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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020

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CPP gets vigilant

-raises red flag



Madam Botoe Kanneh, only female candidate from the county

Tension brews in Gbarpolu

-Ahead of Senate rerun

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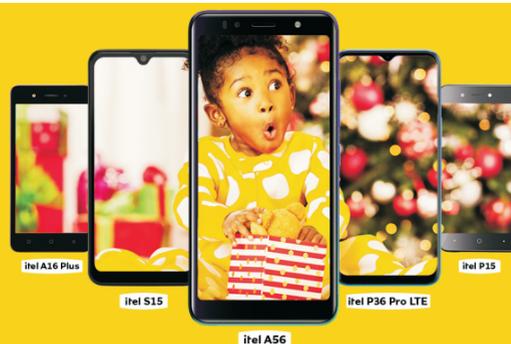
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Continental News

Eswatini's PM dies after contracting Covid-19

The government of Eswatini says Prime Minister Ambrose Dlamini has died, four weeks after he tested positive for coronavirus.

A government statement said Dlamini, 52, died on Sunday afternoon in hospital in South Africa.

No cause of death was mentioned, but Dlamini had recently been receiving treatment for Covid-19 in South Africa. Dlamini had been prime minister of Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, since October 2018.

The tiny landlocked country in southern Africa is one of the last absolute monarchies in the world. With a population of about one million, the country has recorded 6,768 coronavirus infections and 127 deaths linked to the pandemic, according to the health ministry.

Dlamini announced he had tested positive for

coronavirus on 16 November. At the time, he said he was asymptomatic and was feeling well.

A few weeks later, on 1 December, the Eswatini government said Dlamini had been moved to a hospital in South Africa, with the aim of

fast-tracking his recovery.

But on Sunday the government said Dlamini died "while under medical care in a hospital in South Africa", without giving more details.

Government in collaboration with the family will keep the nation informed

of subsequent arrangements," Deputy Prime Minister Themba Masuku said in the statement.

Dlamini was among a number world leaders to have contracted Covid-19 during the pandemic, including US President Donald Trump, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Many presidents, prime ministers and royal family members around the world have contracted Covid-19 since the pandemic began, however there is no confirmed case of any figures dying of the virus while in office.

Former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing died of complications from coronavirus this month. India's former president Pranab Mukherjee died 21 days after testing positive in August. The two men were 94 and 84 years old, respectively.

Republic of Congo's former president Jacques Joachim Yhombi-Opango died of complications from the illness in March. He was 81. A former banker, Dlamini was a political novice when he was appointed prime minister by King Mswati III.

The head of government's role is limited in Eswatini, where the king names all ministers and controls parliament. King Mswati III was crowned in 1986 at the age of 18, succeeding his long-serving father King Sobhuza II, who died at the age of 82.

The king rules by decree and has been criticised for the heavy-handed treatment of opponents and for requesting public money to pay for new palaces and luxury cars.

In 2018 he announced he was renaming the country "the Kingdom of Eswatini". More than 39% of the country's population lived below the poverty line in 2016 and 2017, according to the World Bank. BBC



Prime Minister Ambrose Dlamini tested positive for coronavirus in mid-November

US ends Sudan's listing as sponsor of terror

The US has officially removed Sudan from its state sponsors of terror list. President Donald Trump gave Congress the statutory 45-day notice of this move in October as part of a deal that involved Sudan paying \$335m (£250m) to US victims of terror attacks.

At the same time Sudan agreed to normalise relations with Israel.

The US put Sudan on the list in 1993 after it was used as a base for al-Qaeda. Its

removal should help with vital economic support measures. The compensation relates to al-Qaeda's 1998 bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in which more than 220 people died.

But the country was put on the US list after the first attack on the World Trade Center in New York in 1993, when Sudan hosted a number of Islamist militant groups as well as al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

The designation meant the US stopped Sudan from getting

debt relief, and prevented the International Monetary Fund and other global institutions from lending the country money. In the wake of the attacks in the US on 11 September 2001, Sudan's security services helped the US Central Intelligence Agency.

But Sudan remained on the state sponsors of terrorism list, as some US politicians were concerned about human rights abuses and the war in Darfur.

There was subsequently a thaw in US-Sudan relations and most economic sanctions were lifted in 2017, but this did not improve the economy as anticipated. Relations between the US and Sudan rapidly improved after long-serving President Omar al-Bashir was ousted following mass street protests last year.

In October, Sudan agreed to recognise Israel weeks after similar moves by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain. Last week, Morocco became the latest Arab League country to agree to normalise relations with Israel. The US still designates North Korea, Iran and Syria as state sponsors of terror. The Sudanese authorities had

Ethiopia PM visits Tigray capital after offensive



The prime minister of Ethiopia has visited Mekelle, the capital of Tigray, for the first time since he ordered a military offensive against the region.

Abiy Ahmed attended the first meeting of a new regional council.

He'd earlier hosted talks with the prime minister of Sudan, to where 50,000 Tigrayan refugees have fled.

A Sudanese official said Prime Minister Abdalla

Hamdok was prepared to mediate in the conflict.

But a statement by Mr Abiy made no mention of any such offer - though it said the Sudanese delegation had backed his actions in Tigray.

Reports say Mr Hamdok has returned home early from what Ethiopia said would be a two-day trip.

The Ethiopian prime minister has tweeted photos of his visit to Mekelle: BBC



Sudan has agreed to compensate the US families of the victims of the 1998 attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania

been trying to get off the list for many years.

In private, and occasionally in public, US officials admitted the designation was a political tool, a point of leverage, rather than a fair assessment of whether Sudan was still supporting terror groups

abroad.

The US would never have removed Sudan from the list as long as Bashir was in power; this has been made possible as a civilian cabinet is now in place. The designation has been hugely damaging for Sudan. BBC

EDITORIAL

We demand free, fair election in Gbarpolu

VOTERS IN GBARPOLU County are reportedly being harassed and intimidated, and induced, as they return to the poll today, Tuesday, for a re-run of the December 8, 2020 senatorial election in the county after violence disrupted the previous election.

SPECIFICALLY, REPORT COMING out of the remote county in the western region speaks of cash inducement or vote-buying by politicians to stifle the only woman in the race from getting elected to the Legislature, which is discouraging our mothers, daughters, sisters, wives and friends from running for office and winning.

ABOUT 2021 VOTERS in Nomodatonau, a bordering town with neighboring Sierra Leone, are headed for the re-run to elect the county's next Senator. The re-run comes about after a group of young men seized four ballot boxes during the December 8th because they claimed the people who voted were Sierra Leoneans, not Liberians.

THE ONLY FEMALE in the race is Botoe Kanneh, a dried meat seller, who is leading her male counterparts by 449 votes. She is said to be very popular in Nomodatonau, but she and her delegation have been denied entry there allegedly by Police and other state security forces, while the ruling CDC candidate has been holding meetings in the town with the Clan Chief who forth night ago seized ballot boxes.

THE COALITION SEEMS to be paranoid by recent defeats across the country, and is going all out in apparent desperation to get grip on Gbarpolu County, even by unfair competition. Such tactic contradicts democratic principles that require will of the people to prevail in any election.

NO ONE SHOULD take the Liberian people for granted, that they can be used and abandoned. Liberians are a resilient people, who are very cognizant of their rights as citizens. They should be given the opportunity to exercise such right at the ballot box, void of financial inducement.

GBARPOLU IS ONE of the remote counties that are yet to benefit development due to bad governance and neglect. Knowing the power of women leadership in advocating for development and people-centered service, Madam Kanneh is being unduly harassed to jeopardize her chances in the race.

WE DEMAND NOTHING less than a fair election in Gbarpolu so that the poll results would reflect will of the electorate, as is expected in any democracy. National Elections Commission should make sure the right thing is done.

THE RULING COALITION has showed no respect for women, as demonstrated by having no female candidates on its tickets. Now the only female face, Independent Candidate Botoe Kanneh is being subjected to serious intimidation. This is unacceptable!

COMMENTARY

By Jayati Ghosh

Farmers vs. the Indian State

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government apparently thinks that the huge open-air farmers' protests outside Delhi may fizzle out in due course. But the farmers' resolve, and their widespread public support, suggest that this time could be different.

NEW DELHI - India's capital is under siege from more than two million farmers, who are currently gathered at the city's border in a massive protest that started two weeks ago. Old and young men, women, and even children from farming families are camping on open roads in the bitter cold of a Delhi winter. They have abandoned their concerns about viral infection and come prepared for the long haul, bringing enough food to last for several months.

The movement began when several thousand farmers from the neighboring states of Punjab and Haryana drove their tractors toward Delhi in the hope of publicizing their grievances in the city's center. The protests subsequently swelled as more farmers arrived from other states, and show no sign of dissipating. More than 500 farmers' organizations across India are supporting the protesters' demands, and the farmers' calls for "Bharat Bandh," or a national shutdown, on December 8 garnered widespread support from trade unions and several opposition parties.

The immediate trigger for the protests was the government's hasty enactment of three new farm laws, introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic without consulting stakeholders, like the farmers themselves, or state governments, which are responsible for agriculture under India's Constitution.

On the face of it, the laws appear harmless or even beneficial for farmers. They relax restrictions on the purchase and sale of farm produce, remove constraints on stockpiling under the 1955 Essential Commodities Act, and enable contract farming based on written agreements. The government's declared purpose is to create "an ecosystem where farmers and traders enjoy freedom of choice," with "competitive alternative trading channels" that "promote efficient, transparent, and barrier-free" trade.

India's farmers view the new legislation very differently. They fear that these "modernizing" laws will pave the way for the predatory corporate commercialization of Indian agriculture, led by politically well-connected tycoons. Others argue that the laws effectively deregulate farm-produce transactions, contract farming, and stock holding in ways that will harm farmers. Small and marginal farmers fear they will be the worst affected.

These measures were probably the proverbial last straw for many farmers, whose protests have become more vocal in recent years as threats to their livelihood have increased. True, farm incomes were declining continuously before Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014. In fact, farmers played a crucial role in Modi's initial election triumph after he promised to double their incomes in five years by offering minimum support prices (MSPs) for their produce (sold to the public food-procurement agency) that were 50% above total cultivation costs.

But Modi failed to keep that promise, and

farmers instead received prices that were even lower relative to their costs than they had been under the previous government. Several of Modi's other promises to the agriculture sector also turned out to be hollow, further eroding farmers' trust in his administration.

In recent years, collapsing demand in the Indian economy has kept prices for agricultural produce low. This was the result of policy blunders - two in particular - that destroyed many informal economic activities and damaged livelihoods: the November 2016 demonetization initiative and the subsequent poorly conceived and implemented national goods and services tax.

The government did not use fiscal policy to revive employment and demand, so both incomes and consumption declined, keeping crop prices low. The pandemic subsequently made it much harder for farmers to grow produce and get it to market, while crop prices have remained well below 2019 levels.

Farmers suspect that the new laws will sound the death knell for the public food-procurement system, which, though imperfect, still provides them with some basic protection against the vagaries of the market. And they can see that crop prices in states like Bihar (which has already ended the monopoly of regulated market yards) fall well below the MSPs.

One of the new laws aims to do away with "middlemen" like commission agents. But farmers say they would rather interact with such people, and potentially develop a relationship that allows for some flexibility and concessions when required, than with faceless, intractable corporations that can use various means - such as "quality control" during purchase - to deprive them of their due.

To be sure, farmers must also worry about ecological constraints and soil degradation resulting from ever-greater reliance on chemical agriculture, scarce and contaminated water, and climate change (reflected in adverse weather events and changing rainfall patterns). But the Modi government's policies, farmers fear, would worsen these problems.

So far, the government has sought to deal with the angry farmers much as it has done with all democratic protests. It initially ignored the demonstrators, before claiming that they were being misled and manipulated by malevolent opposition forces. The government then implied that the Sikh farmers were "anti-nationals" and therefore "terrorists," and used brute force to quell peaceful protests. Pliant mainstream media and social media trolls have been unleashed in an effort to undermine the farmers and discredit their demands, just as they have aggressively attacked all dissenters over the past six years.

The government has refused to bend to the farmers' central demand of doing away with these laws. It apparently thinks the open-air protests may in time fizzle out, especially given the cold that has already claimed the lives of several demonstrators.

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The New Dawn
FULLY INDEPENDENT

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc.,
UN Drive, P.O. Box 1266 Opposite National Investment Commission,
Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-886978282 /
+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

CDC concedes defeat finally

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor
 The ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) has conceded defeat in Tuesday's (December 8th) senatorial election and congratulated Montserrado County Senator-elect, Darius Dillon. Addressing a news conference

Representative Thomas P. Fallah, CDC candidate has congratulated Senator Dillon of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) for his victory and pledged his commitment to work together as lawmakers in moving Liberia forward. "This is the first time that a defeated candidate in the

Sheikh Al-Mustapha Kouyateh, congratulated Dillon thru a facebook post. However, chairman Morlu said the CDC will continue to work harder to enhance Liberia's democracy, protect the peace and achieve economic development and transformation.

"On behalf of the President and leadership of the Coalition, let me publicly thank and pay homage to all Liberians and our loyal and committed partisans, well-wishers and sympathizers who turned out to support our campaign and to vote for the CDC throughout Liberia. To CDCIANS you fought a hard fight but this is the nature of free fair and transparent democracy that is flourishing under the CDC. The truth is that mid-term elections the world over are tough on ruling parties and here in Liberia the electoral history confirms that. The Unity Party for example did not win Montserrado County throughout its tenure but went to win a two-term presidency," he added.

He argued the defeat of the ruling party in Montserrado, does in no way indicate voters are making judgment against President Weah, rather, they are sending a message to the CDC and its government to

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



Monday at the headquarters of the CDC in Monrovia, December 14, national chairman MulbahMorlu said consistent with call by President George Manneh Weah and tradition of democratic culture in free democratic societies,

history of Liberia is congratulating his opponent before the official declaration of results by the NEC," Morlu claimed, but his assertion is unfounded.

Just a day after the poll, one of the candidates for the Montserrado senatorial seat,

Revoke Cllr. Sherman's license

-FLY urges LNBA
 By Lewis S. Teh

The Federation of Liberian Youth or FLY, is calling on the Liberia National Bar Association (LNBA) to revoke the license of Grand Cape Mount County Senator Cllr. H. Varney Sherman, after the Government of the United States froze his assets for alleged corruption.

FLY President Amos Williams, in an interview with reporters recently said, the institution hails the United States government for looking in the right direction to track corrupt leaders.

"We wholeheartedly welcome this decision from the U.S. to sanction corrupt leaders on the continent who are in the habit of robbing their people of resources and squandering them", he said.

According to Amos, it is unfortunate that since the announcement of the sanction the LNBA has kept silent, adding, "We all know the kind of person the Bar

President Cllr. TiawanGongloe is, so we want to issue 24 hours ultimatum for them to revoke or suspend his [Cllr. Serman's] license because we think this is a moral issue that will save the integrity of the LNBA like the case involving the head of the LACC."

He said if the 24-hour ultimatum expired and the LNBA fails to make a statement or

take action, FLY will be disappointed in the leadership of the Bar, and that they would make an official inquiry why the LNBA hasn't taken any action against the Senator.

At the same time, Mr. Williams said their next action is to wait on the return of the

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Democracy over Dictatorship -Dillon terms victory

By Ethel A Tweh

Montserrado County Senator-elect, Abraham Darius Dillon says the people of Montserrado have overwhelmingly chosen democracy over dictatorship and bad governance.

Speaking to Spoon Talk live broadcast on Sunday, 13 December he said it's not about popularity, standing up to truth, and being courageous to say the truth noting, the victory at the poll is not his, but the ordinary people, who have started hoping again.

"The victory is not mine, it just a small portion of the blessings for me to be on the ballot but it was Liberia versus the government; democracy

similar action would be taken in the House of Representatives if they in opposition were to get the numbers.

He notes they can't win the elections, get the numbers, raise the hope of the people and then go back to normal at the Senate, saying interesting things are ahead.

According to Dillon, when you serve the people, you don't need to give the people money to vote, you don't need to print big billboard, the people will do it for you, when you serve the people, they will support you with their all.

Senatorial candidate JamimaWolokolie, who backed off in the last minutes and supported the ruling party



versus dictatorship; freedom versus hardship."

According to him, if CPP members succeeded in rallying some Independent candidates on their side, they'll take the senate leadership.

"We don't want [both] leaderships of the House of Representatives and the Senate that have to go to Jamaica resort every morning for consultation before coming to give us instructions. Some of us have to come from our homes independently and go to ensure check and balance."

Senator-elect Dillon, who convincingly defeated ruling Coalition for Democratic Change Candidate, Representative Thomas Fallah by over 60 percent of the votes from the December 8th special senatorial election, says

candidate Thomas Fallah, says CDCians are people who have realized their mistakes, and they have decided to go back to the drawing board and re-strategize.

Madam Wolokolie, who also appeared on Spoon FM along with Sen. Dillon and others, continues that in life, one has to accept the hard facts, saying, politics is politics and it's not yet over. She maintains that no one should think CDC will be an easy ride on 2023.

"CDC with me going back and the president paying more attention to some of the things he was never told will be a different CDC. I can assure everyone that 2023 will be a hard one because we will revamp CDC", Madam Wolokolie reveals. -Editing by Jonathan Browne



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Notice to winners	Thursday, December 17 – Monday December 21, 2020	
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The Incident Management System-COVID-19, wishes to inform the general public that COVID-19 results following testing at the Union Building, Sophie Road, Oldest Congo Town and the Robert's International Airport remain 72hrs.

Importantly, the IMS wishes to advice travelers to ensure samples are collected between 8:00A.M. & 12:00 noon to ensure results are available in a timely manner and avoid over crowdedness and confusion.

For emergence cases to which a travel date is inclusive of the 72hrs turnaround time, the traveler may be processed once they arrived at the testing center from 8:00A.M. to 12:00 P.M. daily.

Note, all sample collected after 12: 00P.M, will be process for the next day.

This is to ensure all clients with travel date inclusive in the 72hrs turnaround time, samples are among the first samples taking to the laboratory and subsequent availability of results on schedule.

Thank you for the cooperation as the Incident Management System-COVID-19, in collaboration with partners work to interrupt further spread of COVID-19 in Liberia.

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November 30, 2020

Survey Notice

The public is hereby notified, that pertinent to public land sale regulations the undersigned licensed land surveyor is duly authorized by the county Land Administrator to conduct the re-survey of Two thousand one hundred fifty seven point five (2157.5) Acres of land, based upon the tribal certificate and public land sale deed perversely issued to Dr. Wilfred Saye Boayue.

The survey will commence on Thursday 17 & 18 December 2020 beginning at 10:00 AM.

The parcel of land is lying and situated in Bunadin Town, Lao Clan, Saclepea-mah chiefdom, Saclepea-mah statutory district, Nimba County, RL

Therefore, all adjoining property owners, and interested parties are requested to be present at the site on the day of the survey with their deed(s), diagram(s), map(s), technical representatives/surveyors and other relevant document to substantiate their claims.

Please let this survey notice and announcement claim the attention of the following individuals:

1. Mr. Felix Wehyeebae
2. Mr. Alferd Zuloh
3. Mr. Richard Quee
4. Mr. Prince Dahn
5. Mr. Daniel Tokpa
6. Mr. Sam Gueh

Signed: Albert D. Giah Jr.
Registered Licensed Surveyor
Cell No. 0886-740-519

SURVEYOR'S LICENCE
NAME: ALBERT D. GIAH
LIC # 083
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

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Hon. Dahn Zekeh—Elder Chief
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Hon. Anthony Gweh—Paramount Chief
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December 11, 2020

Survey Notice

Contours, Limited informed the general public that Madam Rachel Livingston has duly authorized the conduct of perimeter & detail survey of Two Point Zero (2.0) Acres of land in Dolo's Town, Lower Margibi County in favor of Mr. Eric M. Freeman & Mrs. Tupee Freeman.

The parcel of land is lying and situated Behind the Dolo's Town Health Center, Lower Margibi County, Liberia.

This survey will commence on Wednesday, 16th December 2020 beginning at 1:30pm.

Therefore, all adjoining & adjacent property owners, and interested parties are requested to be present at the site on the day of the survey with their deed(s), diagram(s), map(s), technical representatives/surveyors and other relevant document to substantiate their claims.

Please let this survey notice and announcement claim the attention of the following individuals:

1. Dolo's Town Health Center
2. Reeves Family
3. Mr. Scott Family
4. Mr. John Peter
5. Community Chairman & Community Chairlady
6. All other interested Parties

Initials
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L.S.C.
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ELECTIONS 2020: IT'S THE PEOPLE... STUPID?

CPP won a political Battle, The War Comes 2023

By Barclay Nennen

The disruptive (meaning that he did not emerge from the political class or culture) Weah Presidency is about midway through its six-year term. A midterm election has proffered the biggest of jolts and sent thinkers pondering over just what may have happened, how and why it happened so soon. More will be known when the final data from NEC is available to allow for exhaustive, segmented analysis. In the meanwhile, NEC's reports are progressive and until then let us take a stab at what we have all just been through, with the CPP outperforming the ruling CDC by miles, a rarity in our body politics to happen to a first term party.

A combination of CPP and independent candidates are now poised to occupy most of the new seats in the Liberian Senate. To date, available data is projecting that the Coalition for Democratic Change, will win three seats, two of them retained crossovers, Jeremiah Koon of Nimba County and Zoe Pennue of Grand Gedeh; and the third in Maryland by a long time NPP stalwart and Maryland County power player. Grand Kru is still in dispute, but it was earlier projected to be won by Independent Nimene Batekwa. The contestation is not from the apparently defeated CDC Dr. Peter Coleman but from a shadow sympathizer of one of the influential members of the House of Representatives from the county. That means, not a single chest beating "original" Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) fielded candidate won a seat in the just ended by-elections. But for the coalition, (which they are not all together happy about) CDC would have won zilch, which would be even more demoralizing if not traumatizing. This is instructive to all players.

Following twelve years of unchecked and uninterrupted misinformation and distortion about the Unity Party Government achievements and continuous riots and protests from 2006-2017, the Congress for Democratic Change, which later became the Coalition for Democratic Change, managed to convince majority of voters to risk everything on a soccer celebrity, clearly lacking in everything presidential - a man who during campaign could hardly articulate his own vision for the country beyond offering "hope for change" on the one hand and some days "change for Hope" or "Hope is a Lie" For years he and his charges did not only provoke the Sirleaf government, but disparage the enormous gains made by the Unity Party government and positioned the populace to expect more should they trust them with state power. The people gambled.

Ultimately, the citizens, including those who were doing relatively well under the UP regime, obliged, and agreed they were indeed powerless under the UP government and needed a savior. They put their energy in all things CDC to prevent the Unity Party, the CDC-created bogeyman, from retaining state power. The CDC prevailed, because in addition to the unchecked misinformation, third-term fatigue, a rift had emerged in the Unity Party and some stalwarts crossed over to the opposition CDC. The Coalition for Democratic Change pounced and rode anti-regime sentiments and infighting all the way to the Executive Mansion, howbeit, with a huge baggage of expectation.

However, it would literally be only hours long for the sloppiness and years of CDC seething to be laid bare. The true intent of the CDC to dismantle established institution and systems would manifest itself few hours after the inauguration when on the evening of the very day, President Weah announced the dismissal of all UP appointed officials across government and appointed Human Resource Managers, who were not executives at the various entities, to take charge until otherwise order. The move deprived the CDC of a proper turnover. The stage was set to wreck unimaginable destruction of the public service never seen. In some cases, deputies were left acting and exercising unchecked managing director powers for months; members of board of directors were replaced with some grossly incompetent cronies of the president and his closed lieutenants.

The decay and institutional death of the public service was well underway as incompetent and inexperienced ministers and heads of agencies became indiscriminate and fearless in the public discharge of ineptitude with unchecked alacrity. No sooner public service was just a placement center and the disproportionate salary harmonization was "invented" and intended to accommodate mostly unskilled and even where schooled, totally unfit for public purpose CDC partisans. This has caused many at public ministries and agencies to

have employments without jobs. These folks only show up around payday to find out if salary is being discussed for payment into their accounts. The few who are left to work are left constantly demoralized. Silent discontent has been brewing as productivity suffered. Professionals have been ostracized simply because, as one Weah top minister and confidant put it "*we will not be foolish like the UP government to give jobs to the opposition to empower them to take us from power We will keep them jobless and powerless to challenge us*".

Clearly, the stage was set for the party decline as a panoply of events simply overwhelmed the ruling CDC cult --- one misstep followed another and public policy failures mounted. Grandiose promises were never kept; and imprudent undertakings died just as they were announced. The citizenry was growing anxious by the day, but the CDC chiefs fed on the battle cry energy from the small band of zealots, aka, "militant", under the sycamore tree and became deaf, truly believing the "masses" would not get tired of their sufferings.

We are reminded about the following: the promise of the coastal highway has remained in the inaugural speech three years on; Liberians will not be spectators in their own economy - Lebanese friends of president control majority of government contracts/projects; there is the ill-advised failed ETON and EBOMA loan deals that were pursued against public advise from the opposition camp; there is the unexplained issue of the US\$25 Million mop up exercise that remain unclear; there is the issue of the LD\$ 4,000,000,000 that was authorized to be printed and allegedly printed but never put in circulation (only T5 had new L\$500 banknote throughout the campaign and not even the banks did. The issue of the US\$25,000,000 COVID-Relief fund and the whole wahala with WFP implementation remain contentious. You can hardly get a few hundred people in the city to tell you they received any relief. Forget the other 14 counties.

To compound the already prevailing harsh economic situation in the country is the creeping sense of general insecurity: the mysterious unresolved and unexplained deaths of four auditors shocked the city - Allison from Central Bank, Albert Peters and Gifty Lamah from LRA and another LRA employee whose head was sliced as well as Emmanuel Barthan Nyeswa from the IAA. These were followed by the death of a police commander in Grand Gedeh who the government said shot himself - a claim that has since been disputed. And the government's response to all this was that all the citizens should purchase Close Circuit Television (CCTV) for their own security. Nothing could be more insensitive and unintelligent amid what should be a series of national tragedies requiring plain leadership.

CDC considered the young voters as their franchise, equated love for George Weah the football legend "world best" as permanent state even in the face of prevailing suffering and insecurity in the country. The party then proceeded to ask the voters to take campaign bribe, feed off expensive billboards with the face of the President behind every candidate and pretend to be filled when they were hungry, pretend to be happy when they were sad, pretend to be sharing in the spoils of the party governance when it was only but a few living in opulence - the voters simply said NO. Alex Cummings and the other leaders in the collaborating parties asked the Liberian People to simply shout with their votes. The masses responded to the CPP request.

Most interestingly, the CDC government, besides its glaring failures and palpable incompetence, it served as a catalyst for the formation of the coalition and cohesion of the - CPP (Collaborating Political Parties) which appears to have come to stay and grow from strength to strength. CDC government antagonized and ostracized everyone not CDC simultaneously, particularly folks from its nemesis Unity Party and considered them "haters". Every criticism of public policy action was dubbed hate, thus leaving no room for the exchange of ideas or a place for critical views. The party has been intransigent in its ignorance and incompetence. The majority had no alternative since they had all been similarly labelled and banished and harassed, they had common issues and therefore a common opponent, hence, the collaboration to unseat the scourge that is CDC from power, restore sanity and merit to governance and deliver equity.

This is the long and the short as they say in Liberia or the backdrop against which the political party



ELECTIONS 2020:

Cont'd from page 6

leaders were seized of the fierce urgency to fashion the appropriate vehicle to rescue the country from a marauding band of misfits pretending at statecraft with disastrous consequences. The CPP was formed. ALP- Urey, and UP Boakai would chair the CPP before, but the baton was turned over to ANC head Alexander Cummings at a critical time on the heels of the all-important senatorial by-elections, to steer the Coalition of Political Parties (CPP) to the much-desired victories and place a marker about the true intent of the CPP concerning the upcoming All IMPORTANT 2023 elections - to rescue and elevate Liberia to greatness. This is for lack of a better way to not appear to steal or quote Donald Trump -Make Liberia Great Again. The mandate was clear - the intent unmistakable - the focus, lasered -- so all that was left was the organizational and the leadership skills to deliver. Alex Cummings had all the tools and the grease to steer this ship clear off troubled waters for the Liberian people to quietly enjoy and savor their moments across the country in various ways.

Anifty Cummings, (now a household name) aided by Boakai, Urey (the political leader of Liberty Party Nyonblee Karnga was bogged down in Bassa and determined to keep the winning garment on) and a host of CPP executives, who would soon move beyond making policy speeches - both critical and advisory to an inept and bigoted government that is clearly irrationally exuberant about its performance.... ala George Weah with his "I have achieved more in 3 years than any other president" in the history of this nation". We certain have many history books to read to get to this one.

Cummings and his team with an eye on 2023 would focus on the big reachable electoral prizes - Montserrado, Nimba, Bong, Bassa, Lofa Margibi and the western counties of Cape Mount, Gbarpolu and Bomi. This is not to say the other southeastern counties of Maryland (Cummings home), Rivergee, Grand Gedeh, Sinoe and Grand Kru were less important. But the shrewd financial experts and corporate genius would soon bring to bear a full power of his experience to allocate scarce resources to winnable races, with the view of battling pure CDC candidates all over the electoral field, even if it meant such would allow an independent candidate to win. Some did.

Cummings and company also understand alliance building and feel the CPP is less threatened by independents than by CDCians in the upper house. The Cummings CPP game plan would work to near perfection as the coalition won the big prize of Montserrado (a county the CDC had boasted and even falsely claimed as their stronghold and therefore was about winning at all cost); and vote rich counties of Grand Bassa, Bong and Lofa and the western Cape Mount counties. The CPP also won in Rivergee county. If the CPP can similarly run the table with these counties in 2023 presidential elections, victory will be assured, and the presidency wrestled from the CDC.

Sources confide that Alex Cummings muted that he and his team are most pleased with the victories in Montserrado (the so-called CDC base) and Grand Kru (the president's home county) ... two counties President Weah wanted to win desperately. His CPP strategy worked in knocking the president off his perch. This reminds me of Al Gore in the 2000 United States elections. He could have won his home state of Tennessee and won the elections, but he lost his home state and went to battle for Florida where Jeb Bush (brother to George bush) was a sitting governor. I hear after losing both Montserrado (his so-called stronghold) and Grand Kru (his home), President Weah is reportedly fighting tooth and nail to win in Nimba through the Prince Johnson supported MDC Jeremiah Koon. The irony cannot be lost on anyone. That may require him dropping yet another single on the Liberian billboard after the latest. Funny.

Notwithstanding these wins, the CPP faced some challenges in other counties. It is in a tight race for vote right Nimba County as counting continues. The mission in Nimba was hampered by a combination of issues --- lack of funding, competing candidates (Taa Wongbe, Adolphus Dolo and others) that siphoned votes from CPP's Edith Gongloe in the Mano belt; and the Prince Johnson factor that still looms large over Nimba, particularly in the Gio belt. Jeremiah Koon is also a strong candidate with his own solid standing in Nimba. I am told a visible frequent presence of CPP stalwarts campaigning alongside Edith in the county would have changed the dynamics, but that is Monday morning quarter backing. Something to study. The CPP suffered defeat in Maryland county going against a long time NPP power player in the county, but it was able to win the Grebo-dominated Rivergee county. The coalition also lost in Grand Gedeh to the darling of the county, Zoe Pennue. The Sinoe County loss remained unexplained.

What does the CPP triumph mean for CPP looking ahead of 2023? Simple. The CAOLITION collaboration, merger, marriage any kind of coming together IS A MUST. The CPP MUST HOLD. The CPP held together and won bigly. The CDC disregarded its coalition and lost equally bigly. The importance could not be starker. Cummings and company have their work cut out for them.

There is a history to this. The CDC and all opposition parties contested against the ruling Unity Party in 2005 and 2011 and lost on both occasions. The power of incumbency. The CDC formed a coalition with the NPP and LPDP and a few other ppp's in 2017 and contested against a divided Unity Party and won. Fast forward to 2020, the Congress for Democratic Change disregarded the Coalition for Democratic Change, rule as a single party government upon assuming power, went to the 2020 elections as the Congress for Democratic Change, and lost big time. CDC could hardly find candidates wanting to contest under the party banner. Historically, the CDC is a 30 to 35 % party, meaning it has not, cannot and will not win an election standing alone. The same could be said about other parties as well. I guess it is hard time for CDC to stop overestimating its popularity and support and govern for everyone. They can either double down on the failed isolationist tendencies or accept their failures and broaden the governing coalition. I cannot guess which way they will thread even if I wanted to try

The same can be said about the parties in the Coalition of Political Parties: UP, lost standing alone - ALP, LP, ANC - all lost when going it alone. Therefore, the need for the coalition cannot be overemphasized. Cummings and his team will now have to do a post-mortem of the just ended elections and learn the hard lessons, lest they be misled that the vote for Dillon and other CPP candidate were just a vote for CPP candidates. Granted, some were, but most voters in these elections voted against the CDC, not necessarily for the CPP given their preference for the return of sanity to public service and years of progress. It is important to understand this and keep that winning block together as the CPP fashions the way forward.

Advisedly, any attempt to see a weakened and demoralized CDC as a reason for any member party to feel emboldened enough to break the coalition and go it alone will

be an exercise in failure and a waste of all the efforts already exerted. It is half time. Both the CPP and the CDC have lessons to learn and opportunities to recalibrate. The one that does it quickly and better will likely prevail come 2023. Cummings tasted defeat ... stayed around and is learning the terrain. He appears poised and better situated to lead going forward. The pressure from ALP Urey on the government must continue and as a matter of course, Joseph Boakia, the erudite statesman, must become more engaged and remain vibrant. Senator Nyonblee Karnga Lawrence must remain vocal in the Senate, maybe even contest for the leadership; and Darius Dillon must now shine a brighter light since is now a full-term senator

and not the "vacation job" senator CDC had hoped and failed to make him. Nyonblee, Darius, Prince, Samuka, and other CPP candidates must move with immediate haste to form a powerful block in the Senate in collaboration with independents like Snowe, Nuquay and others. All must continue to demonstrate leadership and consistency to keep the coalition in the limelight and relevant. They must dominate the political and policy space and occupy every communication channel that reaches our people.

Pointedly, among the many things to guide against are the aura of inevitability, over confidence, complacency, misreading the results, failure to maintain and expand the coalition, arrogance, and failure to read the tea leaves and listen, among other things. There should be no scheming too. Simply put, this is not a time for the CPP to rest on its laurels or feel invincible because of midterm elections victories. The CPP is simply not unbeatable, at least not yet. It is time for the actual work to begin to organize across the country sooner and better; to recruit good candidates that can win elections and to get everyone buy ins and focused on the goal.

The CPP won a political battle in these elections and not a political war. The war, if I may, is in 2023. The greatness of any nation lies in its ability to repair its faults. The Liberian people have demonstrated that they are quite capable of doing the repairs by using the ballot box and repudiating the incompetence of the CDC government. As the great Civil Rights icon John Lewis put it, "democracy is not a state, it is an act, and each generation must do its part to help build it. The burden has fallen on us all, particularly on Cummings and the CPP. We must never take anything for granted or expect anything to be inevitable, especially in the face of an obstinate inept government. Success takes tireless efforts and determination. That is what is required to make this democratic experiment rooted and gains solidified.

Elections 2020 was about "it's the people stupid". Elections 2023 is a fortnight away - it is now Cummings' and the coalition to lose if they so choose. But they have a clear chance because if anything, the CDC inflated confidence is shaken, and the aura of inevitability has dissipated. May our democracy continue to grow from strength to strength.



Français

Sénatoriales 2020 : Un vibrant message à l'endroit du pouvoir pour 2023

Les résultats des élections partielles sénatoriales du 8 décembre 2020 publiés progressivement par la commission électorale nationale semblent montrer un tsunami politique favorable à l'opposition qui est sur le point de remporter 12 des 15 sièges sénatoriaux disputés.

Si les résultats sont confirmés tels quels, ce sera un message clair à l'endroit de la Coalition pour le

changement démocratique (CDC), qui n'a jusqu'à présent une avance que dans trois comtés.

Les résultats à ce stade montrent également que le peuple désapprouverait totalement dans les urnes la politique du régime de Weah. Cela pourrait également signifier que la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP) a une chance de gagner du terrain avant les élections générales de 2023.

La CPP est la plateforme des

principaux partis politiques de l'opposition actuellement présidée par l'ancien cadre de la compagnie Coca Cola, Alexander B. Cummings. Elle est composée du Liberty Party (LP) de feu Me Charles W. Brumskine, du All Liberian Party (ALP) de l'homme d'affaires Benoni Urey, du Parti de l'unité (UP) de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf et l'Alternative National Congress (ANC) dirigé par

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Des violences post-électorales éclatent à Grand Kru

Des manifestants en colère auraient assiégé le bureau du magistrat de la Commission électorale nationale à Barclayville, dans le comté de Grand Kru, appelant à la publication des résultats réels de l'élection sénatoriale spéciale du 8 décembre 2020 dans ce comté.

Selon les informations, la

manifestation a éclaté après qu'une rumeur a circulé tôt dimanche 13 décembre dans le comté, selon laquelle la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (coalition au pouvoir) envisagerait de modifier les résultats du vote en faveur de son candidat, le sénateur sortant Dr Peter

Coleman.

Selon une source crédible à Barclayville, des membres de l'opposition et des candidats indépendants se sont mis ensemble pour demander « la publication inconditionnelle des résultats du scrutin ». Les images de la scène sont alarmantes. Il n'y avait que quatre agents de la police nationale du Libéria sur les lieux, tandis que le bâtiment abritant le magistrat de la NEC était totalement entouré de manifestants en colère.

Dans un entretien téléphonique avec ce quotidien, le leader politique de l'Union nationale du Libéria (LINU), l'ancien directeur exécutif de l'Agence de protection de l'environnement, Nathaniel T. Blama, a accusé la coalition au pouvoir de vouloir voler la victoire au vrai vainqueur présumé, Nathaniel N. Bahway, en faveur de Dr Peter Coleman.

« La LINU résistera à toute tentative de la CDC de renverser les votes en faveur

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Répression implacable de l'opposition en Guinée

Les autorités devraient libérer les membres de l'opposition détenus à tort, et respecter le droit à la liberté de réunion

Alors que le président de la Guinée, Alpha Condé, se prépare à prêter serment pour un troisième mandat controversé le 15 décembre, des dizaines de leaders de l'opposition, de partisans et d'autres personnes perçues comme proches de l'opposition sont emprisonnés, faisant l'objet d'accusations qui semblent être motivées par des raisons politiques.

Les jours suivant l'élection présidentielle le 18 octobre ont été entachés de violences intercommunautaires et d'une répression par les forces de sécurité usant d'une force excessive pour disperser les manifestations organisées par l'opposition, avec un bilan d'au moins 12 morts. Le 31 octobre, le procureur de la cour d'appel de Conakry, la capitale, a annoncé que 325

11 enfants, sont détenues à la prison centrale de Conakry et accusées de différents crimes, notamment l'insurrection, la destruction de biens, ainsi que la possession illégale et la fabrication d'armes à feu. Parmi les personnes arrêtées figurent quatre dirigeants de l'Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée, le principal parti d'opposition, et le leader du mouvement Nos valeurs communes, un autre parti d'opposition. Leur procès a été ajourné le 30 novembre, et l'affaire a été renvoyée devant un autre tribunal ayant compétence sur les mineurs.

« Les autorités veulent les maintenir à distance de la scène politique afin de les empêcher de mobiliser leurs partisans et de manifester contre le troisième mandat d'Alpha Condé », a expliqué Me Pépé Antoine, un avocat spécialisé dans la défense des droits humains.

Malgré les graves atteintes aux droits humains commises par



personnes avaient été arrêtées en lien avec les violences postélectorales.

Il semble toutefois que la vaste majorité des personnes arrêtées ont été ciblées simplement en raison de leur affiliation politique connue ou supposée, ou parce qu'elles se trouvaient au mauvais endroit au mauvais moment. Human Rights Watch s'est entretenu avec cinq avocats, représentant les personnes détenues, qui ont indiqué que les arrestations étaient souvent arbitraires, effectuées lors de recherches maison par maison la nuit dans des zones considérées comme des bastions de l'opposition. « Les forces de sécurité sont entrées par effraction dans des dizaines de maisons, ont fait usage d'une force excessive, ont volé des objets et ont frappé des personnes », a déclaré Me Thierno Souleymane Baldé, un des avocats.

Les personnes arrêtées, dont

les forces de sécurité guinéennes, Human Rights Watch n'a connaissance d'aucun membre des forces de sécurité faisant l'objet de sanctions disciplinaires ou d'autres conséquences.

Le Front national pour la défense de la Constitution, une coalition d'organisations non gouvernementales et de partis d'opposition, a annoncé la tenue de nouvelles manifestations le 15 décembre, le jour où Alpha Condé prêterait serment. Au lieu d'arrêter arbitrairement des personnes, les autorités guinéennes devraient s'assurer que les forces de sécurité protègent les citoyens tout en respectant leur droit à manifester pacifiquement. Elles devraient aussi libérer les personnes injustement incarcérées, et enquêter sur les actions des forces de maintien de l'ordre.

Français

Sénatoriales 2020 :

Cummings. Elle serait en avance dans 7 comtés.

La CPP a déjà remporté 6 comtés, tandis qu'un septième est sur le point d'être remporté. Les six comtés sont Montserrado, où le sénateur sortant Darius Dillon conserve son siège; Lofa, où l'ancien ministre de la Défense J. Brownie Samukaiest élu nouveau sénateur; Grand Bassa où la sénatrice sortante NyonbleeKarna Lawrence devrait également conserver son siège; Grand Capemount où SimeonBoima Taylor est sur le point d'être le nouveau sénateur; le comté de Bong où le vice-président de la Chambre des représentants Prince Moye devrait rejoindre le Sénat en janvier et River Gee où l'ancienne star du football Jonathan Sengbe, populairement connu sous le nom de Boy Charles, devrait devenir le nouveau sénateur en janvier.

Le comté de Nimba est toujours proche de l'appel puisque Edith Gongloe-Weh de la CPP et Jeremiah K. Kougou de MDR (Mouvement pour la démocratie et la reconstruction fondé par le sénateur Prince Johnson) seraient au coude à coude. Des élections partielles sont prévues dans deux centres où il n'y a pas eu de vote le jour

du scrutin.

Pour ce qui concerne des 5 sièges restants sur les 12 en passe d'être remportés par l'opposition, trois pourraient choir aux mains de candidats indépendants - il s'agit de Rivercess où le candidat indépendant Abraham Gevon Smith est en tête, du comté de Bomi où Edwin Snowe qui se présente comme candidat indépendant devrait passer de la Chambre des représentants au sénat, et de Gbarpolu où la candidate indépendante BotoeKanneh est sur le point de gagner, bien qu'une élection partielle soit prévue dans certains centres où les jeunes ont confisqué les urnes le jour du scrutin.

Dans le comté de Margibi, l'ancien président de la Chambre des représentants, Emmanuel Nuquay, candidat du Parti de l'unification du peuple (PUP), est sur le point de remporter le siège, tandis que dans le comté de Grand Kru, Nathaniel N. Bahwayde l'Union nationale libérienne (LINU) est sur le point de détrôner le sénateur Peter Coleman du parti au pouvoir qui occupe actuellement la troisième place. La Coalition au pouvoir de George Weah, selon les résultats provisoires, ne mène que dans trois des 15 comtés, à savoir Grand Gedeh, Sinoe et Maryland. (Affaire à suivre).

Des violences post-électorales

de son candidat, même au niveau de la Cour suprême du Libéria. Il n'est pas nécessaire de saper les résultats des élections », a dit M. Blama.

Selon notre source, des manifestants menaçaient de brûler le bureau local de la Commission électorale si jamais les résultats ne reflétaient pas la volonté des électeurs.

Selon les résultats officiels publiés par la NEC jusqu'au samedi 12 décembre, dans le

comté de Grand Kru, M. Nathaniel N. Bahway avait recueilli 22,22% des votes. M. Blama a averti que son parti ne prendrait à la légère aucune tentative de quiconque de manipuler le résultat de ce comté.

Pendant ce temps, lorsque ce quotidien a contacté la commission par téléphone portable, les autorités de la NEC ont promis de vérifier les informations dans les plus brefs délais.

COMMENTAIRE

By Jayati Ghosh

Les exploitants agricoles contre l'État indien

NEW DELHI - La capitale de l'Inde est assiégée par plus de deux millions d'exploitants agricoles, qui sont actuellement rassemblés à la frontière de la ville dans le cadre d'une importante manifestation qui a débuté il y a deux semaines. Des hommes, des femmes et même des enfants de familles d'exploitants agricoles, jeunes et vieux, campent en rase campagne dans le froid glacial de l'hiver de Delhi. Ils ont mis de côté leurs inquiétudes relatives à l'infection virale et s'installent dans le long terme, en apportant suffisamment de nourriture pour plusieurs mois de conflit.

Le mouvement a commencé lorsque plusieurs milliers d'exploitants des États voisins du Punjab et du Haryana ont conduit leurs tracteurs vers Delhi dans l'espoir de faire entendre leurs revendications dans le centre de la ville. Les manifestations ont par la suite pris de l'ampleur au fur et à mesure que de nouveaux exploitants sont arrivés d'autres États, et cette mobilisation n'a pas l'air de faiblir. Plus de 500 organisations d'exploitants à travers l'Inde soutiennent les revendications des manifestants, et le cri de ralliement des exploitants à « Bharat Bandh », autrement dit à la grève nationale, a reçu le 8 décembre un large soutien des syndicats et de plusieurs partis d'opposition.

L'élément déclencheur des manifestations a été la promulgation hâtive par le gouvernement de trois nouvelles lois agricoles, introduites lors de la pandémie de COVID-19 et sans consulter les parties prenantes, comme les agriculteurs eux-mêmes, ou les gouvernements des États, qui sont responsables de l'agriculture, selon la Constitution de l'Inde.

À première vue, ces lois semblent anodines voire même bénéfiques pour les agriculteurs. Elles assouplissent les restrictions à l'achat et à la vente de produits agricoles, suppriment les contraintes sur le stockage en vertu de la loi de 1955 sur les produits essentiels et permettent l'agriculture contractuelle sur la base d'accords écrits. Le but déclaré du gouvernement est de créer « un écosystème où les agriculteurs et les commerçants jouissent de la liberté de choix », avec un « circuit de commercialisation alternatif compétitif » qui « favorise un commerce efficace, transparent et sans entraves ».

Les exploitants agricoles indiens n'entendent pas la nouvelle législation de cette oreille. Ils craignent que ces lois de « modernisation » n'ouvrent la voie à la commercialisation prédatrice de l'agriculture indienne, dirigée par des magnats politiquement bien connectés. D'autres soutiennent que les lois dérèglent en fait les transactions de production agricole, l'agriculture contractuelle et la détention de stocks d'une manière potentiellement préjudiciable aux exploitants. Les petits agriculteurs marginaux craignent d'être les plus durement touchés par ces mesures.

Ces mesures ont probablement été la goutte d'eau qui a fait déborder le vase pour de nombreux exploitants, dont les manifestations ont pris de l'ampleur ces dernières années, alors que les menaces pour leur subsistance n'ont cessé de s'amplifier. Il est vrai que les revenus agricoles n'ont cessé de décliner avant l'arrivée au pouvoir du Premier ministre Narendra Modi en 2014. En fait, les exploitants agricoles ont joué un rôle crucial dans les premiers temps du triomphe électoral de Modi, après sa promesse de doubler leurs revenus en cinq ans, en offrant des prix de soutien minimaux pour leurs produits (vendus à l'agence publique d'approvisionnement alimentaire) qui devaient être 50 % supérieurs aux coûts totaux de production.

Mais Modi n'a pas tenu cette promesse, et à lieu de cela, les exploitants ont obtenu des prix encore plus bas par rapport à leurs coûts par rapport à ce qu'ils étaient sous le gouvernement précédent. Plusieurs autres promesses faites par Modi au secteur agricole

se sont également révélées être de fausses promesses, ce qui a encore davantage miné la confiance des exploitants agricoles en son administration.

Ces dernières années, la forte baisse de la demande de l'économie indienne a maintenu les prix des produits agricoles à un bas niveau. C'est le résultat d'erreurs politiques - deux en particulier - qui ont détruit de nombreuses activités économiques informelles et ont nui aux moyens de subsistance : l'initiative de démonétisation de novembre 2016 et la taxe nationale sur les biens et services, mal conçue, qui est entrée en vigueur par la suite.

Le gouvernement n'a pas utilisé la politique budgétaire pour relancer l'emploi et la demande, de sorte que les revenus et la consommation ont diminué, en maintenant les prix des récoltes à un bas niveau. La pandémie a par la suite rendu compliqué la culture et la commercialisation de produits agricoles, alors que les prix des cultures sont restés bien inférieurs aux niveaux de 2019.

Les exploitants agricoles craignent que les nouvelles lois ne sonnent le glas du système public d'approvisionnement alimentaire, qui, bien qu'imparfait, leur fournit encore une protection de base contre les caprices du marché. Et ils peuvent constater que les prix des récoltes dans des États comme le Bihar (qui a déjà mis fin au monopole des cours du marché réglementé) tombent bien en dessous des prix de soutien minimaux.

L'une des nouvelles lois vise à s'en prendre aux intermédiaires comme les courtiers. Mais les exploitants agricoles disent qu'ils préféreraient interagir avec de tels intermédiaires et développer potentiellement une relation qui permette une certaine flexibilité et des concessions en cas de besoin, plutôt qu'avec des entreprises anonymes et inflexibles qui peuvent utiliser divers moyens - comme le « contrôle qualité » lors de l'achat - pour les priver de leur dû.

Il est certain que les agriculteurs doivent également s'inquiéter des contraintes écologiques et de la dégradation des sols résultant d'une dépendance de plus en plus grande à l'agriculture chimique, à l'eau rare et contaminée, ainsi qu'au changement climatique (qui se traduit par des événements météorologiques défavorables et des changements dans les grilles de précipitations). Mais les exploitants agricoles craignent que les politiques du gouvernement Modi n'aggravent encore ces problèmes.

Jusqu'à présent, le gouvernement a cherché à traiter avec les agriculteurs en colère comme toutes les autres manifestations démocratiques. Il a d'abord ignoré les manifestants, avant de prétendre qu'ils étaient trompés et manipulés par des forces d'opposition malveillantes. Le gouvernement a alors laissé entendre que les agriculteurs sikhs étaient « antinationaux » et donc « terroristes » et a utilisé la force brute pour réprimer des manifestations pacifiques. Les médias traditionnels complaisants et les médias sociaux ont été déchaînés dans un effort visant à discréditer les revendications des agriculteurs, de la même manière qu'ils ont pris à partie de manière agressive tous les dissidents au cours des six dernières années.

Les pouvoirs publics ont refusé de se plier à la demande principale des agriculteurs d'en finir avec ces lois. Ils estiment apparemment que les manifestations de plein air risquent de s'essouffler au fil du temps, surtout compte tenu du froid qui a déjà coûté la vie à plusieurs manifestants.

Mais c'est faire montre ici d'un orgueil démesuré. Environ la moitié de la main-d'œuvre totale de l'Inde dépend de l'agriculture et les deux tiers de la population (ainsi que 70 % de la population rurale) dépendent directement ou indirectement des agriculteurs. La détermination des agriculteurs manifestants et le large soutien public dont ils bénéficient suggèrent que cette fois-ci l'issue du conflit risque d'être différente.

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Tension brews in Gbarpolu

Tension is said to be brewing in Nomodatahum, District #3, a bordering town with Sierra Leone in Gbarpolu County ahead of a schedule rerun of the December 8, Senatorial election.

Voting was postponed in the area on December 8, to today December 15, after some youths in the town stormed the voting center and took away ballot boxes on election day claiming that most of the people who had shown up to vote had crossed over from Sierra Leone.

Currently as per the National Elections Commission (NEC) provisional results, Madam BotoeKanneh, an independent candidate is topping the race by some 449 votes ahead of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) candidate Alfred Gayflor Koiwood in the

his client's supporters (Cllr. BoakaiKanneh, a brother and one Joseph) are in a state of danger.

"The Clan Chief today instructed the Traditional Devil to enter the town of Nomodatahum, District #3 virtually terrorizing supporters of Madam Botoe," he explained.

"With these negative development, the campaign committee of Madam Botoe lives are in imminent danger making it practically impossible to continue with her election activities," Cllr. Kanneh concluded.

The situation is fluid at the moment with reports quoting some NEC officials of finding it difficult to access the town.

Earlier in an interview Monday Cllr. Kanneh, told this paper that his sister was under attack and that she and her entourage have been prevented from entering the town, while

Legislature. We have to fight against this menace that is keeping our mothers, daughters, sisters, wives and friends from running for office and winning. On Tuesday, 2021 voters in Nomodatonau (the town bordering Sierra Leone) will be voting to elect the county's next Senator. The National Election Commission is conducting a rerun because a group of young men seized four ballot boxes because they claimed the people who voted were Sierra Leoneans, not Liberians. Right now, Botoe Kanneh, a dried meat seller, is leading the race by 449 votes. She is very popular in the area because she does a lot of business there. The area is also predominantly women. It is her strong hold, so people will do anything to fight for a lion share of the 2021 votes. If you truly believe in women's representation, please join the effort to protect Botoe's voters. Join the fight to protect Mama Gbarpolu. Be on the right side of history," wrote a female campaigner Maureen Sieh on her social media page.

Meanwhile, the Senatorial midterm election results are seen as a big blow to President George Weah's ruling Congress for Democratic Change. The Elections Commission on Thursday announced preliminary results from eight counties.

Speaking at a press conference, NEC chairperson Davidetta Browne Lasanah, said "The Liberian people can be rest assured that the Commission will accurately announce the results of the election as expressed by the people through the ballot box."

The special senatorial elections are seen as a test of support for Weah, a former football icon who has faced criticism as president over persisting economic problems.

The opposition is also leading in the country's largest county, Montserrado, which is home to the capital Monrovia, as well as most of the voters in the nation

The elections occurred alongside a referendum on reducing presidential terms and allowing dual nationality.

Former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in her twitter post congratulated NEC Chair Davidetta Browne-Lasanah and to President George Weah for respecting the will of the Liberian people in the just ended December 8 Senatorial By-Election.-writes **Othello B. Garblah**

Revoke Cllr. Sherman's

Cont'd from page 4

Liberian Senate from recess and they will begin the process of mobilizing young people from Grand Cape Mount to petition the legislature saying, "because this is an embarrassment and we think he should be removed."

Fly is the second group to make seminar call against Cllr. Sherman since the U.S. government took the action. Recently, Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL) urged the Government of Liberia through the Liberia Anti - Corruption Commission (LACC) to step in and investigate the alleged corrupt act that led the United States Department of Treasury to sanction Grand Cape Mount County Senator Cllr. H. Varney G. Sherman.

"We call on the GOL

especially the LACC, and the Judiciary to investigate reports of corruption and payments and receipt of bribes by judges in the case involving Cllr. Sherman," CENTAL said Thursday, 10 December.

Addressing a news conference at CENTAL's office in Monrovia, the group's Executive Director Anderson Miamen said the report released by the United States Department of Treasury should not be taken lightly by the administration in the wake of appropriate initial actions by the international partners.

CENTAL says such reported judicial corruption, especially in the Sable Mining case, undermines the position of independence, fairness and upholding the rule of law. - **Editing by Jonathan Browne**



Madam Botoe Kanneh, only female candidate from the county

county's senatorial election. A win in the town could seal her victory.

Reports of voters' intimidation flared on Monday with many locals reporting the presence of a traditional (country) devil order in town by the Clan Chief, a diehard CDC supporter, which is preventing many people from accessing the town.

The legal team of Madam Botoe Kanneh of Sannoh& Partners filed a former complaint before the NEC chair Mrs. Davidetta Brown-Lasanah on Monday indicating that their client Madam Botoe Kanneh is running for her dear life as a result of attacks on her life and the lives of her supporters.

In the complaint signed by Cllr. Moiffie Kanneh, a relative of Madam Botoe Kanneh, conditions of two of

the ruling party candidate was there having meeting with town elders.

On Sunday reports of voters' intimidations were also reported, with many accounts pointing to the huge deployment of state securities comprising officers of the Liberian National Police (LNP), Immigration personnel, agents of the National Security Agency (NSA) and officers of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA).

The county is a must win county for the ruling establishment. It is the home of State Minister Nathaniel McGill. With the CDC losing to the opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) in nearly all of the vote rich counties, the tiny Gbarpolu County could help give the CDC some hope.

"My Liberian people. I told you last week that cash violence is one of the major barriers to women representation in the

VTF donates LRD100, 000 to YES

The Varney Taylor Foundation (VTF) based in the United States of America has donated a check for 100,000 Liberian Dollars to Youth Exploring Solutions (YES) to foster youth leadership conference in Liberia.

A member of the foundation in Liberia, Varmunyah S. Sheriff, who presented the check to the founder of YES recently at a local hotel in Monrovia, said VTF was

will go a long way to enhance preparation for the leadership conference.

Receiving the donation, YES executive director Attorney Stephen B. Lavalah expressed delight and appreciation for the gesture.

Atty. Lavalah stressed that it is crucial to explore the leadership potential of Liberian youth to drive the growth and development of the country.

He pinpointed that this year marks the 10th anniversary of



founded here by Cllr. Varney Taylor, currently residing in America.

Mr. Sheriff disclosed the foundation has contributed to the needs of Liberians in several ways and sees YES championing development of Liberian youth potential through leadership conference as remarkable.

He noted that YES is expected to hold youth leadership conference this December and the donation

YES's Youth Leadership Conference, which is expected to host 140 young people from across the nation for two days in Monrovia.

According to him, since 2011, YES has been holding youth leadership conferences on different leadership skills in various counties, focusing on various leadership abilities in entrepreneurship, conflict resolutions, environmental awareness, and civic responsibilities, among others.

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CPP gets vigilant

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The main opposition Collaborating Political Parties has raised red flag on the just ended Special Senatorial election and highlighted alleged foul play.

CPP in statement issued in Monrovia, dated December 14 states that while the election day itself was relatively peacefully with Liberians voting in a way that signals a clear and unequivocal rejection of the ruling CDC (especially in the most populous counties) because of bad governance, wanton looting of state resources by a privileged few, 'mysterious killing of professional Liberians' and a host of other vices, the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change has in cohort with the 'compromised' National Elections Commission (NEC) hatched another plan to steal the elections in some of the

entering Nomodatonau Town where a rerun election is expected to be held today, Tuesday, December 15, 2020 to complete the senatorial election in that county, and also intimidating voters in a bid to deter them from voting for the candidate of their choice.

"There is a voice recording circulating of the superintendent of Gbarpolu, mandating government employees in the county to vote for the CDC candidate. The action of the ruling CDC and the government in Nimba and Gbarpolu proves that the CDC will do everything to ensure that women are not elected to the Liberian senate," the statement said.

The main opposition also noted that in Grand Kru County, the CDC in their desperation to win at any cost, is again in cohort with the NEC to elevate through electoral fraud, the candidate contesting on the CDC's ticket who was ranking

legally registered voters to cast their ballots.

The CPP under the stewardship of Chairman Alexander Cummings said that the pre-marked ballots were discovered at other precincts in District 9 including the Don Bosco precinct on elections day. The matter was reported to the police and several observe documented the incident in their reports. We will also be demanding a rerun at those precincts.

Commenting on the issue of the 2020 National Referendum, it strongly cautioned the National Elections Commission not to in any way tamper with the results.

"Counting in our situation rooms across the country showed that none of the propositions acquired the required 2/3rd YES votes to be passed. In fact, our records of count showed that there were more NO votes than YES. The

GOLSAO leadership

Starts from back page

who have made this organization a leading center of transformation in remolding the minds of young people.

"As we take on the mantle of authority to lead this noble body, let me firstly say a big thank you to the rest of our colleagues; the entire membership for reposing in us the explicit confident to take GOLSAO to the next level", he said.

Highlighting some achievements he said the organization was very successful in community service campaign by collaboration with partners in a joint retreat, including hosting several workshops and educational seminars on peace building, youth empowerment, early childhood and girls' education as well as providing awareness on all forms of abuse, especially, rape.

He added that GOLSAO was also successful in reuniting

communities through sports and involvement with the COVID-19 relief initiative across the country.

"As we go forward in an effort to take GOLSAO to the next level, we are wholeheartedly seeking your full commitment and support to enable us deliver on our platform."

He called on his colleagues to consolidate ideas and resources to building a vigorous, contending, searching and learning organization, quite gloriously established to strive for the common good.

Mariama Sheriff, president of ECOWAS women in Liberia, encouraged the newly inducted officials to be focused and make impact in the society.

"We don't have money to give but we want to encourage every one of you to rule well, because the society depends on you", Mrs Sheriff urged. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*



leeward counties and the Montserrado by-election.

The statement added that in Nimba County; there is evidence of tally sheet manipulations at the tallying center in favor of the candidate supported by the government against CPP Candidate Edith Gongloe-Weh, allegedly swapping votes to another candidate, broken seal on ballot boxes and a host of other irregularities.

The opposition said NEC workers were also observed to have carelessly handled ballot papers which questioned the integrity and credibility of the process in certain places.

The CPP specifically pointed out that in Gbarpolu County, state securities are effectively blocking supporters of Independent Candidate BotoeKanneh from

third, to a winning position at the expense of two other candidates in the lead, vowing that CPP will stand toe to toe with the independent candidates and candidates from other parties in the opposition bloc to ensure that the actual winner of the race in Grand Kru is announced by the NEC.

The CPP stressed that in the District 9 bi-election in Montserrado County, scores of voters were disenfranchised either by the incompetency of the NEC or intentional transfer of voters in areas where our candidate was most popular. Most of the voters who registered at the Jorkpen Town Market, one of many precincts in District 9, were told they could not vote because they had been transferred to Blamasi Town in District 17.

The CPP condemns this deliberate act by the NEC and would be demanding a rerun at that precinct so as to enable

CPP along with civil society organizations and other opposition political parties will keenly monitor the tallying of the referendum votes. We call on the government to respect the will of the people and not tamper with their votes or intimidate them. The CPP will not accept any results that do not reflect the will of the people. We will continue to protect the votes of the people and the integrity of these elections. The CPP congratulates all of its winning candidates and those independent candidates that have also been declared winners. We also extend our congratulations to winning candidates of other political parties within the opposition bloc,' the CPP concludes.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

CDC concedes

Cont'd from page 4

address challenges and concerns of the Liberian people in a manner that would secure their trust.

Morlu said the CDC and the government have received this message well and that outcomes will be shown in weeks, months and years ahead as they push harder to meet service delivery and economic needs of the people. He said in the post-election environment, Liberians should all remain committed to protecting the peace and promoting the country's image, while detailing clearly what image is there when insecurity looms and the administration is saturated with corruption at all levels, generating international sanctions for specific officials, the latest being Senator H. Varney Sherman.

Morlu noted the CDC and its collaborators are likely to win four counties, while the CPP is likely to win six counties and independent candidates are likely to win four counties, saying this is a great combination for all to work for Liberia in the years ahead. Her said those elected should be given chance to govern so

that results may be judged at the end of the day, cautioning against use of protests as strategy to thwart governance.

He called on CDCIANS to work harder to build a more vibrant, inclusive and broad based coalition. The party's heart goes out to all partisans who worked and campaigned tirelessly throughout Liberia.

"We faced challenges in our coalition which may have undermined our political efforts but we are committed to resolving those challenges and to building a stronger Coalition. We will build a better coalition, improve our governance, deliver better services, and go on to win in 2023! Let me extend special thanks to our illustrious Standard Bearer and President of the Republic of Liberia, His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah, for his support to the CDC during these elections. Mr. President, let me say that you remain a beacon of peace and democracy in Liberia and great things will continue to happen under your leadership. Take heart as you continue to work for the people of Liberia," he concluded. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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GOLSAO leadership takes office



By Lewis S. Teh

The president of the National Photographers Union of Liberia, Mr. Lawrence Fokoe, has urged officers-elect of the Good Legacy and Athletic Organization or GOLSAO, to be focus, creative and vigilant, as they take on leadership role.

"There will be trials but you don't have to lose hope

because the society depends on you."

Mr. Fokoe gave the challenge Sunday, December 13, 2020, during inauguration of the elected officials of GOLSAO, noting that as young people in society, "we must remind ourselves that many look up to us for direction, and the impact we will make matters a lot."

"As you take the mantle of authority as leaders of GOLSAO, you must make impact in the

lives of the young generation".

He said despite challenges, young people shouldn't lose hope, but see everything around them as an opportunity to achieving their goals.

GOLSAO president-elect Emmanuel B. Juduh recalled GOLSAO was established to help mold the minds of youths communities and society at large.

"In doing this, we are committed to building the capacity of all young people through skills training programs which will help prepare them for future employment", Mr. Juduh added.

He said notwithstanding, GOLSAO as an organization is famously known as the refinery and is working with young people from all works of life, including the educated, uneducated, discipline and indiscipline, serious-minded and unserious minded, and most of all dedicated people,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

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