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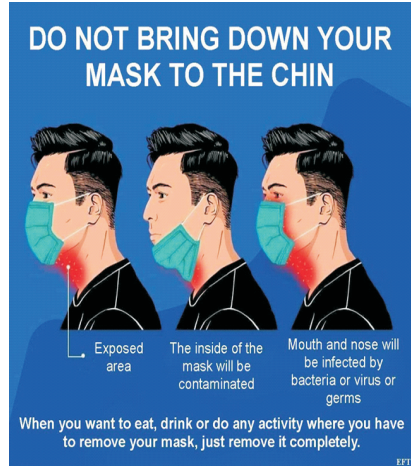
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# The New Dawn

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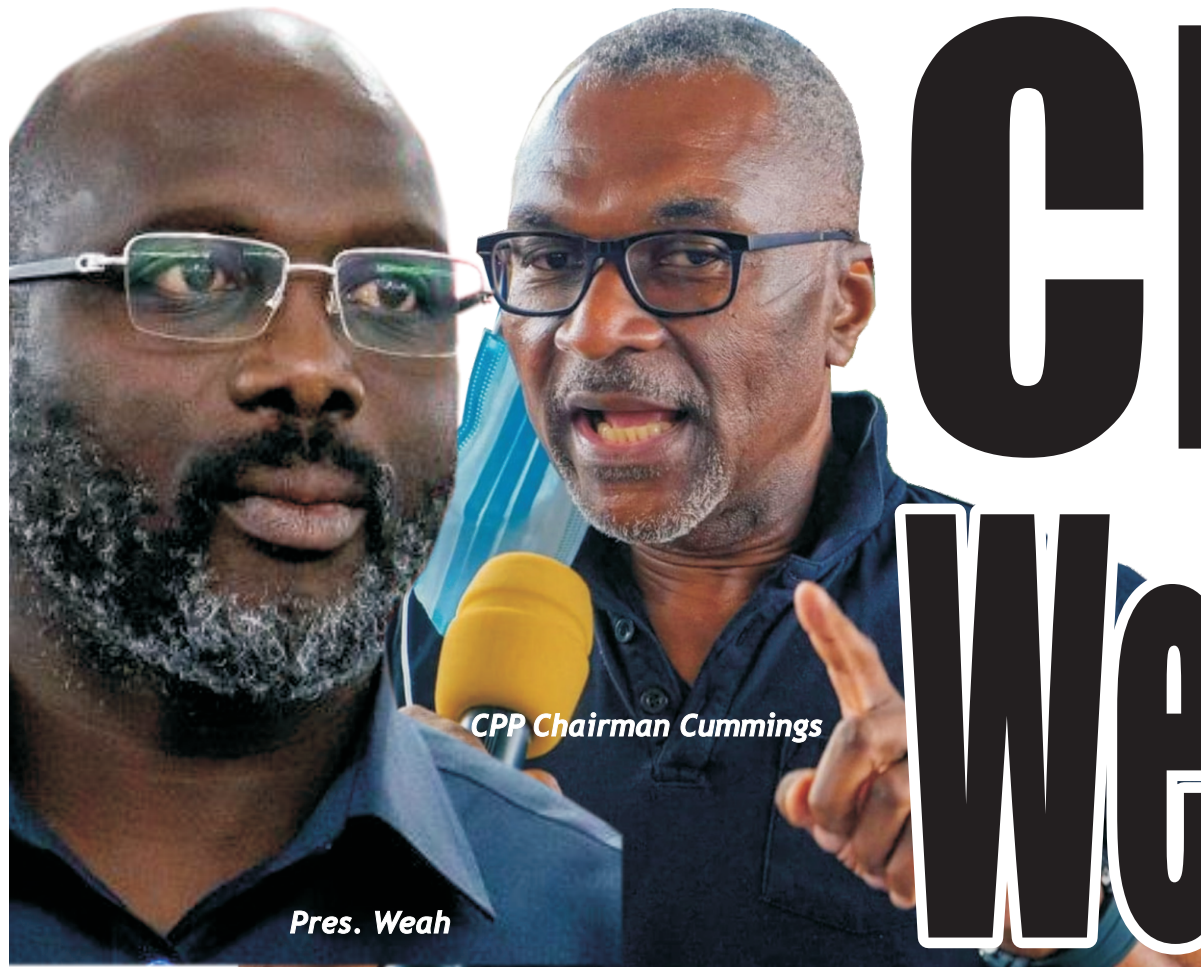
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CPP Chairman Cummings

Pres. Weah

# CPP on Weah's back

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# Continental News

## South Africa police arrested for killing teen, 16

Two South African police officers have been arrested over the deadly shooting of a 16-year-old boy, which had sparked violent street protests.

The family of Nathaniel Julius, who had Down's syndrome, said he had gone out to buy biscuits when he was shot dead in Johannesburg's Eldorado Park suburb.

The officers will be charged with murder and "possibly defeating the ends of justice", said the police watchdog.

The family said Julius was shot after not answering officers' questions.

However, they added, this was because of his disability.

The police initially said Julius had been caught up in a shootout between officers and local gangsters.

The Independent Police Investigative Directorate (Ipid) said it had decided to arrest the officers after "careful consideration of the evidence at hand". After Julius' death on Wednesday night, hundreds of local residents took to the streets

to protest on Thursday, leading to violent clashes with police. Police used rubber bullets and stun grenades to disperse the stone-throwing protesters who had blockaded streets with burning barricades.

The clashes led President Cyril Ramaphosa to appeal for calm.

South Africa's police are often accused of using

excessive force - security forces have been accused of killing at least 10 people this year while enforcing a lockdown imposed to halt the spread of coronavirus.

"There is no evidence of any provocation and it's difficult to understand why live ammunition could be used in a community such as this," Archbishop Malusi

Mpumlwana, head of the South African Council of Churches, told local media outside the Julius household.

"We can't say Black Lives Matter in the United States if we don't say it in South Africa," he said. Nathaniel Julius' death has shocked many, not just in South Africa but also around the world.

His killing has touched a special nerve in the US, where there have been months of protests over police brutality. Several US personalities have tweeted about Julius' death, including Beyoncé's sister,

Solange Knowles.

Here in South Africa, his community is outraged - they not only want answers, but justice.

But South Africans are sadly used to being failed by the justice system, no matter how many times they protest, no matter how many times stories of gruesome violence make local and even international news. Even in the face of these arrests, few are encouraged that anything will change. That resignation to violence is one of this society's great tragedies. BBC



Eldorado Park residents held protests after Nathaniel Julius was shot dead

## Nigeria slams Ghana over 'harassment of its citizens'

Nigeria has criticised what it calls the "incessant harassment of its citizens in Ghana and the progressive acts of hostility towards the country by Ghanaian authorities".

The statement from Information Minister Lai Mohammed says Nigerians in Ghana are "being made... objects of ridicule". Mr

alleged to have said that the crackdown on illegal foreign retail business in the country was for political gain.

In a series of tweets, she described the comment as "most unfortunate" and noted that the Ghanaian government was not targeting any particular nationality in this exercise. Ghanaian law bars foreigners from engaging in

## Huge protest in Mauritius over oil spill

Thousands of people have marched through the Mauritian capital, Port Louis, in protest at the authorities' handling of a massive oil spill, and the discovery of 39 dead dolphins.

Many wore black and waved the national flag, while honking horns and

drumming.

Many called for the government to resign and had T-shirts with the inscription: "I love my country. I'm ashamed of my government."

It is the biggest protest the country has seen in recent years.

About 1,000 tonnes of oil spilled into a sanctuary for rare wildlife after the Japanese ship

MV Wakashio struck a coral reef on 25 July. Many Mauritians believe the government could have done more to prevent the spill. There is also criticism over the decision to deliberately sink part of the ship after it split in two.

At Saturday's protest, one woman told the BBC's Yasmine Mohabuth: "I am present today because we want the truth."

"They didn't do anything when the ship approached our coastline - 12 days they didn't do anything until the oil spill and now thousands of people and marine people are affected."

Mauritians in the diaspora also held demonstrations in cities including London, Paris and Perth.

The government has promised to set up a commission to investigate the spill.

The captain of the ship has been arrested and charged with endangering safe navigation. He has not yet commented. It is not yet clear



Mohammed says the Nigerian government is "considering a number of options aimed at ameliorating the situation" but does not say what those are.

Earlier this week, Ghana's Foreign Minister Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey summoned Nigeria's chargé d'affaires to complain about comments attributed to her Nigerian counterpart.

Geoffrey Onyeama is



the retail business, especially in market areas and local business owners are putting pressure on the authorities to enforce the law, reports the BBC's Thomas Naadi in Accra.

Diplomatic relations between the two countries have been strained in recent months following trade tensions and the demolition of the Nigerian diplomatic building.



The protesters called for the government to resign

what caused the death of the dolphins, who were found washed up on the shore this week.

Experts have examined two of the dolphins' bodies and say they had bite marks from sharks but could find no trace of hydrocarbons in their bodies.

Environmental campaigners have demanded an

independent investigation, saying they were either killed as a direct result of the spill or when it was scuttled.

Tourism is a major industry in the Indian Ocean island nation, and the spill has been a massive blow to the country, coming on top of the coronavirus pandemic, which has restricted international travel. BBC



# EDITORIAL

## Pres. Weah must release NPHIL Probe Committee findings

IT'S NEARLY TWO weeks since the special investigative committee established to probe breaches in the health and administrative protocols governing the issuance of Covid-19 test results by the National Public Health Institute of Liberia submitted findings and recommendations to President George Manneh Weah.

**THE PRESIDENT OF** the Liberia Medical and Dental Council, Dr. Linda Birch headed the committee, which presented its findings to President Weah on August 14, 2020 in Monrovia, accompanied by pieces of evidence.

**PRESIDENT WEAH ON** Monday, August 10, 2020 suspended the Acting Director General of the National Public Health Institute of Liberia, Dr. Masoka Fallah, for alleged fraud and ethical breach, which came after three officials of NPHIL issued a negative COVID-19 traveler's certificate to a Liberian born American Ms. Skeeter T. Wilson, who was bundled out of an airplane on Sunday August 2, 2020, by Liberian Immigration Service officials after authorities discovered that the certificate issued was forged.

**MS. WILSON HAD** earlier tested Covid-19 positive and through the Incident Management System (IMS) treatment protocol was informed about her positive results and placed under treatment, but less than a week, a certificate under the signature of Dr. Masoka Fallah was issued to the patient, declaring her negative of the virus hence, qualifying her to travel abroad only to be asked out of a flight at the Roberts International Airport for being in possession of forged clearance or certificate.

**DR. FALLAH CLAIMED** his chief of office staff Jonathan G. Ender affixed his (Dr. Fallah's) electronic signature on the document without his knowledge, saying, "I never even knew that this was happening under my nose."

**SIMILAR SCENARIO OCCURRED** with University of Liberia Professor Alaric Tokpah, whom the NPHIL certificated Covid-19 negative and was subsequently on his way to the airport to visit his wife in the United States when authorities at the Health Institute called and informed him that he was issued wrong certificate, as his health status had not been certified.

**PRESIDENT WEAH DID** the right thing by suspending the NPHIL boss and instituting a probe to get to the roots of the matter. But since the Dr. Birch-led committee submitted findings, nothing has been heard about accountability and responsibility at the health entity, which is drawing anxiety among the public on a critical matter such as health.

**WE ARE FULLY** aware that government initially suspended three officials of NPHIL, including the deputy director for environmental and occupational health, Amos F. Gborie, the deputy director for national public health and reference laboratory, Fahn Taweh and Jonathan G. Ender, chief of office staff of Dr. Masoka Fallah, respectively.

**IT IS IMPORTANT** that President Weah release findings from the probe to the public as quickly as possible in order to re-establish public confidence in the entire Covid-19 fight, especially test results of suspected cases so as to allay all doubts, fears, suspicions and disbeliefs about the government's handling of the health pandemic.

# COMMENTARY

By Andy Sumner

## Why All Countries Should Contribute to Ending Global Poverty

*In 1969, richer countries agreed to commit 0.7% of their gross national income to international development aid. The world has changed since then, and a new era calls for a fresh approach to poverty eradication, involving a scaled financial commitment from all countries.*

**L**ONDON - Trillions of dollars have already been spent on the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and no one knows what the final bill will be. Is it possible to respond to a much longer crisis - global poverty - with even a fraction of these resources?

Richer countries are currently committed to spending 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI) on international development aid. This target was established by the Pearson Commission in 1969, and approved in a United Nations General Assembly resolution the following year. Countries reached this agreement a half-century ago in a world in which global poverty was at very high levels. At the time, the world was justifiably perceived in binary terms: The North was wealthy, and the South was poor.

Much has changed in the intervening 50 years. Some countries have met the 0.7% target, but many others have yet to do so. Many developing countries experienced rapid economic growth in the 2000s - not only China and India, but also a number of African countries. Although all gains are currently in jeopardy, prior to the pandemic, at least, the world had entered a new era, with fewer low-income countries. At the same time, the higher global ambitions set out in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), committed countries to end poverty in all its forms by 2030.

A new era needs a new approach. The COVID-19 pandemic makes this need even more urgent. My colleagues and I propose a scaled financial commitment to development, with a twist: it should be universal across all countries, rich and poor.

Before describing the proposal, it is necessary to ask what has changed since the 0.7%-of-GNI target was adopted. During this period, two "new middles" emerged. The first is an increase in the number of middle-income countries - now home to much of the developing world's population. In many of these countries, aid levels are already low relative to domestic resources and non-public international flows. At the other end of the spectrum, about 30 countries remain "stuck" in terms of growth. These highly aid-dependent states are home to approximately 10% of the population of developing countries - not a "bottom billion," but a bottom half-billion.

The other "new middle" comprises those who have escaped poverty, but remain vulnerable to falling back into it. This group, as we show, represents more than two-thirds of the developing world's people.

If measured using the World Bank's definition of extreme poverty - living on \$1.90 or less per day - global poverty has fallen (although the decline is more modest when China is excluded), and income has grown among many of the world's poorest. Extreme poverty now

affects only some 10% of the population in developing countries, down from around 50% 40 years ago.

But poverty remains at startling levels when measured at the World Bank's poverty thresholds of \$3.20 and \$5.50 per day. It is sobering to note that every 10 cents added to the poverty line increases the global headcount of the poor by 100 million. Moreover, the poverty count at \$1.90 doubles when one considers multidimensional poverty, which includes health, education, and nutrition.

When using a threshold that is associated with a permanent escape from the risk of future poverty - \$13 per day in 2011 purchasing-power-parity terms - some 80% of the population in developing countries remains poor. Furthermore, poverty does not only occur in Sub-Saharan Africa and in fragile or conflict-affected states. It is widespread. In short, the second "new middle" are those in developing countries living above the \$1.90 poverty line, but below the \$13 vulnerability-to-future-poverty threshold.

Against this backdrop, and amid the global pandemic, our proposal calls for a "universal development commitment" (UDC) from all countries - rich and poor alike. Given their aim of poverty eradication, the SDGs would inevitably be the core focus of any such UDC.

One option for a UDC would be to institute a sliding scale. For example, high-income countries could keep the commitment at 0.7% of GNI, while upper middle-income countries would contribute 0.35%. Lower-middle-income countries would earmark 0.2% of their GNI, with lower-income countries contributing just 0.1%. These are gross contributions, not net. In this scenario, the total finance available for development would amount to almost \$500 billion per year.

These additional resources could, in principle, lift the remaining approximately 750 million people out of \$1.90-per-day poverty; end hunger and malnutrition for an estimated 1.5 billion people; end preventable child mortality; make primary and secondary schooling possible for all children; and provide access to safe and affordable drinking water for over one billion people, as well as providing adequate sanitation for more than two billion people. And in this scaled-contribution scenario, \$200 billion would still remain available to support the achievement of other SDGs.

Developing countries would gain by contributing, because a universal development commitment would lead to more resources for those countries overall. Moreover, and equally important, contributing would ensure that poorer countries have a voice in funds' governance, whether symbolically, as a sign of their moral right to be heard, or physically, as members of the board deciding on priorities and policies.

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FULLY INDEPENDENT



## O-PED

By Slawomir Sierakowski

# What Belarus Needs

*As Belarus's peaceful protest movement continues to challenge Aleksandr Lukashenko's dictatorship, pressure is building not just on the regime but also on outside powers. While the world must tread carefully, it also can and should do more than simply cheer Belarus on.*

**M**INSK - On August 25, the anniversary of Belarus' declaration of independence from the USSR, the country's peaceful protesters enjoyed a brief respite. Although President Aleksandr Lukashenko's regime is not keen on this holiday, even the security forces understood that openly attacking Belarusian citizens on such an occasion would be awkward. Besides, the authorities had already blocked off Independence Square, the main gathering site for protests in Minsk.

By the next day, the authorities were back to exhibiting little restraint. Though the riot police (the OMON) are not as brutal as they were in the immediate aftermath of the August 9 presidential election, they are still breaking up demonstrations and arresting protesters in droves.

At one point, around 100 people were trapped by police in a church on Independence Square, which attracted still more demonstrators to the scene outside. After more than 1,000 people had shown up, the OMON corralled them like cattle and began carting them off. Some 20 journalists were also arrested, though most were released after the authorities checked their accreditations and the contents of their phones.

The regime's current strategy has three prongs: to wait until demonstrators lose their resolve, to detain the most active individuals (journalists as well as labor and protest leaders), and to intimidate the general public so that the demonstrations don't grow. The third prong does not appear to be working, considering that more than 200,000 people are expected to show up to the protests scheduled for August 30.

Though Lukashenko is a self-professed dictator, even he cannot completely ignore public opinion. He knows that the brutality of the previous crackdown cost him much of the little support he had left, not to mention forging solidarity among workers, medical personnel, and other professions, as well as with the wider world. The regime knows that it cannot openly brutalize thousands of people without provoking even larger protests. Lukashenko would become more isolated than he already is, and thus more dependent on Russia - something he has always sought to avoid.

The opposition is operating very wisely, eschewing clearly anti-Russian or pro-European slogans. Commentators who complain that the European Union flag is absent from Independence Square have missed the point entirely. Flying the EU flag would merely harden divisions and might provoke Russian President Vladimir Putin to intervene against the opposition, while the EU itself would be further cut off from a country that it cannot help directly.

Moreover, since the beginning, Belarusians have been relying on themselves, exhibiting courage and determination. This approach, on its own, has put Russia in a more difficult position and increased the moral pressure on the West, toward which Belarusians feel growing affinity.

By congratulating Lukashenko on his fraudulent election victory, sending Russian "journalists" to replace striking Belarusian state media workers, and directing Russia's own media to lie about the events next door, the Kremlin has driven more and more Belarusians away. And, of course, the poisoning of Russia's most popular opposition activist, Alexei Navalny, has not won the Kremlin more supporters. Still, with no other options, Lukashenko is now dangling the threat of a Russian intervention to intimidate the protesters.

The conditions are ripe for Russia to lose Belarus - more slowly but just as surely as it lost Ukraine. This is not to suggest that a post-Lukashenko government would rush into the arms of the EU. Any Belarusian government inevitably will have to deal with Russia. And yet, Europe could serve as much more of a geopolitical reference point than it has in the past.

For its part, the EU can do nothing for Belarus when it comes to "hard power." But Europe does have more than enough money to bolster Belarusian civil society. Belarus's small population of just 9.5 million people means that investments in the country's independent media outlets - such as Tut.by or Nasha Niva - would go far toward strengthening democratic forces.

Already, the regime has been brought to the brink of collapse simply by exposure to sunlight. The independent media has laid bare all of the government's misdeeds, from falsifying the election to torturing detained protesters, as well as Lukashenko's own eccentricities and embarrassments. It is no coincidence that Lukashenko's jailed would-be presidential challenger, Sergei Tikhanovsky, is a video blogger rather than a traditional politician.

European countries, starting with Poland, should be prepared to accept Belarusian refugees, including those who have already been brutalized by the regime and those who may be personally threatened in the confrontations yet to come. But the EU also will have to start providing serious financial support to nongovernmental organizations and cultural institutions operating in Belarus before their staff emigrate.

With appropriate financial support, Belarus's ideological, political, and intellectual ferment will continue to deepen, eventually bringing its people back into the European cultural and political fold. With democracy wavering almost everywhere in the West, Belarus has reminded the world what it looks like when people fight for it.

In this fight, Lukashenko is confronting four threats that he is unable to manage: women protest leaders, demonstrations on an unprecedented scale, reporting by independent media, and strikes by workers in economically crucial industries.

The continued scale of the strikes will depend on how much financial pressure workers feel. But organized solidarity funds can address this issue, by assuring strikers and their families that they will not lose their livelihoods for opposing Lukashenko.

This is an effort to which everyone can contribute. The Polish trade union Solidarity has already set a shining example by donating money and food for Belarusian strikers (though most provisions have so far been seized at the border). Fundraisers are being organized for workers, journalists, and NGOs. The world must tread carefully, but it can and should do more than simply cheer Belarus on.

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## OPINION

By Edmund S. Phelps

# Poverty as Injustice

*Across Western advanced economies, a widespread sense of malaise has given rise to a debate about what the state can and should do to ensure economic justice, particularly for those at the bottom of the income ladder. As always, the fundamental question is whether public policies would help or hamper growth and dynamism.*

**N**EW YORK - In much of the world, there is concern over abysmal wages for the less advantaged and the many victims of racial and gender discrimination. Though tax credits for low-income single mothers provide support and contribute to the development of their children, there are still signs of poverty among working people: malnourishment, poor health, and substance abuse.

Less appreciated is that many low-wage workers often must pass up meaningful work because it pays too little. And without a "good job," these workers cannot have "the good life." Such outcomes, particularly in advanced economies, are grim signs that something is wrong: the problem is not "inequality," but a high degree of injustice.

Wide swaths of society are deeply frustrated with the downward trend in the rewards of work and enterprise. Since the 1970s, there has been a general decline in job satisfaction and a virtual cessation of real-wage growth in the United States, and later in the United Kingdom, France, and perhaps parts of Germany and some other countries. Moreover, real interest rates have sunk nearly to the vanishing point. Underlying this is a decline in innovation. Clearly, some fault in the mechanism of human satisfaction has not been adequately addressed.

While Western societies work to ensure economic justice, it is essential that they restore and preserve a widespread experience of the good life. That means providing for meaningful work such as that in enterprise capitalism, in which participants allocate their accumulated wealth and developed abilities to establish various industries and invest in various projects. To do this, countries have raised and educated people who can exercise their creativity by conceiving new commercial methods and products - and also people who are wise and brave enough to take a chance on backing innovation.

At the same time, a debate about economic justice is emerging. Voices in the Democratic Party, including presidential nominee Joe Biden, have raised expectations that, if elected, they will address the injustices decried at their recent convention. In contrast, Republicans - as far back as Ronald Reagan and, on occasion, Donald Trump - have argued that measures aimed at reducing inequality come at the price of economic growth.

They have in mind the large-scale US programs to raise incomes among the working poor over the past several decades, beginning with the "Great Society," launched by Lyndon Johnson's administration in the 1960s, and the Earned Income Tax Credit in the 1970s. Also, as recently noted, Democrats legislated "Medicare, food stamps, Head Start, and a host of other programs that helped whites and minorities alike." Has all this slowed growth?

It does appear that productivity growth - more precisely, total factor productivity, and ultimately labor productivity - slowed just after this legislation was enacted, and, apart from the peak years of the Internet revolution, remained subdued. Yet, as the old saying goes, "correlation is not causation."

My contrary thesis, which has been argued at length and now tested extensively, is that the great productivity slowdown was really caused by a major loss of people still keen on devising new commercial products and methods, and not by the Great Society. Certainly, it is implausible that those helped by the Great Society are to blame. In any case, there do not appear to be any econometric studies showing that countries that aid the disadvantaged more have less growth.

There is also a worry on another score: call it the "fiscal capacity charge." Some economists and businesspeople fear that boosting already high tax rates in the hope of raising the money needed for substantial poverty reduction would fail to collect much more revenue. Revenue might even be lost as taxpayers cut back their supply of labor and companies lose interest in increasing their efficiency. Yet there is not a shred of academic evidence showing that Western economies - and certainly not the low-tax US economy - have reached the limits of their fiscal capacity.

The US (and other Western governments to varying degrees) therefore has enough room to attack economic injustice. To bring low-paid workers' wages to an acceptable level, the state will want to institute a schedule of subsidies to pull up most strongly the wage rates of those at the bottom. The schedule would then set progressively lower subsidies for each ascending wage bracket.

Much of the attention now paid to economic injustice derives from A Theory of Justice, philosopher John Rawls's landmark work of nearly 50 years ago. Remarkably, Rawls argued that justice requires pulling up the pay of the lowest paid to the maximum - which would entail taxing to capacity. (I soon thereafter built a model of Rawlsian taxation in a 1974 paper.) Of course, a theory abstracts from much, and Rawls focused on poverty from all sources. My hope today is to work for an economy that is both inclusive and just.

While it is important to know the way out of poverty, it is equally important to know the way not to go. We must oppose a universal basic income - a lamentable use of public revenue that would be better directed toward increasing low-wage workers' income to a level enabling them to support themselves, which is essential for self-esteem. But a UBI would also draw (or keep) people and their children away from work, which is for many the only available avenue to personal fulfillment and to satisfying involvement in the world.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Maryland County Health Team conducts training on COVID-19 reporting

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland

Barely days after COVID-19 cases surged to 32 in Maryland County, the county's health team in collaboration with USAID and STAIP has trained local journalists to report effectively on the virus.

The training, held Saturday, 29 August in the conference room of the County Referral Hospital in Harper City, brought together 18 media workers from several community radio stations operating in all three

misconceptions about transmission mode of the virus, the media can help to provide awareness that would clear doubts and fear among citizens.

The community health director stressed that if Maryland County and Liberia at large would progress in the fight against the Coronavirus, the media should be involved in the process by producing jingles and radio drama in various dialects to sensitize citizens about preventive measures.

Mr. Napolu disclosed that since the county recorded its index case of the virus about three months ago, there has been reduction in visitation to health facilities by citizens, as most of them still live with fear that the virus is mainly at health centers.

"Let me encourage you to always seek the rightful information from the County Health Teams, National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) and the World Health Organization (WHO) whenever you are reporting on Coronavirus pandemic because these people provide accurate information of the virus", he encouraged the participants.

"So you see one of the major reasons why we want you guys as journalists to help us as County Health Team to continued telling the people about the transmission and sad effects it will cause to stay away from the health facilities."

Another facilitator, Ms Comfort, cautioned the media against politicizing the health crisis, noting that though some media houses were seeking rightful information about the virus, others don't care to seek clarity, but rather prefer to report rumors that lack facts.

Meanwhile, local journalists who benefited the training have lauded the County Health Teams, USAID and STAIP for the additional knowledge provided them, promising to share what they learnt with their colleagues.

*-Editing by Jonathan Browne*



electoral districts of Maryland.

Community health director J. Kollie Napolu, said the exercise was intended to provide journalist additional knowledge on reporting COVID-19 cases.

He noted that the media plays a very major role in disseminating information about daily occurrences, so it needs adequate education about the pandemic.

He said though there are

He continued that once information is disseminated properly by the media thru various platforms, citizens will be left with no fear but rather to visit health facilities daily to know their health status.

"Please, as you are hearing some of these new things today, use it to help the County Health Team because to where your information reaches when you are on the radio station, a takes us time to get there."

# Liberia among 30 YALA finalists

By Ben P. Wese

One of Liberia's youth education activists Nathan N. Gbelee has reached the top 30 finalists of the Young Africans Leaders Award (YALA) in its Education Star Category.

Nathan is Founder and Executive Director of the Sustainable Educational Initiative of Liberia or SEIL, a non-governmental, non-political and non-for-profit organization with exclusive focus on building Liberia through sustainable education for human resource development and capacity building.

According to organizers of the Young African Leadership

Awards, the young Liberian made it to the top 30 finalist stage of the 2nd edition of the most prestigious award for youths making tremendous impact in Africa.

The EDUCATION STAR category was attained after a rigorous process of nomination and presentation of substantial pieces of evidence of works done in country, and across Africa in education, earmarking the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-4, Quality Education) and the Agenda 2063 of the African Union with Liberian Nathan N. Gbelee and 29 youths from other African countries qualifying to the top 30 finalists.

YALA is the most prestigious

award program that celebrates the best of the best in Sustainable Development Goals & Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

"The awards is an annual event organized by the AFRICAN YOUTH ARCHITECTS, a youth driven organization improving Africa through education and entrepreneurship with the aim of giving young people a voice and empowering them to contribute to the development of strategies that give young people everywhere a real opportunity to become independent and responsible global citizens", says YALA.

# VEx condemns brute force on protesters

The Voices from Exile (VEx) has been closing monitoring social, economic, and political events in Liberia. "Beyond every speck of doubt, we can safely conclude that Liberia is gradually slipping downhill into its dark past as a result of governance breakdown and heightened leadership gap," the group said.

In a release statement issued over the weekend, about few hours ago, the country witnessed another brutal scene between ruthless security personnel and peaceful anti-rape protesters. This is a cause for national concern because those cherished democratic values that were once enjoyed are being fiercely muzzled under footballer President George Manneh Weah.

The Weah-led government has set yet another record of violently clamping down on peaceful protesters who have

President George M. Weah to fight rape and other sexual gender-based violence that continue to deprive women, girls, children, and vulnerable groups of dignity, safety, security, protection, and self-pride. It is time for justice to prevail over impunity. RAPE must end and end now!

VEx is in full solidarity with all rape victims and anti-rape advocates, including protesters, who are very concerned about a safe and secured country for women, girls, children, and vulnerable citizens to strive and maximize their full potential. The real crisis that we are confronted with right now isn't COVID-19 but RAPE. The alarming rate of rape is vexingly unimaginable. Pres. Weah who often calls himself "Feminist-in-Chief" must now take some concrete steps like his counterpart in Sierra Leone.

The rise in rape cases can also be attributed to poor



been honestly pursuing justice for rape victims amid over 900 rape cases in just 7 months. The use of legal weapons and brute force, including teargas, against peaceful and unarmed protesters is not only undemocratic but inhumane, sacrilegious, and despotic.

VEx vehemently condemns this depraved precedent and demands an immediate investigation into this tragedy and/or brutality. Protest is a fundamental right guaranteed under Chapter 3 Article 17 of the 1986 Constitution.

The Weah-led government must refrain from violating this statutory proviso. Enough is enough. VEx gives GOL an 8-hour ultimatum to unconditionally release peaceful anti-rape protesters.

What happened to those anti-rape protesters about few hours ago clearly demonstrates "a complete lack of interest" on the part of

leadership and the lack of proper mechanisms. Min. Williametta Piso Saydee-Tarr of MGCSF has proven widened ineptitude in her role/post as Minister. She has limited knowledge on gender issues because her real background is in political leadership. VEx therefore calls for her immediate resignation or dismissal.

There is crisis everywhere in Liberia and in almost all sectors. The CDC-led government seems to have no solution after almost 3 years. Instead, it has resorted to dictatorial tendencies and thuggish precedents. We call on our international partners, including UN, AU, ECOWAS, MRU, EU, US Embassy, et al, to help rescue Liberia from this national nightmare. May God save Liberia from this dual pandemic (RAPE and COVID-19).



MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Cllr. Bull proposes one month sex strike

By Winston W. Parley

In the wake of rising number of rape cases that have prompted days of mass protests in Liberia, prominent female lawyer Cllr. Pear Brown - Bull is challenging women here to abstain from sex and deny their spouses of

Monrovia and other parts of Liberia.

Cllr. Bull also calls on mothers here to pay attention to their children, and to also get in the streets and grab every child that is sent out there to sell when they should be in school instead.

the police station and let the parents come," she says.

Meanwhile, Cllr. Bull argues that indecent dress code could be one of the factors for rape, but she strongly suggests that it is not the factor when a three - year - old gets raped.

She recalls that in the past women wore miniskirts and did not get raped for their dress code, and that when women in rural places came out from the Sande bush only wearing [short clothes] and leaving their upper body parts exposed, did not also get raped.

This anti - rape protest which has attracted women, men and children from all walks of live comes as reports of rape cases continue to rise here of recent with victims even less than a year - old and in some cases, the perpetrators acting very brutally to prey on their victims.

In one case that emerged from Gbarpolu County of recent, a perpetrator is accused of using razor blade to cut the private part of a three - year - old girl so as to pave his way to abuse her sexually.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Cllr. Pear Brown - Bull

sex for one month as part of protest.

"I say abstain from sex. Don't give it to them for one month, starting today. Proclamation. I started mine," she said last week on the third day of the anti - rape protest in

"... We got law for vagrancy, so Gender Ministry, all y'all mothers today while some of y'all sitting down there the other group supposed to be on the street grabbing the people's children who they got ... in the street selling and carry them to

# Scandalous -Janga Kowo replies critics

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The Comptroller General of Liberia and National Secretary General of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) has described as scandalous, allegations that he distributed money in Nimba County during that county's Legislative caucus sitting to influence votes in favor of CDC candidates contesting in the Project Management

and Development Planning Ministry office in Monrovia, Mr. Kowosaid at no time he had gone to Nmba to offer bribes in the tone of US\$12,000. Instead, Mr. Kowo explained that his trip to Nimba County was to inspect the treasury departments in that county as was done in Buchanan, Grand Bassa and Gbarnga, Bong Counties.

He noted that the move is



# National Stakeholders Conference: delegates resolved to support NEC



A cross-section of delegates at the conference

Closed to 100 delegates at the National Stakeholders Conference, on the Special Senatorial Election (SSE) and Referendum at the weekend signed a Resolution supporting ongoing activities of the National Elections Commission

(NEC) in conducting the elections.

NEC on Saturday August 29, 2020 ended a 2-day National Stakeholders Conference in Gbarnga, Bong County, on the conduct of the 2020 SSE and Referendum to enhance Voters' participation in the electoral

process through sustained and robust civic and voter education activities on the SSE and constitutional referendum.

The Conference gathered about 100 key stakeholders from the 15 Counties of Liberia including

Committee elections.

Since the establishment of the counties Project Management Committee, under the previous regime most counties have routinely elected officials to manage county projects after every two to three years depending on the tenure establish by each county.

Speaking to this paper over the weekend at his Finance

part of efforts to inspect the county treasuries for budget execution.

The team inspected and reconfigured the county treasury system for budget execution for FY-2020/2021. The tour consisted of meetings with county treasury staff, as well as technical need assessments conducted on the status and operations of the treasuries.

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Superintends of the 15 Counties, Commissioners, traditional leaders and chiefs, women and youth groups, and people living with disabilities.

Topics presented included "the legal basis of conducting the voter registration update, the SSE, and the Referendum; 2020 Voter Registration; Hearing Procedures for the 2020 SSE; Referendum Issues-Questions and Symbols; Nonviolence approach for the 2020 SSE; Highlights of CVE activities, and Issues of Gender Parity".

Following wide-ranging consultations over the 2-days of deliberations at the Conference, a Resolution Committee was formulated, which analyzed and rationalized issues and concerns pertaining to the holding of the 2020 SSE and Referendum on December 8, 2020.

The 2-day interactive Conference was officially launched by the NEC Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah on Friday August 28,

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**MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**Koffa differs with Coleman on primitive method of criminal justice**

A member of the Grand Kru County Legislative Caucus, Rep. J. Fonati Koffa of District #2, has provided a dissenting opinion, differing with the Caucus Chairman, Sen. Peter Coleman, that the Caucus supports traditional herbalist TambaBundoo to cleanse

Chenakaleh, Picnicess from alleged witchcrafts and wizard activities but his ministrations were recently halted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs over complaints of scary and strange outcomes of primitive justice.

Sen. Coleman told Grandcess Radio in Grand Kru

the herbalist is like a fool's gold.

He wrote his dissent on his Facebook page: "The presence of a herbalist in picnicess is like a fool's gold. It is not likely to lead to discoverable evidence. As a Catholic and a lawyer, I must object. As a member of the caucus I did not participate in that decision. I respect whatever motives may have impelled the decision. Yet we cannot resort to primitive methods for criminal justice. I most respectfully dissent."

Meanwhile, it has been reported that at least 40 persons have died from alleged mysterious killing or witchcraft activities in Chenakaleh over the years, with the allegedly recent claimed been a catechist in Picnicess, Brother Joseph Nyenplue.

Grand Kru County Superintendent Doris N. Ylatun told this paper over the weekend that the unexplained July 10's death of the late Nyenplue caused protest and petition of seeking justice. Madam Superintendent also said the former commissioner of Picnicess in 2018, TokpaGeplah, also died mysteriously.

She said besides Picnicess, the allegedly witchcraft activities are also alarming in Galarway.

that former Grand Kru County Traditional Chief SwenWleh will lead a delegation from Monrovia to Grand Kru to guide the process of Tamba's ministrations, while police will be deployed to provide protections.

But Rep. Cllr. Koffa, contrarily, said the presence of



Rep. J. Fonati Koffa

Chenakaleh, Picnicess through 'primitive method' as a means of rendering justice from alleged witchcraft activities.

Traditional herbalist TambaBundoo, also called 'Witch Doctor' has been in Grand Kru County since August 19 following Superintendent Doris N. Ylatun's invite to

**Senatorial aspirant breaks ground for Cestos street pavement**

A citizen seeking to represent the people of River Cess at the Liberian Senate will this Saturday break ground for the concrete pavement of Cestos City's main street.

Mr. Steve Tequah is the latest citizen to throw his hat in the ring for the seat which will be out for grab on December 8 this year.

A release from the office of Mr. Tequah says the sketch of the road to experience pavement is the airfield-Cestos city hall corridor.

Speaking on the source of the funding for the project, the release quotes the aspirant as saying diaspora Liberians who believe in his leadership are mobilizing resources for the road.

According to him, the Cestos road is among several



Mr. Steve Tequah

other roads to be paved by him this year.

"We will pave the road that leads to the St. Francis Hospital

in Cestos. The main entrance to Bodowhea Town in Monweh is part of our plan as well. We will connect other major

**CAG concludes "County Treasury" inspections**

Liberia's Comptroller and Accountant General (CAG) Atty. Janga A. Kowo and his technical team have concluded county treasuries visit to Grand Bassa, Nimba, Bong and Margibi counties, as part of efforts to inspect the county treasuries for budget execution.

The team inspected and reconfigured the county treasury system for budget execution for FY-2020/2021. The tour consisted of meetings with county treasury staff, as well as technical need assessments conducted on the status and operations of the treasuries.

The CAG Atty. Kowo expressed delight with the inspection tour, stating that challenges identified have been documented for submission to the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Samuel D. Tweah, Jr., for action.

Atty. Kowo emphasized that the county treasury is an extension of the Ministry of Finance payment system, which is a successful model for decentralized budget execution. He also avowed that there is a need for extension to other counties, currently not part of the county treasury framework.

The inspection and system set-up of the County Treasury is part of the Government of Liberia Decentralization Program in the Pro-poor

Agenda (Pillar IV) being executed by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, through the Department of the Comptroller and Accountant General.

The county treasury in its pilot stage is located in four counties, namely: Grand Bassa, Nimba, Bong and Margibi. The treasury represents the CAG in these counties and is responsible for government disbursement from the consolidated accounts.

With this measure, entities in these counties will not have to come to Monrovia to do any fiscal and budgetary transactions. Meanwhile, over the past year, there have been series of reform activities at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning affecting the Comptroller and Accountant General's Office.

The Comptroller and Accountant General's Office, which was a Division within the Department of Fiscal Affairs, has become a Department of its own in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. This reform was done with the passage of the Amended and Restated Public Financial Management (PFM) Act of 2019.

The Comptroller and Accountant General's Department is responsible for initiating, formulating, and coordinating policy for the efficient management of public funds and assets.

towns in River Cess".

The senatorial aspirant said he has written several prominent figures in the country, including President Weah and Finance Minister Samuel Tweah to attend the ground breaking ceremony.

"We've written President Weah, Finance Minister Samuel Tweah, Minister Nathaniel F. McGill, the River Cess legislative caucus, Grand Bassa County Representative Matthew and other prominent citizens Joe to attend the program".

Mr. Tequah is among nearly a dozen of kinsmen aspiring for the single seat. The seat is being occupied by Mr. Dallas A. V. Gueh of the governing Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC).

Steve Tequah, Former County Superintendents Wellington Geevon-Smith and Bob Rancy Ziankahn,

broadcast journalist and banker turned politician Janjay Bloh, former Grand Bassa County Representative Gabriel Buchanan Smith, and Liberia Agriculture Company's Senior Accountant, Winston Borbor, are some of the notable names vying for the seat.

It's being speculated that Mr. Tequah is placed in the race to sabotage the election of Wellington Geevon-Smith.

At the moment, Geevon is considered the favorite among contenders. He comes from River Cess district '2'.

It's believed having Steve in the race will suppress Geevon's votes to the advantage of incumbent senator Gueh.

Recent development interventions including the electrification of major towns in Senator Gueh's home district of Monweh through solar lights have defeated this argument.



# Français

## L'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson – Sirleaf aux côtés des manifestants anti-viol

L'ancienne présidente du Libéria, Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf, s'est montrée solidaire avec les milliers de manifestants qui sont dans la rue depuis quelques jours pour exprimer leur ras-le-bol contre la recrudescence de viols dans le pays.

L'ancienne chef de l'Etat s'est dite favorable à la manifestation des femmes contre les récents viols de

femmes et de bébés d'à peine trois mois car « cette manifestation est bien pour le pays ».

Le président de la République du Liberia, George Weah, a été critiqué pour ne pas avoir personnellement reçu de pétition de manifestants, faisant campagne pour le renforcement des lois anti-viol. Cela fait suite à une augmentation des attaques avec près de 1 000 cas de viol

signalés depuis janvier.

Pendant trois jours, des centaines de personnes ont défilé dans la capitale libérienne, Monrovia. Certains sont fâchés du fait que le président de la République, George Weah, ne se soit pas prononcé sur la question, en particulier après s'être engagé à garantir les droits des femmes et s'être même décrit comme le «

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Yamoussoukro : ouverture d'un atelier de consultation nationale sur l'élaboration de la vision post 2020 de la CEDEAO

Un atelier de restitution des consultations nationales sur l'élaboration de la Vision Post-2020 de la CEDEAO s'est ouvert à l'hôtel Président de Yamoussoukro les 28 Août 2020. Cette activité de 48 heures du Bureau National de la Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique de l'ouest (CEDEAO) a été présidée par Albert FLINDE, Ministre ivoirien de l'Intégration Africaine et des Ivoiriens de l'Extérieur.

Selon les explications de Monsieur le Ministre, cette restitution vise à faire le bilan de la vision 2020 de la CEDEAO et surtout présenter les aspirations des populations de de la Côte d'Ivoire pour élaborer la vision post-2020.

L'objectif général de la restitution est de présenter et valider les résultats des consultations nationale et de s'assurer que la vision post-2020 de la CEDEAO reflète les besoins et les aspirations des Africains de l'Ouest notamment celles de la Côte d'Ivoire.

L'Atelier de Restitution des consultations nationales, a été l'occasion de faire la synthèse des observations et aspirations des populations et formuler des recommandations à la

Commission de la CEDEAO pour une prise en compte dans la Vision Post-2020.

Le Rapport de synthèse met principalement en exergue les nouveaux défis de développement et les aspirations profondes des populations vivant dans les zones frontalières. Ces défis se résument au terrorisme grandissant, à la migration irrégulière, à la problématique de la monnaie unique, aux à la qualité des infrastructures économiques etc.

Pour rappel, après le

lancement à Abidjan, la première consultation a eu lieu à Abengourou, ville frontalière avec le Ghana, la deuxième consultation s'est tenue à Ferkessedougou, ville frontalière avec le Burkina-Faso et le Mali et la troisième à Danané à l'ouest, ville aux frontières du Liberia et de la Guinée.

Ont participé à ces ateliers les représentants des ministères concernés leaders d'opinion, le secteur privé, les femmes, les jeunes, les acteurs



## Le parlement libérien se penche sur la pétition des manifestants anti-viol

La Chambre des représentants a mis en place cinq comités pour examiner la pétition des manifestants anti-viol qui disent être dans la rue depuis quelques jours pour défendre les droits des femmes et des enfants victimes de viol et de violences liées au sexe dans le pays.

Les comités comprennent respectivement le genre, la justice, la sécurité, la santé et les voies, moyens et finances. Les cinq comités ont deux semaines pour présenter leurs rapports.

La décision de la Chambre fait suite à une communication de la présidente du comité parlementaire sur le genre et les conditions de la femme, la représentante Julie F. Wiah du district n° 2 du comté de Lofa, informant ses collègues d'une pétition qu'elle a reçue mardi, au nom de la Chambre. Dans sa communication, la représentante Wiaha indiqua que depuis mars 2020, plus de

d'une libération sous caution, mais il existe des rapports indiquant que les auteurs de cette catégorie sont libérés pour des raisons que seuls les juges connaissent. »

La législatrice du comté de Lofa s'est dite attristée par la vague de violence contre les femmes et les filles, soulignant que la question du viol est un défi sérieux au Libéria et que les femmes protestent contre le viol, le crime se produit quotidiennement.

S'exprimant également sur la question, le représentant du district n° 8 de Montserrado, Acarus Gray, de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique, a déclaré que le viol est une guerre contre les femmes et les enfants.

Gray appelle à une enquête pour établir pourquoi les cas de viol augmentent malgré la mise en place d'une loi sur le viol amendée et renforcée.

Quant au représentant Larry Yanquio du district n° 7 du



958 cas de viol ont été enregistrés et que seulement une poignée d'auteurs ont été arrêtés. Elle a ajouté que les gens utilisent la tenue vestimentaire prétendument indécente des femmes pour justifier le viol alors qu'en fait plus de 90% du nombre total de cas de viol concerne des enfants de moins de 13 ans.

Selon la législatrice, certains cas dépassent l'imagination humaine et doivent être traités rapidement, affirmant que la plupart des suggestions contenues dans la pétition aideront à protéger les filles.

« Il existe des cas de viol qui concernent des bébés âgés d'un mois à dix ans. Des gens enfreignent gaillardement la loi sur le viol du Libéria, le chapitre 14, section 14.70 du Code du Panel et l'article 13.1.1 de la loi de procédure pénale. Le viol statuaire est un crime du premier degré qui est une infraction dont l'auteur ne peut bénéficier

comté de Nimba, il a exprimé sa déception que les femmes et ceux qui comptent bien pour le pays soient dans la rue depuis trois jours sans que l'exécutif ne vienne écouter leur cri.

Il appelle le président George Manneh Weah à rencontrer les Libériens, mais le législateur Graydu CDC (parti au pouvoir) s'y est opposé, déclarant que la bataille contre le viol n'est pas une bataille présidentielle, mais plutôt une bataille pour le peuple libérien.

Pour sa part, la représentante du district n° 3 du comté de Bomi, Haja F. Siryon, a exhorté le pouvoir législatif à donner suite à la plupart des recommandations contenue dans la pétition des manifestants, tout en demandant que les auteurs pris en flagrant délit soient castrés et amputés.



# Français

## L'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson – Sirleaf

féministe en chef » du Liberia. Les militants demandent que des tribunaux pénaux soient mis en place à travers tout le pays, afin que les affaires de violence sexuelle puissent être jugées convenablement et conformément à la loi.

La manifestation, sous la bannière « Marche pour la justice », a été organisée après la diffusion d'une information faisant état qu'un garçon de 19 ans, dans la campagne du Liberia, aurait utilisé une lame de rasoir pour mutiler les parties génitales d'une fillette de 3 ans. Ce qui, selon lui, lui permettrait de la violer plus facilement. Les organisateurs ont déclaré qu'environ 5 000 personnes se sont déplacées pour les manifestations. Les gens portaient du noir en signe de solidarité pour les victimes et survivants de viol, portant des pancartes avec les inscriptions suivantes : « Justice pour toutes les filles et femmes libériennes », « Stop Rape (Non au viol) » et « Elle pourrait être votre fille ».

Ils ont marché, ce jeudi 27 août 2020, du quartier de Sinkor à Capital Hill, le siège du gouvernement libérien. Ils se sont rassemblés devant le ministère des Affaires étrangères, où se trouve le bureau du Président George Weah, jusqu'à ce qu'ils soient gazés de lacrymogènes. Certains manifestants ont été empêchés de se rendre au ministère des Affaires étrangères, par la police, et se sont rassemblés dans un champ en face du domicile de l'ancienne Présidente libérienne, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Elle a vu les femmes dehors et est allée à leur rencontre.

« Compte tenu des cas qui sont récemment sortis où de jeunes bébés, âgés de trois mois, dix ans, sont violés... les femmes ont senti qu'elles devaient agir », a-t-elle dit, les félicitant pour leur protestation pacifique.

Plusieurs comtés, dont le comté de Bong dans le centre du Liberia, le comté de Nimba, le comté de Grand Bassa et le comté du Maryland ont organisé leurs propres marches pour protester contre l'augmentation des cas de viol. « Trop c'est trop. Nous sommes dans une pandémie de violence sexuelle et sexiste au milieu de la pandémie de Covid-19 », déclare Naomi Tulay-Solanke, fondatrice et directrice exécutive de Community Healthcare à Monrovia. « Les chiffres sont plus élevés que ce que nous avons l'année

dernière », déclare Williametta E. Saydee-Tarr, ministre libérienne du Genre, des Enfants et de la Protection sociale. Un message clair à l'endroit du Président George Weah.

Mme Sirleaf, qui s'est présentée à la manifestation jeudi, a déclaré qu'elle ne pouvait pas rester chez elle et ne pas manifester sa solidarité avec les manifestants.

« Aujourd'hui, ils ont décidé de se rassembler devant mon domicile, là où je vis, donc je ne pouvais pas m'asseoir chez moi, rester dans ma cour, voir toutes ces femmes manifester pour quelque chose qui est bon pour le pays et ne pas les rejoindre pour leur montrer notre solidarité », a-t-elle déclaré jeudi 27 août.

A Mme Sirleaf de dire : « Le viol a toujours été un problème qui a existé bien avant mon administration, tout au long de mon administration et il persiste toujours, même aujourd'hui ».

Pour Mme Sirleaf, les femmes n'avaient d'autres choix que d'agir, étant donné la gravité et la particularité des cas qui se sont récemment produits, des bébés de trois mois et des adolescents de dix ans ayant été violés par des hommes âgés.

« Et Elles ont dû agir en organisant une manifestation pacifique. Et donc elles sont descendues dans les rues, elles ont remis des pétitions à l'Assemblée législative, aux ambassades, à d'autres endroits, nos cœurs sont avec elles », a-t-elle dit.

Mme Sirleaf a saisi l'occasion pour lancer un appel solennel aux hommes, leur demandant d'être raisonnables à cause de leurs épouses, mères, sœurs et filles,

de comprendre que ce que les femmes font, « c'est pour la protection des femmes et de celles qui apporteront une contribution majeure à l'économie si elles sont autorisées à poursuivre leurs objectifs et ne se font pas violer par les hommes sans scrupule ».

« Je vous invite donc tous à faire preuve de solidarité, à leur apporter votre soutien et à les défendre. Il ne faut pas qu'elles soient obligées à faire ça. Il nous incombe donc tous de trouver une manière différente de résoudre le problème », a-t-elle dit.

L'ancienne présidente a également appelé les femmes à ne pas se livrer à la violence, mais à continuer à faire en sorte que le mouvement demeure pacifique, à chérir la paix pour laquelle elles se sont battues pendant toutes ces années.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Andy Sumner

### Pourquoi l'éradication de la pauvreté dans le monde est du ressort de tous les pays

LONDRES - Des milliers de milliards de dollars ont déjà été dépensés dans la réponse mondiale à la pandémie de Covid-19, et personne ne sait à combien se montera l'addition finale. Pourrions-nous répondre à une crise qui dure depuis bien plus longtemps - la pauvreté mondiale - avec une simple fraction de ces ressources ?

Les pays riches se sont engagés à dépenser 0,7 % de leur revenu national brut (RNB) dans l'aide publique au développement. Cet objectif fut fixé dès 1969 par la commission Pearson et approuvé par une résolution de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies l'année suivante. Les pays membres parvinrent à cet accord, voici un demi-siècle, dans un monde où la pauvreté atteignait des niveaux très élevés, un monde alors perçu, à juste titre, de façon binaire : le Nord était riche, le Sud était pauvre.

Beaucoup de choses ont changé dans les cinquante années qui se sont écoulées. Quelques pays ont atteint l'objectif de 0,7 %, mais de nombreux autres en sont encore loin. De nombreux pays en développement ont connu dans les années 2000 une forte croissance économique - la Chine et l'Inde, bien sûr, mais aussi des pays africains. Si ces progrès sont aujourd'hui menacés, le monde n'en était pas moins entré, avant la pandémie, dans une nouvelle ère, comptant moins de pays à faible revenu. Dans le même temps, les ambitions plus élevées de la communauté internationale, telles qu'elles sont formulées par les Objectifs de développement durable (ODD) des Nations Unies, engageaient les pays à éliminer la pauvreté sous toutes ses formes d'ici 2030.

Pour une nouvelle ère, une nouvelle approche est nécessaire. La pandémie de Covid-19 en renforce encore l'urgence. Mes collègues et moi-même proposons d'adapter l'engagement financier pour le développement, en le réorientant quelque peu : il devrait concerner tous les pays, riches ou pauvres.

Avant de présenter notre proposition, il est nécessaire de se demander ce qui a changé depuis qu'a été fixé l'objectif de 0,7 % du RNB. Au cours de cette période, deux nouvelles « situations moyennes » sont apparues. La première consiste en une augmentation du nombre des pays à revenu intermédiaire - qui hébergent aujourd'hui une bonne partie de la population en développement. Dans nombre de ces pays, la part de l'aide publique au développement est d'ores et déjà faible lorsqu'on la compare aux ressources intérieures et aux flux internationaux non publics. À l'autre bout du spectre, 30 pays environ demeurent « en panne » de croissance. Ces États, extrêmement dépendants des aides publiques, hébergent quelque 10 % de la population des pays en développement - il ne s'agit pas du « milliard d'en bas », mais du demi-milliard d'en bas.

L'autre « situation moyenne » est celle des pays qui ont échappé à la pauvreté mais pourraient y retomber. Ce groupe, comme nous le montrons, représente plus des deux tiers de la population du monde en développement.

Si on la mesure en utilisant la définition de l'extrême pauvreté donnée par la Banque mondiale - vivre avec 1,90 dollar ou moins par jour -, la pauvreté a diminué (quoique cette décade soit plus modeste lorsqu'on exclut la Chine) et les revenus des personnes les plus pauvres ont augmenté. L'extrême pauvreté ne touche plus que 10 % de la population des pays en développement, alors que la proportion était, voici quarante ans, de 50 %.

Mais la pauvreté demeure à des niveaux surprenants lorsqu'elle est mesurée à l'aune des seuils de 3,20

dollars et de 5,50 dollars quotidiens. Il n'est guère encourageant de constater qu'à chaque palier de 10 cents, le nombre total de pauvres s'accroît de 100 millions. En outre, le nombre de pauvres établis sur la base du seuil de 1,90 dollar doit être doublé si l'on considère la pauvreté multidimensionnelle, qui prend en compte la santé, l'éducation et la nutrition.

Lorsqu'on utilise le seuil associé à la sortie permanente du risque de devenir pauvre - soit 13 dollars par jour en parité de pouvoir d'achat 2011 - ce sont quelque 80 % de la population des pays en développement qui restent pauvres. En outre, la pauvreté ne se manifeste pas seulement en Afrique subsaharienne et dans les États fragilisés touchés par des conflits. La pauvreté est répandue. En bref, l'autre « situation moyenne » nouvelle est celle de celles et de ceux qui vivent avec plus de 1,90 dollar par jour mais moins des 13 dollars considérés comme le seuil de vulnérabilité à une pauvreté ultérieure.

Dans un tel contexte, et en pleine pandémie, nos propositions appellent à un « engagement universel pour le développement » - universal development commitment (UDC) - qui regrouperait tous les pays, riches et pauvres. Compte tenu de leur intention affichée d'éliminer la pauvreté, les ODD seraient bien entendu au cœur d'un tel engagement.

L'une des options possibles pour cette initiative serait d'instituer une échelle des efforts consentis. Ainsi les pays à haut revenu conserveraient-ils l'objectif de 0,7 % du RNB, tandis que les pays à revenu intermédiaire supérieur contribueraient à hauteur de 0,35 %. Les pays à revenu intermédiaire inférieur s'engageraient pour 0,2 % de leur RNB, et les pays à faible revenu ne contribueraient qu'à hauteur de 0,1 %. Toutes ces participations sont brutes, et non nettes. Dans un tel scénario, la somme des ressources financières disponibles pour l'aide publique au développement se monterait presque à 500 milliards de dollars annuels.

Ces moyens supplémentaires pourraient, en principe, sortir 750 millions de personnes vivant avec 1,90 dollar par jour ou moins de l'extrême pauvreté dont elles sont encore prisonnières, mettre un terme à la faim et à la malnutrition dont souffrent selon les estimations 1,5 milliard de personnes, réduire considérablement la mortalité infantile évitable, permettre à tous les enfants de recevoir un enseignement primaire et secondaire, fournir à plus d'un milliard de personnes un accès abordable et sûr à l'eau potable, et équiper plus de deux milliards de personnes en services d'assainissements convenables. Et dans ce scénario de contributions échelonnées, 200 milliards demeuraient disponibles pour soutenir la réalisation des autres ODD.

Les pays en développement auraient avantage à contribuer, car un engagement universel pour le développement mettrait plus de moyens à disposition de l'ensemble des pays. En outre, et c'est tout aussi important, leur contribution garantirait aux pays pauvres de faire entendre leur voix dans la gouvernance des fonds, que ce soit sur le plan symbolique, en tant que manifestation de leur droit moral à être entendus, ou pratique, puisqu'ils pourront, en tant que membres des conseils d'administration, contribuer à fixer les priorités et prendre part à la décision des mesures mises en œuvre.

Notre proposition soulève, indubitablement, d'autres questions, qui sont nombreuses. Mais le principe demeure simple : chaque pays contribue au système, et l'argent est consacré à vaincre la pauvreté dans le monde. En pleine pandémie mondiale, alors que la date butoir des ODD approche - il reste dix ans -, le monde doit exprimer, et le plus vite sera le mieux, son engagement universel pour le développement.



# MTN promotes wearing a mask in new campaign

Liberia's leading GSM Company, Lonestar Cell MTN announced that it is adding its voice to the global drive to raise awareness about the importance of wearing masks with today's launch of the #WearItForMe campaign across its 21 African and Middle Eastern markets.

MTN says it committing its September 2020 marketing resources to encouraging everyone to do more to save lives.

"As our Africa and Middle East markets continue to navigate the "new normal" brought about by COVID-19,

and its effects. Initiatives ranged from free data lifelines and zero-rated access to educational sites. In addition, utilising technological solutions for contact tracing and dissemination of information through the Africa COVID Communication & Information Platform across our 21 markets.

Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in Liberia, Lonestar Cell MTN has, through our Y'ello Hope initiative, supported the national efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19 in Liberia.

"When we began 2020, no one could have imagined that we would experience a pandemic like COVID-19. It is fair to say that this year has been a very challenging one for all of us. But I have been encouraged by the resilience and hope in our communities here in Liberia. People have come together to help contain the virus and protect each other. Our frontline health workers have sacrificed to take care of the sick and help all of us stay safe. And most important of all, we have all adapted ways to ensure we are protecting the most vulnerable amongst us. That is why wearing our masks is so important. I urge everyone to please wear a mask if you are not already doing so. Let's continue to ensure that we all come through the pandemic healthy, strong and full of Y'ello Hope." concludes Yaw AnkomaAgyapong, Chief Marketing Officer and Co-Acting Chief Executive Officer of Lonestar Cell MTN.

#WearItForMe will run throughout the month of September. Visit [www.wearitfor.me](http://www.wearitfor.me) to send a message to someone encouraging them to do the right thing. #WearItForMe: Because when we all wear masks, we protect each other.



wearing masks remains one of the most effective preventative measures to slow the spread of the virus and accelerate recovery. However, many people refuse to wear them, wear them incorrectly, or still feel it is not important," the company said in a statement.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted our lives and claimed so many more. It still presents a very real risk to us all. That is why we need to do all we can to protect ourselves and our loved ones. Masks are key to this as they help slow transmission

across the continent; our mothers, and mother-figures. The initiative will see mothers and mother-figures sending heartfelt messages to their children, and all the children of Africa, to wear their masks and "wear it for me" - saving lives.

MTN's #WearItForMe campaign will build on the work already carried out under Y'ello Hope to brighten lives and limit the impact of the pandemic. During this time, MTN has prioritised looking after its people, customers, communities and networks while focusing on efficiencies to help navigate the pandemic

# Oppong's country

Starts from back page

expect them to be fast?" she asks.

However, Cllr. Bull says some of the judges here are good, naming Judge Peter Gbeneweleh and Judge Yami Quiqui Gbeisay who has just acquitted former officials of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) of charges of corruption.

Earlier the government lost a high profile case against former House Speaker Alex Tyler, incumbent Grand Cape Mount County Senator Cllr. Varney Sherman and several top officials accused by Global Witness of taking bribes to change Liberian laws to favor a British firm Sable Mining in a concession bid for Mount Wologisi in Lofa County.

The regime also lost another case against officials of the National Housing Authority who were accused of soliciting bribes from potential investors, among many other high profile cases.

Cllr. Bull's criticism of the chief prosecutor comes as the CBL case becomes the latest high profile case President Weah's administration has lost in its fight against corruption.

Last week Judge Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay set free four former CBL officials held to account for alleged excess LD\$2 billion plus because there is no scintilla of evidence that it ended up in their pockets, but he said they are guilty of unauthorized printing of LD\$10 Billion.

The officials include former CBL Executive Governor Milton A. Weeks, former CBL Board Members David Fahart, Elsie Dossen Bardio and Kollie Tamba.

The government here indicted the former CBL

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

However the court rules that from the analysis of these quantum of evidence, it is of the considered and informed opinion that the presidential investigative team's (PIT's) report was in error with reference to the mathematical calculation and its limitation to the parking list only.

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

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

However, when prosecution drew its last version of the indictment based on which this case has now ended, Mr. Sirleaf who served as Deputy CBL Governor for Operations when the financial scandal emerged at the bank was not included because he was nolleprosequi with prejudice in May this year.

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

# National Stakeholders

Cont'd from page 6

2020. She was supported by the rest of the six Commissioners of the new Board, who were all present at the Conference over the two days. At the official opening of the Conference, the entire Board was formally introduced to the delegates.

Responding to the Resolution, Chairperson Lansanah lauded the delegates for their decision to endorse the efforts of the Commission and the decision of the Joint Resolution of the Legislature to have the SSE held on December 8, 2020. She said the NEC will continue to work hard to meet the

constitutional mandate of conducting both the SSE and Referendum.

Following the 2-day Conference, NEC's 2020 activities will intensify with the start of the Candidate Nomination on Tuesday September 1-21, 2020. The Commission will also commence the Voter Roll Update (VRU) of September 11-25, 2020. The VRU will be on a mobile basis, over the period of 15 days. Each of the mobile Teams will spend three days at each of the 2080 Registration Centers across Liberia.

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# Cllr. Bull proposes

Liberia's former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf joined the anti - rape protest last week, saying women's demonstration against recent incidents of rape against women and babies as young as three months old, ten years old is as good for the country.

The mass protest against rape entered its third day in Monrovia Thursday, 27 August, but throughout the days President George Manneh Weah continued to avoid appearing in honor of protesters' demand for him to

receive their petition.

This is probably a reason for the extension of the protest which stalled normal movements and could also affect normal economic operations as the days of protest increase and residents in other counties are reported to join the protest.

What is responsible for Mr. Weah's failure to show up and receive protesters' petition may be best known to him.

In an audio aired on local FM broadcasters Thursday, Mr.

Weah is heard criticizing the protesters for presenting their petition to a team from the U.S. Embassy, but yet refused to present it to officials of his government that he had designated to receive it. "If will accept a team from the American Embassy which is not wrong at all, and you understand, and then refuse to accept a team from your government to receive your petition then you can see that it doesn't make sense," he says.

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# CPP on Weah's back

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) here has condemned President George Manneh Weah's failure to receive a petition from anti-rape campaigners, as well as his failure to condemn the brutal force used by joint state security forces against peaceful protesters.

Speaking at a news conference last Friday at the Alternative National Congress (ANC) headquarters in Monrovia, CPP spokesman Atty. Orishall Gould condemned President Weah's alleged deliberate failure to act speedily on the act of rape against kids.

Atty. Gould claims that these circumstances are indicative of continuous, well-orchestrated plans by the Weah administration to violate the constitutional rights of

Liberians by some elements of the Liberia National Police whom themselves have had people accused them of rape.

"Not only do these continuous violent actions of the Liberia National Police against peaceful Liberians violate provisions of the Liberian Constitution, but they also violate provisions of several International Human Rights Instruments that Liberia is a signatory to," he says.

He notes that these continuous violent actions are in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 December 1966 which commits states parties to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, including the right to freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

He also cites the African Charter on Human and Peoples'

He maintains that as a people, Liberians must also begin to teach their children those values which discourage the culture of rape and impunity, promote responsible citizenship and support all reasonable and legal efforts to end the rape epidemic in the country.

"We acknowledge the efforts of those anti-rape campaigners. We applaud their efforts to stand up against rape in the face of threats and harassments and assure them of the unflinching support of the CPP in this regard," he continues.

Gould terms as flawed reasoning, President Weah's argument that the continuous protests by Liberians under his watch are evidence that his government upholds the tenets of democracy.

He notes that as the word implies, in most cases, protests are held to express resentment against societal ill, adding that rightfully so, all the protests that have been held since Weah became president have been against the excesses of his regime.

Gould states that the conduct of the police force during these protests also defeats the president's argument about upholding the good tenets of democracy.

The CPP notes that as the country moves closer to the December 8, 2020 Special Senatorial Election, the events that occurred during the protest bring a sad memory of previous acts of police brutality against Liberians which are yet to be investigated.

"We like to recount the electoral violence in the Montserrado County Districts 13 and 15 By-elections which resulted to the destruction of properties and injured several peaceful Liberians; the killing of a baby in West Point by an Officer of the LNP during the onset of the COVID-19 lockdown," Atty. Gould says.

He further points to the shooting to death of a young man by officers of the LNP in 2019 and the attack on peaceful protestors of the Council of Patriots (COP), among others.

As the country prepares for the Special Senatorial Election, Atty. Gould calls on ECOWAS, the AU, and all of the international partners to prevail on the Weah administration to ensure that this menace is dealt with before it further degenerates to serious civil unrest.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

# LPRA Pre-qualifies

Following a vigorous evaluation of Liberian companies who applied to be prequalified for the country's ongoing Offshore License Round for the Harper Basin, The Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority (LPRA) has pre-qualified Seven (7) Liberian Companies.

Nine (9) companies expressed interest to be pre-qualified but the evaluation panel denied two companies for lack of legal and financial

Millennium Oil and Gas, Africa Oil and Gas Inc, Green Petroleum (Liberia) Limited, MAC-Africa Petroleum Inc and the TSC Global Inc.

The pre-qualification of Liberian companies is in line with the New Petroleum Law of Liberia which sets aside a mandatory minimum 5% equity interest in all petroleum agreements to companies owned by natural persons of Liberian citizenship.

The list of Liberian



peaceful Liberians and patronize lawlessness as has always been the trademark of the government.

Gould laments that what is further noteworthy and sad is the blatant refusal of the president and self-proclaimed Feminist-in-Chief to receive the petition of the campaigners despite frantic efforts to meet with him during the first two days of the campaign.

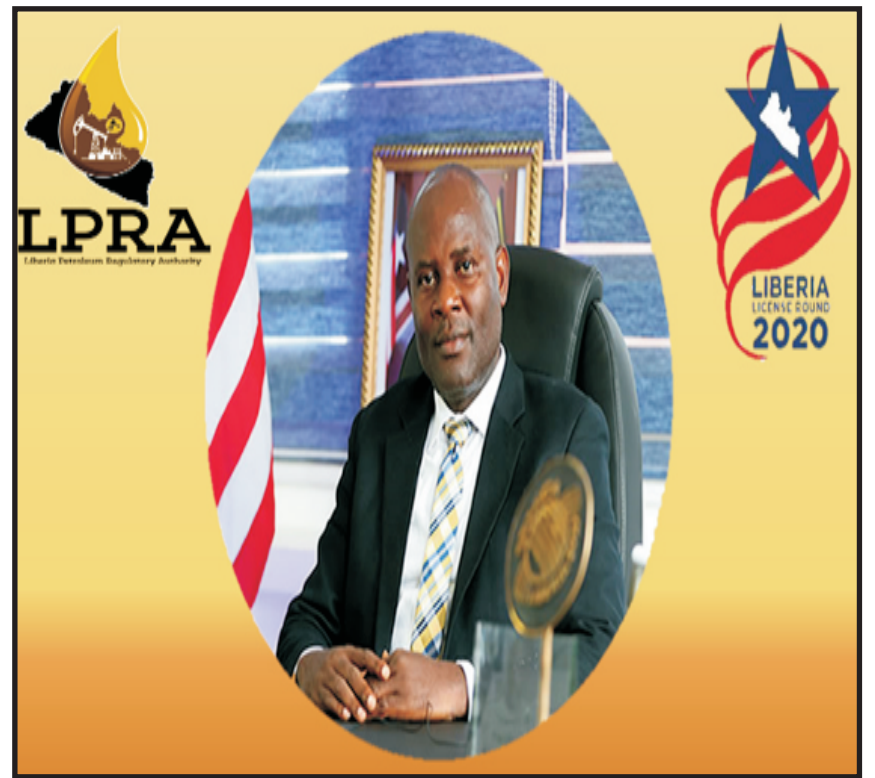
According to him, this is evidence of the government's complicity and lack of commitment to end the widespread abuse of women, girls, and children in the country.

The CPP official suggests that the action of President Weah can be viewed as a reason why no investigation has been conducted into continuous acts of lawlessness against peaceful

Rights (also known as the Banjul Charter); the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, among others, as instruments being violated.

Commenting further on the rape issue, the CPP requests President Weah to put aside his pride and meet with the organizers of the anti-rape protest and hear their propositions on ways of addressing the situation.

"We also urge the president to establish a Special Non-Partisan Based National Taskforce on rape; ensure the decentralization of the Specialized Court for Rape in all parts of the country; create rehabilitation and reintegration opportunities for victims of rape, and facilitate a National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on tackling rape," Atty. Gould says.



competence.

The evaluation team which comprised of representatives from the National Oil Company of Liberia (NOCAL), the Ministry of Mines and Energy, Ministry of Finance the Liberia Revenue Authority, Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) and LPRA pre-qualified the following companies: DEMUS Exploration and Production, Jungle Energy Power INC, New

companies that has been pre-qualified by the LPRA will be submitted to qualified international bidders for possible partnership in fulfillment of the amended petroleum law.

Nine oil offshore blocks which have been unexplored and undrilled in the Harper Basin are being offered for bidding. The Bid Round runs from April 2020-February 2021.

## Light International

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went to their respective classrooms but stay for 10-20 minutes before leaving to join Adam who deliberately insisted that he wasn't stepping into the classroom.

The four were absent from school on Monday August 17, Tuesday, August 18 and Wednesday August 19, without excuses.

Meanwhile, on Thursday the Frontpage Africa newspaper reported that the four teachers were threatened with dismissal because they requested for their just benefits, which is untrue. The teachers were dismissed

because they refused to go their classes, which action of theirs is in violation of the school's Handbook and the Contract the teachers signed with the school.

Thus on Friday August 21, the school decided to relieve them of their posts. The school notes that up to this day, it is yet to establish what their concerns are.

The school further notes that the absence of the four teachers will have no negative impact on the school as academic work is proceeding smoothly.







# Oppong's country devil

**-Cllr. Pearl Brown – Bull labels Syrenius Cephus**



By **Winston W. Parley**

Prominent Liberian female lawyer Cllr. Pearl Brown - Bull has labelled Solicitor General Cllr. Saymah Syrenius Cephus as one of President George Manneh Weah's "country devils," criticizing the official for

dividing the Ministry of Justice and causing government to lose good cases.

"Who name Syrenius ...? Cephus, you mean that Cephus man? One of the smartest where? You see how he just spoiling the law? He's misquoting the law and this

thing, he's one of the country devils that Oppong ... dress up and brought to Monrovia and dancing around," she said last Thursday in a live interview with local broadcaster Prime FM.

"Look how the people losing good cases," she said in response to suggestion that Cllr. Cephus is seen as one of the smartest lawyers here, adding that they are losing cases because they got no business even carrying such cases to court and Cllr. Cephus got the Justice Ministry divided.

"If you take somebody who's slow, who was not so smart, who took the legal profession as something as to go get money and don't have that passion, compassion, if you put some of those people in position because of the county they come from or you can manipulate them, you

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# Light International School System clarifies teachers' dismissal

The Light International School System here has clarified the dismissal of four of its teachers saying, their dismissals were in line with the school's handbook and the contract which they sign up to with the school.

The dismissed teachers are Adam Togba, Zeoboi P. Leck, Ibrahim Bility and Michael Jimmy.

The teachers were dismissed after they refused to go to class despite repeated

warning that they do so.

The school says on Monday August 17, 2020, after it resumes classes based on the Ministry of Education's instruction, the four teachers refused to go to their respective classrooms to teach and instead demanded a meeting giving the school authority one-hour ultimatum to arrange a meeting.

The school Principal in return told the teachers that since the students were already



seated in the classrooms, it would be better to go and teach first then have the meeting after classes.

The four teachers said no, arguing that it was the first day of school and that they did not come to teach but rather to have a meeting.

The teachers were given 5 minutes to go back to their classrooms. However, three of the teachers-Jimmy, Leck and Bility initially complied and

▶ **CONT'D ON PAGE 10**

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