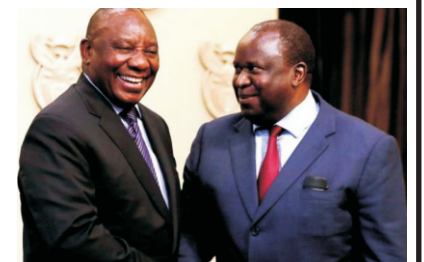
Mr Rampahosa said the comments did not reflect the views of his government.

Zambia's information minister said the tweets were "improper" and "immature."

Dora Siliya told Mr Mboweni to instead focus on South Africa's "coronavirus problems": South Africa has the highest number of coronavirus infections and deaths in Africa.

In a statement on Monday, President Ramaphosa called Mr Mboweni's comments "unfortunate", adding that the issue was being addressed "so that it does not occur again".

Mr Mboweni is known for his frequent, colourful and occasionally controversial use of Twitter. Mr Ramaphosa did not say how he would prevent a reoccurrence. Denny Kalyalya was dismissed because of the poor disbursement of funds meant to stimulate the country's struggling economy, according to a statement by the ruling Patriotic Front party, the



local Lusaka Times news site reports.

But the Reuters news agency reported that Mr Kalyalya's dismissal came barely three days after Zambia's central bank cut its benchmark lending rate by 125 basis points to 8% to try to safeguard the financial sector's stability and protect livelihoods in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Kalyalya, a respected former World Bank executive director, was appointed in 2015 and his tenure was due to end in 2023. The main opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema has called his sacking "another sad development" in Zambia's history. The BBC's Kennedy Gondwe in Lusaka says the governor's appearance on local media, where he repeatedly warned about the dire state of the economy could have led to his sacking.

President Lungu is facing a tough election next year and he would want to dispel a narrative of a struggling economy. BBC



The coup leaders said that the people of Mali will make the final decision on the way forward

2018, but since June has faced large demonstrations over corruption, mismanagement of the economy and disputed legislative elections.

There has also been anger

among troops about pay and the conflict with militant jihadists in the north of the country, which has seen scores of soldiers killed in the past year. BBC

EDITORIAL

CDC's mountain from a molehill

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH Weah's governing Coalition for Democratic Change is building a mountain from a molehill here after opposition leader Alexander B. Cummings' recent response to instead, debate with the President than his surrogates.

MR. CUMMINGS, POLITICAL leader of the Alternative National Congress and chairman of four Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) in the country had thrown out the challenge to President Weah after the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, Nathaniel McGill said on social media that he's prepared to debate the CPP leader on President Weah's performance into his nearly three years leadership.

BUT THE RULING CDC is fuming over the opposition leader's response to a challenge that had originated in fact, from the government itself. CDC chairman Mulbah Morlu, argues that it is unspeakable that the leader of a political party would want to debate with a seated President far ahead of a political campaign or an electioneering process.

WE DISAGREE TOTALLY with Morlu on this one. How effective is an opposition leader anywhere around the world if he or she cannot critically checkmate the ruling administration, especially, the President who presides over the governance of state and is chief architect of policies that affect lives of the people? The CDC chair should state clearly who is to scrutinize the daily workings of the government in power if not the opposition as an alternative national leadership?

IN THE FIRST place, it is an official of the Weah administration that threw out the challenge, and as leader of the opposition, Mr. Cummings only responded, rather preferring to debate with the President whom he seeks to replace at the ballot box than his surrogates.

BUT THE APPARENTLY less busy CDCians from the level of party chairman and others are raging with emotions, attempting to raise a mountain out of an issue that is as plain as it should be. For the record, Mr. Weah has not participated in any serious national debate with his opponents in past elections and the CDC knows that.

MR. CUMMINGS ONLY responded thru his facebook page, "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." We wonder what is wrong with this response that has put the ruling party on fire.

THE RULING COALITION should call press conferences to address matters such as rampant rape of our babies and teenage girls by heartless men in society, jobs creation, and youth empowerment, among others rather than sounding like an empty drum.

NOW THAT MINISTER McGill, chairman Morlu and the likes have transitioned from opposition and ascended to the glasshouse, they should stop throwing stones and get themselves busied with advancing the progress of Liberia rather than looking for molehills to elevate.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF any elected government are known by the level of impact is making on the lives of the people instead of constantly talking or defending itself, for its thru deeds, not words.

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

COMMENTARY

By Nouriel Roubini

Is the Almighty Dollar Slipping?

Far from signaling its imminent demise as the main global reserve currency, the greenback's sharp depreciation is to be expected in the current macroeconomic context. The forces that could erode the dollar's hegemony remain slower-moving and farther off.

NEW YORK - The recent sharp depreciation of the US dollar has led to concerns that it may lose its role as the main global reserve currency. After all, in addition to the US Federal Reserve's aggressive monetary easing - which threatens to debase the world's key fiat currency even further - gold prices and inflation expectations have also been rising.

But, to paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of the dollar's early demise are greatly exaggerated. The greenback's recent weakness is driven by shorter-term cyclical factors. In the long run, the situation is more complicated: the dollar has both strengths and weaknesses that may or may not undermine its global position over time.

Chief among the short-term negative factors is the Fed's ultra-loose monetary policy. With the United States monetizing ever-larger budget deficits, the Fed's approach looks more accommodative than that of most other major central banks.

The dollar tends to weaken during risk-on episodes, and vice versa. That is why its value peaked during the February-March panic over COVID-19, and then weakened from April onward as market sentiment recovered. Moreover, the Fed's activation of currency swap lines with other central banks eased the dollar illiquidity that had been pushing the exchange rate higher earlier in the crisis. Now, a flood of global dollars is putting downward pressure on the greenback.

Moreover, some developed countries (in Europe and elsewhere) and some emerging markets (such as China and others in Asia) are doing a much better job of containing COVID-19 than the United States is, implying that their economic recoveries may prove to be more resilient. The public-health failures and related economic vulnerabilities in the US are thus further contributing to the dollar's weakness.

It also bears repeating that before the pandemic, the dollar had appreciated by over 30% in nominal and real (inflation-adjusted) terms since 2011. Given the yawning US external deficit, and because interest rates are not high enough to finance it with capital inflows, a dollar depreciation was necessary to restore US trade competitiveness. And the US turn to protectionism signals that it prefers a weaker dollar to restore external competitiveness.¹

Even in the short run the dollar could strengthen again if - as the latest global growth data suggest - a V-shaped recovery stalls into an anemic U-shaped recovery, let alone a double dip, if the first pandemic wave is not controlled and a second wave kills the recovery before effective vaccines are found.

In the medium to long term, multiple factors could preserve the greenback's global dominance. The dollar will continue to benefit from a broad-based system of flexible exchange rates, limited capital controls, and deep, liquid bond markets. More to the point, there simply is no clear alternative currency that could serve as a broad unit of account, means of payment, and

stable store of value.

Furthermore, despite its pandemic travails, the potential annual US growth rate, at around 2%, is higher than in most other advanced economies, where it is closer to 1%. The US economy also remains dynamic and competitive in many leading industries, such as technology, biotech, pharmaceuticals, health care, and advanced financial services, all of which will continue to attract capital inflows from abroad.

Any country vying for the US position would have to ask itself if it really wants to end up with a strong currency and the associated large current-account deficits that come with meeting the global demand for safe assets (government bonds). This scenario seems rather unattractive for Europe, Japan, or China, where strong exports are central to economic growth. Under the current circumstances, the US is likely to maintain its "exorbitant privilege" as the issuer of safe long-term debt that private and public investors want in their portfolios.

The question, then, is what factors might undermine the dollar's global position over time. First, if the US keeps monetizing large budget deficits, thereby fueling large external deficits, a surge of inflation eventually could debase the dollar and weaken its attractiveness as a reserve currency. Given the current mix of US economic policies, this is a growing risk.¹

Another risk is the loss of US geopolitical hegemony, which is one of the main reasons why so many countries use the dollar in the first place. There is nothing new about the hegemon's currency being the global reserve currency. This was the case with Spain in the sixteenth century, the Dutch in the seventeenth century, France in the eighteenth century, and Great Britain in the nineteenth century. If the coming decades bring what many have already called the "Chinese century," the dollar may well fade as the renminbi rises.¹

Weaponization of the dollar via trade, financial, and technology sanctions could hasten the transition. Even if American voters elect a new president in November, such policies are likely to continue, as the Cold War between the US and China is a long-term trend, and US strategic rivals (China and Russia) and allies alike are already diversifying away from dollar assets that can be sanctioned or seized.

At the same time, China has been introducing more flexibility to its own exchange rate, gradually relaxing some capital controls, and creating deeper debt markets. It has convinced more trade and investment partners to use the renminbi as a unit of account, means of payment, and store of value, including in foreign reserves. It is building an alternative to the Western-led Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) system, and working on a digital renminbi that eventually could be internationalized. And its own tech giants are creating huge e-commerce and digital-payments platforms (Alipay and WeChat Pay) that other countries could adopt in their own local currency.

O-PED

By Joschka Fischer

The End of Western Opportunism

For the past 50 years, the West has clung to the hope that modernization would automatically transform China into a capitalist liberal democracy. For decades, maintaining this illusion was good for the bottom line, but now the implications of China's ascendancy have become disturbingly clear.

BERLIN - The confrontation between China and the West is escalating almost daily. The conflict is about technology, trade, global market share, and supply chains, but also about fundamental values. Underpinning this economic and ideological competition is the goal of global predominance in the twenty-first century.

But why is the current escalation happening now? It is not as though the West suddenly had some epiphany about the implications of China's rise. The fact that China is a Leninist one-party dictatorship is not news, and it did not stop Western countries - led by the United States - from steadily deepening their trade and economic ties with China since the 1970s.

Likewise, China's leaders have long dismissed outside criticism of their human-rights record and oppression of minorities. Rampant industrial espionage and theft of Western technology and intellectual property are other well-known problems that the West has more or less tolerated for decades in exchange for access to China's vast market and low-cost labor. Western governments and investors remained sanguine even after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing. No sooner had the dust settled than Western businesses poured into the country like never before.

Through it all, Western leaders assumed that modernization and economic development would lead China eventually to adopt democracy, embrace human rights, and the rule of law. They were wrong. The Communist Party of China has evolved a novel hybrid development model consisting of a one-party dictatorship, a highly competitive economy, and a consumer society.

So far, this approach has been extremely successful. While political power has remained squarely in communist hands, almost everything else has been turned over to the forces of high-tech consumer capitalism. The Soviet Union could not have dreamed of such an innovation in political economy.

The results have been impressive - and, in many ways, unprecedented. Hundreds of millions of people have escaped absolute poverty and joined an ascendant middle class. Just one generation ago, China was a technological and scientific backwater. Today, it is a global leader in many of the critical sectors that will define the twenty-first century - digitalization, artificial intelligence, and quantum and super computers. With China now poised to leave the US behind in many of these domains, it is only a matter of time before it becomes the world's leading economy across all the metrics that matter.

The reason why the Sino-American confrontation is escalating only now is relatively simple: the end is in sight for the West. Ever since the beginning of industrialization, the West has held an effective monopoly on global power. But now an Asian great power will soon bring an end to Western hegemony as we know it. This is not just about US President Donald Trump's administration. The growing challenge to Western power will remain long after Trump is gone, and regardless of whether he is gone this November.

After all, while China has grown stronger, the leading Western power has become relatively weaker. The 2008 global financial crisis played a crucial role in altering both Chinese and global perceptions of the US model. Suddenly, the West's vulnerabilities were laid bare for everyone to see. And now, the COVID-19 crisis is further exposing America's weaknesses and domestic fault lines. The floundering US response to the pandemic will powerfully reinforce the global impression conveyed by the 2008 meltdown, as will its confused approach to China.

US policymakers have yet to reach a consensus on the role they would like to see China play internationally. Many in the US foreign-policy establishment want to prevent or delay China's rise to economic and technological leadership. Yet it is too late for that. What would a containment strategy against a world-leading economy of 1.4 billion people even look like? It could not possibly succeed without inflicting serious damage on everyone else.

That said, it is equally clear that the Western strategy of adaptation, accommodation, and economic opportunism - an approach that has often bordered on naiveté - cannot continue. So, what is to be done?

For starters, the West must shed its illusions about China - both those based on strategic ingenuousness and those grounded in the power politics of a bygone era. The West will have to find a way to live with China as it actually is. That means finding a path between kowtowing and confrontation, with Western values and interests serving as the guide.

For example, trade with China must continue, but under new conditions. China's ascendancy is forcing Western countries to pursue their own industrial policies. Crafting them will require deciding which technologies to share and which direct investments from China to accept.

The fundamental difference in values between the West and China will remain indefinitely, and it is here that the West must draw the line. Any concession that entails a sacrifice of fundamental principles, for example in cultural matters, must be rejected. If this values-based approach results in economic disadvantages, so be it. By the same token, the West should abandon the conceit that it can push, force, or cajole China to become a democracy wrought in its own image.

The shared values between Western countries necessarily should limit the scope of geopolitical cooperation with China, as will China's expansionist behavior in its own neighborhood, especially in the South China Sea and regarding Taiwan. But on global issues such as climate change and pandemic prevention, cooperation will remain indispensable.

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OPINION

By Robert Skidelsky

The Crowding-Out Myth

The argument that public investment invariably "crowds out" private capital is wrong both theoretically and empirically. States have always played a leading role in allocating capital, either through direct investments, or by deliberately encouraging certain types of private investment.

LONDON - Three economic effects of COVID-19 seem to be generally agreed upon. First, the developed world is on the brink of a severe recession. Second, there will be no automatic V-shaped recovery. And third, governments will therefore need to "support" national economies for an indefinite period. But, despite this consensus, little thought has been given to what private firms' prolonged dependence on government support will mean for the relationship between the state and the capitalist economy.

The main obstacle to such thinking is the deeply entrenched notion that the state should not interfere with long-term capital allocation. Orthodox economic theory holds that public investment is bound to be less efficient than private capital. Applying an oversimplified logic then leads to the conclusion that practically all investment decisions should be left to the private sector.

The two generally recognized exceptions are "public" goods such as street lighting, which private firms have no incentive to supply, and "essential" goods like defense that must be kept under national control. In all other cases, the argument goes, the state should allow private enterprise to select investment projects in line with individual consumer preferences. If the state were to substitute its own choices for such rational market-based allocations, it would "crowd out" higher-value activities, "pick losers," and impede growth.

But the crowding-out argument is wrong both theoretically and empirically. First, it assumes that all resources in an economy are fully employed. In fact, most market economies normally have underemployment or spare capacity, meaning that public investment can "crowd in" resources that otherwise would be idle. This was John Maynard Keynes's key argument, and it cannot be stressed often enough. And the superior efficiency of a boom-and-bust private investment system dominated by financial oligarchs is far from obvious.

Second, the state has in practice always played a leading role in allocating capital, either through direct investments of its own (including most nineteenth-century railway-building), or by deliberately encouraging certain types of private investment.

For example, Toyota, which started out as a textile-machinery manufacturer, became a leading global automobile producer from the early 1960s onward with the help of tariff protection and state subsidies. Nor did Silicon Valley succeed because the state got out of the way of risk-taking venture capitalists and garage investors. From the Internet to nanotechnology, most of the major technological advances of the last half-century were financed by government agencies. Private firms entered the game only once the returns were within clear sight. And then there's China, whose economic ascent is the apotheosis of state-led development today.

Governments also have frequently intervened to rescue large, tottering private firms from the consequences of their own follies or unexpected shocks, with the 2008 bailout of the banking system being the most recent example. But these operations have rarely led to constructive institution-building; rather, governments have sought to return the rescued firms to private ownership as soon as they became profitable again.

Of course, we can never prove that a country will invest better if the state has a hand in the process. Moreover, many countries have lacked the state capacity needed to make public investment work. But one historical example of state investment in industrial firms - that of the Italian holding company Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale (IRI) - sheds light on the conditions under which it might succeed.

IRI's establishment in 1933 was the unintentional consequence of the bailout of Italy's three largest banks, which were on the verge of collapse following the Great Depression. It quickly became obvious that the banks' balance sheets could not be restored without restoring profitability to the hundred or so firms in which the banks owned equity stakes, but for which no unguaranteed private capital was available. Through IRI, the state became the owner of the country's biggest industrial complex, eventually owning 21.5% of Italian joint-stock company shares.

The three "lives" of IRI highlight the benefits and potential pitfalls of public investment. During the remainder of the 1930s, the companies in IRI's portfolio recovered under the direction of the anti-fascist businessman and statistician Alberto Beneduce, whom Benito Mussolini had the good sense to appoint as the holding company's first president. Under the fascist system, pork-barrel politics were not allowed to interfere with IRI's investment decisions.

IRI enjoyed a second successful period immediately after World War II, when the technocratic tradition inherited from the 1930s kept political influence at bay. As Laurie Macfarlane and Simone Gasperin of the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose tell it, IRI spearheaded Italy's post-war reconstruction and economic miracle.

In this period, IRI companies accounted for about 50% of Italy's steel output, and supplied high-quality, low-price steel to the vital machine-goods sector (where IRI accounted for more than one-quarter of total production). Similarly, the holding company's shipping firms boosted the shipyards that it owned. IRI also built Italy's motorways and telephone networks in the 1960s, and developed the national airline Alitalia.

Moreover, IRI became the national and often a European leader in aerospace, microelectronics, complex systems engineering, and telecommunication technologies. "What became known as the 'IRI formula,'" write Macfarlane and Gasperin, "involved mixed private-public ownership of certain companies."

But the story did not end happily. By the 1970s, IRI's losses grew, owing to its heavy investments in declining sectors, especially steel. Whatever the causes of its decline, IRI increasingly appeared to conform to the neoliberal model of the inefficient, corrupt state corporation. Its assets were gradually sold to pay its mounting debts, and the company was finally wound up in 2002.

IRI's mixed record raises the crucial question of how such statist institutions can succeed. The answer, surely, is to give them a broad mandate that reflects an accepted national purpose, while insulating their commercial decisions from political meddling.

This is easier said than done. But we should give the matter constructive thought, rather than surrender to neoclassical first principles. A market-driven economic system that lacks political accountability and periodically crashes is simply too dangerous.

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LIBERIA POLITICAL HOT-FIRE

With Jones Mallay

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Collaborating Political Parties (CPP): Can They Truly Avoid A Disastrous Ending?

One of the most fundamental ingredients of democracy is the establishment of a political party or parties from the thoughts and philosophical policies of their founding fathers who are commonly referred to as “vision bearers.” These hard truths still hold constant for Hon. Cummings, the ANC’s vision bearer; Hon. Bookie, the UP’s proxy vision bearer; Hon Urey, the ALP’s vision bearer, and Madam Kanga the LP’s proxy vision bearer. Each of the above mentioned iconic political personalities sees him/herself as a potential President, Head of State, and a Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia in waiting.

The CPP’s preeminent proclaimed to the Liberian populace as well as their stewards and their indispensable die-hard constituencies that they have finally formed a political a collaboration, that was barricaded by all positive legal instrument and had vehemently obtained the hard blessings of NEC. These political personalities in the eyes of their followers, are few among equals who should administer the affairs of state not in the too distant future according to them. The CPP is considered by their huge fans and political admirers as being among few of the finest political minds who are the best political scientists from all intents and purposes to govern the nation, Liberia by all accounts. But Political Hot-Fire is very mindful to suggest that political alliances, togetherness, and collaborations are often submerged in a disastrous ending, except if the all-powerful CPP can disprove such a political dilemma that befell scores of other political institutions in Liberia.

There is an interesting South East-Asian maxim that says “politics is like a cookie jar—politicians are not interested in the jar that hosts the cookie, they are interested in the cookie itself because it is the cookie that is attracted to the eyes of the politicians and not the jar because the jar possesses no special attractions but to simply accommodates the cookie.” This maxim speaks volumes of the greediness of politicians who hide behind politics and so-called multipartyism to rub their people in the name of representation through the vehicle of political parties.

It is highly thinkable that from the inception of Liberia as a nation-state in the early 1800s, the idea of multipartyism was conspicuously absent in Liberia especially between July 26, 1847, up to the dark era of April 12, 1980, when a bloody period witnessed the final nail penetrating the once golden coffin of a one-party rule of the TWP being the only front runner in all of the political dramas held in Liberia.

The chief difference between a so-called one-party system and multipartyism system has not changed much, except that the mushrooming of political parties in Liberia had not yielded any better or tangible dividends, because most of the so-called multipartyism political institutions in Liberia have potentially developed the characteristics of a one-party sociocultural and traditional approach to politics that is “grab the resources and go.”

This is because Liberian political parties both registered and nonregistered ones netting about 45 in number are directly personality-based, with weak political structures, ineffectual capacities, economically poor, family-oriented, personality-centered, perpetual hold to party leadership, lifetime chairmanship, lifetime presidential hopefuls’ trends, poorly managed party’s structures, no visible financial statements, the institutionalization of party structures, slowly dying parties, no party convention, poor membership-based party, constant membership swung from one party to another, most political parties are directly and indirectly fragmented and politically weak in Liberia.

It is incumbent on these unavoidable political trends and notable deficiencies which have greatly undercut and undermine the strengths and capabilities of most political parties in Liberia since the 80s. These deficiencies have often then none compared most, if not all political parties in Liberia to urgently side with the concept of either a collaboration, merger and or alliance which stands as a terrible political embarrassment beyond the control of each party’s leadership. Political Hot-Fire is 100% convinced that no one political can comfortably negotiate the future of their party into an uncertain political collaborate, merge, or an alliance, but it is often done out of untimely political necessities and political poverty, where no one party can ever take over state power except they merger as one unity, which often proves to be politically futile for so many hidden facts. Firstly, no one political party can outrightly win 50+1 masses votes in a given election in Liberia that will pave the way for that party to enforce a state mandate of its voters.

The irony is that each political party in Liberia has its political philosophies, standing constitutions, and bye-laws, national and international platform/projects, platform for the party and the nation, each has a set of different political value systems, leadership structures/styles, different funding mechanisms, strategic membership-based; different sets of national and international contacts; fundraising strategies and many other embedded political values.

▶ TO BE CONT'D

An Open Letter:

To the President, officials and members of PUL regarding our position on the December referendum

Dear President Coffey and Press Union of Liberia

As one of the longest-serving active members of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL), I write to suggest that the PUL and the general media community take a definite position on whether or not Liberia is really ready to have a referendum in December.

We need one, but are we ready as a nation to have it in December?

Less than four months left for the holding of this referendum I can report to you that my interactions with people in some rural counties and towns have established that not only are people unaware of the impending referendum, they do not know and understand the propositions on which Liberians are to vote “yes or no” should the referendum go ahead.

Politicians who have started premature campaigns in the name of acquaintance and consultations with the electorate are only concerned about the senatorial polls; they are not explaining anything about the referendum to the locals.

I am afraid as media people, if we sit supinely and do not act as the mirror and conscience of the society, all of us belonging to the enlightened class would be heavily blamed for possible blunders that may result from going ahead with the ill-timed referendum. We have to speak out.

I think we should call a meeting of media people and/or leaders to derive a decision and subsequently proffer a suggestion to the National Elections Commission. We have to.

If our stance on this cardinal national issue is ignored, at least we would have made our position clear.

We have a situation where even the educated class are still confused and debating what the reduction of the presidential tenure and having this as part of the propositions would mean. There is a debate whether if this proposition passes, and the incumbent happens to win in 2023, that would be considered his first term under the new amendment or whether this would be the start of his second and final term. These things need to be made clear.

Even on the dual citizenship debate, many people still do not understand whether this means one can, for example, be a Liberian and a Guinean, whereas as a country we don’t have the sophistication to know who true Liberians are. Anyone can come from across the border and take on a Liberian citizenship relying on cultural and name commonalities.

Mr. President and officials, many people in rural towns wanted to know from me if the dual citizenship proposition is voted “yes”, and one becomes, for example, a Liberian and an American citizen, whether America will recognize that person’s Liberian citizenship. In other words, if the person who is both an American and a Liberian commits a crime in Liberia and flees to the United States, will the authorities of the United States be obligated by law to return the person to face justice in Liberia? Do we have that extradition treaty with the US or next door Sierra Leone or Ivory Coast?

I am not opposing the dual citizenship drive; but I am concerned that we could find ourselves in some tight and ugly situations if we rush and don’t proceed the right way.

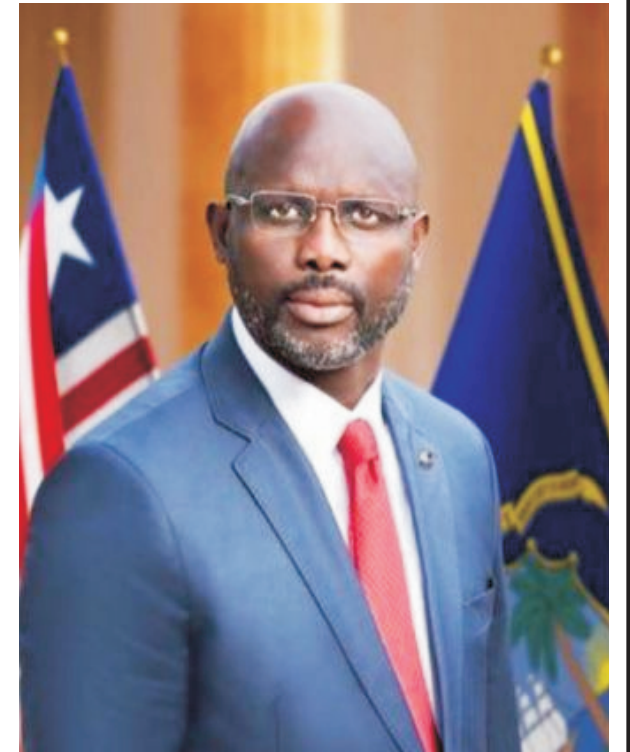
Obviously, there will be some civic education to precede the holding of the senatorial elections and the referendum; but experience has shown that these important exercises are usually inadequate, incomprehensive and restricted to accessible places where groups of dancers would simply gather to sing and dance before crowds of curious people, and that’s supposed to be civic education.

President Coffey, I believe we should be heard and heard now; we need to have a position --- stating whether or not we feel Liberia is really ready for the referendum.

It is only institutions and organizations such as ours that should take the lead in debates like this.

I respectfully submit.

Yours truly



MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

NaFAA and EJF collaborate to support sustainable fisheries in Liberia

The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) and the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) have announced a new era of working together to secure sustainable, legal, and equitable fisheries in Liberia.

During a held meeting over the weekend in Marshall City Highway, Margibi County, NaFAA and EJF agreed to work together to achieve the goal of protecting Liberian fisheries through sustainable

“creating prosperous, sustainable fisheries that support livelihoods and food security is the central goal for NaFAA, and we welcome the contributions of EJF to this crucial aim. Collaboration with local communities is a vital part of creating fair, effective fisheries management plans.”

The understanding between NaFAA and EJF will allow them to identify any gaps in fisheries management and create potential roadmaps for addressing those gaps. EJF's EU-funded project

have limited resources at their disposal, as well as providing the government with a source of specialist with local knowledge. Co-management in coastal communities will provide vital monitoring and surveillance in the fight against illegal fishing.”

NaFAA has already initiated progress in managing the country's fisheries resources, as well as combatting illegal and unsustainable fishing. EJF has worked in Liberia for almost a decade, one of the few NGOs that remained throughout the Ebola crisis, and is now embarking on a four-year project funded by the European Union to help communities and authorities to co-manage fisheries and build lasting sustainability and equity into Liberia's fishing sector.

Fishing is a vital source of food and income for coastal communities' dwellers in Liberia. The sector provides full-time and part-time employment for 37,000 people and contributes about 10% of the country's gross domestic product. Small-scale fisheries alone employ 33,000 people.

During these difficult times of COVID-19, fishing is especially important for food security as 80% of Liberians are dependent on fish for essential dietary protein. Improved sustainability, and through this, a greater abundance of fish, will reduce the risk of food shortages arising from declining catches. The Environmental Justice Foundation is a UK-based charity working internationally to protect the environment and defend human rights.



NaFAA's Director General, Madam Emma Metieh Glassco & EJF's Technical Director Sheck Abdul Sheriff in a collaborative discussion

fishing for the overall improvement of the sector.

The two Fisheries Institutions pledged to strengthen collaboration to improve sustainable fisheries across Liberia by jointly playing vital roles in supporting the monitoring and management of the coastal ecosystems that provide food and livelihoods to fishing communities.

A NaFAA and EJF Joint Press Release quotes the Director-General, Hon. Emma Metieh Glassco as saying that

'Communities for Fisheries' is centered around facilitating 'co-management fisheries regime' where government authorities work with local fishing communities to create sustainable and equitable management plans.

The Executive Director of EJF, Steve Trent, said, "We are deeply appreciative of the opportunity to collaborate with NaFAA to build on the important progress they have already achieved. Co-management will benefit not only communities, but also policymakers who may

Kaipay wants all cities in National Budget

By Ethel A Tweh

Grand Bassa County Senator Jonathan Kaipay is calling for equal distribution of the country's money to all the capital cities in the country, proposing that each county capital should receive US\$100,000 while other cities in the country get US\$50,000.

In his communication to the plenary of the Liberian Senate, the Bassa Senator says Monrovia City

Corporation's annual budget is over US\$4 million dollars while the Paynesville annual budget is over US\$500,000.

But Kaipay believes that all cities created by law should be given US\$100,000 because Article 7 of the Constitution calls for the equal participation of citizens in the wealth of the nation.

According to Senator Kaipay, there are other cities in the country that need to benefit as well. He argues that while there

is money in the budget to Internal Affairs for cities, there is still money allocated in the budget for Monrovia and Paynesville Corporations.

He thinks this additional allocation done for Monrovia and Paynesville should also be done to all the other cities around the country.

Kaipay adds that cities that are enacted by law are being marginalized in the National Budget, urging that they

Protests rock New Kru Town governor's office

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The office of the Governor of the Municipal Borough of New Kru Town last weekend witnessed two separate protests involving two rival motorcycle unions operating within the borough in Electoral District #16, Montserrado County.

The protests came in the wake of information received by one of the leadership of the rival unions known as the Borough Motorcycles and Tricycle Union that Governor Moses Weah had allegedly received the sum of US\$1,000.00 from the Federation of Motorcycles Union so as to give the latter legitimacy.

The contention is a quest by each of these rival groups to have control over several other parking lots in addition to the ones already under their controls.

Breaking news about the alleged double-standard game being played by Governor Weah's office, the president of the Borough Motorcycles and Tricycle Union Joseph Richards told a press conference that prior to their protest, their colleagues from the Federation of Motorcycles Union protested over news that the governor's office had given right over the remaining five parking lots within the district to his (Richard's) group.

Richards narrates that three years ago, his union entered into an agreement with Governor Weah's office to control New Kru Town, Point Four, Caldwell, Kanga Building and Kuwait parking lots, but he has learned that the governor has allegedly received money, contrary to the agreement between both parties.

According to Richards, they also learned that Governor Weah was promised the sum of LRD20,000.00 by the Federation of Motorcycles Union every month if they were given full legitimacy over all parking lots within the district.

The BMTU president was flanked by some of his officials namely Secretary General, Dixon Wleh, Chairman of BMTU Board, Alpha Sow, among others, disclosed that this prompted his group's protest.

He says in keeping with the MOU entered with Governor Weah's office, the BMTU is to remit to the borough the amount of USD240.00 as rental and LRD20,000.00 as social contribution to the borough, totaling 240,000.00 Liberian dollars per year.

He adds that he decided to stage the protest to remind the local authority about the agreement reached with the BMTU. Dozens of motorcyclists blocked the free flow of traffic earlier last week in front of Governor Weah's office, demanding redress to the information.

Richards maintains that as a result of the protest, a quick meeting was arranged by the chairman of the six nominating communities within the borough Mr. Johnson Teah, the leadership of the opposing motorcycle groups, the Chief of Traffic of the Liberia National Police (LNP) as well as representatives of Governor Weah to resolve the dispute.

He claims that at the end of that meeting, the Borough Motorcycles and Tricycle Union was granted legitimacy to control all parking lots to include New Kru Town, Point Four, Caldwell Junction, Kanga Building, Duala, and Kuwait, respectively as the mother union.

When the office of Governor Weah was contacted via mobile phone concerning the allegation made against him by the Borough Motorcycles and Tricycles Union, he told reporters that he was in Monrovia on official business and did not give any details.

Meanwhile a closed associate to his office who was part of the resolution meeting denied that Governor Weah had received money from the Federation of Motorcycles Union as being insinuated by the BMTU.

The associate who did not want to be named, also discloses that the office of Governor Weah and the leadership of the Borough Motorcycles and Tricycles Union are working together cooperatively in the development of the motorcycles business in the district.—Edited by Winston W. Parley

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Noise over cash package to 12th graders

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ministry of Education (MOE), in partnership with GiveDirectly, have launched the Education Cash Stipend Program (ECSP) to provide support to all 12th graders writing the WASSCE Examination this year.

receiving part - payment of US\$25 out of US\$50, or its equivalent in Liberian dollars.

One of the prominent critics of the cash distribution exercise, Montserrado Senator Darius Dillon raises question in a Facebook post as to why the full amount of US\$50 for each student was not allegedly disclosed why part - payment was being made to each of them.

try to give you an impression that he was the one that personally gave you the \$25?" he continues.

Meanwhile, the information concerning the cash package urges that 12th graders who in case are working, or personally know any of their colleague who would benefit from the program should share the information with them so that they can enroll.

Authorities say 12th graders writing the examination are requested to read the communication from the Ministry of Education (MOE) regarding this program, and 12th graders are also requested to contact the enrollment website (educationliberia.org) to receive their support stipend.

The communication notes that online enrollment and mobile money will not be accessible to many students, therefore authorities are working to set up other enrollment and support methods to ensure equity.

Meanwhile, several 12th graders writing this year's WASSCE Examination have expressed gratitude to USAID/MOE partner GiveDirectly for providing the students support stipend which will assist 12th graders to overcome some of the financial challenges that they are faced with during the period of the administration of the examination.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



Information circulated on the Social Media disclosed that all 12th graders in Liberia are eligible for the stipend, which will be delivered via mobile money.

However, there has been noise over the distribution of the cash package for the 12th graders on social media due to the senior students allegedly

"If your father was sincere in the first place, why didn't he tell you that your Uncle was kind enough to help you with \$50 for your lunch and transportation, but you will receive half now and he will keep the balance until you complete the exam?" Mr. Dillon asks.

"Why did your father even

Nasser Gains Momentum Ahead of 2020

By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan (Bong County Correspondent)

It was a wide-ranging political tsunami in Kpiai Administrative District's capital (Palala) on Friday August 21, 2020, when thousands of citizens congregated to petition a former Youth Leader Mr. Kermue Mohammed Nasser.

Mr. Nasser had earlier served as President of the Federation for Liberian Youth (FLY) and is currently the Technical Team Manager at Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE).

The well-attended program was dignified by traditional leaders of the District (Kpiai) as well as some illustrious citizens of Kokoyah Statutory District.

Reading the Petition, a son of the District; Anthony Suah said Mr. Nasser has over the past been betrothed with

youth enablement across Liberia which has made youths to become self-determining.

"We the citizens and residents of Kokoyah statutory District met in open assembly

and had a lengthy discussion, and evaluated the development paths and other political qualification of many would-be aspirants of Bong County in which are proven by



Weah asks

Starts from back page

nation to whom Liberians remain constantly indebted.

According to President Weah, the Lonestar has also come to represent the pride and dignity of the Liberian people and to symbolize the hopes and aspirations of all Liberians with its patriotic colors and designs of red and white stripes and a white star on a blue banner.

Mr. Weah says the flag is more than just a piece of

cloth, a design, a set of colors, but an emblem used to portray "ourselves and our country to the world."

He notes that as culturally diverse as "we are, we are all bound together" by the values that the Lonestar banner represents.

"My fellow Liberians, when we salute our flag, pledge our allegiance to it, we are honoring what Liberia stands for as a nation," he says.

Weah asks

Starts from back page

intentional about changing this and support women's leadership, especially electoral-based," he added.

"On this Flag Day, we must also reflect on our history and how it has been impartially told by our national symbols: the Seal, the Flag, and the Motto, all of which only tell the story of our settlers' heritage, omitting the existence of our indigenous heritage. It is time to finally ensure that our national symbols reflect both sides of our history as a people and as a nation; that we all can see ourselves and the contributions of our ancestors in our national symbols. This call began in the 70s, pre-conflict era when Pres. Tolbert instituted a 51 person committee that made

recommendations for changes in our symbols. It continued up to Madam Sirleaf's post-conflict administration, where several similar suggestions were also made. In 2012 our National Flag Day Orator, Amb. Elwood Dunn called on the nation in his oration to rethink our national symbols as they do not reflect our oneness as Liberians. I agree, and today, I call on all Liberians, whether of settlers' heritage, indigenous heritage, or both, to support a change in the national symbols to reflect our oneness.

This is how we unite. This is how we govern. This is how we build and fly our country's flag higher. Together, as one," he concluded.

tangible impacts not only on the youths but Bong as a whole that you

Mr. Kermue Mohammed Nasser is the only person that will help us here in this County upon your election" Anthony said during the reading of the petition.

According to the petition statement, the citizens' decision to endorse Mr. Nasser for the upcoming senatorial election derived from series of consultations made by them.

Our Correspondent quotes the endorsement statement as saying, citizens of the area have built confidence and trust in the Bong County Son as people center leader and emphasized the need for him to be given the chance to serve the County at the level of Liberian Senate.

The citizens at the same time lauded Mr. Kermue Mohammed Nasser for his outstanding and humanitarian roles in the life of citizens and the development of Bong County.

The Kpiai citizens said it is

based on the goodwill of Mr. Nasser that encouraged them to petition him for the 2020 Senatorial election.

Accepting the petition, Mr. Nasser declared himself as an unbending force in the upcoming senatorial elections in Liberia.

He said the fight for improved Leadership cannot be done alone but with the support of all the citizens.

The youthful Senatorial Aspirant stressed the need for Bong County development; encouraging the citizens to give him all their supports for the benefit of the County's citizens.

According to him, the problem of Bong is not President George Manneh Weah but the Lawmakers of the County who have over the past allegedly taken everything to be theirs and left the less - fortunate out of the process.

"All those greedy Lawmakers are the problem, not the President. But I want to say thank you for petitioning me today and with your

Français

Libre-échange et la transformation économique de l'Afrique : Le pas supplémentaire de l'UA

L'Union africaine inaugure le Secrétariat permanent de la Zone de libre-échange continentale africaine (ZLECAf), base opérationnelle pour la transformation économique de l'Afrique. Tous les 54 États africains sont signataires de la ZLECAf tandis que 28 d'entre eux l'ont ratifiée.

ABIDJAN, Côte d'Ivoire, 22 août 2020/ — Lors d'une

cérémonie d'inauguration du Secrétariat permanent de la Zone de libre-échange continentale africaine (ZLECAf), le président du Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo, et le président de la Commission de l'Union africaine (UA), Moussa Faki Mahamat, ont rappelé, lundi 17 août, l'importance de cet organisme pour la transformation économique du continent.

« L'intégration économique

de l'Afrique cimentera les fondements d'une Afrique qui saura s'affranchir de l'aide internationale. Le nouveau sentiment d'urgence qu'éprouve l'Afrique pour une véritable autonomie et son aspiration à y accéder trouvent largement leur expression dans la cérémonie d'aujourd'hui », a déclaré Nana Akufo-Addo.

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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.

Ouattara : 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 ! », dixit 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.

Éditorial

Traduisez les auteurs des violences de Zwedru en justice rapidement

Les missions étrangères au Libéria ont récemment appelé l'administration Weah à enquêter rapidement sur les violences politiques qui se sont produites le 30 juillet à Zwedru, dans le comté de Grand Gedeh, de manière objective et non partisane, afin de traduire tous les coupables en justice.

Ils ont indiqué qu'une telle action enverrait un signal clair aux auteurs de troubles comme quoi les menaces et la violence n'ont pas leur place dans le régime démocratique dont le peuple libérien s'est doté.

Les Nations Unies, la CEDEAO, l'ambassade des États-Unis et l'Union européenne, dans une déclaration commune rendue publique à Monrovia, ont exprimé leur soutien aux groupes libériens en particulier, le Conseil interreligieux, le diocèse catholique de Cape Palmas, la Providence Baptist Church, le caucus parlementaire de Grand Gedeh et d'autres parties prenantes religieuses et politiques, pour leurs préoccupations face à la recrudescence des discours de haine et de la violence, dont en particulier la violente attaque contre des politiciens de l'opposition à Zwedru, dans le comté de Grand Gedeh.

Il y a près de deux semaines, des centaines de jeunes issus de la ligue des jeunes du Congrès pour le changement démocratique de Zwedru, dans le comté de Grand Gedeh, ont assiégé l'hôtel dans laquelle président de l'Alliance des partis politiques de l'opposition, Alexander B. Cummings, et le représentant du district # 10 du comté de Montserrado, Yekeh Kolubah, ont élu domicile. Les deux opposants au régime du président Weah ont été empêchés de sortir et de vaguer à leurs activités politiques. Ces jeunes en colère rejoints par des voyous armés de projectiles, de gourdins et de machettes, ont tenu leur siège pendant plus de cinq heures.

Ils menaçaient de lyncher le représentant Kolubah à qui ils reprochent l'habitude d'insulter le président George Manneh Weah. Il a fallu l'intervention d'une colonne des forces armées du Libéria qui a réussi à exfiltrer les politiciens de l'opposition du comté qui est un bastion du président Weah et sa coalition au pouvoir.

Ni la Coalition pour le changement démocratique, ni le gouvernement du Libéria n'a immédiatement condamné la violence. Il a fallu quatre jours au président George Weah avant de faire des commentaires alors qu'il assistait au culte dans sa propre église, appelant ses partisans à ne pas se livrer à la violence.

Mais nous nous joignons aux missions étrangères et appelons à une enquête rapide et impartiale pour traduire tous les responsables en justice et permettre à l'état de droit de régner. Cela servira sûrement de moyens de dissuasion à toute autre velléité de la part de quelque groupe que ce soit de perturber la paix actuelle par la violence politique dans le futur.

Si à seulement trois mois des élections sénatoriales la violence de Zwedru n'est pas punie comme ce fut le cas des deux violences électorales sanglantes précédentes qui se sont produites dans les circonscriptions électorales n° 13 et 15 du comté de Montserrado, alors il y'aura de quoi à être inquiet pour les prochaines élections.

Nous ne voulons pas que cette attitude se répète continuellement dans notre pays où les politiciens ont tendance à détruits les progrès, comme notamment la gouvernance démocratique et la stabilité politique, réalisés grâce à l'aide de la communauté internationale.

Nous pensons que c'est dans cette optique que les missions étrangères ont appelé l'administration Weah à enquêter rapidement avec objectivité et à clore l'affaire afin que le gouvernement ne soit pas soupçonné de complaisance et, par extension, de pardonner les actes de violence.

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Français

Libre-échange et la

Le Ghana a été choisi en juillet 2019 par les dirigeants africains pour abriter le siège de l'organisme, lors d'un Sommet des chefs d'État de l'UA tenu à Niamey au Niger, qui avait donné le coup d'envoi à la mise en œuvre de l'Accord de libre-échange qui devrait stimuler les échanges commerciaux régionaux entre les pays membres. Tous les 54 États africains sont signataires de la ZLECAf tandis que 28 d'entre eux l'ont ratifiée.

Le président ghanéen, Nana Akufo-Addo, a appelé l'ensemble des États membres à ratifier l'accord avant le prochain sommet de l'UA prévu en décembre 2020, « afin d'ouvrir la voie à un démarrage progressif des échanges commerciaux à partir du 1er janvier 2021. »

« La pandémie de Covid-19 ne fait qu'accroître l'importance du succès que doit connaître la ZLECAf, a-t-il déclaré. Le bouleversement des chaînes d'approvisionnement internationales met en lumière la nécessité d'une intégration plus étroite entre nous afin que nous puissions renforcer notre autosuffisance commune, améliorer nos économies et réduire notre dépendance vis-à-vis des sources extérieures. »

La ZLECAf, qui représente la plus grande zone de libre-échange du monde, est susceptible de transformer le continent grâce à son marché potentiel de 1,2 milliard de personnes et son PIB combiné d'environ 3 000 milliards de dollars américains pour les 54 États membres de l'UA.

H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Président de la Commission de l'Union africaine (UA)

Le président de la Commission de l'UA, Moussa Faki Mahamat, a déclaré que l'ouverture du Secrétariat permanent marquait une étape importante dans la matérialisation de la vision de l'intégration continentale africaine promue par ses pères fondateurs.

Selon WamkeleMene, premier secrétaire général de la ZLECAf, l'accord offre à l'Afrique l'occasion de s'attaquer aux plus grands défis actuels en matière d'échanges commerciaux et

de développement économique : la fragmentation du marché, la présence d'économies nationales de petite taille, la dépendance excessive à l'égard des exportations de matières premières, un potentiel exportateur trop limité, le manque de spécialisation dans les exportations, des chaînes de valeur régionales sous développées et des barrières réglementaires et tarifaires encore trop élevées ne favorisent pas les échanges commerciaux.

« Nous devons agir dès maintenant ! Nous devons agir pour démanteler le modèle économique colonial dont nous avons hérité », a insisté WamkeleMene.

Le Groupe de la Banque africaine de développement a accordé une subvention d'appui institutionnel de cinq millions de dollars américains à l'UA pour la mise en place du Secrétariat permanent de la ZLECAf, dont les bureaux se trouvent dans un complexe ultra-moderne situé dans le quartier central des affaires d'Accra, la capitale ghanéenne.

« La Banque africaine de développement félicite l'UA et la ZLECAf pour la cérémonie d'inauguration du Secrétariat organisée par le Ghana le 17 août 2020. La Banque est heureuse d'être associée à cette initiative continentale sans précédent, déterminante et transformatrice dans la poursuite de l'objectif de création de l'Afrique que nous voulons », a déclaré Solomon Quaynor, vice-président de la Banque en charge du Secteur privé, des infrastructures et de l'industrialisation.

« Le soutien que nous apportons à la ZLECAf s'inscrit dans le rôle directeur de la Banque au niveau du continent en permettant la création de structures d'accueil qui sont essentielles à la mise en œuvre réussie des institutions indispensables à l'accélération des objectifs de développement économique de l'Afrique », a ajouté Solomon Quaynor.

Lors de cette cérémonie, le président en exercice de l'Union africaine, le président sud-africain, Cyril Ramaphosa, et le président du Niger, Mahamadou Issoufou, ont également exprimé leur satisfaction par le biais d'une visioconférence.

COMMENTAIRE

By Nouriel Roubini

La chute du tout-puissant dollar ?

NEW YORK - La récente dépréciation brutale du dollar américain soulève certaines inquiétudes quant au risque de le voir perdre son rôle de monnaie de réserve mondiale. En effet, parallèlement à l'assouplissement monétaire agressif mené par la Réserve fédérale américaine - qui menace d'altérer encore davantage la principale monnaie fiduciaire de la planète - le cours de l'or et les prévisions d'inflation augmentent actuellement.

Mais pour reprendre Mark Twain, les annonces autour de la mort du dollar sont souvent très exagérées. La récente baisse du billet vert s'explique par des facteurs cycliques de court terme. À long terme, la situation est plus complexe : le dollar présente à la fois des points forts et des faiblesses, susceptibles de mettre à mal ou non sa position mondiale au fil du temps.

Parmi les principaux facteurs négatifs à court terme, intervient la politique monétaire ultra-assouplie de la Fed. Les États-Unis monétisant actuellement des déficits budgétaires sans cesse plus importants, l'approche de la Fed apparaît plus accommodante que celle de la plupart des autres grandes banques centrales.

Le dollar a tendance à s'affaiblir en périodes de risk-on, et inversement. C'est la raison pour laquelle sa valeur a atteint un pic lors de la panique de février-mars autour du COVID-19, pour ensuite s'affaiblir à partir d'avril, lorsque l'état du marché s'est rétabli. Par ailleurs, l'activation par la Fed de lignes de swap de devises auprès d'autres banques centrales est venue atténuer l'illiquidité du dollar, qui plus tôt pendant la crise avait poussé le taux de change à la hausse. Désormais, un torrent de dollars mondiaux exerce une pression baissière sur le billet vert.

En outre, un certain nombre de pays développés (en Europe et ailleurs) ainsi que de marchés émergents (Chine et autres pays d'Asie) parviennent beaucoup plus efficacement que les États-Unis à contenir le COVID-19, ce qui implique que leur reprise économique pourrait se révéler plus résiliente. Les échecs de la santé publique et les vulnérabilités économiques connexes des États-Unis contribuent ainsi à la fébrilité du dollar.

Il convient également de rappeler qu'avant la pandémie, le dollar s'était apprécié de plus de 30 % en termes nominaux et réels (ajusté à l'inflation) depuis 2011. Compte tenu du déficit extérieur béant des États-Unis, et de taux d'intérêt insuffisamment élevés pour financer leurs flux entrants de capitaux, une dépréciation du dollar était nécessaire pour rétablir la compétitivité commerciale américaine. Le virage des États-Unis en direction du protectionnisme signale par ailleurs que le pays préfère un dollar plus faible pour restaurer cette compétitivité extérieure.

Le dollar pourrait même à court terme se renforcer à nouveau si - comme le suggèrent les derniers chiffres de la croissance mondiale - une reprise en forme de V se changeait en reprise anémique en forme de U, sans parler d'une reprise à double creux, dans le cas où la première pandémie demeurerait incontrôlée, et où une deuxième vague viendrait anéantir la reprise avant la découverte d'un vaccin efficace.

À moyen terme et long terme, plusieurs facteurs sont susceptibles de préserver la domination mondiale du billet vert. Le dollar continuera de bénéficier d'un système à large base réunissant taux de change flexibles, contrôles limités sur les capitaux, et marchés des obligations profonds et liquides. Plus significatif encore, il n'existe tout simplement aucune monnaie alternative clairement susceptible de servir de large unité de compte, de moyen de paiement, ainsi que de réserve stable de valeur.

Par ailleurs, en dépit de ses difficultés face à la pandémie, l'Amérique présente un taux de croissance annuelle potentielle d'environ 2 %, c'est-à-dire supérieur à celui de la plupart des autres économies développées, qui tournent plutôt autour de 1 %. L'économie américaine demeure également dynamique et compétitive dans de nombreux secteurs majeurs, tels

que les technologies, les biotechnologies, les produits pharmaceutiques, les soins de santé, ou encore les services financiers de pointe, qui continuent tous d'attirer des flux de capitaux en provenance de l'étranger.

N'importe quel pays aspirant à la position des États-Unis doit se demander s'il souhaite réellement se retrouver avec la monnaie forte et les importants déficits de balance courante qui accompagnent le fait de répondre à la demande mondiale en actifs sûrs (obligations d'État). Un tel scénario semble relativement peu attrayant pour l'Europe, le Japon et même la Chine, où la solidité des exportations s'inscrit au cœur de la croissance économique. Dans le contexte actuel, il faut s'attendre à ce que l'Amérique conserve son « privilège exorbitant » en tant qu'émetteur de dette sûre à long terme, à laquelle les investisseurs privés et publics aspirent pour leurs portefeuilles.

La question consiste alors à déterminer quels facteurs seraient susceptibles de mettre à mal la position mondiale du dollar au fil du temps. Premièrement, si les États-Unis continuent de monétiser d'importants déficits budgétaires, et ainsi d'alimenter de lourds déficits extérieurs, une envolée de l'inflation pourrait conduire à une dépréciation du dollar, et affaiblir son attractivité en tant que monnaie de réserve. Compte tenu du mix actuel des politiques économiques américaines, c'est un risque croissant.

Un autre risque réside dans l'éventuelle disparition de l'hégémonie géopolitique des États-Unis, qui constitue à la base l'une des principales raisons pour lesquelles tant de pays utilisent le dollar. La monnaie de la puissance mondiale dominante a toujours été également la devise de réserve mondiale. Ce fut le cas pour l'Espagne au XVIe siècle, pour la Hollande au XVIIe, pour la France au XVIIIe, et pour l'Angleterre au XIXe. Si les prochaines décennies nous orientent vers ce que beaucoup appellent déjà le « siècle chinois », alors le dollar pourrait bien être éclipsé par la montée en puissance du renminbi.

La militarisation du dollar via les sanctions commerciales, financières et technologiques pourrait d'ailleurs accélérer cette transition. Même si les électeurs américains élisent un nouveau président en novembre, il est probable que ces politiques se poursuivront, à l'heure où la guerre froide Amérique-Chine devient une tendance de long terme, et où les rivaux des États-Unis (Chine et Russie) comme leurs alliés procèdent d'ores et à déjà une diversification par rapport aux actifs en dollar susceptibles de faire l'objet de sanctions ou de saisies.

Dans le même temps, la Chine introduit davantage de flexibilité dans son propre taux de change, assouplissant progressivement certains contrôles sur les capitaux, et créant des marchés de dette plus profonds. Le pays parvient à convaincre un nombre croissant de partenaires commerciaux et d'investissement d'utiliser le renminbi comme unité de compte, comme moyen de paiement, et comme réserve de valeur, y compris dans le cadre des réserves de change. La Chine construit également une alternative au système Western-led Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT), et travaille sur un renminbi digital susceptible d'être plus tard internationalisé. Ses propres géants technologiques créent par ailleurs d'immenses plateformes de commerce électronique et de paiement digital (Alipay et WeChatPay), que d'autres pays pourraient adopter dans leur propre monnaie.

En somme, si la position du dollar est pour l'heure stable, le billet vert rencontrera d'importants défis dans les années et les décennies à venir. Certes, ni le système économique de la Chine (capitalisme d'État et contrôles financiers), ni son régime politique technocratique et autoritaire ne suscitent un véritable attrait en Occident. Pour autant, le modèle chinois se révèle d'ores et déjà relativement attrayant pour de nombreux marchés émergents et pays moins démocratiques. Peu à peu, avec la montée en puissance économique, financière, technologique et géopolitique de la Chine, la monnaie chinoise pourrait bien se frayer un chemin vers de nombreuses autres régions du monde.

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PERSPECTIVES PERSPECTIVES

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

CREDIBLE, CHALLENGING POLITICAL STAR IS BORN IN DISTRICT #9, MONTSERRADO COUNTY

With Bai M. Gbala, Sr.
August 19, 2020

Some individuals venture into the realm of Politics after retirement from their first choices of life's endeavors, although Aristotle (Virtuous politics) held that politics is the highest vocation in life. Politics is unique, in that, it is concerned with the vital interests and service of the people - their passions, choices, decisions, public and private, not for personal enrichment by illicit means, wholesale stealing of public resources, overnight "rags-to-riches and disregard-disobedience of law, according to Liberia's century and three-quarters facts of History.

Quite recently, we have been treated to a new, encouraging discourse on democratic politics by a retired football (Soccer) striker and coach, relatively young (perhaps in his late 40s or early 50s) and Candidate seeking to capture District #9 of Montserrado County.

Significantly, Mr. James Salinsa Debbah (of the opposition Labor Party) is one of Liberia's legendary football (Soccer) Super-star, nationally-, internationally-well known as much as the now President George Weah, also retired football (Soccer) super-star.

This young or middle-aged Liberian's approach to Politics is the old, traditional classical principles of democratic politics and Thought, under the rule of law; it is as new to Liberia's Past, Recent Past, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's "Generation of new Leaders", The prevailing Politics of Corruption, high crimes of armed robberies, murder, Poverty and Hunger.

Mr. Debbah's Approach

Mr. James Salinsa Debbah's Old-New Approach to politics is a cool, calm and collected analysis of validated facts and figures regarding District #9 of Montserrado County. He attacks and/or accuses no one, but presents himself as a viable candidate to represent the citizens of the district as catalyst, together, with the citizens to find solutions to the problems of the district. Said he, according to the newspaper (Front Page Africa, August 17, 2020):

"I was born, raised and nurtured in district 9; I have never had the capacity to, at least, give back. . . . The time is ripe for me to give back to my community . . . in a more distinctive and a more complicated capacity".

About District 9 Lawmaker Madam Youngblood of the CDC Coalition who passed away recently, Candidate Debbah says that "she was a down-to-earth, very good human being who was people-centered. I am here to continue her legacy. If it is said she did not do well in the district - that would be like an abomination. I have always been affiliated with the (opposition) Labor Party and could likely run on the Party ticket".

That "his main priority, if given the chance to represent District 9, would be to apply the same level of consistency he has lived his entire life and exhibited over the years. I am hard working, I'm energetic and I promise to do the same. Poverty is still a major concern and I will work toward that to empower the young people".

"Most importantly" Debbah says, that "he wants to bring a different approach to the National Legislature

by avoiding (repeat of the mistakes of History) the mistakes of those currently serving. I think a lot of mistakes Representatives make is that they take decisions unilaterally. If elected, I will make sure that elders (men and women) and young people constituents (also men and women) in the district will have a seat at the table and form an integral part of whatever decisions that are made. I'm not going to take decisions unilaterally. They are going to be decision-makers that will be inclusive with elders and young people . . . District 9 has a lot of young people and there is no recreation. When I am elected, I am going to form a council that will be comprised of young people and elders . . . because they know the ills of the society".

On National Issues

Debbah says that he knows not why his former partner, footballer for decades, now President George Weah, shuts him out. "I think he (Mr. Weah) should look beyond the past. We came a very long way, we have been in the same fraternity for decades, I think he should retrospect on that because those that are surrounding him are not his friends, they don't have his interest at heart. At times, you do not realize that - and I don't blame him because he is in a very - I do not know how to describe it. It's



James Salinsa Debbah

unfortunate. He's very charismatic and he has a lot to offer but he's been swayed by people he brings in his circle. We are not opponents, he is my next of kin".

Mistakes of History

It is very important and encouraging to note that Candidate Debbah is aware of and commits to avoid one of Liberia's major sources of socio-economic and political problems - ignoring the mistakes of history since 1847. For, it is said that "those who ignore the mistakes of history are likely to repeat them".

Indeed, Candidate Debbah's new-old political approach presents, apparently, a realistic challenge to Liberia's political tradition of "business-as-usual" - monopoly of the universal, phenomenal vice of corruption and historical cycles of defective governance characterized by the Unitary system of the Liberian government.

Announcing Government's National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance, Liberia's Governance Commission declared that "Liberia shall remain a Unitary State with a system of local government and administration which shall be decentralized with the

County (Political sub-division) as the principal focus of the Devolution of power and authority" (Page 2, Section 1.0, National Policy on Decentralization & Local Governance), although the Governance Commission, in its own Preamble to Decentralization Policy based on Research and Analysis held:

a) That ". . . Since 1847 and throughout the history of Liberia, governance and public administration (of the Unitary System of Government utilized) have remained highly centralized in Monrovia and controlled mainly by institutions and structures of the central state which have not allowed adequate legal opportunities for the establishment of a system of participatory local governance";

b) That "The system has impeded participation in the management of public affairs and led to the gap in economic growth and development, equal access to social and economic opportunities and well-being between Monrovia and the rest of Liberia"; and

c) That "These conditions have impeded Liberia's democratization process leading to underinvestment in human resources development".

But in Representative Democracy

The right to vote in the election of important public officials, in the case of Liberia - mayors of cities, town, clan and paramount chiefs and superintendents of counties - is regarded NOT as a privilege but an inalienable right that inheres to adult citizens by virtue of their citizenship. This right is the primary means by which governments are responsive to the governed.

Regarding Systems of Government

There are two most popular systems of government worldwide, the Federal and Unitary systems. Both Systems refer to or define "devolution" as decentralization of power. But there are distinct, important differences and conditions, critical to successful democratic practice and results, particularly, in the light of Liberia's turbulent past and recent past. Examples:

1) In the Federal System, devolution-decentralization is guaranteed by written constitution with mutually-binding terms and conditions upon both, the central Federal government and its regional, semi-autonomous constituents; and whereas,

2) In the Unitary system, devolution-decentralization is non-constitutional and that the central Unitary government reserves the right to alter, re-arrange and/or abolish the devolved-decentralized powers without consultation with and/or consent of the regional constituents, because unlike the Federal system, the regional constituents of the Unitary system lack constitutional right to exist, in the first place.

Consequently, devolution of political power, as defined by Liberian Government's National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance and announced by the Governance Commission affecting the right to vote in the election of mayors, town, clan and paramount chiefs, and Superintendents of Counties, desired and expected by the Liberian people is not governed by written constitution and that the present Unitary Central government reserves the right to change, alter and/or abolish the devolved powers without consultation with and/or consent of the regional constituents, the counties of the Republic of Liberia, according to the law now prevailing.

2020's political risks

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

There's so much at stake seriously, as Liberia heads to the polls this December for a Special Senatorial election. Political actors and political parties can only watch and take steps which may put them in better position to face the 2023 presidential and legislative race.

Though the National Elections Commission (NEC) is yet to announce the opening of political campaign here, politicians and their followers have begun engaging the electorate on daily basis.

The highways of the 15 political sub-divisions of the

and the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) candidate in that election, and he is also contesting as an incumbent in this year's senatorial election on the same ticket in Montserrrado.

Last year's defeat of the ruling party in its proclaimed stronghold was under the watchful eyes of President George Manneh Weah and Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor who, along with CDC hierarchies who campaigned vigorously to regain a slipping popularity ahead of the 2023 presidential election.

The CDC needs Montserrrado, Grand Bassa and Nimba Counties in these senatorial

National Congress (ANC) and All Liberian Party (ALP) also have a task to prove that it is a political force and must be taken serious by the Liberian people.

Liberty Party having lost its flag bearer Cllr. Charles Brumskine is now under the political leadership of Grand Bassa County Senator Nyonblee Karnga - Lawrence who is seeking re-election this December.

Karnga - Lawrence faces an uphill battle in Grand Bassa County for her re-election as former Senate Pro - tempore and former Foreign Minister Gbehzohngar Milton Findley who was once rejected by the



country are busier so are the communities, and neighborhood community football fields, as aspirants spied out their messages to lure potential voters to their direction.

During the 2019 senatorial by-election which brought opposition candidate Abraham Darius Dillon to the Liberian Senate, the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) suffered a great loss of a county it claims to be its stronghold - Montserrrado.

Mr. Dillon stood as opposition Liberty Party (LP)

elections in order to be in a comfortable position for the 2023 bid or else the ruling party's days at the national echelon risks a closure at the next presidential election.

There are reports that President George Manneh Weah is strongly anticipating that the CDC wins Montserrrado and Grand Bassa Counties.

To achieve this, reports say Mr. Weah and his CDC are making preparations and strong campaign tactics are being put in place to implement the mandate of the president.

The CPP which comprises LP, Unity Party (UP), Alternative

people of Bassa, joins the race to once again seek their blessing.

For Madam Lawrence to maintain her relevance at the level of the CPP and the Liberty Party, she must win the December 8 election or she may disappear from the political space.

Also for the CPP to remain to be seen as a beacon of hope for change for the nation's highest seat, it must ensure that Sen. Dillon retains his senatorial seat.

This December the CPP under the chairmanship of ANC political leader Alexander Cummings, needs to win Nimba, Bong, Lofa, Grand Bassa and Montserrrado Counties to make a major contender ahead of the 2023 elections.

The risk of failing to secure these vote-rich counties on the side of the CPP is that this opposition coalition may end up into a failed opposition bloc in presidential elections.—Edited by Winston W. Parley

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA)
MONTSERRADO COUNTY)

IN THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
FOR AND IN MONTSERRADO COUNTY / R. L
TEMPLE OF JUSTICE BLDG, MONROVIA, LIBERIA

IN RE: AFFIDAVIT OF CHANGE OF NAME EXECUTED BY AUGUSTINE C. SEKOU, RESIDENT OF CATHOLIC COMMUNITY, CONGO TOWN CITY OF MONROVIA, MONTSERRADO COUNTY, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, TO BE KNOWN, REGARDED AND CALL "AUGUSTINE S. SELLU"

AFFIDAVIT OF CHANGE OF NAME

PERSONALLY APPEARED BEFORE ME, the undersigned, a duly qualified and commissioned Justice of the Peace for and in Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia, at my office in the City of Monrovia, Augustine C. Sekou, Affiant, and made Oath according to law and deposes as follows, to wit;

1. That Affiant is a Liberian Citizen and resident of Catholic Community, Congo Town, City of Monrovia, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia.
2. That Affiant says and avers that to the best of his knowledge, he was born on May 9, A.D. 1989 in West Point Community, Busrod Island, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia unto Mr. Fallah Sellu and Madam Tawah Fallah, both of whom are Liberian Citizens.
3. That Affiant says and avers that he was given the name Augustine C. Sekou by his Uncle Sekou Dolley who was his Guardian and bear same name up to his graduation from high school and up and including the filing of this affidavit of change of name.
4. That Affiant further says and submits that having been connected with his biological parent and of the legal age and sound mind; he has decided to change his name from Augustine C. Sekou to be call, known and regarded as "Augustine S. Sellu" so as to reflect his true identity with his father, in both law and equity.
5. That, Your Humble Affiant should be known, called and regarded as **Augustine S. Sellu** and that all official documents executed and signed by the affiant herein previous named (**Augustine C. Sekou**) remains valid.

THAT ALL AND SINGULAR THE ALLEGATION as are set forth and contained in the foregoing Affidavit of Change of Name, executed by Augustine C. Sekou are true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief and as to those matters of information, he verily believes them to be true and correct

Augustine C. Sekou
Deponent / Affiant
Cell#: +231-776-322-158

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME
THIS 21ST DAY OF AUGUST, A.D. 2020

ENOCH S. GARLAWOLD
NOTARY PUBLIC
MONTSERRADO COUNTY
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
Commission Expires: Feb. 21, 2022

Kaipay wants all cities

Cont'd from page 6

should have been given an envelope from the budget as well, noting that such allocation can be used for health and sanitation in the various cities.

He recommends to his colleagues that it is necessary for such allocations to be done now since the National Budget has reached to the Legislature, expressing hope that his advocacy will yield good fruit.

In a motion, Senator Dallas

Gueh of River Cess County thanked the author of the communication, saying it is necessary that all the other cities be included in the budget.

Meanwhile, the communication was sent to the Senate Committee on Ways, Means and Finance to report to plenary in one week.—Edited by Winston W. Parley

GOLSAO EST. 2016

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Sports

With **Emmanuel B. Juduh**

VOL. 10 NO. 146

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020

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Weah asks for national unity



By **Winston W. Parley**

Amidst persistent bitter political divide between supporters of the government and the opposition here, President George Manneh Weah is asking Liberians to put aside their differences and come together as one people, placing the national interest above personal and partisan interest.

In a statement delivered Monday on Liberia's Flag Day which is observed on 24 August each year, Mr. We said the occasion gave yet another opportunity for Liberians to reflect on their collective actions as a people and stand the united course for the continuous betterment of the nation.

"Therefore, as we celebrate our Flag Day as a symbol of

patriotism and national unity, let us put aside our differences and come together as one people, placing the national interest above personal and partisan interest," he says.

Liberia has for years been rocked by in a wave of political tension, but recent developments leading to the 8 December 2020 senatorial election speak more of how the fragile nation is on the brink of chaos if the emerging culture of stone battle between opponents at political events is not speedily averted.

In his Flag Day message, Mr. Weah pleads with Liberians to continue to work peacefully together for "our collective good" because as the national anthem says, in union strong success is sure, "we cannot fail."

Mr. Weah states that the Lonestar banner has come to symbolize the deeds and valor of the forefathers of this

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



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Cummings pays tributes to Liberian women

-echoes calls to change national symbols

The political leader of the opposition Alternative National Congress and chair of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Mr. Alexander B. Cummings has paid tributes to Liberian women for their contributions here saying August 24, which is celebrated every year as a national Flag Day is a reflection of Liberian women

contributions here.

Mr. Cummings also echoed calls to change the country's national symbol to reflect the diversities of all Liberians.

"I want to wish all Liberians a commemorative Flag Day. As we observe another Flag Day, may we take this moment to reflect on the many contributions of Liberian women to our society," he wrote adding, "The making of the Flag by an all-women



committee, led by Susannah Lewis, is just one of the many major contributions of Liberian women to the history and foundation of our country despite the many societal barriers they face."

Cummings went on further to state that it is unfortunate that 173 years later, women's political participation in the electoral politics and governance of the state is dismal. "We must be

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

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PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT: To Whom It May Concern

This is to inform the public that the individuals identified herein, **Mr. Morris Deshield, Mr. Moses Gbor and Mr. Boakai Massaquoi** have both fraudulently received money for property ("land parcels") located in the township of Johnsonville which DOES NOT and never has belonged to them. The pertinent land on which this notice is based is described in the legally registered deed as follows: "The Northeast angle of an avenue thirty three (33) feet at a soap tree, commencing at Cornelius Bailey's sixty (60) acre block of land thence running South 44 degrees East twenty-five and a half (25 1/2) chains, thence running North 46 degrees East forty and a half (40 1/2) chains, thence running North 44 degrees West twenty five and a half (25 1/2) chains, thence running South 46 degrees West forty and a half (40 1/2) chains to the place of commencement and containing twenty five acres (25) of land".



Morris Deshield **Boakai Massaquoi**

Anyone who has or continues to conduct business transactions with **Mr. Morris Deshield, Mr. Moses and/or Mr. Boakai Massaquoi** with regards to the above-referenced property in Johnsonville is doing so at his/her own risk.

Several encroachers claiming to have purchased land from the above individuals were repeatedly warned by overseers and security personnel. Large and clear "No Trespassing" signs were repeatedly vandalized with clear criminal intent. The legal owners of said property

will not negotiate with victims of this fraud because they were forewarned. Legal action has been initiated by the lawful owners of this property.

All illegal materials, structures, or activities on this property must cease immediately. Victims of this fraud are given two to three weeks to salvage and remove their materials from the property, as plans are in place to use earthmoving equipment to clear the entire property after this grace period.

Signed: _____
The Legal Owners of the Referenced Property located in the township of Johnsonville, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia.