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Continental News

Ethiopian forces 'march on Tigrayan capital'

Ethiopia's prime minister has said that his army is advancing on the capital of the northern region of Tigray where soldiers from the region are fighting the central government.

The government accused Tigray's forces of destroying bridges near the city of Mekelle to halt the advance.

Tigray's leader confirmed his soldiers had lost territory but said it was a temporary setback.

Hundreds of people have reportedly died in nearly two

weeks of clashes.

Verifying information from Tigray is hard due to a blackout on most communications.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed suggested on Tuesday that the fighting was coming to an end, saying "the final critical act of law enforcement will be done in the coming days".

The conflict is rooted in long-standing tension between powerful Tigrayan party the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Ethiopia's central government.

When Mr Abiy postponed a

national election due to coronavirus in June, tension escalated between the two groups. The TPLF sees the central government as illegitimate, arguing Mr Abiy no longer has a mandate to lead the country. The government accused the TPLF of attacking a military base to steal weapons, which the TPLF denied. In response, Mr Abiy ordered a military offensive, accusing the TPLF of treason. Government forces advanced on Mekelle as well as the towns of Shire and

Axum as a three-day deadline given by Prime Minister Abiy to Tigray's forces to surrender expired on Tuesday.

TPLF leader Debretsion Gebremichael confirmed to a local TV station on Wednesday that central government troops had taken control of Shire and Axum, but called it a "temporary success" for the government and vowed to defeat Mr Abiy's forces.

The government has accused Tigrayan soldiers of destroying four bridges and a section of a road near Shire and Axum. The TPLF have not commented on the accusations.

At least 27,000 people have fled over the northern border to Sudan as the UN warned a "full-scale humanitarian crisis" was unfolding.

TPLF adviser Fesseha Tessema, a former Ethiopian diplomat, told the BBC that civilian sites in Mekelle were being bombed by federal forces.

"[The people of Tigray] haven't done anything wrong, they are in their own homes, churches," Mr Fesseha said.

The federal government has denied targeting civilians and said that air attacks are aimed at the Tigrayan military. Mr Abiy suggested that a number of TPLF fighters had switched sides to the government but he did not say how many. He added that his government was "ready to receive and reintegrate our fellow Ethiopians fleeing to neighbouring countries". The UN's refugee agency, the UNHCR, has said that thousands of people have been fleeing the fighting. The agency was "on stand-by to provide assistance in Tigray when access and security allow" spokesman Babar Baloch said.

"There may be massive displacement inside Tigray and that is of course a concern and we try to prepare the best way possible," Jens Laerke, spokesman of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said.

The UN fears the numbers fleeing Ethiopia may be just a fraction of those forced from their homes by the fighting, but for the moment aid agencies have no access to the Tigray region. BBC



The loyalty oath keeping Rwandans abroad in check

Leaked footage of a controversial "oath" ceremony at the Rwandan High Commission in London has fuelled allegations of an aggressive global crackdown on dissent by the authoritarian government of the small East African nation, dubbed the new "North Korea" by its critics.

Members of the Rwandan

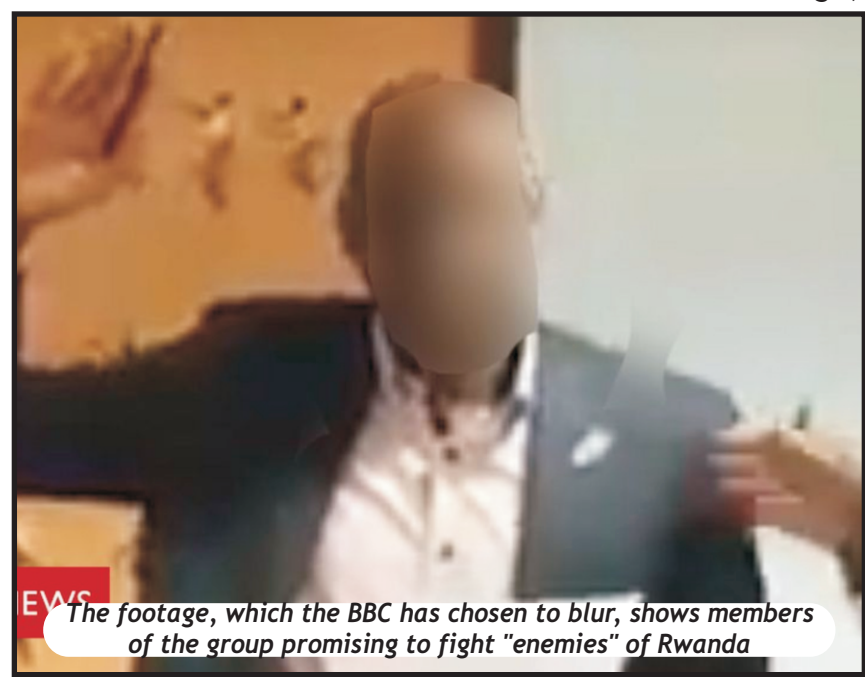
diaspora have told the BBC that such ceremonies are commonplace and designed to instil fear and obedience.

One man said his relatives back in Rwanda had been abducted and possibly killed to punish him for refusing to cooperate. The Rwandan authorities have dismissed the allegations as false and unsubstantiated.

In the video footage,

recently circulated on WhatsApp, more than 30 individuals can be seen standing in a crowded conference room at the Rwandan embassy in the UK, raising their hands and pledging loyalty to the governing party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

"If I betray you or stray from the RPF's plans and intentions, I would be betraying all Rwandans and must be punished by hanging," the group says, in Kinyarwanda, while also promising to fight "enemies of Rwanda, wherever they may be". The RPF's use of an embassy - which in London is close to Marylebone Station - for an overtly political pledge is, in itself, noteworthy. But, while some of those attending the ceremony - understood to have taken place in 2017 - may well have been genuine supporters of the governing party, now living abroad, others have told the BBC that many attendees were there under duress. BBC



The footage, which the BBC has chosen to blur, shows members of the group promising to fight "enemies" of Rwanda

SA leader Ramaphosa holds phone talks with Biden



South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa held phone talks with US President-elect Joe Biden on Tuesday evening and discussed strengthening of US-Africa relations. The two leaders also talked about ways of overcoming the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a statement from President Ramaphosa's office.

"President-elect Biden and vice-president-elect Kamala

Harris have identified Africa as a major player in international affairs and in the advancement of multilateralism," the statement said.

President Ramaphosa, who is also the African Union chairperson, said he looked forward to a strong partnership between the US and Africa. Many African leaders have congratulated Mr Biden for his election win. BBC

EDITORIAL

We need party agents in polling centers

COMMISSIONER BOAKAI DUKULY of the National Elections Commission stressed the need for party agents to be present at various polling centers across the country during the December 8, 2020 special senatorial election to monitor the polls. He made the call last Friday, 13 November at a Training of Trainers Workshop for political parties, alliances, coalition and Independent Candidates, ahead of the special senatorial election.

COMMISSIONER DUKULY FURTHER noted the role of political party agents during elections is critical to legitimacy of election results throughout the country, as their presence during voting significantly help in validating free, fair, credible and transparent election.

WE WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREED with the NEC Commissioner that candidates, parties, alliances and or coalitions vying in the December poll should do everything necessary in having their agents deployed at various polling centers across the country to monitor the elections. This is important to avoid wild or unsubstantiated claims of electoral fraud that could undermine the process.

IN OTHER WORDS, claims of electoral malpractices coming from the pending elections should be backed by facts or documentary evidence to authenticate their validity.

OVER THE YEARS, we have observed repeatedly with great disappointment that most political parties and or Independent Candidates failed to send agents or representatives to polling centers to observe both casting and counting of ballots. Yet, they are the first to alarm about malpractices, which does not demonstrate good intentions.

WHILE THE NATIONAL Elections Commission is statutorily and constitutionally responsible to conduct free, fair and transparent elections in Liberia, the Commission is not perfect in all of its activities because they are carried out by human beings, who may err or who may what to do something selfish.

HOWEVER, IF AGENTS of various political parties, alliances, coalition and Independent Candidates are present to watch the polls, they may quickly raise concerns and bring they to NEC's attention for prompt redress.

COMMISSIONER DUKULY CHALLENGED party agents to be truthful and to report exactly what they see but also to be careful in handling complaints arising out of the elections. And this is very important because if complaints are not carefully handled by parties or candidates involved, they may have the propensity to spark violence, which is counterproductive in a democratic process.

THE SUPREME COURT of Liberia has assured Liberians that it would remain fully active during and after the polls, ready to receive and address all electoral complaints in the interest of justice and peace. Political actors should learn from late Cllr. Charles Walker Brumskine, ex-leader of the opposition Liberty Party, who mustered courage and complained to the High Court during the 2017 presidential election. That was demonstration of leadership at its highest level!

EMULATING CLLR. BRUMSKINE'S style of politicking by using the law would surely go a long way in not just strengthening our growing democracy, but setting good example for our respective followers and zealous loyalists other than choosing means of violence.

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FULLY INDEPENDENT

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

COMMENTARY

By Jayati Ghosh

Vaccine Apartheid

Because a pandemic can be overcome only when it is overcome everywhere, embracing an every-country-for-itself approach would seem irrational. And yet, as the unseemly competition for vaccine doses indicates, that is exactly what many countries have done.

NEW DELHI - The American pharmaceutical company Pfizer and Germany's BioNTech have announced that the COVID-19 vaccine they are jointly developing was more than 90% effective in early clinical trials. The news raised hopes around the world that life may soon return to pre-pandemic normal.

Those hopes may not last long. The announcement also sent governments scrambling to lay claim to vaccine doses, apparently realizing a bleak prediction: wealthy countries and individuals will monopolize early doses of any effective vaccine.

The COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX) - led by the World Health Organization, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance - was established precisely to prevent this outcome. The COVAX Facility aims to accelerate COVID-19 vaccine development, secure doses for all countries, and distribute those doses fairly, beginning with the highest-risk groups. In other words, the facility was created partly to prevent hoarding by rich-country governments.

So far, more than 180 countries, representing nearly two-thirds of the world's population, have joined. This includes 94 higher-income countries, all of which have made legally binding commitments. All will have access to the vaccines in the COVAX list, and pay for their doses individually. The 92 lower-income countries that are parties to the facility will receive their doses free of charge.

The COVAX plan would have the vaccine distributed in two phases. In the first phase, all participating countries would receive doses proportionate to their populations. It would begin with enough vaccines to immunize the 3% of their population at highest risk, especially frontline workers in health and social care. Additional doses would then be delivered, until immunization covers 20% of each country's population - beginning with others most in danger from COVID-19, such as the elderly and those with co-morbidities.

In the second phase, vaccines would be delivered to specific countries based on how quickly the virus is spreading; whether other pathogens (like measles) are also spreading; and how vulnerable the country's health infrastructure is to being overwhelmed. Given the constraints at work - the BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine, for example, must be administered in two doses three weeks apart, and only 1.35 billion doses, at most, will be produced by the end of next year - it is difficult to imagine a fairer system.

And yet there are major barriers to the system's implementation. First and foremost, while China finally joined COVAX in early October, the United States has not.

Of course, given his "America First" approach, US President Donald Trump surprised no one by refusing to join. There is, however, reason to hope that President-elect Joe Biden will be more receptive. After all, Biden plans to re-join many international agreements from which Trump withdrew, and has already established a COVID-19 task force. Seth Berkley, the head of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is set to hold talks with Biden's team.

Meanwhile, China has been working aggressively and largely independently to develop and test its own vaccine. At least four candidates are currently undergoing Phase-3 trials. Though none are yet proven, Chinese officials have reportedly attempted to inoculate tens of thousands of people - possibly many more - outside the traditional testing process.

But there is another problem: COVAX participants are still competing to secure bilateral deals with pharmaceutical companies, as there is no rule against it. The United Kingdom, for example, has reserved 40 million doses of the BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine. Several other European governments have also placed orders, or are negotiating deals.

Moreover, the European Union has finalized a deal for up to 300 million doses. The US, with its population of 328 million, has ordered 100 million doses, with the rights to acquire 500 million more - a target so high that it smacks of an attempt to corner the market. Brazil - another COVAX participant - is also in talks with Pfizer, as are many others.

Within days of its announcement, Pfizer had sold more than 80% of the vaccine doses it will be able to produce by the end of next year to governments representing only 14% of the global population. In other words, if this is the first safe and effective vaccine to get to market, the vast majority of the world's population will have almost no access to it.

Many other vaccine candidates - there are currently over 200, around 50 of which are in the clinical-trial phase - are also spoken for. Rich-country governments have already cut deals for privileged access to vaccines being developed by Moderna (which has also reported promising results from clinical trials), Johnson & Johnson, and AstraZeneca, among others, should these candidates make it through the approval process. Obviously, low-income countries do not have this option.

Because a pandemic can be overcome only when it is overcome everywhere, embracing an every-country-for-itself approach would seem irrational. And yet, as the unseemly competition for vaccine doses indicates, that is exactly what many countries have done. Unless we change course, global health apartheid will become increasingly entrenched and drive inequality to new heights. And the pandemic will still be with us. We will have merely added new problems to the one we didn't solve.

O-PED

By Daoud Kuttab

What Biden Owes the Palestinians

Contrary to popular belief, a permanent settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict is not a lost cause. But it will require courageous and resolute US leadership. Whether President-elect Joe Biden will provide that remains to be seen, but pledging to ensure that Israel immediately halts settlement construction in the occupied territories would be a good start.

AMMAN - Nearly three years ago, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas took the extraordinary step of ending all negotiations with US President Donald Trump's administration, owing to its unabashed pro-Israel bias. Under President-elect Joe Biden, the Palestinian leadership is looking forward to getting back to the negotiating table. At the top of their agenda will be an end to Israel's construction of illegal settlements on Palestinian land in the occupied territories.

The Trump administration's bias in favor of Israel could not have been more blatant. Those who led the "peace process" - such as Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and the US ambassador to Israel, David Friedman - have all publicly supported Israeli settlement building and violations of Palestinian human rights.

Not surprisingly, the so-called peace plan this team devised gave Israel virtually everything it wanted, while offering no concessions to the Palestinians. Instead, the Trump administration attempted to buy Palestinians' acquiescence - or, more accurately, surrender - with promises of investment. Rather than submit, Abbas broke off discussions with the United States - a remarkable decision when one considers that, in the 1980s, the Palestinians were pleading with the Americans to hold direct talks with their leaders.

But Abbas had no choice. With the world's leading superpower on its side, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's right-wing government did not need the Palestinians' approval to ramp up its settlement building and lay the groundwork for more. In recent months, Israel has carried out an unprecedented spree of demolition of Palestinian homes and structures.

There is no question that such activities violate international humanitarian law. The United Nations Security Council confirmed as much four years ago, when it unanimously passed Resolution 2334. The resolution's preamble explicitly condemned "all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character, and status of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967," including "the construction and expansion of settlements" and "the demolition of homes and displacement of Palestinian civilians."

Yet the Trump administration remains committed to supporting Israel's violations. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who may be eyeing his own presidential run in 2024, is poised to visit an illegal Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank, making him the first US secretary of state to do so. This is a blatant violation of Resolution 2334, which calls on all states "to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967."

Since the Trump administration's betrayal, Palestinians have been fending for themselves. In protest of Israel's settlement activity, they have refused to accept taxes collected by Israel on their behalf - a decision that, together with a sharp reduction in US aid, has pushed the Palestinian Authority to the brink of bankruptcy.

This goes to show how crucial the settlement issue is to the Palestinians - and for good reason. Beyond violating international law and Palestinians' rights, Israeli settlement expansion precludes the establishment of an independent Palestinian state along the pre-1967 borders.

Fortunately, there are promising signs that Biden will take a very different approach from his predecessor. Resolution 2334 passed because US President Barack Obama's administration, then in its final days, decided not to veto it. The order came from Susan Rice, Obama's national security adviser at the time, who is now said to be on Biden's short list for secretary of state.

Of course, Biden himself was vice president in the Obama administration, and in 2014, he told Netanyahu, "I don't agree with a damn thing you say." Other projected Biden administration appointees - including incoming chief of staff Ron Klain - all oppose illegal Israeli settlement activity.

Abbas clearly hopes that this will translate into progress. After congratulating Biden on his victory, Abbas called on his administration to "strengthen Palestinian-American relations," pursue "freedom, independence, justice, and dignity" for Palestinians, and "work for peace, stability, and security for all" in the Middle East and worldwide.

Even before Biden was elected, Abbas was attempting to jump-start progress. In his speech before the UN General Assembly in September, he called on the Quartet - the US, the UN, the European Union, and Russia - to convene an international conference early next year "to engage in a genuine peace process, based on international law, UN resolutions, and the relevant terms of reference, leading to an end of the occupation."

To hold such a conference, let alone produce results, in the first days of the Biden administration is a tall order. But it is not unreasonable to expect the new administration to implement Resolution 2334 immediately - and that means bringing Israeli settlement building to a swift end.

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OPINION

By Shlomo Ben-ami

Joe Biden's World Order

Many hope that, when US President-elect Joe Biden takes over in January, he can salvage, and even renew, the American-led post-1945 liberal world order. That's an understandable desire, but it is entirely unrealistic.

TELAVIV - In less than four years, outgoing US President Donald Trump has achieved what, historically, only devastating wars had done: recast the global order. With his isolationism, wannabe authoritarianism, and sheer capriciousness, Trump gleefully took a sledgehammer to the international institutions and multilateral organizations his predecessors had built from the ashes of World War II and maintained ever since. What now?

Many hope that, when President-elect Joe Biden takes over, liberal international arrangements can be salvaged, and even renewed. That would certainly be desirable. Unfortunately, it is an unrealistic hope. A post-Trump order appears to be more about a return to the inter-bloc competition of 1945 than to post-Cold War liberal euphoria.

For starters, the Biden administration will be consumed by the daunting tasks of healing the domestic wounds that Trump has inflicted and correcting America's critical weaknesses, laid bare by the pandemic. The US' recovery from the most divisive presidency in its history will be neither quick nor painless. Reforming America is a prerequisite to restoring its capacity for global leadership.

Even if Biden's administration had infinite capacity, there would be no turning back the clock. The status quo ante sprang from a kind of post-Cold War euphoria, animated by the belief that Western liberal democracy had secured a definitive victory over the rest, and the world had reached, in Francis Fukuyama's famous formulation, the "end of history."

In the 1990s and 2000s, when the United States was the world's unrivaled economic, military, and diplomatic power, the logic of liberal hegemony was compelling. But, in today's rapidly changing multipolar world, it no longer is. This has been true for more than a decade, which is why the US was retreating from global leadership long before Trump took office.

Although Trump's isolationism is often portrayed as anomalous, it reflects a strain of American thought stretching back to the country's founding. Had German submarines not attacked American merchant ships in 1917, the US may well have stayed out of World War I.

Likewise, it was only when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941 that the US entered World War II. And after the war, US efforts to preserve peace (by deploying troops) and restore prosperity in Europe (by implementing the Marshall Plan) were driven by fear of Soviet expansion, not some sense of moral duty.

It was also in America's interest that Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, in whose administration Biden served as vice president, and even George W. Bush before him, took steps to scale back US foreign policy's hegemonic project. Like Trump, both Obama and Bush voiced frustration about inadequate burden-sharing by America's NATO allies.

The US retreat from hegemony reflects history that Biden cannot undo: America's loss of credibility as a result of its long, costly, and inconclusive Middle East wars, and the 2008 global financial crisis, which exposed the downside of globalization and the shortcomings of neoliberal orthodoxy. Far from fulfilling the promise of broadly shared prosperity, it became clear, the free-market ethos of the last few decades had facilitated the emergence of obscene inequalities and the collapse of the middle class.¹

This combination of never-ending war and rising inequality fueled the nationalist backlash that propelled Trump to victory in November 2016. The same frustrations were reflected in the United Kingdom's Brexit vote that June, France's Yellow Vest protests in 2018, and even the COVID-19 crisis.

A pandemic would seem like an unmissable opportunity for cooperation. Yet it has been met with border closures and competition over supplies and future vaccine doses, not to mention curbs on civil liberties and expansion of surveillance capabilities, including in democracies. Simply put, just when we need global cooperation the most, our broken multilateral system has driven us back to the bosom of the nation-state.

So, the world seems to be returning to a Westphalian order, in which sovereignty prevails over international rules. Trump's "America First" stance fits neatly within such an order. And while China touts international cooperation in some realms, multilateralism is a fundamentally alien concept to it. It would oppose the revival of a world order based on liberal precepts. Other big nationalist powers (such as Brazil, India, Russia, and Turkey) and smaller ones in Eastern Europe (Hungary and Poland) move broadly within the same illiberal realm.

The Biden administration should aspire to lead the world's democracies in their competition with a rising authoritarian bloc, while upholding the multilateral institutions and structures most essential to peace. To this end, it should immediately abandon its predecessor's connivance with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and replace his bellicose strategy toward Iran with an effort to reach a revised, durable nuclear agreement. Fortunately, it appears set to do both.

At the same time, the Biden administration will need to treat America's alliances more as collective enterprises, which the US ideally leads without dominating. From the allies' side, this shift has already begun, with European leaders, especially French President Emmanuel Macron, increasingly recognizing the need to take Europe's security into their own hands. The US should work with an empowered European Union to contain Russia's revisionism on NATO's borders and end its hybrid war on Western democracies.¹

Similarly, to manage its ongoing strategic confrontation with China, the US will need to work with its Asian allies, such as a rearmed Japan and South Korea. With China having all but abandoned its "peaceful rise" strategy, avoiding violent conflict will be a delicate balancing act.

More broadly, the US will need to galvanize the world's liberal democracies to forge a bloc capable of standing up to the world's authoritarians. This should include efforts to counter the forces of disintegration within the EU and, potentially, to transform NATO into a broader security alliance of democracies.

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**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Grand Bassa County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BARCHUE	ANTHONY	NEKI	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
2	DAYKEAY	EMMANUEL	BRAVY	Male	National Democratic Coalition (NDC)	Accepted
3	DIXON	DAVE	LLEWELLYN	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
4	FINDLEY	GBEHZOHNAR	MILTON	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
5	HARRIS	MAGDALENE	MAGDALENE	Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	KARNGA-LAWRENCE	NYONBLEE		Female	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
7	VAH, II	CHARLES	PAUL	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
8	WILLIE, II	VICENT	S.T.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Gbarpolu County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BENDA, SR.	JOHN	KERKULA	Male	Liberia Transformation Party (LTP)	Accepted
2	GBOWEE	ALLEN	M.	Male	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted
3	JALLAH	ARMAH	ZOLU	Male	People's Unification Party (PUP)	Accepted
4	KANNEH	BOTOE		Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
5	KENNEDY	PAUL	KOULBOI	Male	Liberian National Union (LINU)	Accepted
6	KOIWOOD	ALFRED	GAYFLOR	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
7	TAWEH, III	BOIMAH	QUAYE	Male	United People's Party (UPP)	Accepted
8	TOKPA	ALARIC	K.	Male	National Democratic Coalition (NDC)	Accepted
9	ZINNAH	SAM	KAMARA	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Bong County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	CORNEH	ADAM	BILL	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
2	DUMOE	MENIPAKEI		Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	FLOMO, JR.	MOGANA	SZORKPOR	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
4	MOYE	PRINCE	KERMUE	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
5	NASSER	MOHAMMED	A.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	SAGBEH	BENEDICT	KPAKAMA	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
7	TOOMANN	DOROTHY	KWENNAH	Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
8	YALLAH	HENRY	WILLIE	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Bomi County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	DORLEY	SOKO	ADAMA	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
2	JOHNSON	SANDO	DAZOE	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
3	NORMAN	ZOBONG	BOIMA	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
4	SNOWE, JR.	EDWIN	MELVIN	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
5	TYLER, SR.	JENEKAI	ALEX	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted



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**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Grand Kru County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BAHWAY, SR.	NATHANIEL	N.	Male	Liberian National Union (LINU)	Accepted
2	BARTEKWA	NUMENE	T.H.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	CLARKE	LAWRENCE	SNOR	Male	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted
4	COLEMAN	PETER	SONPON	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
5	SEGBE	ALFRED	TOE	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	SNEH	ROSALIND	SEGBE TONNE	Female	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
7	TUIDER	WILLIAM	WIAH	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
8	WASHINGTON, JR.	GEORGE	TOE SIEH	Male	National Democratic Coalition (NDC)	Accepted
9	WLEH	NICHOLAS	N. DORYEN	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Grand Gedeh County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BOLEY, SR	GEORGE	SAIGBE	Male	United People's Party (UPP)	Accepted
2	COOPER, II	CYRUS	S.	Male	People's Unification Party (PUP)	Accepted
3	DUNCAN	FELICIA	FLAHN DOBOYONNOH	Female	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
4	GEEBRO	JOSEPH	W.	Male	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted
5	JOHNSON	BEATRICE	WONNAH	Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	NIMELY	THOMAS	YAYA	Male	Liberia Restoration Party (LRP)	Accepted
7	NYANUE	WILLIAM	G.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
8	PENNUE, SR.	ZOE	EMMANUEL	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
9	ZLEH	AMOS		Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Grand Cape Mount County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BROPLEH	HAWA	CORNEH	Female	Liberian National Union (LINU)	Accepted
2	BROWN	JEBEH	DAKEL	Female	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
3	KAMARA	EMERSON	VAYOMO	Male	People's Unification Party (PUP)	Accepted
4	KROMAH	FODEE		Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
5	SHERIFF	SIAFA	GARGBEH	Male	Liberia Restoration Party (LRP)	Accepted
6	SONII	MAMBU	M.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
7	TAYLOR	SIMEON	BOIMA	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
8	WATSON	VICTOR	VARNEY	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
9	WAYNE	SANDO		Male	United People's Party (UPP)	Accepted
10	ZOEDUA	EDWIN	G.K.	Male	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Lofa County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	AGHAILAS	TAMBA	DABAH	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
2	DUKULY	ABRAHIM	M.	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
3	FOFANA	MARIAMU	BEYAN	Female	All Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP)	Accepted
4	JALLAH	JOSEPH	KPATOR	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
5	JONES	DEDEH	NOHR	Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	KAMARA	MOHAMED	O.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
7	MOIWULA	GORDON	NYUMA	Male	Liberia Restoration Party (LRP)	Accepted
8	NDEBE	JOHNNY	K. M.	Male	Liberian National Union (LINU)	Accepted
9	SAMUKAI	BROWNIE	JEFFREY	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
10	TENGBEH	GEORGE	TAMBA	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
11	WIAH	JULIE	FATORMA	Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted



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 Website: www.necliberia.org



**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Montserrado County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BENSON JR.	BERNARD	DJ-BLUE	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
2	DILLON	ABRAHAM	DARIUS	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
3	DIXON	PHIL	TARPEH	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
4	FALLAH	THOMAS	PANGAR	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
5	KING	EVANGELINE	ISRAEL	Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	KOUYATEH	SHEIKH	AL-MOUSTAPHA	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
7	TANDANPOLIE	SIAH	JARMIE	Female	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted
8	TEAH	CECELIA	SIAWAY	Female	National Democratic Coalition (NDC)	Accepted
9	TUKPAH	ISAAC	VAH	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
10	WOLOKOLIE	JAMIMA	K.H.	Female	Movement for One Liberia (MOL)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Maryland County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	ANDERSON, SR.	WILLIAM	PHILLIP	Male	Liberia Restoration Party (LRP)	Accepted
2	BALLOUT JR	JOHN	AKEL	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	BINEY	JAMES	POBEE	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
4	GIKO	ERIC	WLEA	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
5	MORAIS	H.	DAN	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	ROLAND	ISAAC	BLALU	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
7	TOPOR	WOLLOR	EMMANUEL	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
8	YANCY	RICHARD	EMMANUEL WILBERT	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Margibi County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BEDELL, JR.	GABRIEL	GAHIE	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
2	COLLINS	ALEXANDER	BANGO	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	COOPER	OSCAR	A.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
4	FOFANA	BEN	A.	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
5	JONES	IVAR	KOKULO	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
6	MACAULAY	PRINCESS	S.	Female	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted
7	NUQUAY	EMMANUEL	JAMES	Male	People's Unification Party (PUP)	Accepted

**2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES**

Nimba County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	COOPER	D.	DORR	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
2	DOLO	SAYE-TAAYOR	ADOLPHUS	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	GONGLOE-WEH	EDITH	LIANUE	Female	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
4	GRUPEE	THOMAS	S.	Male	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted
5	KOUNG	JEREMIAH	KPAN	Male	Movement for Democracy and Reconstruct	Accepted
6	WONGBE	TAA	Z.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
7	YEALUE, JR.	GARRISON	DOLDEH	Male	People's Unification Party (PUP)	Accepted



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2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES

Rivercess County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BLOH	JANJAY	M.	Female	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
2	BORBOR	WINSTON	GARPUE	Male	United People's Party (UPP)	Accepted
3	BROWN	PRINCE	B.	Male	Liberian National Union (LINU)	Accepted
4	GUEH	DALLAS	A.V.	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
5	SMITH	GABRIEL	BUCHANAN	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
6	SMITH	WELLINGTON	GEEVON	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
7	STROTHER	EDDIE	JARQUE	Male	Movement for Progressive Change (MPC)	Accepted
8	TEQUAH	STEVE		Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
9	ZIANKAHN	BOB	RANCY	Male	People's Unification Party (PUP)	Accepted

2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES

River Gee County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	BARDYL	CHARLES	KORKOR	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
2	JAYE	MATTHEW	N.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	SOGBIE	JONATHAN	BOYCHARLES	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
4	YOUNGE	FRANCIS	SAYWON	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted

2020 SPECIAL SENATORIAL ELECTION
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES

Sinoe County

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	CHEA	AUGUSTINE	S.	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
2	CHEESEMAN	ANDY	M.S.	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
3	QUIOH	THOMAS	ROMEO	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
4	SCOTLAND-BRIAMAH	GRACE		Female	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted



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2020 REPRESENTATIVE BY-ELECTIONS
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES

Montserrado County
 District: 9

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	CATAKAW	B.	MILLER	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
2	DEBBAH	JAMES	SALINSA	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	FODAY	RAHAILE	M.	Female	Movement for One Liberia (MOL)	Accepted
4	FOKO, JR.	FRANK	SAAH	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted
5	GIBSON	CYVETTE		Female	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
6	HENRIES	FUBBI	FRANKLIN ARMAH	Male	Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)	Accepted
7	LLOYD	EDMOND	K.P.P.	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
8	ROBERTS	SAAH		Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted

2020 REPRESENTATIVE BY-ELECTIONS
 FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES

Sinoe County
 District: 2

S/No:	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Gender	Party	Recommendation
1	CALL, JR.	FREDERICK	KPENNIE	Male	Liberian National Union (LINU)	Accepted
2	DENNIS	ABRAHAM	SARKPA	Male	Independent Candidate (IND)	Accepted
3	DOE	S.N.	SUNNY	Male	People's Unification Party (PUP)	Accepted
4	JARTEH, II	S. NAGBE		Male	Liberia Transformation Party (LTP)	Accepted
5	KOON	THOMAS	TOGBA	Male	Movement for One Liberia (MOL)	Accepted
6	McCAULEY	JEREMIAH	W.N.	Male	National Democratic Coalition (NDC)	Accepted
7	NAGBE	OTHELLO	DOE	Male	Rainbow Alliance (RA)	Accepted
8	WIAH	SAMSON	QUEJUE	Male	Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)	Accepted

LMD FELLOW'S STORY:

No road, no vote: Voters in Bong protest

By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan, Bong County

Small towns and villages across Liberia, disconnected from the main roads and basic infrastructure, may see voters segregated from their basic, constitutional voting right. And when voters ask for accommodations to be able to cast their ballots, authorities seem unable to find a simple solution.

This is exactly the case of two small establishments in Bong County.

Founded in 1960, Tinsue is a village in the Bong County, with an estimated population of nine hundred souls. The "road" is no more than a footpath that has not been blessed by the wheels of a vehicle since its creation. Motorbikers phen-phen even struggle to get here.

It connects to several other villages in the far north of Zota, forming a straight line of foot paths to neighboring Guinea, about 10 miles to the east.

Citizens of the Wornukai and Tinsue had to walk almost three hours on a good day before reaching Belefanai, which is the headquarters of Zota, where the voter registration process took place. But that was okay, and a sacrifice they were willing to make.

However, voters in these two villages are now taking issue with the National Elections Commission (NEC)'s upper Bong County office because it allegedly refused to establish a polling station in Kelly's village where it would allow more people to



A partial view of Tinsue and the road

establish a polling station closer to their community so that everyone has a chance to exercise their constitutional right of voting, especially since the voting is about amendments to the law of the nation.

Youth President of Wornukai, Philip Kollie, said that lack of access to a proper road does not only mean voter suppression, but complete disconnect from the rest of the country and abandonment by leaders

voter turnout.

In 2017, only 54.5% of the total registered voters in Bong county cast their ballot. Bong also registered one of the highest numbers of invalid votes, suggesting that the people were not properly educated on how to cast their ballot. The NEC has not published voter turnout results for Belefanai polling center.

The number of polling places per county in the 26 December 2017 Presidential Run-off. Source: NEC

When contacted, NEC Upper Bong Magistrate, Daniel Newland, said that establishing polling a center can be done by the NEC, maintaining that it is not an event --but a process.

Newland said they usually establish polling centers based on proximity, adding that "[i]t cannot be done on individual call, but the NEC can investigate by carrying on [a] facts finding [mission] because whenever we establish a center, we will have to increase the budget for that center," he clarified. He clarified that before establishing a center, the NEC head office -not the Magistrate- will mandate it.

"This polling center establishment has been a cry all over, so not only the people of Tinsue and surrounding communities, for example, in Gbarpolu County, you have people walking for more than four hours so that is not only happening here in Bong County," Newland noted.

Mr. Newland promised to forward the information to the Board of Commissioners of NEC but also urged citizens to engage their lawmakers on the issue, instead of only depending on the NEC, on grounds that the lawmakers are the ones responsible to make allotments for NEC operational budgets.

County	Polling Places	%
Bomi	158	100.0%
Bong	502	100.0%
Grand Bassa	388	100.0%
Grand Cape Mount	171	100.0%
Grand Gedeh	167	100.0%
Grand Kru	99	100.0%
Lofa	417	100.0%
Margibi	382	100.0%
Maryland	156	100.0%
Montserrado	1,790	100.0%
Nimba	699	100.0%
Rivercess	97	100.0%
Sinoe	136	100.0%
River Gee	95	100.0%
Gbarpolu	133	100.0%
National	5,390	100.0%



Mr. Stephen Barclay, Tinsue Town Chief

vote. They even appealed to the NEC for this solution back in 2017; however, there was no cooperation or communication on this proposed compromise.

Stephen Barclay, the town chief of Tinsue said that a majority of the citizens in his town, and especially the elderly people, were unable to register to vote in 2017 and this was exactly the case in 2020, because of the bad road and long distance.

"The road is very bad to the extent that even when you are walking, you will have to be careful with the many gutters along the way. There is no way that motorcycle can even reach our area least to mention [a] car."

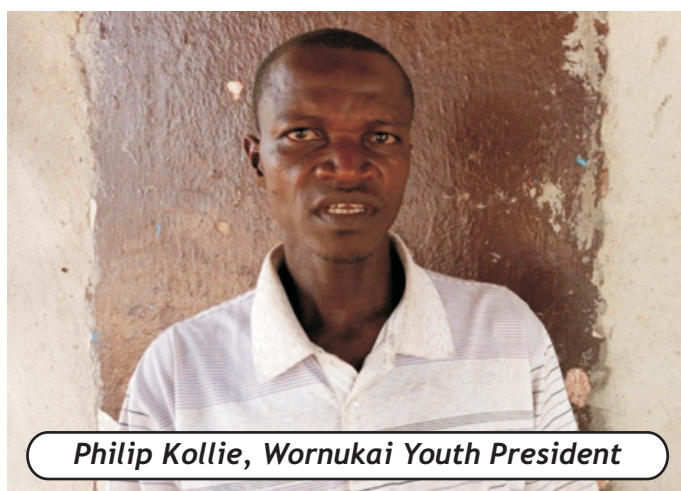
Garman Twayah, aged 76, said that she would love to participate in the electoral process, but her age does not permit her to walk long distances to register or vote. MaTwayah said that she was lucky to succeed to register in 2017 when she had already gone for treatment in Belefanai but did not vote on October 10, 2017 because of the long distance.

"We want the authorities to help fix our road, at least when that is done, we will no longer have to walk but to easily get on motorbike or car to get to the district headquarters" she added. This is why, Ma Twayah said, the NEC must make an effort and

seeking votes. He believes the leaders are not interested in significant investments to areas with small numbers of votes.

"I think the only reason politicians are not bringing development to our area is because we cannot highly contribute to their elections. The road condition is responsible for everything because if motorbike or car were coming here, you could see more people leaving from here to go and register to vote" Kollie explained.

He alleged that the National Election Commission has failed to establish a polling center in their area which, he said, has also greatly contributed to low



Philip Kollie, Wornukai Youth President

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Ivoirian refugees over 10,000

-as gov't, partners tour Nimba, Maryland counties
By Patrick N. Mensah (Maryland) & Roger Akin Than, (Nimba)

Amidst political tension in neighboring Ivory Coast due to recent election, about 500 Ivoirians fleeing the violence, have crossed to Maryland County, southeast Liberia.

George A Prowd, led the delegation to the camp.

Superintendent Prowd thanked members of the delegation for the visit and assured that as local authorities, representing the Liberia government, they will

She cautioned to avoid misunderstanding among themselves and to always adhere to preventive measures for Covid-19, noting that COVID-19 hasn't be declared free from both countries.

"I am encouraging you to be moderate in talking to one another, feel at home; Liberia is your neighboring Country", Madam Okoro said.

She recalled that since the political situation in Ivory Coast, statistics has shown that about 500 Ivoirians have crossed into Maryland County, and are currently residing in the Little Wlebo Refugees Camp.

Responding on behalf of fellow refugees, Mr. Albert Didan, one of the refugees outlined problems they are faced with inside the camp.

Mr. Didan named lack of conducive shelter, water, school, hospital, food, and latrines, among others.

"Let me say that we are pleased to see the UNHCR Country Representative in our mist, but we are appealing to the government and international partners to come to our aid", he pleaded.

Meanwhile, the Government of Liberia and international partners have

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 15



Internal Affairs Minister Sirleaf leads delegation

On Monday, November 16, 2020, a high-powered delegation including UNICEF, WFP and LRRRC visited Little Wlebo Refugees Camp in Harper, Maryland County Electoral District#1. Maryland County Superintendent

ensure safety and improvement for the newly arrived Ivoirians.

UNHCR Country Representative Roseline Okoro, said the aim of the visit was to observing the emergency situations of the Ivoirian Refugees in the county.

Pastor mourns woman killed by falling tree

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland

The resident pastor of the United Methodist Church in Gbon, Karluway (Electoral District#3) Maryland County mourns the death of a 40-year-old woman, Dorothy Nimely, who was killed by a falling rubber tree in her farm.

The deceased had gone to the farm with her eight-year-old daughter only identified as Moneygirl Nimely, when the incident occurred recently.

Narrating in tears during an interview with the NewDawn in the district, Pastor Thomas Wilson laments that the death of the Madam Dorothy Nimely is as a result of recent violent storm that led to a rubber tree falling on the 40-year-old victim woman and her daughter, killing her instantly while the daughter is said to be in a critical condition.

Pastor Wilson says the entire town is grieved by the death of Madam Nimely,



Pastor Thomas Wilson

noting that this is the first of such experience in Gbon.

Family sources reveal the deceased had six children - three boys and three girls, was a very outspoken person.

Martha Cummings, a close friend of the decess, regrets the painful death.

Miss Cummings describes the death of Dorothy as painful, frustrating and a serious blow to

her children, family and fellow women.

Meanwhile, several residents of the town are calling on government to rehabilitate feeder road to their area.

They explain that bad road network is a serious hindrance to infrastructure and social development in the district.

Pastor Wilson, who is a

Chief Justice clarifies halt on election

By Ben P. Wesee

Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor, Sr., says the Supreme Court did not place a stay order on campaign activities for the pending Senatorial election, but it did place a stay order on the final candidate roll following a complaint filed by one of the aspirants of Margibi County, Mr. Mulbah Jackollie.

Speaking Wednesday, 18 November, he said there was no stay order placed on campaign activities, noting that the stay order was only placed on the final candidates' roll by the National Elections Commission (NEC).

His comments were in reaction to media publication

think that the Supreme Court placed restriction to stop the electoral process that is already ongoing.

Instead, he explains that the stay order which was lifted Tuesday by the Supreme Court was not placed earlier on the entire election activities.

The stay order followed a complaint filed by the lawyers representing Margibi County senatorial aspirant Mulbah Jackollie against the National Elections Commission for allegedly denying him due process.

The lifting of the stay order came when Jackollie's lawyers on Tuesday, 17 November withdrew overnight from the



Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.

on Wednesday that the Supreme Court had lifted a stay order on elections activities, following the court's decision Tuesday to lift the stay order it had placed on the release of the final candidate roll.

"If you have problem with the National Elections Commission or adjourned to this, and this we have cleared that the adjustment made first before the final list can be published, that's why the Justices in chamber put the stay order on the final candidate roll," Chief Justice Korkpor says.

According to the Chief Justice, the public should not

lawsuit. The stay order initially placed by Chamber Justice Sie-A-Nyene Yuoh mandated the NEC to put a hold on all other activities, including the publication of the final list of candidates to contest the election, as well as the declaration of the opening of campaign pending the outcome of the hearing of Jackollie's complaint.

It is unclear as to what necessitated the law firm's decision, especially when the lawyers assured Jackollie that they would do everything legally possible to have him participate in the pending senatorial election.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

volunteer health worker in Gbon, Karluway Statutory District discloses the town has a total population of about 2,900 residents.

Gbon is surrounded by other towns that are alone the main road leading to the Cavalla River with a very huge

population that focuses on food production.

But with the food being produced by farmers in huge quantity due to the human population in the area, road connectivity remains a major challenge for farmers.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Bomi: Uncertainty Over The Referendum As Politician Discourages People from Voting

By Ibrahim M. Sesay (LMD Election Reporting Fellow)

One of the referendum propositions seeks to reduce the term in office for elected officials, but House Representative Edwin Melvin Snowe said that he is telling his supporters and citizens of Bomi county not to vote in the referendum. However, Snowe is seeking votes for a Senate seat.

Liberia gears up for the special senatorial election, two by-elections for the House and a national referendum to be conducted on December 8, 2020, in less than three weeks. But as the National Elections Commission (NEC), the main organizing body, speeds ahead with the plans, more and more people speak up against holding the referendum on the scheduled date in order to allow more time for voter education.

The national referendum seeks to reduce the term in office for both the Presidency and the House of Representatives from six to five years; the Senate from nine to seven years; to legalize dual citizenship or dual nationality and change the date for presidential and general elections from second Tuesday in October to second Tuesday in November, respectively.

One main complaint surrounds the issue of term in office, or tenure, for the Presidency, House and Senate officials, which are clustered under Proposition 2, and does not provide room for independent thought on each.

For instance, Representative Edwin Melvin Snowe from Bomi county, who is running for a Senate seat, argued that Proposition 2 seeks to reduce tenure for members of the House of Representatives but is silent on tenure of the Speaker, currently set at six years. To become speaker for the House, one should first become elected lawmaker, meaning that while there could be a reduction in tenure for members of the House, the Speaker will not be affected, even though he effectively represents a constituency in Maryland county, southeast Liberia.

The NEC currently conducts regional civic and

voter education programs across the country on all three counts. But voters struggle to understand the constitutional propositions, and especially the one that seeks to legislate dual citizenship for Liberians.

Several of these voters voiced their concerns during a one-day Community Media Forum (CMF) organized by the Center for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP) in Gbah Jallakeh, Bomi county, western Liberia.

The forum sought to provide Liberians an opportunity to learn about the referendum and ask questions on issues that they did not understand.

Bomi voter, Morris S. Konah, believed that the referendum is rushed and lack of knowledge on how to vote may lead to many invalid ballots.

"As far as I see this

certain positions that you can't [run] for; for example, [you] will not be allowed to run for the positions of senator and representative, as it is now in America, where some naturalized American won seats. I believe this is one of the areas we should look at to avoid future problem, more awareness needs to be done and the time is short."

Titus M. Wleh, also a voter in Bomi, sees things differently relative to tenures for members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

"My concern has been drawn to two issues here, mainly from the Legislature, the Speaker normally in this country under our law, the Speaker for the House of Representatives is going for six years and the Senate is

awareness among voters before December 8.

"The law is when the Legislature passes a resolution, the action to move forward with the referendum takes place within a year, so the legislature passed this resolution in September 2019 and in 2020, the government decides to move ahead consistent with law. They keep raising the issue of lack of awareness, but people are explaining to them; there is still enough time."

Rep. Edwin Melvin Snowe disagreed. He claimed that voters have not been properly informed about the referendum, which is an important act of modifying the country's supreme law: the Constitution. He insisted that more education needs to happen to inform voters on what they are asked to vote on, what, and why it is important.

He added that Proposition 2 about reducing tenures of elected officials should have been separated for the House, the Senate and the Presidency.

"I think our citizens have not been properly informed about the referendum. Referendum is a serious situation because you are changing portion of your Constitution, so we need to do more public awareness, we need [to] let the citizens know what is happening, what we want to change, why we want to change it."

During an interactive forum with journalists at Accountability Lab in Monrovia in October, Mr. Jappah Nah, head of the Referendum organization at the NEC said that the Commission did a lot of work to make it this far in the referendum process. He noted that the Constitution sets the legal basis for organizing the Referendum and the NEC communication section will shortly roll out awareness messages across the country on the process.

The Commission is currently involved with regional public awareness on the Referendum, grouping all 15 counties based regions.

"We have been doing lot of work around this referendum that has delayed the process.

It is the Constitution that sets the legal basis for the holding of Referendum in our country and after that we need to have several discussions around it. As we speak, the communication session will shortly begin producing awareness messages about the referendum and it will be aired on several community radio stations in the counties." Mr. Nah said.

Chapter XII, Articles (91) (92) and (93) of the Constitution of Liberia under the title, Amendments reads:

"This Constitution may be amended whenever a proposal by either (1) two-thirds of the membership of both Houses of the Legislature or (2) a petition submitted to the Legislature, by not fewer than 10,000 citizens which receives the concurrence of two-thirds of membership of both Houses of the Legislature, is ratified by two-thirds of the registered voters, voting in a referendum conducted by the Elections Commission not sooner than one year after the action of the Legislature.

Proposed constitutional amendments shall be accompanied by statements setting for the reasons therefore and shall be published in the Official Gazette and made known to the people through the information services of the Republic. If more than one amendment is to be voted upon in a referendum they shall be submitted in such manner that the people may vote for or against them separately.

The limitation of the presidential term of office to two terms, each of six years duration, may be subject to amendment; provided that the amendment shall not become effective during the term of office of the incumbent President."

Particularly, it is based upon Article 92 of the above chapter in the Constitution, which states, "If more than one amendment is to be voted upon in a referendum they shall be submitted in such manner that the people may vote for or against them separately", which is not being done in this case.



referendum, the counts that are on this paper, I think that [they are] very belated and I want to ask the Elections Commission to postpone this referendum for now because awareness is low and time is very short; our people are not educated on how to carry out this awareness. If this referendum goes on, we will have too many damaged ballot papers during the election," Konah said.

Another participant and resident of Gbah Jallakeh, Saah S. Sheriff, believed that naturalized Liberian should be allowed the opportunity to run for seats in the country's Legislative body.

"The proposition that talks about dual citizenship, if it goes into law, as a naturalized citizen of Liberia, there are

going for nine years and we will want an even number for the Speaker, who controls the Lower House. He heads the House from six years so you have to elect the Speaker to go for the same five years because you want an even number and the issue of the pro-tempore; we will want an even number so this has to be clearly defined and well explained. The commission [NEC] has a lot to do if this referendum is to be a success," Wleh explained.

Responding to some of the concerns, Attorney Alphonsus Zeon, one of the panelists for CMF, explained that when the Legislature passes a resolution, the referendum must take place within a year. Zeon believes that there is still enough time to conduct

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Français

Le Sénat Libérien répond au tribunal de la CEDEAO

La direction du Sénat libérien a répondu au président du tribunal de la CEDEAO sur sa récente décision en faveur de l'ancien juge associé du Libéria, Kabineh Ja'neh. Le sénat maintient et persiste qu'il n'a en aucun cas violé ni la loi ni les droits de l'ancien juge associé de la Cour suprême du Libéria.

Dans un communiqué publié à Monrovia le mardi 17 novembre sous les autorités du chef du Sénat Albert Chie, le sénat a déclaré qu'il aurait pu réagir au verdict du tribunal de la CEDEAO plus tôt n'eut été le fait qu'il ne soit à même de réunir le quorum du fait des campagnes électorales pour les prochaines élections sénatoriales.

« En raison de la désinformation colportée d'un média à l'autre par des

Asante a en outre ordonné au gouvernement libérien de restituer et de payer tous ses droits retenus, y compris les salaires, les indemnités et les prestations de retraite à compter de la date de sa destitution jusqu'à la date de notification du jugement du tribunal.

Le Juge Janeh a été destituée ses fonctions de juge associé de la Cour suprême du Libéria à la suite d'une procédure de destitution qu'il qualifie d'inconstitutionnelle.

Il considère que l'ensemble du procès en destitution, sa condamnation et son remplacement constituent une violation de ses droits à un procès équitable, une atteinte à sa dignité.

Ja'neha fait valoir qu'en vertu du chapitre VII, article 72 (B) de la Constitution libérienne de 1986, il s'est vu

Ja'neh s'est déroulé de manière très juste et transparente, comme le prescrivent la Constitution libérienne de 1986, les lois pertinentes du pays et le Règlement permanent du Sénat libérien.

Selon le Sénat, Ja'neh s'est vu accorder une procédure régulière comme l'exigent ces lois et d'autres instruments juridiques et ses droits fondamentaux ont été respectés pendant tout le processus de son procès au Sénat.

La Constitution du Libéria, le Règlement permanent de la Chambre des représentants, le Règlement permanent du Sénat et la préséance ont clairement établi les règles d'engagement entre les deux chambres du parlement.

Le Sénat a révisé l'article 63 de son règlement intérieur, qui traite de la procédure de destitution mentionnée à l'article 43 de la Constitution. Cette règle de procédure de destitution a été validée et approuvée par le pouvoir législatif le 30 mars 2009.

Lors de son examen de la règle de procédure relative à la procédure de destitution, comme cela est indiqué à l'article 63, le Sénat a fait remarquer que l'article 24 du règlement indique qu'une personne mise en accusation ne peut être acquittée ou condamnée que par au moins les deux tiers des membres du Sénat présents. Cela est en porte à faux avec la Constitution du Libéria qui demande un vote des deux tiers de l'ensemble des membres du Sénat pour acquitter ou condamner un agent public mis en accusation.

Par conséquent, l'article 24 du Règlement du Sénat a été révisé pour rendre l'article 63 du Sénat cohérent avec la Constitution du Libéria, a-t-il dit.

« Le procès a eu lieu dans les chambres du Sénat sous la présidence du juge en chef de la Cour suprême. La loi de procédure pénale révisée du Libéria, chapitre 2.2, stipule : " Dans toutes les poursuites pénales, l'accusé jouit du droit d'être représenté par un avocat à tous les stades de la procédure à partir du moment de l'arrestation, comparution initiale et soumission de l'accusé à la compétence du tribunal".

Le juge Ja'neh était présent tout au long du procès

La Cour suprême confirme la candidature de Brownie Samukai aux prochaines sénatoriales

La Cour suprême du Libéria a rejeté une pétition visant à annuler la décision de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) qui avait validé la candidature de l'ancien ministre de la Défense J. Brownie J. Samukai aux élections sénatoriales de 2020 après qu'un tribunal inférieur l'ait reconnu coupable de détournement de fonds publics, de vol propriété et complot criminel.

M. Samukai et deux autres fonctionnaires du Ministère de la défense avaient été condamnés par le tribunal pénal "C" en avril de cette année pour avoir prétendument utilisé à mauvais escient les fonds générés par la déduction des salaires d'officiers des Forces armées du Libéria (AFL).

Le juge de la Cour pénale «C» Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay avait condamné Samukai et son adjoint Joseph P. Johnson à deux ans de prison avec sursis, à condition qu'ils restituent le montant total ou substantiel de la somme du jugement dans un délai de six mois et stipulent la restitution du solde dans un délai de 12 mois. En outre, le juge Gbeisay avait condamné le troisième accusé James Nyumah Dorkor à une peine d'emprisonnement avec sursis de six mois, à condition qu'il restitue sa part de la somme en totalité ou en partie substantielle en six mois et dépose une stipulation pour payer le solde en 12 mois.

Annonçant les condamnations jeudi 23 avril, le juge Gbeisay avait rappelé que le tribunal, à l'issue d'un procès régulier, avait jugé les trois accusés coupables des crimes de détournement de fonds publics, un crime de premier degré, le vol de biens pour plus d'un million USD, un crime du deuxième degré et une conspiration criminelle.

Alors que l'appel sur cette question était devant la Cour suprême, un groupe appelé Consortium of Lofa Citizens a demandé à la NEC de rejeter la candidature de Samukai à l'élection sénatoriale du comté de Lofa pour avoir fait l'objet d'une condamnation dans un procès pénal.

Cependant, la NEC a jugé que la plainte du groupe était sans fondement et l'a donc rejeté, permettant à M. Samukai de briguer les sénatoriales.

Mécontent de la décision de la NEC, le groupe a sollicité l'intervention de la Cour suprême. Mais là aussi, il a

essuyé une défaite cuisante. Dans sa décision unanime, la Cour suprême a déclaré que la NEC est un organe de régulation autonome du gouvernement du Libéria chargé de la responsabilité d'organiser des élections publiques.

« Conformément à cette responsabilité, elle a en outre la responsabilité d'élaborer des règlements, des lignes directrices et des procédures régissant les processus menant aux élections. Ces règlements, directives et procédures sont contraignants et ont force et effet de la loi, à moins qu'ils soient en contradiction avec la Constitution du Libéria », a dit la haute cour de justice.

La Cour suprême a déclaré en outre que la loi électorale ne prévoit aucune disposition concernant les plaintes, contestations et appels préélectorales.

« Ainsi, conformément au pouvoir de la NEC d'élaborer des règlements, des lignes directrices et des procédures régissant les processus menant aux élections, elle a promulgué le règlement sur la nomination des candidats qui prévoit qu'un "challenger ou l'aspirant / candidat contesté" peut faire appel d'une décision du Conseil des commissaires du NEC à la Cour suprême dans les deux jours suivant la décision », a dit le tribunal.

La Cour continue que la disposition de la loi électorale prévoyant qu'un appel doit être porté devant la Cour suprême dans un délai de sept jours s'applique aux contestations postélectorales et non aux contestations préélectorales d'une nomination de candidat comme dans le cas présent.

La Cour suprême ajoute que le fait que le groupe n'ait pas fait son appel dans les deux jours conformément aux procédures de nomination des candidats 2020 promulguées par la NEC est un motif valable de rejet de l'appel.

« C'est pourquoi et compte tenu de ce qui précède, la décision du Conseil des commissaires de la NEC rejetant l'appel des requérants est confirmée », déclare la Cour suprême, ordonnant au greffier d'envoyer un mandat à la NEC pour qu'elle procède et exécute sa décision à partir de laquelle l'appel émanait.



détructeurs politiques et des personnes mal informées de la sphère publique sur les procès de l'ancien juge adjoint, il est important de rétablir les faits », a dit le sénat.

Les juges siégeant au tribunal de la CEDEAO à Abuja, au Nigéria, dans un verdict rendu le mardi 10 novembre, ont ordonné au gouvernement libérien de soit réintégrer le juge associé Kabineh M. Ja'neh ou de lui accorder le droit de prendre sa retraite en toute dignité.

En plus, il faut lui verser 200 000 USD (deux cent mille dollars) en réparation du préjudice moral qu'il a subi pour la violation de ses droits.

Le juge associé de la Cour suprême réclamait dans son recours la bagatelle 25 millions de dollars américains en compensation.

Le juge Edward Amoako

garantir l'exercice et la protection de la fonction de juge associé et exhibé une bonne conduite jusqu'à l'âge de 70 ans.

Cependant, les législateurs qui ont porté des accusations contre lui disent le contraire. Ils ont par conséquent procédé à sa destitution de ses fonctions.

L'une des affaires qui a déclenché le procès en destitution du juge associé Ja'neh au Libéria concerne un différend foncier qui l'opposait une certaine Mme Annie Yancy Constance.

Il a été accusé par les législateurs d'abus de pouvoir, lui reprochant d'avoir utilisé son influence en tant que juge associé pour obtenir une décision en sa faveur à la Cour suprême pour prendre possession du terrain.

Le Sénat maintient que le procès de l'ancien juge associé

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Français

Le Sénat Libérien répond

avec ses avocats. Il a été adéquatement représenté par ses avocats depuis le stade initial du procès jusqu'au moment du jugement. Des avocats représentant la Chambre des représentants ainsi que les responsables de la destitution étaient également présents tout au long du procès. Le Sénat a siégé en tant que « jurés » au procès. Selon la Constitution libérienne, les accusés doivent avoir un procès équitable, rapide, public et impartial. Tous ces éléments énoncés ici ont été respectés au cours du procès.

De plus, des avocats des deux côtés ont présenté leurs arguments, des témoins ont été présentés, il y a eu des plaidoiries finales et des motions ont été présentées et rendues par le juge en chef. Les éléments de tout procès pénal étaient présents. Il n'y a pas eu de harcèlement de l'accusé et de justice destituée, pas de harcèlement de ses avocats et il n'y a pas eu de harcèlement de témoins », indique le sénat.

« Vers midi, après que les avocats de la Chambre des représentants et de l'ancien juge Ja'neh aient présenté leurs arguments, le juge en chef a fait une déclaration, demandant aux sénateurs, qui faisaient office de jurés, de se rendre dans leur salle de délibération et de donner leur verdict.

Le Sénat s'est ensuite retiré dans ses chambres de l'annexe et a tenu une discussion sur les directives de vote. Le procès-verbal et tous les autres documents relatifs au procès ont été mis à disposition par le secrétaire du Sénat. Les sénateurs ont eu l'occasion de parcourir les documents avant de prendre une décision.

Le 28 mars 2019, 26 sénateurs ont pris part au vote. À 17 h 00 le même jour, aucun autre sénateur ne se présentant, le vote pour la journée a pris fin. Le contremaître et le secrétaire du jury ont compilé les résultats, rempli la feuille de résumé du verdict, l'ont signée et datée.

Le résultat final indique qu'un total de 23 sénateurs ont voté pour démettre le juge KabinehJa'neh de ses fonctions après avoir été destitué plus tôt par la Chambre des représentants. Il a été reconnu coupable, alors qu'il n'y avait pas suffisamment de votes requis

par la Constitution pour le condamner pour vol de documents », ajoute le sénat.

« La majorité des sénateurs croient qu'il a abusé de son pouvoir discrétionnaire en émettant un bref d'interdiction contre le paiement d'un montant total d'environ 27 millions de dollars US, que SRIMEX Corporation et CONNEX Corporation avaient collecté en tant qu'agents de retenue pour que le gouvernement libérien les utilise pour construire de nouvelles routes et réhabiliter les anciennes routes conformément au Millennium Challenge Compact entre le gouvernement libérien et le gouvernement des États-Unis.

Cet argent n'était pas la propriété de ces deux sociétés privées ; cela ne faisait pas partie de leurs revenus ou bénéfices. En tant qu'agents de collecte, ils avaient collecté 0,35 \$ US (trente-cinq cents US) pour chaque gallon d'essence et de carburant diesel vendu à la pompe au public, retenu et utilisé 0,10 \$ US (dix cents US) le gallon comme commission ; et au lieu de remettre le solde de 0,25 \$ US (vingt-cinq cents US) par gallon au compte du Fonds routier, ils ont tout gardé et l'ont appliqué pour leur propre usage, au détriment du gouvernement et du peuple libériens.

Cela a amené le gouvernement libérien à faillir à ses obligations vis-à-vis du gouvernement des États-Unis dans le cadre du Millennium Challenge Compact. Et lorsque le gouvernement libérien a exigé de payer le montant perçu, le JugeJa'neh a émis un bref d'interdiction afin qu'ils n'aient pas à payer pour le motif fallacieux et intenable que la réglementation / loi en vertu de laquelle ils percevaient la surtaxe était inconstitutionnel.

Notons avec affirmation et avec une clarté catégorique que le Sénat libérien n'a violé aucune des dispositions de la Constitution libérienne de 1986 et des lois libériennes et n'a violé aucune de ses règles permanentes lors du procès en destitution de l'ancien juge associé de la Cour suprême du Libéria. L'ensemble du processus de destitution a été transparent, juridiquement et constitutionnellement sain et totalement dépourvu d'incitations, de coercition, de collaboration politique, de vengeance et de politisation » conclut le communiqué.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Jayati Ghosh

L'apartheid du vaccin

NEW DELHI - La société pharmaceutique américaine Pfizer et la société allemande BioNTech ont annoncé que le vaccin qu'ils développent conjointement contre le COVID-19 était efficace à plus de 90 % dans le cadre des premiers essais cliniques. Cette nouvelle suscite partout dans le monde l'espoir de retrouver la vie que nous connaissions avant la pandémie.

Les espoirs de certains pourraient malheureusement être de courte durée. Cette annonce a en effet conduit les gouvernements à revendiquer au plus vite les doses de vaccin, ce qui semble donner raison à une triste prédiction : pays riches et personnes fortunées monopoliseront les premières doses d'un vaccin efficace.

Le Mécanisme pour un accès mondial aux vaccins contre le COVID-19 (COVAX) - mis en place par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, la Coalition pour l'innovation en matière de préparation aux épidémies, et par Gavi, l'Alliance du vaccin - a été précisément conçu pour éviter une telle situation. Le mécanisme COVAX vise à accélérer le développement d'un vaccin contre le COVID-19, à garantir des doses pour tous les pays, ainsi qu'à distribuer ces doses de manière équitable, en commençant par les catégories de population exposées à un risque particulièrement élevé. Autrement dit, ce mécanisme a été créé notamment pour empêcher une accapuration par les gouvernements des pays riches.

À ce jour, plus de 180 pays, qui représentent environ deux tiers de la population mondiale, se sont joints à cette démarche. Parmi ces États figurent 94 pays à revenu élevé, qui ont tous pris des engagements juridiquement contraignants. Tous auront accès au vaccin sur la liste COVAX, et payeront chacun leurs doses. Les 92 pays à revenu faible qui font partie de ce mécanisme recevront leurs doses gratuitement.

Le mécanisme COVAX prévoit une distribution du vaccin en deux phases. Dans la première phase, tous les pays participants recevraient des doses proportionnellement à leur population. Il s'agirait dans un premier temps de fournir suffisamment de vaccins pour immuniser 3 % de leur population, exposée un risque élevé, notamment les travailleurs médicaux et sociaux de première ligne. Des doses supplémentaires seraient ensuite fournies jusqu'à ce que l'immunité couvre 20 % de la population de chaque pays - en commençant par les personnes les plus à risque face au COVID-19, à savoir les personnes âgées ou présentant des comorbidités.

Dans la deuxième phase, les vaccins seraient distribués à des pays spécifiques, en fonction de la rapidité de propagation du virus sur leur territoire, de la propagation éventuelle d'autres pathogènes (comme la rougeole), ainsi que du risque pour l'infrastructure sanitaire du pays de se retrouver dépassée par la situation. Compte tenu des contraintes en présence - le vaccin BioNTech-Pfizer devant par exemple être administré en deux doses à trois semaines d'intervalle, et sachant que seulement 1,35 milliard de doses tout au plus seront produites d'ici la fin de l'année prochaine - il est difficile d'imaginer un système plus équitable.

Seulement voilà, plusieurs obstacles majeurs existent à la mise en œuvre de ce système. D'abord et avant tout, si la Chine a finalement rejoint le mécanisme COVAX début octobre, ce n'est pas encore le cas des États-Unis.

Évidemment, étant donné son approche de « l'Amérique d'abord », le président américain Donald Trump n'a surpris personne en refusant de rejoindre la démarche. L'espoir existe toutefois de voir le président élu Joe Biden se montrer plus réceptif. Biden prévoit en effet de rejoindre de nombreux accords internationaux dont Trump s'est retiré, et a d'ores et déjà mis en place une task force contre le COVID-19. Il est également prévu que Seth Berkley, directeur de Gavi, l'Alliance du vaccin, mène des discussions avec l'équipe de Biden.

Dans le même temps, la Chine travaille de manière intense et pour l'essentiel indépendante au développement ainsi qu'au test de son propre vaccin. Quatre candidats au moins font actuellement l'objet d'essais de phase 3. Bien qu'aucun des quatre ne soit pour l'heure reconnu, les dirigeants chinois auraient semble-t-il vacciné plusieurs dizaines de milliers de personnes - et peut-être beaucoup plus encore - en dehors des procédures habituelles de tests.

Intervient toutefois un autre problème : les participants au mécanisme COVAX se concurrencent encore pour obtenir des contrats bilatéraux avec les sociétés pharmaceutiques, ce qu'aucune loi n'interdit. Le Royaume-Uni, par exemple, a réservé 40 millions de doses du vaccin BioNTech-Pfizer. Plusieurs autres gouvernements européens passent également des commandes, ou négocient des contrats.

L'Union européenne a par ailleurs finalisé un accord portant sur 300 millions de doses. Les États-Unis, qui abritent 328 millions d'habitants, ont passé une commande pour 100 millions de doses, à laquelle s'ajoute le droit d'en acquérir 500 millions supplémentaires - objectif si élevé qu'il ressemble fort à une tentative de prise de contrôle du marché. Le Brésil - autre participant du mécanisme COVAX - est également en pourparlers avec Pfizer, comme de nombreux autres pays.

En l'espace de quelques jours après son annonce, Pfizer avait déjà vendu plus de 80 % des doses de vaccin que la société sera capable de produire d'ici la fin de l'année prochaine pour des gouvernements qui ne représentent que 14 % de la population mondiale. Autrement dit, s'il doit s'agir du premier vaccin sûr et efficace à être lancé sur le marché, l'immense majorité de la population mondiale n'y aura quasiment pas accès.

De nombreux autres candidats vaccins - on en compte actuellement plus de 200, dont 50 en phase d'essais cliniques - sont également déjà réservés. Les gouvernements des pays riches ont d'ores et déjà conclu des accords pour un accès privilégié aux vaccins développés notamment par Moderna (lequel démontre lui aussi des résultats prometteurs à l'issue des essais cliniques), par Johnson & Johnson, ainsi que par AstraZeneca, en cas d'approbation de ces candidats. De toute évidence, les pays à revenu faible n'ont pas cette possibilité.

Une pandémie ne pouvant être surmontée que lorsqu'elle est vaincue partout, le recours à une approche du chaque pays pour soi apparaît irrationnelle. Or, comme l'indique l'actuelle compétition malsaine autour des doses de vaccin, c'est précisément cette approche que privilégient de nombreux pays. À moins que nous changions de cap, l'apartheid sanitaire mondial se fera de plus en plus ancré, et poussera les inégalités vers de nouveaux sommets. Alors, la pandémie demeurera, et nous aurons simplement ajouté de nouveaux problèmes à celui que nous n'aurons pas su résoudre.

Who's on the ballot?

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The National Elections Commission releases final list of contestants, officially qualifying 199 candidates for the nationwide special senatorial election and two representatives' by-elections in Montserrado and Sinoe County respectively, on December 8, 2020.

The electoral body also formally declares campaign opened from Wednesday, 18 November - December 06, 2020, precisely 24 hours before polling day.

NEC Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah says of this number, 181 are duly qualified as senatorial candidates, besides eight representative candidates each for the Montserrado and Sinoe counties by-elections.

Madam Lansanah explains political campaign activities should have commenced since October 10, 2020, but due to Stay Order placed on the process by the Supreme Court, the electoral house suspended all activities, pending investigation into a complaint filed by aspirant Mulbah Jackollie from Margibi County. Mr. Jackollie has reportedly dropped his concerns, according to the Supreme Court.

Chairperson Davidetta Lassanah strongly warns against electoral violence, urging candidates and parties to observe the rule of law at all times during the campaign period and beyond.

She encourages political actors and stakeholders to submit their respective calendar of events to the commission with precise dates for public engagement to avoid clashes of rival supporters.

She notes that already, some political parties and independent candidates have submitted calendar of events for their respective campaign activities, which she terms as laudable.

The Commission had announced earlier 299, 969 new registrants following the conclusion of the Voters Roll Update (VRU) exercise in September.

"We are pleased to announce the conclusion of the 2020 Voter Roll Update exercise; during the update exercise, a total of two hundred, ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and sixty-nine (299, 969) new registrants were captured nationwide," she had reported.

She details that of this number, One Hundred, Eighteen Thousand, Nine Hundred and Twenty-three, (118, 923) constituting 39.6 percent, are females, while One Hundred Eighty-one Thousand, Forty-six (181, 046) constituting 60.4 percent are males. However, she reminds that these numbers are provisional and they could likely be changes due to the ongoing voter roll cleaning exercise.

She says prior to the VRU exercise, the NEC data center had done a lot of work in furtherance of cleaning the 2017 voter roll and the total number of registered voters at the beginning of the VRU exercise stood at Two Million, One Hundred, Eighty-three Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty-one (2, 183, 381).

Now with the inclusion of the additional two hundred ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred

Parties headed by form presidential candidate, Alexander B. Cummings. During the entire 12-year presidency of Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the now ruling Congress for Democratic Change of President George Manneh Weah retained its numerical strength in the county, accumulating more votes.

In the 2005, 2011 and 2017 general and presidential elections, the CDC topped all political parties that participated until the 2019 senatorial by-election when CPP candidate Dillon overturned the table, convincingly defeating CDC candidate Paulita Wie.

Now the CDC has combined forces with the Liberia People Democratic Party and the National Patriotic Party to march on the opposition. Following primaries

seat of government before 2023 presidential election.

But Sen. Dillon currently enjoys the support of the CPP which comprises four political parties: the Unity Party, the Liberty Party, the Alternative National Congress and the All Liberian Party.

Dillon, who brands himself as the 'light' in the Liberian Senate, is seen here as someone who stands a greater chance of retaining the Montserrado seat. However, the ruling establishment is building up strategies to make Dillon the shortest-serving senator.

Senator Dillon's popularity swelled when he publicly declared his salary, allowance and other benefits to the public, the first ever by any of the 30 senators on Capitol Hill. He also broke the news of senators receiving US\$6,500 each as operational funds

political leader, Senator Nyonblee Karnga Lawrence coming face to face with former Foreign Affairs Minister Gbehzohngar Milton Findley.

Findley served as Senate Pro tempore of the Liberian Senate from 2008 to 2014 but was defeated by current Senator Jonathan Kaipee.

He recently resigned his ministerial post primarily to face incumbent Senator Youngblee Karnga Lawrence also from the CPP in the 2020 Senatorial election.

Madam Karnga Lawrence is daughter of a popular and influential gospel prelate, Rev. Dr. Karnga Lawrence who established the Worldwide Church and the JCCA Bassa singing group. Both religious groups are very popular in the county.

Maryland County: the county and its habitants will witness two sons and partisans of the National Patriotic Party battle each other at the ballot box. Senator H. Dan Morais and former longest-serving Representative James Biney are currently at each other's throats for the senatorial seat of Maryland County.

Bomi County: the people Bomi are currently being entrenched in political noise and tensions as two former speakers of the House of Representatives battle for the senatorial seat of that county. Representative Edwin Melvin Snowe and political leader of the Liberian People Party, former Speaker Alex Tyler will spend time with the people in persuading electorate, ahead of the 2020 Special Senatorial Elections.

Tyler is contesting on the ticket of the ruling CDC and is a native of the county unlike Snowe, who crossed over from Montserrado County Electoral District #6 after two terms and contested in Bomi during the 2017 election and won.

Snowe is considered a heavy weight, based on establishment of his huge farm which is currently producing palm oil for export. He recently resigned from the former ruling Unity party, and is contesting as an independent candidate.

On the other hand, Tyler is a man with serious cash but he's blamed for not investing in Bomi; instead, his investment is based both in Monrovia and Margibi County.

Between the two, is current Senator Sando Johnson, who seeks re-election thru ticket of the All Liberian Party and the CPP. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



sixty-nine (299, 969) new registrants, the total number of registered voters stands provisionally at Two million, Four Hundred, Eighty-three Thousand, Three Hundred Fifty (2, 483, 350).

"We are also pleased to inform the Liberian people that the Exhibition of the voter roll was concluded on October 31, 2020 as scheduled and results from that exercise are being processed by the data center."

Meanwhile, as campaign activities progresses across all 15 political sub-divisions of the country, this paper has earmarked four counties that are likely to become tough battlegrounds in for the senatorial race namely; Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Maryland, and Bomi Counties.

Montserrado County: The contested senatorial seat of Montserrado is currently occupied by opposition Senator Abraham Darius Dillon of the Liberty Party. The LP is member of the Collaborating Political

conducted throughout Montserrado County recently by the ruling establishment, the Coalition for Democratic Change has put forward Representative Thomas Fallah, who currently enjoys a third term in the House of Representatives.

Fallah presides over Ways, Means, Finance and Budget Committee of the House of Representatives and is vice chairperson for operations of the ruling party.

There are reports that President Weah has instructed all officials of government to ensure the Montserrado County seat is retaken.

The CDC under the leadership of Chairman Mulbah Morlu, Chief Cyril Allen, Alex Tyler and Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor, is digging its heels deep into the ground to make a comeback. The Coalition is leaving no stone unturned to regain the county, which is the

immediately after endorsing the State of Emergency declared by President Weah in a joint resolution.

The money totaling US\$195,000 was dished out among senators at a time nurses and other health workers leading the Covid-19 fight cried for incentives and personal protective equipment or PPEs.

Though Dillon said the amount was operational funds, Senator Prince Johnson of Nimba County strongly debunked the Montserrado County Senator when he revealed on a live talk show that the money was lobbying fee from the executive for recalling senators from their Easter Break. Senator George Tengbeh of Lofa County later stated that the amount was understated by Dillon, saying, they actually received US\$8,000 each. Grand Bassa County: the second oldest county of the Republic will witness the Liberty Party

S/Court red cards Referendum

By Ben P. Wese

Liberia's Supreme Court has granted main opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP's) request prohibiting the conduct of a controversial National Referendum that was due to be combined with the conduct of the senatorial election on 8 December by the National Elections Commission (NEC).

"Wherefore and in view of the foregoing, the alternative writ of prohibition issued is sustained and the peremptory writ for is granted," the nation's highest court ruled in a unanimous decision Wednesday, 18 November.

Prior to the court's ruling, the government has been facing public criticisms for

Wednesday prohibited the NEC from printing ballots for the referendum, contrary to a joint resolution of the Legislature and Article 92 of the Constitution.

The Supreme Court rules that the NEC proceeded by the wrong rule, therefore, prohibition will lie.

It says the act of the commission in deviating from the clear language of the Legislature's resolution by combining and condensing the eight propositions into three categories quite contrary to the provision of Article 92 of the Constitution which specifically mandates that each of the eight propositions be stated separately on the ballot to afford voters the opportunity to exercise their right of choice is

exercise of its lawful jurisdiction, proceeded by wrong rules other than those which ought to be observed at all time.

However, the Supreme Court details the NEC did not assume jurisdiction not ascribed to it by setting December 8, 2020 as the date to vote in the referendum since it is not sooner than one year from September 30, 2019, the date of the joint resolution of the Legislature.

It notes that this is in compliance with the constitution and it did not exceed its jurisdiction, nor did it proceed by rules other than those which ought to be observed at all time.

The Supreme Court explains that Article 92 of the

Ivoirian refugees

Cont'd from page 10

ended a joint emergency assessment mission to Nimba County led by the Minister of Internal Affairs Varney A. Sirleaf to receive new Ivorian refugees arriving here thru that county.

The joint mission comprised the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Liberia Refugees Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees, World Food Programme, International Organization for Migration, UNICEF and UNFPA, among others.

Over the weekend, the team toured Belewalay, Kpablee, Zordru and Buutuo, all in lower Nimba County where the Ivorian refugees recently crossed and are seeking refuge from ongoing political crisis back home.

The emergency joint assessment mission was intended to inspect registration centers, schools, WASH facilities, shelters and border points currently hosting the refugees.

Conveying President George Manneh Weah's message to the refugees, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Varney A. Sirleaf assured them the Government and People of Liberia will ensure their security is guaranteed during their stay in Liberia.

He said government and partners are working to promptly intervene in critical areas of concern, including medication, schools, safe-drinking water and sanitation for the refugees especially, children.

Minister Sirleaf cautioned the Ivorian refugees to abide by Liberian laws and laws governing refugees, and avoid returning to Ivory Coast to cause problems, adding that any perpetrator caught risk losing their refugee status.

However, he encouraged the refugees to feel free and

live away as though they were home, further assuring that nobody would go against them because of their refugee status, and thanked the local inhabitants for being receptive.

The Minister recalled that when Liberians fled home to Ivory Coast in the 90s to seek refuge during civil unrest in Liberia, the Ivorian government accepted them, so the Liberian government is obliged to reciprocate.

UNCHR country director Roseline Okoro said, the entry of Ivorian refugees into Liberia is of grievous concern to the UN. Madam Okoro said since the Ivorian election early this month that resulted to a controversial third term victory for President Alassane Ouattara, thousands of Ivorians continue to enter Liberia something, she said, is a serious concern to the UNCHR because in all the sectors they need humanitarian response and their needs are enormous.

She disclosed UNICEF has deployed a competent team, and together they are assessing children, looking at malnutrition and sending those with health condition to Seclepea Comprehensive Health Center for treatment.

The Executive Director for the Liberia Refugees, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, Rev. Festus R. B Logan, revealed plan to relocate the Ivorian refugees 50 kilometers away from the Liberian border.

Director Logan said in keeping with international laws, refugees are not to be in close proximity of the border, disclosing that currently, Liberia is already hosting 8,999 Ivorian refugees out 225,000 that fled Ivory Coast in 2010, and with the new arrivals, the number has surged to 9,999 Ivorian refugees.



combining the senatorial election with the referendum, mainly for concerns that there has not been much publicity in terms of awareness for the people to have a clear understanding of what they are expected to be voting for in the referendum.

The senatorial election brings its own stress and serious political tension which have kept the nation on its heels, and this in part has left others thinking that many people here might just get lost on the issues contained in the referendum while focusing on deciding who should be their candidate in the senatorial election.

But the Supreme Court on

prohibited.

According to the Supreme Court, the petitioners having demonstrated that they are duly registered and certificated by the National Elections Commission as two separate and distinct political alliances with common concern relative to the conduct of the December 8, 2020 referendum, they have a stake in the matter and can therefore join in an action to assert any right common to them.

The Supreme Court continues that the court held that prohibition will lie where it is established that the respondent has assumed jurisdiction not otherwise ascribed to it, exceeded its designated jurisdiction or in the

Constitution is devoid of any time frame for the dissemination of information and awareness on the referendum.

The court indicates that it is not in the position to determine what constitutes sufficient public awareness and information, especially where the petitioners have admitted in their petition that indeed, some public awareness was undertaken by the NEC on the referendum.

Regarding this aspect of the case the Supreme Court determines that the institution is not proceeding by wrong rule, and therefore prohibition will not lie.--
Edited by Winston W. Parley

Cont'd from page 10

Pastor mourns

The Methodist prelate notes that products of farmers are damaging on a daily basis due to lack of paved road to transport vegetables and other crops to Harper and Pleebo respectively, the two main

political and commercial cities. He says the bridge at the entrance of the town that links Yleaken Clinic in Yleaken Town to rest of the other towns in the district is damaged and needs urgent repairs, adding that people living alongside the

bridge have lost their crops several times because canoes are no longer transporting food stuffs crossing the Gbon river.

The road is about 25 kilometers from Boniken to towns along the Cavalla River,

according to residents. Market women pay over one thousand, five hundred (1,500) Liberian dollars on commercial bikes as fares from adjacent towns to Pleebo City to sell their crops.

Currently, one kilo of rice is sold for LRD210 in Gbon, while residents survive on two hand pumps.

However, Pastor Wilson appeals to Maryland County

District #3 Representative Isaac Roland Blalu, national and international partners for speedy intervention in rehabilitating the road, particularly the damaged Gbon Bridge that is preventing ambulances and commercial vehicles from reaching their communities. -*Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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Activa Insurance launches Medical Emergency Evacuation program



By Lewis S. Teh

In an effort to bring relief to the insurance sector here, Activa International Insurance Company Liberia Ltd has launched a program entitled Emergency Medical Evacuation, something the company says, will citizens in getting proper medication.

The program, Activa says will evacuate sick patients, who are in critical conditions to any nearby countries for proper treatment, and it's also aimed at strengthening the insurance sector in Liberia by adding values to services.

Addressing a news conference Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at the company head office in Sinkor, Monrovia, Activa Chief Executive Officer, also an associate professor at the University of Liberia particularly, the Louise Arthur Grimes School of Law, Saye D. Gbalazeh said the program covers everyone who meets all application processes, including terms and conditions and are between ages 14 and 65.

Activa International Insurance (Liberia) Ltd is a licensed company that has

been working in Liberia over the past six years, providing quality Insurance Packages for Blue Chip Companies, Multinationals, Small/Medium Enterprises, Non-Profit Organizations (NGO), Liberian Institutions and personal lines insurance in the private and public sectors.

He said the decision to launch the medical emergency evacuation program derived from numerous situations where citizens had to be evacuated to get proper treatment outside of the country, and some lost their lives as a result of lack of proper care.

"We've done our research and we realized the availability, and affordability of this program that's why we thought to launch this program."

He added that the program is not a prepaid service saying, once you pay your premier, and subscribe to the program with a qualified situation then you are airlifted and you don't have to prepare the cost of the air ambulance or airplane; all you have to do is to pay your premier with a minimum of \$US 250.

He explained the eligibility to qualify for the program is a group of ten (10) people minimum or above from any institution, including

motorcyclists, market women, and all individuals with a charge premier, saying this program is a medical emergency evacuation and for one to get qualified you firstly have to be a subscriber, with an emergency qualify situation that takes you to a hospital where a determination will be made as to whether the case is qualify for evacuation.


He continue that once you subscribe and meet all the application process including the term and conditions you will have access to over eight thousand facilities worldwide, including air ambulance, or commercial medical escort flight, hospital expenses, medication and drugs, hotel accommodation, post-discharge awaiting return home, covering up to US\$ 350.000 per event, not annual.

"You can't call us to rescue you in the middle of the forest, this program doesn't work that way; the person must be taken to a hospital after which we will engage our doctors to collaborate with doctors at that hospital before a determination can be made".

Mr. Eustace Anye, who is the regional financial controller at Activa International Insurance said, there might be other companies who are offering similar service, but the difference is where Activa comes in to provide the medical services.

"Activa comes in to make the difference in the insurance sector, and with the launching of this program we stand out to be the best because of this service", he added.


CEO Gbalazeh is a career Senior Insurance Executive




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with over 25 years of proven work experience in the industry both in the United States, and Africa. Mr Gbalazeh became CEO of Active (Liberia Limited) since 2014 to present. He formerly served as Assistant Vice President and Consultant (Medical Mal Practice/Healthcare Division, One Beacon Professional Insurance Company, a leading Professional Liability Insurance Company, Hartford Financial District, Farmington, Connecticut, USA, (2008 - 2014); Program Director,

Healthcare Professional Liability Program, US Risk Underwriters, Washington D C MetroArea USA, (2004- 2008).

He holds a one year diploma in Insurance, property, Casualty, Life & Health, West African Insurance Institute, Gambia, LL.B, Louis Arthur Grimes Schools of Law, University of Liberia, an MBA in Risk Management & Insurance, from College of Insurance, Risk Management & Actuarial Science, St. John's University, New York, in 1993. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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