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# The New Dawn

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# Arab style protest

**-As Judicial worker sets himself ablaze**



Mr. Ponpon struggles for life after the incident



Water is being poured on Mr. Ponpon as he lies in flames

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# Continental News

## Tanzanian opposition leader arrested over protests

Police in Tanzania have arrested the chairman of the main opposition party in the wake of a disputed election. Freeman Mbowe was detained, along with two other Chadema leaders, for planning violent protests, according to the police.

President John Magufuli was re-elected with 84% of the vote, Friday's official results showed.

But the opposition said Wednesday's poll was fraudulent and called for peaceful demonstrations.

Chadema's presidential candidate Tundu Lissu told the BBC's Newsday programme that he had also heard of the arrest of party leaders in other parts of the country. Mr Lissu received 13% of the vote, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) said. He alleged last week that his party agents had been prevented from entering some polling stations where ballot boxes were tampered with.

Over the weekend, the leaders of Chadema, including Mr Mbowe, and another opposition party, ACT-Wazalendo, urged their supporters to come out in



The Chadema party allege that ballot boxes were tampered with during Wednesday's election

large numbers to peacefully protest and demand fresh elections. But the police have said that intelligence reports suggested that the opposition was planning to burn down markets and petrol stations. ACT-Wazalendo leader Zitto Kabwe said on Saturday that the decision to protest was for "the future of our country". "We cannot accept going back to a one-party system," he added.

The ruling CCM party governed Tanzania from 1977 to 1992 as the only legally allowed

party, and has won every multiparty election since. It was formed in a merger of the Tanganyika African National Union, which governed from independence in 1961.

Mr Magufuli was first elected in 2015. In some ways, things have gone back to normal and this city, the country's commercial hub, is busy once again after last week's general election.

But a significant presence of anti-riot police in two parts of Dar es Salaam indicate that

not everything is normal. These were supposed to be the two starting points for the opposition demonstrations called for today, but by lunchtime there was no sign of the protesters.

Police have threatened to use force to detain anyone who takes part in street demonstrations.

Some are saying that now the election is over, things should go on as before, others though have expressed an interest in protesting but feared the reaction from the authorities. The NEC has dismissed the opposition's claims of fraud and its head, Semistocles Kaijage, said allegations of fake ballot papers were unsubstantiated.

And on Friday an observer mission from the East African Community said that the election was "conducted in a regular manner".

Last week, the US embassy in Dar es Salaam said that "irregularities and the overwhelming margins of victory raise serious doubts about the credibility of the results... as well as concerns about the government of Tanzania's commitment to democratic values". As well as taking part in the Tanzanian elections, voters on the semi-autonomous archipelago of Zanzibar also elected their own president, and the CCM candidate Hussein Mwinyi was declared the winner with 76% of the votes. BBC

## Ivory Coast opposition urges 'transition' after vote

Opposition leaders in Ivory Coast are demanding a "civil transition", following Saturday's presidential poll that their parties boycotted.

Pascal Affi N'Guessan and Henri Konan Bédié say it was illegal for President Alassane Ouattara to stand for a third term as it broke rules on term

limits.

But the president's supporters dispute this, citing a constitutional change in 2016 which they say means his first term effectively did not count.

Vote counting is still under way.

At least 16 people have been killed since riots broke out in August after President Ouattara

said he would run again following the sudden death of his preferred successor.

At least two people were killed during Saturday's vote.

Key opposition figures are urging mass protests to block what they describe as a "dictatorship".

Mr N'Guessan said on Sunday: "Opposition parties and political groups call for the start of a civil transition."

"[We] note the end of President Alassane Ouattara's mandate on 31 October and call on the international community to take note," he added, saying a civil transition was needed to "create the conditions for a fair, transparent and inclusive election." "Several polling stations were ransacked in opposition strongholds on Saturday and election materials were burned.

In the eastern town of Daoukro, protesters erected roadblocks. Meanwhile tear gas was used to push away demonstrators who gathered

## WHO chief in quarantine after Covid-19 contact



The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Sunday he was self-quarantining after someone he had been in contact with tested positive for Covid-19.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he had no symptoms.

"I have been identified as a contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19. I am well and without symptoms but will self-quarantine over the coming days, in line with WHO protocols, and work from home," he said in a tweet.

"My WHO colleagues and I will continue to engage with partners in solidarity to save

lives and protect the vulnerable," he added. The 55-year-old former Ethiopian health minister said "it is critically important that we all comply with health guidance".

"This is how we will break chains of Covid-19 transmission, suppress the virus, and protect health systems." Dr Tedros, as he likes to be known, is the first African head of the WHO.

He has weathered bitter criticism - most notably from the US - of his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, which the WHO declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 30 January. BBC



Key opposition figures are urging mass protests to block what they describe as a "dictatorship"

close to where the president cast his ballot in the main city, Abidjan.

At least two monitors from the independent election group Indigo Côte d'Ivoire were attacked, the Washington Post reports. It quotes the group as

saying 21% of polling stations were closed during the day.

But the electoral commission head called the disturbances on Saturday "minimal", saying they "only affected 50 polling stations out of 22,381". BBC



# EDITORIAL

## Operating a national carrier is no joke

**PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH** Weah is perhaps, still settling down from the euphoria that characterized the official launch of "Liberia Airway", Wings of Liberia at the Roberts International Airport in Margibi County last week Friday, 30 October.

**ACCORDING TO THE** Executive Mansion, the President did not hold his emotions during the occasion saying, Liberia owning a national carrier has been his long time wish since he came to the Presidency. "It has been my dream, hope and vision that we will very soon see Lone Star Air, the Wings of Liberia, flying our flag in international skies, shining so brightly", Mr. Weah is quoted in a press release.

**WHILE WE WELCOME** progressive investments that would boost our national economy, we caution the government that operating an airline service is not a child's play, as it requires serious investment and huge responsibility both nationally and internationally.

**IF NEWS OR** experiences of countries with strong economies in Africa such as Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya or Ethiopia and elsewhere are anything to go by, the Government of Liberia should be very circumspect in how it proceeds on this matter.

**THESE COUNTRIES WITH** national carriers are seriously struggling to maintain services to the public principally due to bad management and corruption that have left employees without pay for months, if not years, grounding aircrafts.

**SUCH BAD BUSINESS** environment erodes public confidence in a national carrier and portrays a very negative image of the country involves thus, driving away investors rather than the other way around.

**IT IS NOT** just enough to perform a launch, but serious thought is required in running a national carrier that should bring pride to every Liberian and our beloved country.

**WE MAY RECALL** that the last time Liberia had an effective national carrier (Air Liberia) was in the 70s under the administration of slain President William R. Tolbert. Tolbert's successor Samuel Kanyon Doe came and picked up what could be described then as remains of Air Liberia, but did do anything much with it, as the aircraft crashed in Sudan, while returning from repair in Egypt, killing one of the crew onboard.

**PRESIDENT WEAH DISCLOSED** that the current venture is efforts of authorities at the Ministry of Transport and investors from Ghana, who are partnering with Liberian entrepreneurs to resurrect the national carrier, which has been out of service for nearly half of a century.

**CONSIDERING THE GLOBAL** economic meltdown that has even been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, we think deep thought should go into this so that Liberia would do it differently this time around; it is not about seeing neighboring countries having national carriers and we think we are ready to enter the civil aviation market to operate a carrier because this business thrives on confidence, reliability and efficiency.

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Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-886978282 /  
+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan

# COMMENTARY

By Terry Chan &  
Alexandra Dimitrijevic

## A Debt Crisis Is Not Imminent

*The short-term economic outlook remains worrying worldwide, particularly for borrowers at the lower end of the credit scale or in the industries hit hardest by COVID-19 restrictions. But a large-scale debt crisis may not be nearly as likely as many fear.*

**N**EW YORK - As countries, companies, and households confront the COVID-19 pandemic's economic fallout, many market watchers are sounding the alarm about rapidly rising leverage worldwide. And for good reason: in an acceleration of a years-long trend, the debt-to-GDP ratio among these three sets of borrowers is set to swell by 14% this year, to a record 265%. But while this has raised the risk of insolvencies and defaults, particularly among corporations, S&P Global Ratings believes a near-term debt crisis is unlikely.

Given the higher leverage and a challenging operating environment, S&P has downgraded the credit ratings of roughly one-fifth of corporate and sovereign debt issuers globally, especially speculative-grade borrowers and those suffering the most from COVID-19's economic effects. For corporate borrowers, insolvency risks are likely to increase if cash flows and earnings do not return to pre-pandemic trend levels before extraordinary fiscal stimulus is withdrawn.

In our view, the world is likely to experience a gradual, albeit choppy, economic recovery, assuming that accommodative financing conditions are maintained, in a lower for longer environment, and adjustments to spending and borrowing behavior are made. Add to that a widely available COVID-19 vaccine by mid-2021, and global leverage should flatten out around 2023, with governments scaling back stimulus, firms slowly repairing their balance sheets, and households spending more conservatively.

But absolute debt levels are only part of the story. We must also - and more importantly - consider borrowers' ability to repay. Today, unprecedented fiscal and monetary stimulus is keeping the liquidity tap open for firms through bond markets and bank loans. Borrowing costs are very favorable, and appear likely to remain so for a long time: we expect benchmark interest rates to remain historically low into 2023. Meanwhile, credit spreads have tightened from their March peak; as it stands, they are more sensitive to business-specific risks than market risks, particularly for the lowest-quality borrowers.

For the most part, the increased debt is intended to help create conditions for an economic recovery that improves borrowers' future ability to repay. This is especially true for sovereigns, whose fiscal-stimulus measures aim to reduce the pandemic's economic impact.

All sovereigns will emerge from the pandemic with a larger stock of debt. The most developed economies are likely to bear the largest share of increases. However, they are largely wealthy, with strong financial markets and substantial monetary flexibility, allowing them to sustain their overall creditworthiness

thus far.

We assume that governments will reverse the trajectory of fiscal deficits as economies recover, stabilizing debt dynamics. So far, S&P has not lowered the ratings of any G7 country. Speculative-grade sovereigns are more vulnerable to downgrades, given their inherently weaker finances and higher susceptibility to shocks. Most of the negative sovereign ratings actions over the last few months have been in this category.

For all sovereigns, much will depend over the next year on how the new debt is used. If it finances productive activity, boosts national income, and increases government revenues, it will ultimately be supportive of debt sustainability and current ratings levels. But if the economic recovery drags on for longer than expected, or if governments are unable to consolidate fiscal results toward pre-pandemic levels, negative pressure on the ratings will increase.

As for business, many large companies have so far used the proceeds from their newly acquired debt to add cash to their balance sheets as precautionary reserves or to refinance their existing liabilities. Overall, we estimate that US investment-grade nonfinancial firms have kept about three-quarters of the money they borrowed in the first half of 2020 on their balance sheets. In Europe, that figure is just over 50%.

This is not the case for firms at the lower end of the ratings scale or for small and medium-size companies, especially in the industries that have been directly affected by social-distancing rules and the pandemic-induced recession. Fighting to survive, they are borrowing to cover income shortfalls and working capital needs.

For households, the increase in the debt ratio has been driven in part by the decline in GDP. Households often take on more debt soon after facing income loss. But, in past downturns, households have soon adjusted to more conservative spending patterns, slowing down debt growth. Based on those experiences, we forecast that, after some incremental improvements next year, the global household debt-to-GDP ratio will stabilize around 66% at the end of 2023.

Of course, the shape of the post-pandemic recovery will affect how much and how quickly these three groups of borrowers can trim debt. In many cases, debt ratios will flatten only as a result of a GDP recovery, rather than a decrease in debt. And several factors - including additional waves of COVID-19, a delayed vaccine, increased interest rates, a sustained dramatic widening of credit spreads, continued debt growth, or a disappointing rebound in demand - could turn the recession into a W-shaped one.



## O-PED

By Harold James

# Will Lies Win?

*If there is one thing that most Americans can agree on, it is that this year's presidential election campaign featured an endless stream of lies and falsehoods that have made normal politics effectively impossible. Unfortunately, those peddling a "Big Lie" sometimes have the advantage.*

**P**RINCETON - The strange and dispiriting US presidential election campaign has been marked by an absence of substantive debate and a deluge of lies. As Joe Biden said of Donald Trump in the first televised debate, "The fact is that everything he's saying so far is simply a lie. I'm not here to call out his lies. Everybody knows he's a liar."

In politics, the more that lies are employed, the more grounds there are for each side to accuse the other of lying. A spiral of dishonesty ensues, making rational debate impossible. With each lie begetting more lies, normal politics comes to be replaced by a politics of exception. We know this because the phenomenon isn't new or exclusive to the twenty-first century.

History is full of warnings for a society swamped by lies. Shakespeare described the problem brilliantly in his plays. In *As You Like It*, the court jester Touchstone describes a seven-stage increase in the vehemence of retorts: the fourth is the "Reproof Valiant; the fifth, the Countercheque Quarrelsome; the sixth, the Lie with Circumstance; the seventh, the Lie Direct."

Like any infernal mechanism, the first direct lie sets in motion an endless cycle. Lies create the need for more lies; and as they become bigger, their promoters often think their claims have become better. But to others, the tightening ratchet is clear to see with the simplest kind of lie: the factual distortion.

Manipulation of facts should be easy to call out. Trump started his presidency with the lie that his inauguration crowd had been larger than President Barack Obama's four years earlier. Photographic evidence showed this claim to be breathtakingly false. But perhaps that was the point: Trump was using the lie to assert his power.

Twentieth-century dictators found the tactic of the "Big Lie" quite attractive, and made it central to their exercise of power. Adolf Hitler describes the process programmatically in *Mein Kampf*: "In the big lie there is always a certain force of credibility; because the broad masses of a nation are always more easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional nature than consciously or voluntarily." Though Hitler was accusing his opponents of practicing the Big Lie, he was also offering a preview of how he would seize power.

Another form of lying involves inappropriate simplifications that are not easily called out. Here, the politician's claim serves to block or pre-empt a more complex discussion of the underlying issue. For example, in the second Biden-Trump debate, the *New York Times*'s real-time fact checkers highlighted two economic claims that they categorized as false. The first was Biden's statement that Trump "has caused the [trade] deficit with China to go up, not down."

Here, the truth is more complicated. America's bilateral deficit with China under Trump initially rose between 2016 and 2018, but then fell, owing partly to Trump's tariffs. But the US' overall seasonally adjusted trade deficit has continued to grow since 2016, hitting levels this summer that were higher than the equivalent months in 2019. Complicating matters further, some part of the US deficit is with other countries that buy intermediate products from China, as in the case of generic pharmaceuticals imported from India.

The second falsehood that the fact-checkers pointed out concerned the question of whether China should pay reparations for causing the COVID-19 pandemic. Trump insisted that "China is paying. They are paying billions and billions of dollars," implying that his administration's tariffs constitute a form of reparation.

The US did indeed levy more than \$60 billion in tariffs on \$360 billion worth of Chinese goods before the pandemic. Yet it is not easy to work out precisely who paid these "reparations." In some cases, Chinese producers did need to reduce their prices to remain competitive in the American market. But in many other cases, the tariffs led to higher prices for American consumers. All told, these distortions seem to have served little purpose other than to support the Trump administration's claim that it was holding another government accountable.

In any case, the economics behind apparently simple statements in presidential debates is rarely clear-cut. Even less clear is what the underlying politics is about. Is economic policy supposed to secure the best deal for American consumers? If so, the tariffs are a mistake. Is the goal to preserve American jobs? If so, Trump might be able to say he's protected some sectors, but only at the expense of others. Making intermediate imported products more expensive has far-reaching knock-on effects: higher tariffs on imported steel leads to higher prices and reduced demand from the automobile sector, thus destroying jobs there.

Finally, there is the ideological lie, whose primary purpose is to derail the process of normal politics. This kind of lie cannot be picked up so easily by fact checkers. In a striking essay, "Live Not by Lies," composed in 1974 shortly before he was arrested, Alexander Solzhenitsyn pointed out that it is the ideas, not simple factual statements, that make lies compelling. "If we did not paste together the dead bones and scales of ideology, if we did not sew together rotting rags, we would be astonished how quickly the lies would be rendered helpless and would subside. That which should be naked would then really appear naked before the whole world." Similarly, the great Czech truth-teller Václav Havel saw that the "power of the powerless" consists in the refusal of small people to accept the Big Lie.

Part of Trump's overall approach has been to suggest that politics is always about lies, and that politicians are all liars. Hence, in the second debate, he tried to depict Biden as a long-time Washington, DC, politician, and himself as an outsider. On other occasions, he boasts of having invented a new vocabulary that would make permanent a new style of politics. "I think one of the greatest of all terms I've come up with is 'fake,'" he said in 2017.

## OPINION

By Simon Johnson

# Donald Trump's COVID Comeuppance

*Refusing to act decisively on COVID-19 - using all the resources at the disposal of the federal government - was very risky for US President Donald Trump. But Trump likes this kind of risk, because he believes - based on long experience - that he can shift all losses onto others.*

**W**ASHINGTON, DC - The US COVID-19 crisis fits the pattern of President Donald Trump's career with its serial bankruptcies. Trump has badly mishandled the crisis, but while the United States will be living with the adverse consequences for many years, Trump will walk away - perhaps as soon as this week - blaming everyone but himself.

The pandemic did not turn Trump into a bad decision-maker unwilling to learn and take responsibility. But it did fully expose all his worst tendencies, including his poor judgment, inability to think about anyone but himself, and eagerness to shift the cost of his mistakes onto others. This time, the human and economic losses are borne by all of us, and they are enormous.

Trump was born rich - and much of the money he made on his own was the tainted fruit of "tax dodges in the 1990s," according to a *New York Times* assessment of his tax records. His career has been a train of default and failure: Atlantic City casinos, Trump University, Trump Mortgage, Trump Steaks, Trump Magazine, Trump: The Game, and so on. The available evidence suggests that by the early 2000s, Trump had little remaining net worth.

Most likely, this is the reason that Trump has never released his tax returns. He was not very successful as a businessman, except as a serial dupe of creditors and other investors.

As president, Trump promised to bring back manufacturing jobs; in fact, the US has actually lost more than 200,000 jobs in this important sector since the start of his presidency. Trump claims that he boosted the economy; in fact, the US has experienced the greatest economic disaster since the Great Depression.

Trump of course blames COVID-19 and claims that its impact is not his fault. But the primary economic and foreign policy responsibility of any president is to safeguard against crisis and potential collapse - problems that are not rare in the modern world. Effective crisis management is about understanding what is going on, considering all relevant expertise, making sound decisions, and updating those decisions as needed. Trump has failed on all of these dimensions.

Trump did apparently know the nature and potential impact of COVID-19 early on. According to what he told Bob Woodward, Trump was well briefed in January. Yet at that stage he did nothing to warn the public or help prepare federal, state, and local government agencies.

The US has deep scientific and medical talent, but Trump failed to marshal it. In Woodward's well-documented assessment, "Trump never did seem willing to fully mobilize the federal government and continually seemed to push problems off on the states."

And when Trump did act, it was to cause confusion and chaos. The White House could not organize the emergency import of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks and gowns - until one of my MIT colleagues became involved. Trump famously told governors to find their own supply of ventilators. And the guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been consistently subject to damaging political meddling.

The pressing problem of nursing homes - vulnerable and unprotected residents and staff - was explained in detail to the White House by mid-March, by the COVID-19 Policy Alliance (which I co-founded) among others. The response? Do nothing: no additional PPE, no money for COVID-19 testing, and no money to pay additional workers replacing those who became sick or were forced into quarantine. Tens of thousands of people died unnecessarily, separated from their families. Thirty-eight percent of all pandemic-related deaths in the US have been in nursing homes.

The only consistent Trump policy was, and is, to blame others - in fact, to blame everyone imaginable - and never to take responsibility. In the Trump narrative, all his decisions are perfect.

Refusing to act decisively on COVID-19 - using all the resources at the disposal of the federal government - was risky, very risky. But Trump likes this kind of risk, because he believes - based on long experience - that he can shift all losses onto others. And America certainly had big losses in terms of output, employment, and lives.

What consequences of this mismanagement await Trump? One scenario is that he will sulk away this week, promoting an angry and false narrative that continues to polarize the public. He may continue to rattle around the world, attempting to gull new suckers into investment schemes where he gets the upside and someone else owns the downside when things go wrong.

Alternatively, COVID-19 ends his business career. Most of Trump's assets are commercial real estate, the market value of which is now greatly diminished. Over \$900 million of Trump's debt reportedly comes due in the next four years. If Trump is no longer president, his creditors will have no reason to be patient when the Trump Organization can no longer make its payments.



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# US-based Marylanders dedicate several projects in Liberia

By Patrick N. Mensah

The National Maryland County Association of Liberia based in the United States of America has turned over several projects in Maryland County, southeast Liberia.

The dedicatory ceremony was done on Sunday, November 1, 2020 at the home of the former president and current financial secretary of NAMCAL, Eric Wlea GIKO, who is also an aspirant for the December 8, 2020 special senatorial election, vying on the ticket of the Collaborating Political Parties.

Speaking during the ceremony, Mr. GIKO said projects undertaken in the county by Marylanders residing in the USA is another way of giving back to the fellow kinsmen and Liberia at large.

He said renovation of the Dugbeken Elementary and Junior High School in Barrobo Statutory District, Maryland



County is a way of buttressing efforts of government and residents of the district, including District Education Officer, Mr. Jackson Weah and authorities of the school.

He recalled that in April 2020, a violent storm devastated Barrobo District,

un-roofing homes and the school building.

He said as soon as NAMCAL learned about the disaster, it immediately responded with the renovation of the school hiring services of a local contractor, Mr. Larry G. Geekor.

According to him, previous effort to turn over the renovated school building failed, so this time around, NAMCAL deems it necessary to carry out the exercise.

"As you may know, the National Maryland County Association of Liberia, USA, Inc (NAMCAL) was formed in the United States of America in 2003", he disclosed.

Mr. GIKO added NAMCAL's mission is to bring together Marylanders residing in the USA from Barrobo, Karluway, Pleebo, and Harper Districts together in fostering unity and collaboration.

NAMCAL encourages One Maryland County agenda beyond social, economic, political, and tribal barriers.

The organization has grown over the years from five to 12 Chapters in the USA, comprising Marylanders for Progress, Maryland County Associations in Rhode Island, Minnesota, New Jersey, Georgia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Arizona, Oklahoma, and

Indiana, respectively.

Mr. GIKO said the organization acknowledges the good work of the Barrobo United Development Association (BUDA) and the Karluway Development Association (KDA), further disclosing that NAMCAL has also completed construction of a modern Pleebo Parking Station Rest Stop, named after its late president, Isaac T. Cla Russell.

The Rest Stop was constructed in response to call from the people of Pleebo to help provide a place where travelers could ease themselves to prevent environmental pollution and contamination.

Mr. GIKO lauded his successor Mrs. Agnes Dean-Bargblor, for the achievements.

Meanwhile, the people of Maryland County have lauded NAMCAL for being supportive of activities back home in Liberia.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



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**Supply and Delivery of Data Collection Equipment & Supplies**

**Background and Context**

The United States of America, acting through the Millennium Challenge Corporation ("MCC") and the Government of Liberia (the "Government" or "GoL") have entered a Millennium Challenge Compact for Millennium Challenge Account assistance to help facilitate poverty reduction through economic growth in Liberia (the "Compact") in the amount of approximately 256,726,000 USD ("MCC Funding"). The Government, acting through Millennium Challenge Account - Liberia (the "MCA Entity"), intends to apply a portion of the MCC Funding to eligible payments under a contract for which the Request for Quotation ("RFQ") is issued.

MCA-Liberia now invites priced quotation from eligible firms/suppliers for Supply and Delivery of Data Collection Equipment & Supplies.

The RFQ is for:

**Supply and Delivery of Data Collection Equipment & Supplies**

**How to Participate in the Process:**

Interested firms/suppliers should send an email to [MCALiberiaPA@cardno.com](mailto:MCALiberiaPA@cardno.com) requesting a copy of the RFQ, which is free of charge.

Important dates:

No.	Activity	Dates
1	Release of RFQ	October 30, 2020
2	Last date for questions/clarifications	November 4, 2020 at 5pm
3	MCA Response to Questions/Clarifications	November 6, 2020
4	Deadline for Submission of Quotations	November 11, 2020 at 5:00pm

## Team Andy provides training for over 50 young people

Over 50 young people between the ages of 18-30 have benefited from a one-day leadership training and seminar in Electoral District 13 and its environs in Montserrado County.

The training held under the theme: "Creating a Viable Manifesto for Generational Leadership" took place at the Salvation and Deliverance

through its political leader Andy BroplehJallah, has embarked on many educational activities in District 13 and Montserrado County at large since declaring his intention to become the district's lawmaker.

Speaking at the training, Mr. Andy BroplehJallah, a stalwart of ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) says he is astonished by the huge turn

of young people who are in desperate need of making impact in the society through leadership training.

"Today all of you have made history to gather under our dynamic youthful leadership and listen to our facilitators," he says.

According to him, the training

will be a continuous effort of the Team Andy Movement, which he says seeks to build scholars of like mind into national leadership to make a difference.

Speaking to participants at start of the training, Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY) president Amos Williams says it is important that young people



Christian Church in Topoe Village recently.

Ramsay T. Sumanie, a member of Team Andy political movement says the group is a political institution that was founded few years back with the aim of providing amicable solutions to problem confronting citizens in Electoral District 13.

According to him, Team Andy

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**Radio stations suspend programs after journalist's death**

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Major programs on community radio stations in Gbarnga, Bong County have been suspended in demand of seeking speedy justice for

along the Gbarnga-Lofa road with gunshot wounds.

He was reportedly shot dead while riding a motorbike.

According to the media in Bong County, the move is intended to prescribe to the public and the security sector

Coordinator Samuel Kplawru says radio programs will remain suspended until Wednesday, 4 November.

He notes that if the police cannot give the clear findings of the death of journalist Chris, the media along with Civic Society Actors will stage a very peaceful protest to draw the attention of the national government.

Mr. Kplawru continues that the lives of journalists are currently at risk in Bong County especially during a time the country is going to an election.

He explains that the police need to be serious and quickly tell them who is responsible for the death of Chris, adding that "we will take another hard stance if they delay with justice."

"We are not producing any program, we will remain silent until what we want can be done," he adds.

Also speaking via phone, Press Union of Liberia president Charles Coffey calls on the Liberia National Police and other relevant state securities to speedily investigate, pursue and bring to justice the perpetrators.

Mr. Coffey indicates that Liberian journalists,

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11**



The late Journalist Chris David

journalist Chris David who was recently shot by unknown persons.

Journalist Chris David's lifeless body was discovered Friday morning, 30 November

how important the case is and that the alleged perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Speaking in an exclusive interview in Gbarnga, the Press Union of Liberia Bong County

**Several private schools in jeopardy**

**-as government enforces annual permit fees**

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Several private schools operating in Liberia might likely not re-open their doors to the public for Academic 2020/2021 due to failure to pay annual operational permit fees to the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Enforcement of the permit fees by the Ministry come at the time schools are resuming regular academic programs after prolonged closure due to the deadly Corona Virus, which caused all learning institutions here to cease operation in response to government directive.

The Ministry of Education has placed public service announcement on some local radio stations, urging school proprietors and proprietresses to regularize their status by renewing their operational permits before resumption of academic activities.

Private schools are not receiving subsidy from the government, which could

assist them to reduce tuition and other fees being imposed on parents.

Inherently however, the government through the

US\$20.00 (Twenty United States Dollars).

This amount, according to some private school administrators, does not include other supporting staff such as cleaners and



Ministry of Education recently released one million dollars assistance package for private school teachers, with each teacher expected to receive

securities even though they are part of the total staffers in their respective learning institutions.

S o m e s c h o o l

**GoL distances itself from violence in I. Coast**

The Government of Liberia has distanced itself from ongoing post electoral violence in neighboring Cote D'Ivoire in the wake of Saturday's Polls.

The situation has already led a few thousands of Ivoirians to seek refuge in Liberia and other neighboring countries, evoking memories of the 2010 electoral violence in that country.

In a statement issued by the

- as has been insinuated on social media.

The statement also quotes President George Weah of reminding detractors who wish to use the situation in Cote D'Ivoire to score political capital at the expense of Liberia, that he has cordial relationship with all the major Ivorian political actors - including the opposition and ruling parties.

He said Liberia has



Violent clashes erupt ahead of Ivory Coast election

government Monday, a country with recent ugly history with Cote D'Ivoire reminded all Ivoirians of the consequences of resorting to violence as a means of resolving their differences.

The government says it firmly backs regional and international efforts aimed at finding a lasting solution to the political situation, and will do nothing to undermine the security of a friendly neighbor

absolutely no involvement in the political affairs of Cote D'Ivoire. The President said he strongly detests any suggestion that which runs contrary to Liberia's sole desire of having peace in the region.

He said lessons from our recent history has taught us enough that no country in the Mano River

Basin is safe when another is engulfed with conflict.

administrators, who spoke to this paper based on anonymity for fear of reprisal, claimed the Ministry of Education had earlier requested them to prepare and submit one-month payroll, and that while working on the document, the Ministry again requested that they upgrade the payroll to three months.

They wonder whether this time around, the Ministry would also include those essential staffers, who were not covered in the one-month payroll earlier requested, so that all staffers would benefit from the package.

They lamented that private schools ceased operations during the entire Corona virus

lockdown in the country, which badly affected revenue generation to pay instructional staff, rental, and yearly operational cost, including renewal of their permits.

They then appeal to government to reconsider enforcement of the permit fees to give them sufficient time to adjust and be prepared to make payment.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education is yet to disclose total amount of private schools in the country to benefit from the subsidy for private school teachers since payment pronouncement was made.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## GoL commences phase-two training on result

### -Based planning, monitoring and evaluation

The Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning with support from the United Nations Children's Fund on Wednesday October 27, 2020 began three day participatory capacity building training in what is term as "Result Based Planning Monitoring and Evaluation workshop for Monitoring and Evaluation officer's in Tubmanburg, Bomi County.

The workshop is held under the Theme: Strengthening Government

highlighting key parameters for consideration when an agency or government institution is planning an intervention. It is a best practice to always critically analyze the problem the proposed intervention intends to address, considering the scale of the problem, categories of people affected by the problem, the availability of expertise to intervene, how to intervene, whether alone or together with others, how to know whether or not the activities of the intervention are on track.

Furthermore, the PAPD

Liberia to United Nations Children's Fund for their full support toward capacity building and national development.

According to Mr. Zangar, at the end, participants will gain greater understanding of program logic and results framework contents and features, the PAPD results framework and its interpretation, and different data collection techniques, analysis, interpretation and report generation.

"We will also give them the skills on how to measure the results of the various projects that contribute to the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) in their respective counties " He added. Over the next three days, we will conduct lots of exercise, learn new skills, particularly in results based monitoring & results framework analysis and interpretation.

From this Results-Based Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Training, development partners who work with county planners will develop projects to support the implementation of the National Development Agenda. So this training is key because we want to bring Monitoring and

Evaluation Officers on par with not just routine monitoring formalities but how to plan for and track results.

The three-day training brought together thirty (32) participants comprising County Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, district agriculture officers. County gender coordinators, LISGIS county Coordinators, from Grand Cape Mount, Gborpolu, Bomi and Montserrado County along, as well as senior staff of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP).



Approach for Accountability, Transparency & Result that is aligned with the National Development Plan of Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).

On the overall, it is expected that participants will acquire fundamental knowledge to comfortably discuss Results-Based monitoring and evaluation terminologies- Program logic, indicators, results matrix, results framework, Planning risks & assumptions, evaluations etc.

Specifically, the training is

Results Framework interpretation and data flow arrangement including description of various data collection techniques and the associated data quality issues are also part of topics being taught at the training.

Participants are expected to develop monitoring and evaluations plans and finalize the preparation of the Voter National Registry plan for 2020.

Making remarks at the opening session, the National M&E Director, Mr. Jerry D. Zangar conveyed greetings on behalf of the Government of

## MOA donates foodstuffs to GSA

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The Ministry of Agriculture in partnership with local vendors has donated 11,000 bags of Garri (processed cassava) to the General Services Agency (GSA) for onward distribution to vulnerable communities as part of COVID-19 stimulus package promised by President George Manneh Weah.

The food items also include powdered fufu, locally produced beans, palm oil and other foodstuff. Making the presentation on behalf of the ministry, Agriculture Minister Jeanie Cooper said this is in continuation of food supplies to vulnerable residents in the fight against the deadly Corona Virus which had hit the country early this year.

Minister Cooper explained the World Bank through the Liberian government provided US\$10.2 million for locally

that food stuffs received from the ministry are equally distributed to vulnerable people, including zogoos (disadvantage youths) on weekly basis.

On May 15, this year the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) released its COVID-19 food and nutrition security situation report, informing stakeholders and the public on the status of food security in the country amid the lockdown instituted by the Government of Liberia to curb spread of the virus that has caused disruptions within the food supply chains.

The COVID-19 food and nutrition security situation report of the MOA highlights challenges confronting smallholder farmers and other value chains actors in various areas of agriculture as the result of the lockdown.

The report also announces the launch of the country's



produced food production in the fight of the COVID-19, since the virus is a global one.

She said about 20 local vendors were hired for foodstuff production to supply vulnerable communities during peak of the virus, and has been able to supply food items to government through the General Services Agency for proper management, as the GSA is key driver on the presidential steering committee against the virus.

Receiving the items on Monday, 02 November in Monrovia, the Director General of the GSA, Madam Mary Broh thanked the agriculture authorities and the local vendors for the effort thus far.

She told the program that the Ministry has been forceful and helpful in providing locally produced food items at most needed time, while reminding

first agricultural transport permit system, a tool that will enable agriculture authorities to grant temporary permission to actors to move between approved counties during the lockdown.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic in Liberia in March, there are reports that smallholder farmers and other value chain actors are finding it difficult to increase production and access markets due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The situation has led to some stakeholders in the agriculture sector to call on the government to derive measures for agriculture in order to keep the sector alive during the pandemic to avoid panic-driven reactions that could aggravate disruptions and deteriorate food and nutrition security among the most vulnerable.

Cont'd from page 5

## Team Andy provides

be consistent in whatever they thought to do.

"If we young people must succeed in becoming part of the future of this country, than we must volunteer and be consistent," he cautions.

"As a leader, you have to build honesty, and don't allow the power to change who you are. Always be yourself," he continues.

For his part the second

facilitator Ernest Lincoln says if the community truly desires to see someone ascending to higher height, then young people have to organize themselves by coming together to do research and identify what is needed.

Meanwhile, the president of the National Muslims Student Ishmael V. Konneh extols the leadership of Team Andy for undertaking the initiative.

"We need to be a true patriot, you can't achieve as a volunteer if you are not patriotic," he says.

According to Konneh, youth should not raise their expectations whenever they are doing volunteerism, but rather it will help in advancing their careers.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



# Français

## Weah lance Air-Liberia sans aucun avion

Le président George Weaha a annoncé vendredi le lancement de la première compagnie nationale de transport aérien d'après-guerre à l'aéroport international Roberts (RIA), dans le comté de Margibi.

Selon un communiqué de la présidence, le président Weah, par le lancement officiel d'une compagnie nationale de transporteur

aérien, « a réalisé l'une des choses qu'il souhaitait depuis longtemps - voir la République du Libéria avoir sa propre compagnie aérienne.

«Ayant su que le Libéria possédait autrefois ce qu'on appelait alors « Liberia Airlines » avant la guerre civile, et se sentant jaloux de voir d'autres pays plus petits posséder leurs propres avions, le Président avait nourri le souhait que le pays fasse la reconquête du ciel

avec ses couleurs nationales (rouge, blanche et bleu) », indique le communiqué.

Quoique le lancement ait été fait sans que le pays ne possède le moindre avion, les autorités ne cachent pas leur fierté. C'est pour eux un exploit inégalable. «Je suis ravi d'être ici aujourd'hui pour assister à cette cérémonie organisée par les

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Le nouveau représentant spécial de l'UE rend une visite de courtoisie à la NEC

Une délégation de l'Union européenne conduite par l'ambassadeur de l'Union Européenne Laurent DELAHOUSSE a effectué une visite au siège de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) le vendredi 30 novembre pour s'enquérir des préparatifs pour les élections sénatoriales de mi-mandat de 2020.

L'Ambassadeur Laurent DELAHOUSSE était

accompagné par le chef adjoint de la délégation de l'Union européenne Juan Antonio FrutosGoldarat.

Les deux diplomates de l'UE ont été reçus par la présidente du NEC Davidetta Browne Lansanah au siège de la commission à la 9ème rue, Sinkor. L'ambassadeur DELAHOUSSE a fait part de la préoccupation de l'Union Européenne quant à savoir si les autorités de la Commission

électorale nationale sont totalement prêtes pour l'organisation des élections sénatoriales spéciales, du référendum constitutionnel et de deux autres élections législatives partielles le même jour, le 8 décembre 2020. Le nouvel ambassadeur de l'UE a également exprimé des préoccupations concernant le niveau de financement mis à la disposition de la Commission électorale par le gouvernement du Libéria et par ses partenaires pour l'organisation des multiples scrutins. En réponse, la présidente de la Commission électorale nationale, Davidetta Browne Lansanah, a déclaré que le gouvernement du Libéria s'était engagé à fournir tous les fonds nécessaires pour organiser les élections sénatoriales en question. Elle a dit avoir confiance au gouvernement d'où la certitude que des élections libres, équitables et transparentes auront lieu le 8 décembre 2020.

« Tous les préparatifs progressent jusqu'à présent comme prévu », a-t-elle conclu.



EU Ambassador Laurent DELAHOUSSE and NEC Chairperson Davidetta Brwone Lansanah post for a photo after the meeting

## CÔTE D'IVOIRE. 5 QUESTIONS POUR COMPRENDRE UNE ÉLECTION PRÉSIDENTIELLE SOUS TENSIONS



Le président sortant, Alassane Ouattara, semble dimanche bien parti pour remporter un troisième mandat, la commission électorale le donnant en tête selon les premiers résultats. Un scrutin émaillé de violences et boycotté par l'opposition.

Au lendemain d'une élection présidentielle émaillée d'incidents ayant fait au moins deux morts, l'opposition ivoirienne, qui a boycotté le scrutin, a appelé dimanche 1er novembre à une « transition civile », alors que les premiers résultats donnent sans surprise une avance écrasante au président sortant Alassane Ouattara en quête d'un troisième mandat controversé.

Quand les tensions sont-elles apparues??

Le volte-face de Alassane Ouattara marque le point de départ des tensions. Alors que le président sortant affirme depuis mars qu'il ne se représentera pas, il décide finalement le 6 août de briguer un troisième mandat. Ouattara invoque alors un « cas de force majeure » après le décès de son dauphin et Premier ministre Amadou Gon Coulibaly le 8 juillet.

L'opposition conteste son droit de se représenter, la constitution limitant à deux le nombre de mandats présidentiels. Mais selon l'interprétation du pouvoir, l'adoption de cette nouvelle loi fondamentale en 2016 a remis les compteurs à zéro. Comment s'est déroulée la campagne électorale??

La campagne électorale a été marquée par des violences dans lesquelles plus de 30 personnes ont trouvé la mort, lors de manifestations contre la candidature du président Ouattara.

Deux candidats de l'opposition, Pascal Affi N'Guessan et Bédié, ont appelé à « la désobéissance civile » et au boycott de la

campagne et des élections, en affirmant ne pas être « concernée par le processus électoral. » Outre Alassane Ouattara, seul le candidat indépendant Kouadio Konan Bertin dit KKB, crédité de moins de 4% des voix en 2015 a fait campagne.

Beaucoup craignent une crise majeure, dix ans après la crise post-électorale issue de la présidentielle de 2010 qui avait fait 37 000 morts à la suite du refus de Laurent Gbagbo (2000-2010) de reconnaître sa défaite face à Alassane Ouattara.

Comment s'est passé le scrutin??

Quelque 35 000 membres des forces de l'ordre avaient été déployés dans le pays pour le scrutin du 31 octobre, qui a été émaillé de nombreuses violences. Le bilan exact de ces violences est difficile à établir, mais l'opposition comme le pouvoir ont évoqué des « morts ».

De source sécuritaire, au moins deux morts sont à déplorer « un à Oumé (260 km au nord-ouest d'Abidjan) et au moins un à Tiébissou (centre) ». Le maire de Tiébissou a quant à lui fait état d'un bilan de « 4 morts et 27 blessés » dans sa commune. Alassane Ouattara, 78 ans a appelé au calme samedi: « J'en appelle à ceux qui ont lancé un mot d'ordre de désobéissance civile qui a conduit à des morts d'hommes: qu'ils arrêtent! Je dis aux jeunes de ne pas se laisser manipuler ».

Selon le Programme Indigo qui avait déployé des observateurs dans tout le pays, « 23% des bureaux de vote sont restés fermés toute la journée ».

Qui remporte les élections?? Protégée par un important dispositif policier, la Commission électorale a commencé ce dimanche à

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



# Français

## Weah lance Air-Liberia

promoteurs de la nouvelle compagnie aérienne qui sera connue et appelée Lone Star Air, Wings of Liberia», a dit le chef de l'Etat.

Il a fait savoir que le lancement de Lone Star Air est conforme à son souhait de longue date, à sa vision et à son appel clair pour la place du Libéria dans l'industrie aéronautique internationale ; pour les investisseurs impartiaux de s'intéresser et d'explorer les opportunités d'investissement dans le secteur.

A M. Weahde réitérer la nécessité pour les investisseurs d'explorer le domaine de l'aviation et de s'engager dans des entreprises qui créent des emplois et renforcent l'économie libérienne.

« Dès mon retour de ma première visite officielle en France, j'ai encouragé les investisseurs à développer une nouvelle compagnie aérienne libérienne qui reliera le Libéria à la sous-région ouest-africaine et au reste du monde. Récemment, j'ai été si heureux lorsque j'ai été informé par les autorités du ministère des Transports que des investisseurs potentiels de notre pays frère, le Ghana, avaient formé un partenariat avec des

entrepreneurs libériens ont demandé à l'autorité de l'aviation l'autorisation de développer conjointement une nouvelle compagnie aérienne pour le Libéria », a dit le président Weah avant de remercier ceux qui ont entrepris cette initiative historique.

« Mon rêve, mon espoir et ma vision ont été de voir très bientôt Lone Star Air, les ailes du Libéria, arborer notre drapeau dans le ciel international, briller si fort. Le lancement de Lone Star Air est une initiative opportune qui doit être saluée et encouragée. », a-t-il ajouté.

Il a révélevé avoir donné instruction au ministère des Transports et à l'Autorité de l'aviation civile du Libéria d'apporter le soutien nécessaire à l'entreprise dans le cadre de toutes les lois et réglementations applicables, tant au niveau national qu'international, afin de garantir qu'il n'y ait aucun compromis avec la sécurité des citoyens qui utiliseront les services proposés.

Pendant ce temps, avec toute la joie, on ne sait pas encore quand le premier Lone Star Air atterrira à l'aéroport international de Roberts. Mais jusque-là, cela n'est qu'un rêve du président.

## Le nouveau représentant spécial de l'UE

annoncer au compte-gouttes des résultats partiels de l'élection en direct à la télévision.

Elle donne en tête Alassane Ouattara dans chacun des 26 départements où a déjà eu lieu le dépouillement de l'élection présidentielle. Le président sortant, 78 ans, a remporté au moins 90% des suffrages exprimés dans la majorité de ces départements, qui sont pour la plupart des bastions de son camp. Le pays compte au total 108 départements. Et maintenant??

Les tensions entre le pouvoir et l'opposition sont au summum. Dans une déclaration commune lue, dimanche, par l'ancien Premier ministre et candidat inscrit à l'élection Pascal Affi N'Guessan, l'opposition appelle à une «?transition civile?» pour une nouvelle présidentielle «?juste?» et «?à la mobilisation générale des Ivoiriens pour faire barrage à la dictature et à la

forfaiture du président sortant?».

Le parti au pouvoir, à travers la voix d'Adama Bictogo, les a mis en garde contre «?toute tentative de déstabilisation?». Le directeur exécutif du Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix a aussi accusé nommément les responsables de l'opposition d'être les «?commanditaires?» des violences qui ont émaillé le scrutin samedi.

Ces tensions en Côte d'Ivoire, premier producteur mondial de cacao, font craindre une nouvelle crise dans une région éprouvée par des attaques jihadistes au Sahel, un putsch au Mali, une élection contestée en Guinée et une contestation politique chez le géant voisin nigérian.

«?Le grand défi de l'après-élection pour le parti au pouvoir va être de recréer un dialogue avec l'opposition, sinon les tensions seront récurrentes?», a estimé Rodrigue Koné, analyste politique.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Terry Chan & Alexandra Dimitrijevic

## Une crise de la dette à grande échelle n'est pas inéluctable

NEW YORK - Alors que les Etats, les entreprises et les ménages sont confrontés aux conséquences économiques de la pandémie de COVID-19, de nombreux observateurs tirent la sonnette d'alarme quant à l'augmentation rapide de l'effet de levier de la pandémie à travers le monde. Il y a une bonne raison à cela : en raison de l'accélération de l'endettement que l'on observe depuis des années, le ratio dette/PIB de ces trois groupes d'emprunteurs devrait augmenter de 14% cette année, pour atteindre le niveau record de 265%. Bien que cela augmente le risque d'insolvabilité et de défaut de paiement, notamment de la part des entreprises, l'agence de notation S&P Global Ratings estime qu'une crise de la dette est improbable à court terme.

Du fait de l'augmentation de l'endettement et d'un environnement opérationnel difficile, S&P a abaissé la notation de crédit d'environ un cinquième des émetteurs de dette d'entreprise et de dette souveraine dans le monde, en particulier les emprunteurs de catégorie spéculative et ceux qui souffrent le plus des conséquences économiques de la pandémie. Le nombre d'entreprises insolubles va probablement augmenter si avant l'arrêt des mesures extraordinaires de relance budgétaire, les flux de trésorerie et les bénéfices ne reviennent pas à leur niveau précédent la pandémie.

A notre avis, le monde devrait connaître une reprise économique progressive mais irrégulière, à condition que les facilités de financement soient maintenues dans un contexte de taux d'intérêt bas sur une longue période, et que des ajustements soient apportés aux dépenses et emprunts. Si l'on ajoute à cela le développement d'un vaccin contre le COVID-19 largement disponible d'ici la mi-2021, les Etats réduisant leurs mesures de relance, les entreprises réparant lentement leur bilan et les ménages dépensant moins, l'effet de levier mondial devrait se stabiliser vers 2023.

Les niveaux d'endettement absolus ne constituent qu'une partie du scénario. Nous devons également - et surtout - tenir compte de la capacité de remboursement des emprunteurs. Aujourd'hui, des mesures de relance budgétaire et monétaire sans précédent permettent de garder le robinet des liquidités ouvert pour les entreprises grâce aux marchés obligataires et aux prêts bancaires. Le coût du crédit est très favorable, et va probablement le rester pendant encore longtemps : nous prévoyons que les taux d'intérêt de référence resteront historiquement bas jusqu'en 2023. Entre-temps, les écarts de crédit se sont resserrés par rapport à leur pic de mars ; actuellement ils sont plus sensibles aux risques spécifiques des entreprises qu'aux risques du marché - en particulier pour les emprunteurs de moindre qualité.

Pour l'essentiel, l'augmentation de la dette vise à créer les conditions d'une reprise économique qui améliore la capacité future de remboursement des emprunteurs. C'est particulièrement vrai pour les Etats qui cherchent à réduire l'impact économique de la pandémie par des mesures de relance budgétaire.

A l'issue de la pandémie, l'endettement de tous les Etats aura enfin augmenté. Les pays développés devraient supporter la plus grande partie de ce surendettement. Néanmoins, ils ont maintenu jusqu'à présent leur solvabilité grâce à leur richesse, à la solidité de leurs marchés financiers et à leur flexibilité monétaire.

Nous supposons que les Etats stabiliseront la dynamique de la dette en inversant la trajectoire de leur déficit budgétaire à mesure que les économies se redresseront. Jusqu'à présent, S&P n'a abaissé la note d'aucun pays du G7. Les Etats de catégorie spéculative sont les plus vulnérables au déclassement, car ils sont intrinsèquement plus sensibles aux chocs et moins résistants financièrement. La plupart des déclassements de ces derniers mois ont touché cette catégorie.

L'année prochaine, beaucoup dépendra de la manière dont les Etats utiliseront leurs nouveaux prêts. S'ils servent à financer l'activité productive, à augmenter les revenus nationaux et les recettes publiques, ces prêts permettront le maintien de leur notation au niveau actuel et amélioreront la viabilité de la dette. Par contre, si la reprise économique tarde ou si les Etats ne parviennent pas à consolider leur résultat budgétaire pour retrouver leur niveau pré-pandémie, la pression à la baisse sur les notations augmentera.

Beaucoup de grandes entreprises ont jusqu'à présent utilisé leurs nouveaux crédits pour ajouter des liquidités à leur bilan en tant que réserve de précaution ou pour refinancer leur passif existant. Dans l'ensemble, nous estimons que les entreprises américaines non financières ayant une cote de crédit élevée ont conservé dans leur bilan environ le trois quarts des sommes qu'elles ont empruntées au cours du premier semestre 2020. En Europe, ce chiffre est légèrement supérieur à 50%.

Ce n'est pas le cas des petites et moyennes entreprises et de celles qui sont les moins bien notées, en particulier dans les secteurs qui ont été directement touchés par les règles de distanciation sociale et la récession due à la pandémie. Luttant pour leur survie, elles empruntent pour couvrir leur manque de revenus et leurs besoins en fonds de roulement.

Pour les ménages, l'augmentation du taux d'endettement tient en partie à la baisse du PIB. Les ménages s'endettent souvent davantage après une perte de revenus. Mais lors des ralentissements précédents, les ménages ont rapidement pris l'habitude de moins dépenser, ce qui a ralenti la croissance de la dette. Sur la base de ces expériences, nous prévoyons qu'après quelques améliorations progressives l'année prochaine, fin de 2023 le ratio dette/PIB des ménages se stabilisera autour de 66%.

La forme de la reprise post-pandémie aura une incidence sur le niveau et la rapidité avec lesquels les trois groupes d'emprunteurs (Etats, entreprises, ménages) réduiront leur dette. Dans de nombreux cas, les ratios d'endettement diminueront en raison d'une augmentation du PIB plutôt que d'une diminution de la dette. Plusieurs facteurs pourraient entraîner une récession en forme de W - notamment des vagues supplémentaires de la pandémie, l'absence de vaccin, une hausse des taux d'intérêt, un élargissement spectaculaire et soutenu des écarts de crédit, une croissance continue de la dette ou une demande insuffisante.

Même si la reprise se déroule comme prévu, la situation économique restera très difficile. Certains secteurs fonctionnent nettement en dessous de leurs capacités, ce qui menace la survie des entreprises et en conséquence l'emploi et le crédit. Les perspectives à court terme restent donc préoccupantes, notamment pour les emprunteurs au bas de l'échelle du crédit et pour les secteurs vulnérables. Néanmoins, l'analyse nous montre qu'une crise de la dette à grande échelle n'a rien d'inéluctable.



# Arab style protest @ Temple of Justice

By Winston W. Parley

**A** protesting judicial worker Mr. Archie Ponponset himself ablaze at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia on Monday November 2 in an Arab-style protest, following weeks of protest for overdue salaries.

His action was true to his recent threat in which he accuses Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor, Sr. of allegedly using all draconian means to hunt, suspend and relieve aggrieved staffers of their positions due to their protest.

In what may be the first of such terrible style of protest in Liberia, Mr. Ponpon on Monday, 2 November appeared to have concealed gasoline and fire litter to make his way into the premises of the Temple of Justice on Capitol Hill ahead of November 8, the day he publicized that he would have set himself ablaze.

The judicial workers started the protest roughly four months back in demand for the Liberian dollars component of their salaries that had been outstanding for about a year, but it escalated recently and their leader Mr. Ponpon threatened to set himself ablaze after judicial authorities indefinitely suspended, transferred and placed some of the protesters under investigation.

Ponpon and few of his fellow aggrieved judicial workers had just been served some writ of arrests Monday, 2 November by court officers when he suddenly walked up the stairs outside the building hosting the Supreme Court and pulled out a bottle filled with gas from under his double clothes with coat on top.

He placed the writ by his side, lied on the floor while he spilled the gas over his body, mainly on his chest and then pulled out a fire litter, setting himself ablaze as those around him yelled and cried out for his life.

The courtyard went wild as Mr. Ponpon's "Arab style protest" sent a shock to almost everyone seeing him burnt in flame on the sunny Monday.

In effort to save Mr. Ponpon, some of his colleagues used water reserved in an anti - coronavirus bucket to extinguish the fire. But the fire left his skin peeled and wounded. His colleagues suddenly took him away using a motorbike to seek medication.

Later in the day some of the judicial workers assembled at the scene where Ponpon set himself ablaze and staged a protest, demanding justice and the resignation of Chief Justice Korkpor. They have vowed to parade with caskets at the court's premises. Riot police were deployed at the scene, with no latter incident.

Prior to leading his fellow workers into this sustained protest at the Judicial branch, Ponpon has been in different

level.

In December 2011, Ponpon was sent to court by the Liberia National Police along with one Oliver Siaty for trial for burning the Norwegian flag.

The duo had indicated at the time that they had no regret for their action because they wanted to draw the attention of the international community that then President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf did not deserve the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to her.

In his latest protest which has escalated into suicide attempt, Ponpon and other aggrieved judicial workers are facing suspensions, transfers and investigation following a complaint filed with the

Then on 8 October, aggrieved judicial workers protested at the Temple of Justice following several weeks of failed negotiations with authorities at the judicial branch, disgracefully chanting Chief Justice Korkpor's name and urging him to return their money.

In a rather humiliating way, some of the protesters held placards as others used empty gallons as drums to cause stirs outside the courts, chanting repeatedly: "Bring our money back, Chief Justice bring our money back; Bring our money back, Francis Korkpor bring our money back."

They have defied an alleged demand that has emerged in negotiating efforts requesting them to apologize to Chief

Justice that can address their grievances, pondering who will give them justice if the Chief Justice is vex with them.

"As such, no lawyer in this country feels comfortable to plead our case. So when we are [thirsty] and call for water, the Chief Justice only offers us vinegar...", Ponpon added.

In a suspension letter dated 19 October and addressed to Mr. Archie Ponpon, the author identified as R. Stephen Wontee, Deputy Personnel Director at the Judiciary, indicated that Ponpon accused Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor of sending people to his (Ponpon's) house to kill him.

According to the communication, this accusation was repeated and allegedly confirmed by Mr. Ponpon at a meeting that the Chief Justice held with employees of the Judiciary at the ground floor of the Temple of Justice on 8 October 2020.

The communication continued that this is a serious allegation which the Chief Justice categorically denies as having no iota of truth, but merely intended to besmear him. "In this regard, the matter has been sent to the Minister of Justice/Attorney General for full scale investigation," he added.

"In view of the above, you are hereby suspended from work effective Monday, October 19, 2020 pending the outcome of the investigation," it concluded.

In another communication dated 8 October under the signature of Civil Law Court "B" Clerk Nah J. Wollor and approved by Civil Law Court "B" Judge Scheaplor R. Dunbar, a request was made to Court Administrator Cllr. Elizabeth B. Nelson for the transfer of bailiffs Brenda Geekor and Cynthia Wildoh.

The communication cited the two bailiffs' unwillingness to work, habitual absence from work and refusal to wear uniforms.

Mr. KybezeilligarKokuloKalaplee, co - chair of the aggrieved protesters insists that they will not bow to intimidation, adding that they are going beyond protesting for salaries now.

"This ground will continue to be a protest ground ... few days from now, we have just paid for like 15 caskets; we will parade those caskets here and those caskets will be used by Francis Korkpor to bury us one after the other," Mr. Kalaplee says.

"He got to resign! Francis Korkpor, we want him to resign, we want Cllr. [Elizabeth] Boyonnoh Nelson to resign...", says Mr. Kalaplee.

He explains saying, "Chief Justice Korkpor says he has a



Mr. Ponpon pursued by media folks and others

protests as a student and as a campaigner following different issues, including his advocacy for same sex union, something which is a taboo in the Liberian society.

Ponpon's move to campaign for gay rights in Liberia resulted to the burning down of a house rented by his mother after he set up the Movement for the Defence of Gays and Lesbians in Liberia in January 2012 to defend the rights of homosexuals in the country.

He survived other attacks that were related to his homosexual campaign before he finally aborted the move. He took part in student politics at the state - run University of Liberia before coming out to take on issues on the national

Ministry of Justice by Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor, indicating that Ponpon accused him of sending people to his (Ponpon's) house to kill him.

The judicial staffers' suspensions and investigation ordered by the judicial authorities came despite Finance Minister Samuel Tweah's intervention committing the government to pay the aggrieved judicial workers' salaries in October, a move others had though would have calmed the months of crisis at the Temple of Justice.

Ponpon and his colleagues have since been pursued with different writs by court officials, and in return he has at separate times lied down under the chief justice's vehicle and the vehicle of the Court Administrator, Cllr. Elizabeth Nelson.

Chief Justice Korkpor was on 10 September this year prevented from parking his vehicle at its usual parking lot at the Temple of Justice, as angry judicial staffers intentionally occupied the spot to deny him access while they held a meeting regarding an alleged unpaid Liberian dollar component of their salaries.

Justice Korkpor to pave the way for peace, insisting that they stand by whatever actions they took to get back a portion of their salaries allegedly cut.

"We say we stand in defiance, we say we will not apologize for any other action done on the grounds of the Judiciary. Our action is guaranteed under Article 17 of the Liberian Constitution of [1986], and as such we petitioned the Chief Justice for the redress of our grievances," head of the aggrieved judicial staffers Archie Ponpon said Wednesday, 28 October.

In the protest, Mr. Ponpon alleged that Chief Justice Korkpor over the past two to three weeks has demanded through Associate Justice Joseph Nagbe that the protesters do a communication expressing their regret for their actions.

But Ponpon insisted that the protesters believed that every action they took to ensure that they got their money was just, therefore they stood by their decision not to apologize.

According to Ponpon, when they assembled at the Temple of Justice and cry for hunger and thirst, it's only the Chief



Mr. Ponpon struggles for life after the incident



# Solidarity Center trains stakeholders on human trafficking

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Solidarity Center, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor (MOL) has ended a trafficking workshop for labor leaders and key stakeholders at its offices in Manba Point, Monrovia.

Speaking in an interview with reporters following what some of the participants described as intensive and impressive workshop, the President of the Civil Service Agency (CSA) Moibah K. Johnson said he hoped to pass on to members of the Civil Service skills and knowledge

for its continuous support to key stakeholders, who are gatekeepers in various institutions fighting human trafficking.

She encouraged the Center to continue its capacity building program, noting that the training was encouraging and rewarding.

Madam Nyumah warned those engage in human trafficking in Liberia to desist, noting their action harms human existence.

The Vice President for Operations of the Civil Servant Association of Liberia, Madam Edwina T. N. Carr described the workshop as an eye opener,

through a representative thanked the Solidarity Center for its continued partnership and training of stakeholders, who have role to play in fighting and eradicating human trafficking.

He urge the participants to use the skills and knowledge acquired to train their colleagues who lack basis of about the crime and its effects in the Liberian society.

Solidarity Center, which organized the training exercise, said the training is intended to increase union leaders' knowledge on trafficking and the "3 Ps" approach - prevention, protection, and prosecution



Trainers & participants posed for photo

acquired from the workshop to adequately prepare them to combat human trafficking in Liberia especially, in work places.

He noted that the workshop provided him a better insight into the different forms of human trafficking, appealing to the organizers to extent such training to some of their colleagues who have no idea on human trafficking.

For her part, the President of the National Teachers Association of Liberia (NTAL) Madam Mary W. M. Nyumah, thanked the Solidarity Center

saying she learned so many things that she sees but doesn't know are associated with human trafficking.

According to her, she will set up a special human trafficking desk at her institution to monitor and report on the crime.

She explained the desk would also assist members of the association to detect, identify, and report human trafficking at their assigned places of work to help eradicate the practice, which is against international laws.

The Ministry of Labor (MOL)

to effectively protect vulnerable workers.

It also disclosed that the training will help labor leaders develop critical actions to protect vulnerable workers and increase coordination with government's interventions to counter trafficking in persons.

Solidarity Center is the largest United States-based international workers' rights organization helping workers attain dignity on the job.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

## Radio stations suspend

Cont'd from page 6

particularly journalists in Bong County are now living in fear due to the wanton killing of journalist Chris David.

He notes that the Association of Liberian Journalists in the Americas is also concerned and will shortly come up with a statement to condemn the situation.

Meanwhile, the Liberia National Police Bong County

Detachment has confirmed to the public that journalist Chris David was shot.

According to Bong County CSD Commander John KellesoFlomo, journalist David died of gunshot wounds, adding that the police have started doing everything possible to bring the murderer to justice.

Mr. Flomo says even though the situation is worrisome, the media will have to give little

chance to the team of investigators in doing its professional job.

He explains that they have suspected someone, but they are tracing that person.

For security reasons, the Bong County CSD Commander did not call the name of the alleged suspect, but says very soon, the person will be arrested for questioning.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley

# Arab style protest

Cont'd from page 10

writ here for us," adding that predicated upon that, they went to the Temple of Justice to receive their writ but they were allegedly harassed.

He further explains that a lot of the judicial workers from central administration that are afraid to form part of the protest are relatives brought to work with the judiciary.

Kalaplee claims he advised Mr. Ponpon against setting himself ablaze, saying "I told him that was not the rightful way."

In an interview with judicial reporters following the incident, Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) president Cllr. Taiwan Gonglose says this is the first time, in response to this paper's question if a protester in Liberia had ever set him or herself ablaze.

"This is a terrible thing of historic importance, it never happened before. People have been killed here, they've killed people on the pole, and soldiers have killed people. Different things have happened, but I don't know of any account of an advocate taking his own life away," Cllr. Gonglose says.

He suggests that this is another reason for critical examination of the Liberian society, pointing to the issue of rule of law, "how we govern," respond to leadership, uphold law and regulation and how the different offices given by the constitution are administered and not to ignore what has happened.

"That's the first, I'm really shocked. I wasn't here, but I

arrived here, I heard about it and I'm shocked because I ... read Liberian history from the beginning of Liberia, here to now, I have not heard of anything, any Liberian putting himself on fire for some advocacy," Gonglose says.

He notes that one of the things that is necessary for this country is the upholding of the rule of law generally, not selectively.

He says what has troubled Liberia for long is that the public always suspects that the government is not living by what it says, it is not following the rule of law and it selectively applies laws, regulations, decisions and other things.

Cllr. Gonglose says on Friday he met with Ponpon and others and told them to catalogue what their grievances are so that the LNBA can discuss how it could mediate if it is possible, but he got the shocking news on Monday that Ponpon was burning himself.

He says what Mr. Ponpon did try to pay the hard prize for what he believed in, noting: "There are very few people like that in society who are prepared to pay any cause, especially, give their life for what they strongly believe in."

The head of communication at the Temple of Justice Atty. Ambrose Nmah did not respond to a call from this paper seeking comment from the Judiciary regarding the incident. -Edited by Othello B. Garblah

# Families claim

Starts from back page

police is in the know of this information I'm giving you," Mr. Blamo alleges.

He continues that their investigation has revealed that their missing children are being held for ritualistic sacrifice, noting that some hidden big hands have put a lot of money out, making it very difficult for the family to get the children back.

Mr. Blamo continues that they have also contacted the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Traditional Council, but they allegedly declined to help.

But police Spokesman Moses Carter says the police are leaving no stone unturned till they can get to the bottom of the story.

Carter notes that all the information provided by the victims' families are all speculation and sentiments, adding that the job of the police investigators is not

based on sentiments or heresy.

Instead, Mr. Carter explains that the police work based on facts. He indicates that the manner in which the families are engaging the media has the propensity to undermine the police investigative outcome.

The police spokesman calls on the families to work in line with police, further explaining that one of the bodies of the missing men has been found and it's taken to Kakata, Margibi County and placed in a mortuary.

He notes that the body that was discovered is yet to be identified.

Moses Carter narrates that authorities at the Liberia National Police have dispatched a 25 - men team to Bong Mines to enforce the search that is ongoing, lamenting that last week a body was found not far from the incident scene.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

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# Families claim missing men in kidnappers' custody



By Ben P. Wesee

Family members are claiming that the three missing men who were alleged to have drowned in St. Paul River are in the custody of their alleged kidnappers at an undisclosed location, but allege that big hands are preventing efforts to release the victims.

A father of one of the three missing men, Mr. Robert

Blamo, Sr. claimed in a live radio interview with local broadcaster Prime FM Monday, 2 November that the men have allegedly been relocated from Bong Mines to Monrovia by their kidnappers.

St. Moses Funeral Parlor proprietor Mr. Moses Ahoussouhe stands accused of hiring victims Robert Blamo, Jr., 29, SiafaBoimah, 33 and Blama from Monrovia since Saturday,

15 October to travel to Bong Mines to do technical work for him at his diamond creek when all three of them went missing.

Families of the three missing men have threatened unspecified actions as they continue to demand their children's living bodies from Moses Ahoussouhe.

Mr. Robert Blamo, Sr. alleges that after receiving information that their missing children were brought to Monrovia by their kidnapper, they wrote asking the police and the Justice Ministry to issue a search and seizure warrant.

But he claims that after their formal communication, the authorities declined to act.

"What I can easily confirm to you right now is that our children are not dead, they are here in Monrovia alive and being held hostage by St. Moses and the Liberia National

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# Pochettino to return amid Manchester United links

Mauricio Pochettino says he is ready to return to management, almost a year after he was sacked by Tottenham.

The Argentine's enthusiasm will no doubt intensify speculation linking him with replacing Ole Gunnar Solskjaer as manager of Manchester United.

Pressure has begun to mount on Solskjaer at Old Trafford in recent months,

with United currently 15th in the Premier League table.

After taking Spurs to the Champions League final, Pochettino has been linked with a number of top jobs including those at Real Madrid, Juventus and Paris Saint-Germain.

However, after six years in England, Pochettino seems keen to return to the Premier League.

"I discovered an amazing people in this country, an amazing culture. I am in love,"



Pochettino said on Sky Sports. "I was always ready to be involved in the game again. I love football. It's my passion, not my job.

"It's not a stress when you are working. It's not a stress to go to the training ground. It's not a stress to prepare for a game. It's not a stress to compete... look, my hair is still getting longer and longer!

"I am looking forward to being involved in the game again, I love the game.

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