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CPP delegates arrested in Gbarpolu



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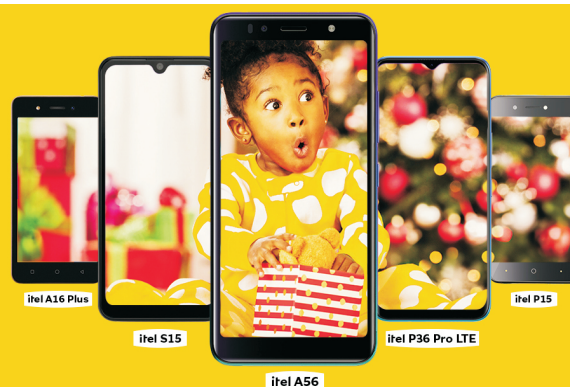
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Continental News

Hotel Rwanda 'hero' sues airline over 'kidnap'

The man portrayed as a hero in a Hollywood movie about the Rwandan genocide, Hotel Rwanda, says he is suing a Greek charter flight company for aiding his alleged kidnap.

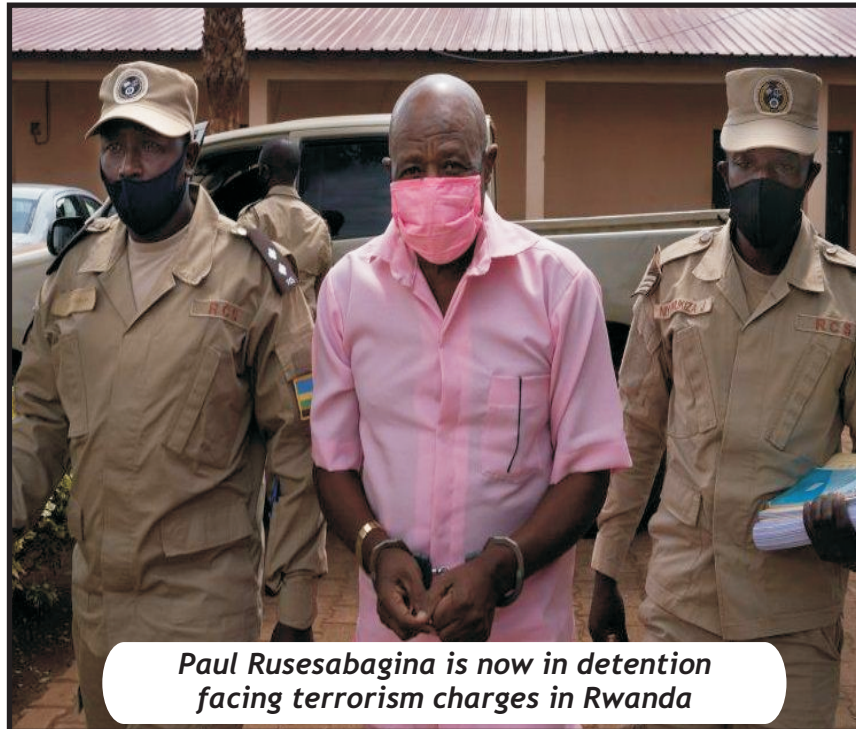
Paul Rusesabagina says that in August he intended to visit Burundi but after he boarded a private flight in Dubai he was instead flown to Rwanda.

He was arrested for leading "terrorist movements", Rwandan officials said at the time.

His lawyers denied the charges. An ethnic Hutu, Mr Rusesabagina became well known after the 2004 film Hotel Rwanda depicted his efforts a decade earlier during the genocide to save hundreds of Tutsis at a hotel where he was a manager.

He is a fierce critic of President Paul Kagame and is the leader of the opposition MRCD group.

It is said to have an armed wing, the National Liberation



Paul Rusesabagina is now in detention facing terrorism charges in Rwanda

Front (FLN), which stages attacks on Rwanda.

He had been living in exile and has Belgian citizenship and a US green card.

But he says he was tricked by a pastor into taking a trip to Burundi for speaking engagements.

Rwanda has charged him with terrorism, financing terrorism, recruiting child soldiers, kidnapping, arson, and forming terror groups.

In September, a Rwandan court heard allegations that the FLN had received help from Zambia's President Edgar

Lungu because of his close friendship with Mr Rusesabagina.

His lawyers denied the charges against him and Mr Lungu's spokesman denied the allegation in a BBC interview. Mr Rusesabagina is currently in prison in Rwanda awaiting trial. He has filed a lawsuit in Texas, where he has been living, against the charter company GainJet, alleging the company agreed to facilitate the plane journey because of its close relationship with officials in Rwanda.

"Paul was bound and gagged before the plane landed in Rwanda," said his lawyer Robert Hilliard.

"The pilots have an international responsibility to every single one of the people on the plane. They cannot be complicit with kidnapers and say go ahead and tie him up, go ahead and drug him, go ahead and bind him, go ahead and bind his feet and his hands and

we'll get you to Rwanda where you can then pretend he's going to get a fair trial," he added.

A similar case is expected to be lodged in Belgium where Mr Rusesabagina holds citizenship, reports the BBC's Africa correspondent Catherine Byaruhanga.

GainJet has not responded to the BBC's requests for comment.

Rwanda's Justice Minister Johnston Busingye has denied that Mr Rusesabagina was kidnapped and insisted he will get a fair trial on 26 January. The 2004 film Hotel Rwanda told the story of how Mr Rusesabagina, a middle-class Hutu married to a Tutsi woman, used his influence - and bribes - to convince military officials to secure a safe escape for an estimated 1,200 people who sought shelter at the Mille Collines Hotel in Kigali. Don Cheadle played Mr Rusesabagina in the film.

Rwandan genocide survivors' group Ibuka has in the past said that he exaggerated his own role in helping hotel refugees escape the 100-day slaughter. BBC

Boko Haram shows video 'of kidnapped schoolboys'

A video said to be from the jihadist group Boko Haram shows some of more than 300 Nigerian schoolboys kidnapped last week.

In the video, filmed in a forest, gunmen with their faces covered stand guard over boys, some of whom look no older than 10.

One child is coaxed into making demands on behalf of the group.

The boys were snatched

from a boarding school in the north-western state of Katsina. The six-minute footage features a boy in the foreground whose clothes and face are dishevelled.

Dozens of children, some of them appearing to be very young, stand in the background, pleading.

In a mix of English and Hausa, the main speaker says they were kidnapped by Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau's gang.

He says some of the boys

have been killed by Nigerian fighter jets and calls for the closure of schools other than Koranic schools.

He adds that all the government troops who have been sent to help them should be sent back.

At one point his voice appears to break and the other children begin to cry.

It's a distressing watch, BBC correspondent Mayeni Jones says. BBC



Abdulhadi avoided the mass kidnapping in Nigeria's Katsina school but his twin brother Mustapha was lost in the chaos

Malawi named country of the year



Lazarus Chakwera, seen here voting, was elected in the presidential poll re-run in June

Malawi has been named country of the year for "reviving democracy in an authoritarian region" by the Economist newspaper. The newspaper cites the nullification of the 2019 presidential election results that were marred by irregularities. "The vote-count was rigged with correction fluid on the tally sheets. Foreign observers cynically approved it anyway. Malawians launched mass protests against the 'Tipp-Ex election'. Malawian judges

turned down suitcases of bribes and annulled it," the Economist reports. The country held a presidential election re-run in June and President Peter Mutharika was beaten by President Lazarus Chakwera. The Economist says Freedom House's report that democracy and respect for human rights regressed in 80 countries between the start of the pandemic and September but only improved in Malawi.

"Malawi is still poor, but its people are citizens, not subjects," the newspaper adds. BBC

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EDITORIAL

We demand free, fair election in Gbarpolu

NEWS COMING OUT of Gbarpolu County is not pleasant at all, as candidates are reportedly being harassed and intimidated on one hand, while voters are being induced and coerced to cast their ballots only for the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change in what supposed to be a democratic process.

THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS Commission was constrained to postpone Tuesday, December 15 re-run poll specifically in Nomodatanau, electoral District#3, due to the security situation there. The NEC has again rescheduled the re-run election for Friday, 18 December.

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 Nomodatanau, 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 senatorial election because they claimed most of the people who voted came from Sierra Leone.

THE ONLY FEMALE in the race is BotoeKanneh, 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 area 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 free, 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 shown no respect for women, as demonstrated by having no female candidates on its tickets. Now the only female face in the Gbarpolu senatorial election, Independent Candidate BotoeKanneh, is being subjected to serious intimidation. This is unacceptable!

COMMENTARY

By Mohamed Nasheed
& Loren Legarda

Countdown to Climate Catastrophe

By submitting updated climate action plans to the United Nations, countries that have contributed the least to the climate change crisis are now demonstrating the most commitment to resolving it. Developed countries need to heed their example.

MALÉ/MANILA - Jamaica, Rwanda, the Marshall Islands, and Mongolia are among the world's most climate-vulnerable countries, and account for just a small percentage of global emissions. This year, their economies have also been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet every one of these countries delivered updated climate plans to the United Nations, as set out in the 2015 Paris climate agreement, before the deadline at the end of this year.

In other words, countries that have contributed the least to the climate crisis are now among the most committed to resolving it. This should set an example for developed countries, including the United States, whose emission-reduction plans - due by midnight on December 31 - have not yet materialized.

In addition to climate plans, the Paris agreement calls for financial aid from richer countries to support climate action. To date, this support - also due by the end of 2020 - is lacking as well. The OECD estimates that only around \$79 billion of the promised \$100 billion annually is being delivered to the countries where it is needed most.

Vulnerable countries are already feeling the financial impact of climate change. According to the UN, climate vulnerability raised the cost of debt for such countries by more than \$60 billion over the past decade. Interest payments are expected to balloon to \$168 billion in the coming decade, for the same reason. The most at-risk economies require an immediate injection of liquidity, along with debt restructuring and forgiveness.

Now, COVID-19 is compounding these economic woes, and it is clear that the pandemic will not be the last of its kind. After all, climate change, deforestation, and the destruction of natural habitats increase the risk of new vector-borne diseases.

Advanced economies are responsible for helping to ensure that the developing world is not left mired in debt and battered by the interconnected threats of COVID-19 and climate change. And, in addition to helping vulnerable countries, they need to reconsider their own COVID-19 recovery plans.

Unfortunately, that's not happening. Trillions of dollars are being directed toward recovery packages that economists tell us reward sectors responsible for pollution. The International Monetary Fund's 2020 World Economic Outlook also emphasizes the G20 countries' responsibility to

implement growth packages that reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. It is vital that governments understand that if we want to ensure a safer world for future generations, building back better and greener is not a policy just for the next year.

Vulnerable countries are tired of inaction. And they are not simply calling for help, but are committed to leading by example. The Central Bank of the Philippines, for example, recently adopted a sustainable-finance framework to safeguard the financial system from evolving climate risk. The new framework encourages banks to start pricing physical climate and transition risks, as well as valuing climate-resilience and low-carbon opportunities. Moreover, the central bank must disclose its own exposure to environmental risks, which could lead to excluding specific assets - like fossil fuels - from its policies in the future. In late October, the country also imposed a moratorium on new coal-fired power stations.

On a global scale, the World Bank and the IMF are collaborating with the G20 to attract more investment to poorer countries by lowering the costs associated with "green" projects. In the United States, President-elect Joe Biden has vowed to re-establish the US as a country committed to the UN, multilateral agreements such as the Paris accord, and international law. America's return to a position of global leadership on combating climate change is to be welcomed. But, like other developed countries, the US still needs to deliver its updated climate plan.

The COVID-19 crisis underscores the urgent need for more ambitious measures. During World War I, the United Kingdom issued war bonds to finance both the conflict and the subsequent recovery. Similar instruments could be used to help the Global South claw its way out of both pandemic- and climate-related disaster. In addition, major development banks and private investors should demonstrate leadership by implementing the Paris agreement's vision of a global investment shift from dirty to clean energy.

Climate action cannot be delayed any longer, and the leaders of developed economies need to step up and follow the example already being set by developing countries. Real leaders are not those who shout the loudest or tweet the most. Real leaders are those who deliver on their promises. We urge richer countries to submit updated climate plans before the end of the year, and to uphold the other promises made in the Paris climate agreement - both for our sake and that of future generations.

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Lord, they na see the hand writing on the wall yet?

Dear Father:

Hmmm, you know, way, way back in the Bible before Jesus was even born, they had one king who could not listen to anyone else besides his friends he used to womanize and drink plenty liquor with. And you know, in those days, God told the people to carry everything in his house-money oo, gold oo, silver oo, everything.

He told them to do it so that the people of the village who were in need could go there and get it. - It was just like today, we get Central Bank them where all the banks in the country can carry their money to keep and then do the thing they call clearing between the banks them.

So, this day, I don't know what got in the King's head and he sent his people to take some of the treasures (golden cups) from the Temple-remember I said in our days we called it Central Bank.

Can you image that my son!

Oh yes, Father. I say the King was so brave, he could not listen to anyone accept for his few friends who were around him. They took the treasures from the Temple, and who dare to ask him. So he went to have a big party where he and his friends were enjoying themselves with women. And then boom-they just saw this mystery hand written some funny, funny things on the wall.

Father those funny, funny writings on the wall was a message being send to the King that he had loss his place over his people and that one small boy called Cyrus who was just bend on expanding his own empire was coming to invade his beautiful country and take over.

And you know, that reminds me of our village Father. The same thing na start happening in our village. The writings are on the wall but the question the people asking is whether the Country Giant is read.

Look Father, first they say money disappear just like that. Nowadays when people carry check to get their lay thing it na there. Can you imagine that Father?

And the people already get it in their heart that like this hard hay King in the Bible, who saw nowhere to put his hand to send for things to use but in the Temple-God's Central Bank-you too, your name inside their Central Bank about money missing from their everyday and they can't get their money from the small, small banks because of that.

And the people na sent their message. Oh yes, they did on Tuesday using their fingers, just as the mystery hand used its finger in the Bible.

Unlike, the King in the Bible who needed some kinda interpreter, this other message our people na sent don't need no other interpretation. So that it there.

Hmm, my son the book people can say 'a word to the wise is quite sufficient.'

Father, you don't even need to carry it to the book people seh. Our old people can say when you tell the child pupu on the palm kernel and the child na listen and still go and burst it, when the pupu flash on him that his own bisnay. So it left with our Brabee to listen or not to.

Eh eh, before I forget, they say what happen to the ATM machine?

Hahaha, ooh hahaha, Father, I begging you here mehn, don't bring trouble on my block.

Oh, I just asking you about the ATM Machine and you laughing like you na find Bill Gate susu card?

Father, the way you asked the question seh that the one making me to laugh. You na join the people them too who can be giving people names around here? Anyway, am told the place the ATM machine er it is going under some kinda serious repair.

O-P-E-D

By British Ambassador,
Neil Bradley

The Case for Climate Action Now

2020 has been a challenging year for Liberia and countries across the world that have grappled with the implications of COVID-19. But the pandemic has not stopped the climate crisis. Our world continues to get hotter. Climate damage is increasing, and it will get much worse without greater action. As we recover from COVID-19, governments are putting in place packages to revive their economies. The decisions we make now will determine whether the planet builds back greener and more resilient for future generations to come.



The author

Last week the world came together for our planet at the Climate Ambition Summit, hosted by the UK, UN and France alongside our partners Italy and Chile. Responding to the calls for action from youth, business, indigenous peoples and civil society, 75 world leaders announced new commitments to climate action, including 45 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) covering 71 countries when including all EU member states; 24 net zero commitments (net zero is reached when greenhouse gas emissions produced are balanced by those removed from the atmosphere, e.g. through tree planting); and 20 adaptation and resilience plans. Liberia's Environmental Protection Agency is already working with ministries, development partners, civil society, communities and business to develop an ambitious NDC that will support sustainable development goals and demonstrate Liberia's valuable contribution to global climate action.

Green growth is an economic success story. The UK has demonstrated this - since 1990 we have grown our economy by 75%, whilst cutting emissions by 43%. According to Systemiq, the low carbon economy has the potential to create up to 35 million new jobs by 2030. This was evident at the summit, with businesses such as Apple announcing plans to go net zero and carbon neutral. Liberia can benefit from the low carbon transition, helping meet consumer demand for products such as forest-friendly cocoa and sustainable palm oil, reaping the financial rewards such high-value premium goods bring. Liberia can also harness the exceptional biodiversity of the Upper Guinea rainforest, with communities building better livelihoods from the growing eco-tourism market. And there is huge opportunity for Liberia to expand citizens' access to reliable, affordable energy, through domestic and international investment in renewable energy sources such as solar and hydro-electric power.

As hosts of the next UN Climate Change conference (COP26), taking place in November 2021 in Glasgow, the UK urges all countries to invest in a green recovery that addresses the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and public health. The UK is leading by example: our NDC commits us to reducing emissions by the fastest rate of any major economy, and alongside that, we submitted our Adaptation Communication and set out plans to double our International Climate Finance (ICF) support to £11.6 billion (approximately US\$15.7bn) over the next five years. The Prime Minister also announced the UK will end direct support for the fossil fuel energy sector overseas.

Our Presidency of COP26 will build consensus and broker an agreement around four key goals. We will facilitate a step change in emissions cuts, with NDCs that put us on track to limit the rise in temperature to 1.5 degrees, plotting a course to net zero emissions that is fair to all. We will address the vital issues of adaptation and loss and damage. To protect lives, livelihoods and ecosystems - adaptation and resilience must take centre stage at COP26. We will take steps to ensure that finance will flow to climate action. We must deliver for those that are at the front line of climate change, collectively honouring developed countries' commitment to mobilise \$100 billion per year in climate finance for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. And we must work with the private sector to unleash the power of capital markets for a green and resilient recovery.

Finally, we will work to craft a new era of international cooperation that urgently accelerates climate action, bringing people together around five key challenges; adaptation and resilience, clean energy, clean transport, finance and nature-based solutions. We call on other countries to join us, and ensure these five key areas are embedded in sustainable and inclusive recovery packages. We want to ensure that the benefits of green recovery are accessible to the countries that are most vulnerable to climate change.

Success in Glasgow next year will depend on all of us. We all have a responsibility to build on the ambition we have seen at the summit and work together to forge a brighter future. Liberia has much to be proud of in her climate action and much to gain from sustainable low carbon development. We are proud to support Liberia, through our UK Aid programmes in forestry and agriculture, and also through our substantial financial contributions to multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank, and funds such as the Green Climate Fund.

Together, we can use the opportunity to build back better and greener to unleash the full potential of our collective action, set the planet on an accelerated trajectory towards meeting our climate change commitments, and contribute to our economic recovery. We must use the time ahead of COP26 to unite behind a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy for both our people and planet. We do not have time to waste.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Speaker Chambers hails Liberians

-for peaceful election

House Speaker Bhofal Chambers has extolled Liberians for peacefully participating in the just-ended special senatorial elections held in the country.

He thanked members of

the contestants to see themselves as champions of democracy.

According to a press release issued in Monrovia Thursday, Speaker Chambers said now that the elections are over, he is cognizant of the impact the process has made on the 54th Legislature, signaling the House

counties, including those who did not get their people's mandate, for their participation.

He also welcomed the two Representatives-elect from Montserrado and Sinoe Counties, after the National Elections Commission officially pronounced them as winners.

At the same time, Chambers has congratulated Deputy Speaker Prince Moye, as senator-elect for Bong County, noting that Moye's victory has triggered a looming by-election to fill both the Deputy Speaker's post and the vacant created in Bong.

The House of Representatives standing rule#54.1, gives the Speaker the mandate to appoint or reappoint all chairpersons and co-chairpersons of all statutory and standing committees, including members of legislative delegations to international parliamentary bodies.

This authority of the Speaker coincides with the outcome of the special senatorial elections which witnessed the participation of 17 incumbent lawmakers from the House of Representatives.

of Representatives, which recorded several of its members expressing their interest for the Senate.

He congratulated all sitting Representatives of the Legislature who won senatorial seats in their respective



Speaker Bhofal Chambers

the 54th Legislature who saw faith in the democratic process and participated in the race.

Speaker Chambers believes outcome of the poll reflects will of the Liberian people and has called on all of

Representatives urged to elect Crayton Duncan as Deputy Speaker

By Winston W. Parley

Liberian political activist Amb. B. Geeplaye Nyenswah is urging members of the House of Representatives to vote for Sinoe County District 1 Rep. Crayton O. Duncan as next Deputy House Speaker, in light of his maturity, transparency, leadership ability and spirit of unity to bring peace to the House.

Amb. Nyenswah made the appeal during an exclusive interview Wednesday, 16 December with this paper via mobile phone ahead of an expected in-house election due among members of the House of Representatives to fill a vacant post left following the election of Bong County Representative and Deputy Speaker Prince Moye as Senator.

"Basically he's a mature person and he has the leadership ability, he can unite the House of Representatives and [promote] the issue of transparency, accountability

and responsiveness ... to make sure to help all the committees, chairpersons, the leadership of the House and make sure that the Liberian people's interests are met," he says.

In an exclusive interview with this paper via mobile Wednesday, 16 December, Amb. Nyenswah recalled since Rep.

Duncan's election in 2017 as representative of Sinoe, he has carried out a lot of projects in his county.

According to him, Rep. Duncan has dedicated numerous projects across Sinoe, beside the district he

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Rep. Crayton O. Duncan

Bringing country devil out is wrong

-Women group

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Coalition of Liberian Women Organization says the use of country devil against Gbarpolu County senatorial candidate BotoeKanneh in an election is very wrong.

Addressing a news conference Thursday in Monrovia, Madam Yvete Chesson Wureh said, traditionally, women are not to see a devil.

She said there are specific traditional practices for which a devil should come outside, but to come outside just to prevent a female candidate from getting elected is wrong.

Members of the Coalition

council of traditional leaders to bring those involved to book.

According to her, local authorities in the county brought out the male devil to intimidate Madam Botoe and her supporters, knowing that traditionally, women

are prohibited from seeing the male devil.

"Since when our cultural practices have been used during elections, we now have the country devil coming out at the request of individual who are looking for

political gain and using the devil to intimidate and disenfranchise

women voters", she lamented.

Madam Wureh called on President George Weah to demonstrate political will and



include Madam Mandela Cooper and Cyvette Gibson, amongst others.

She noted that cultural and physical attacks on women in politics

should come to an end, calling on the National Elections Commission to protect

all candidates especially, women candidate.

She disclosed the Coalition has met with Justice Minister Frank Musa Dean and the Minister of Internal Affairs on the incident in Gbarpolu and an

investigation has been launched along with the

protect women against all forms of violence, including electoral violence.

She said President Weah should provide adequate resources to the Ministry of Justice to enforce the law by investigating and prosecuting those involved in electoral violence.

She urged the Ministry of Justice to arrest and prosecute all perpetrators of violence during the just-ended senatorial election, saying that the armed forces should be called in to help these security situation.

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ELECTIONS 2020: IT'S THE PEOPLE... STUPID?

Cummings-led 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, Augustine Chea of Sinoe 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 NimeneBatekwa. 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 employment without jobs. These folks only show up around payday to find out if salary is being disbursed 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 GiftyLamah from LRA and another LRA employee whose head was sliced as well as Emmanuel BarthanNyeswa 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 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 would chair the CPP, 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

ELECTIONS 2020:

Cont'd from page 6

and place a marker about the true intent of the CPP concerning the up-coming 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.

A nifty Cummings, (now a household name) aided by Boakai, Urey (the political leader of Liberty Party NyonbleeKarnga 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 certainly 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, LofaMargibi 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 Rivergeecounty. 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-rich Nimba County as counting continues. The mission in Nimba was hampered by a combination of issues --- lack of funding, competing candidates (TaaWongbe, AdolphusDolo 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 NyonbleeKarnga Lawrence must remain vocal in the Senate, maybe even contest for the leadership; and Darius Dillon must now shine a brighter light since he 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 Cumming's 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. - SPONSORED ARTICLE

Français

Pas de date pour l'élection partielle de Gbarpolu

Aucune date n'a encore été fixée pour la reprise partielle de l'élection sénatoriale à Nomodatahum, district # 3, dans le comté de Gbarpolu, selon les autorités de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC).

La NEC a déclaré avoir retiré tout son personnel de la zone par mesure de sécurité, jusqu'à ce que le calme revienne. Mais pour le moment, aucune date n'a été fixée.

Nomodatahum, est une localité frontalière proche de la Sierra Leone. Une reprise de l'élection sénatoriale de mandat du 8 décembre 2020 y était prévue pour mardi 15 décembre, mais, pour cause de violences post-électorales dans le comté de Gbarpolu, elle a été reportée à une date ultérieure qui n'a pas encore été précisée.

L'élection a été perturbée le jour du scrutin par des jeunes en colère qui, sur instructions du chef de clan, ont pris d'assaut quatre centres de vote

et emporté les urnes contenant des bulletins de vote et autres matériels de vote.

Actuellement, selon les résultats provisoires de la NEC à l'élection sénatoriale du comté, Mme BotoeKanneh, une candidate indépendante, est en tête avec quelque 449 voix de plus que le candidat de la Coalition au pouvoir, Alfred Gayflor Koiwood, qui occupe la deuxième place. Une victoire de cette dernière

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Alfred Gayflor Koiwood

Madam Botoe Kanneh

Liberia : le "oui" en tête du référendum, l'opposition accentue son avance aux sénatoriales

Les Libériens ont répondu "oui" aux propositions de leur président George Weah de réduire le mandat du chef de l'Etat et d'autoriser la double nationalité, selon les résultats partiels portant sur un tiers des régions du pays annoncés mardi. Dans le même temps, les électeurs ont infligé à l'ex-star du foot

mondial un sérieux revers lors des élections organisées le même jour pour renouveler la moitié des 30 sièges de sénateur, selon de nouveaux résultats publiés mardi confirmant les premières tendances.

Environ 2,5 millions d'électeurs avaient été appelés

à se prononcer le 8 décembre sur huit amendements à la Constitution, dont un réduisant la durée du mandat présidentiel de six à cinq ans. Le "oui" aux huit questions l'a emporté dans les cinq comtés où le dépouillement est achevé, sur les 15 que compte le Liberia, a indiqué la commission électorale nationale (NEC).

Aux sénatoriales, sur les sept comtés entièrement dépouillés, l'opposition en remporte quatre, contre deux pour le Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) de George Weah et un pour un candidat indépendant, selon la NEC.

L'opposition enregistre une victoire hautement symbolique dans le comté de Montserrado, le plus peuplé du pays et qui comprend la capitale Monrovia.

Dans le fief électoral historique de George Weah, c'est l'un de ses adversaires les plus farouches, le sénateur Darius Dillon, qui est

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Photo Caption: BotoeKanneh is standing fourth from right (in the green) with members of her rescue team from women's rights advocacy organ

Éditorial

Nous exigeons des élections libres et équitables à Gbarpolu

Les électeurs du comté de Gbarpolu feraient l'objet d'harcèlement et d'intimidation à la veille de l'élection sénatoriale partielle occasionnée par les violences qui ont perturbé les élections du 8 décembre dans le comté.

Des informations en provenance du comté de la région de l'Ouest font état d'incitation ou d'achat de votes en vue d'empêcher la seule femme en lice d'être élue à l'Assemblée législative. N'est-ce pas là l'une des raisons pour lesquelles nos mères, nos filles, nos sœurs, nos épouses et nos amies n'ont pas assez de courage pour se présenter aux élections.

Environ 2021 électeurs de Nomodatou, une localité frontalière proche de la Sierra Leone voisine, retournent dans les urnes pour élire le prochain sénateur du comté. La reprise du scrutin intervient après qu'un groupe de jeunes gens ont saisi quatre urnes le 8 décembre. Ils soupçonnaient des gens qui ont voté le 8 décembre d'être des Sierra-Léonais et non des Libériens.

Mme BotoeKanneh, la seule femme en lice est une vendeuse de viande séchée. Elle a 449 voix d'avance sur ses adversaires selon les résultats partiels. On dit qu'elle est très populaire à Nomodatou, mais sa délégation et elle-même se sont vu refuser l'entrée là-bas, prétendument par la police et d'autres forces de sécurité de l'Etat, tandis que le candidat du parti au pouvoir (CDC) a eu une série de réunions dans la ville avec le chef de clan qui avait donné l'ordre de saisir le matériel électoral.

La Coalition au pouvoir semble désespérée suite aux récentes défaites à travers le pays, et fait tout son possible dans un dernier espoir apparent de prendre le contrôle du comté de Gbarpolu, peu importe que ce soit une concurrence déloyale. Voilà une telle tactique politique qui contredit les principes démocratiques qui exigent que la volonté du peuple l'emporte dans toute élection.

Que personne ne prenne le peuple libérien pour acquis en voulant s'en servir à des fins égoïstes. Les Libériens sont un peuple résilient, qui est très conscient de ses droits en tant que citoyens. Il faut qu'on leur donne la possibilité d'exercer ce droit aux urnes, sans incitation financière.

Gbarpolu est l'un des comtés éloignés qui n'ont pas encore bénéficié du développement en raison de la mauvaise gouvernance et de la négligence. Connaissant le pouvoir des femmes leaders dans la promotion du développement et du service axé sur les personnes, Mme Kanneh est indûment harcelée pour compromettre ses chances dans la course.

Nous n'exigeons rien de moins qu'une élection juste à Gbarpolu afin que les résultats du scrutin reflètent la volonté de l'électorat, comme on l'attend dans toute démocratie. La Commission électorale nationale doit s'assurer que la bonne chose est faite.

La Coalition au pouvoir n'a montré aucun respect pour les femmes, comme en témoigne l'absence de candidate féminine sur sa liste de candidats. Ainsi le seul visage féminin, la candidate indépendante BotoeKanneh fait l'objet de graves intimidations. C'est inacceptable !

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Français

Pas de date pour l'élection

dans cette localité pourrait sceller sa victoire définitivement.

Mais selon des informations qui circulent depuis lundi, les électeurs et surtout les militants de Mme Botoe seraient l'objet d'intimidation. Des témoins font état de la présence d'un masque traditionnel, qui serait sorti sur ordre du chef de clan, un militant inconditionnel de la Coalition pour le Changement Démocratique (coalition au pouvoir), ce qui empêcherait les gens d'accéder à la localité.

L'équipe juridique de Mme Botoe Kanneh de Sannoh & Partners a déposé une plainte devant la présidente de la NEC Mme Davidetta Brown-Lasanah lundi, indiquant que sa cliente et ses militants sont la cible d'attaques.

Dans la plainte, Me Moiffie Kanneh, un proche parent de Madame Botoe Kanneh, a indiqué que les partisans et la campagne de sa cliente ne sont pas en sécurité. «Le chef de clan a demandé aujourd'hui au masque traditionnel d'entrer dans la ville de Nomodatahum, district n° 3, terrorisant pratiquement les partisans de Mme Botoe», a-t-il expliqué.

«Avec ces développements négatifs, la campagne de Mme Botoe est en danger, ce qui rend pratiquement impossible la poursuite de ses activités électorales », a dit Me Kanneh.

La commission électorale n'a pas encore entendu la plainte. La situation est tendue en ce moment. La localité contestée est

Liberia : le "oui" en tête

reconduit, avec 61% des voix, selon la commission électorale.

L'échéance avait valeur de double test pour le président Weah, qui avait soulevé un immense espoir en 2018 en accédant au pouvoir dans ce pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest toujours marqué par la guerre civile de 1989-2003 et l'épidémie d'Ebola de 2014-2016. Il n'a pas réussi à redresser l'économie et l'enthousiasme a fait place au désenchantement. Les principaux partis d'opposition avaient appelé à boycotter le référendum.

Bien que M. Weah, 54 ans, en soit toujours à son premier mandat, ses adversaires

difficile d'accès. Il faut deux jours pour y arriver par la route en raison du mauvais réseau routier.

Il y a des informations non confirmées selon lesquelles le bureau des droits de l'homme des Nations Unies s'est intéressé à la situation, en particulier aux allégations de violations des droits de l'homme.

Le mercredi 16 décembre, plusieurs jeunes ont tenu des pancartes devant le ministère des Affaires étrangères, pour demander au ministre d'État Nathaniel McGill, originaire du comté, à s'en désengager. Ils l'ont tenu pour responsable pour le chaos en cours, bien qu'il n'y ait aucune preuve que le ministre est derrière ce qui se passe à Gbarpolu.

Me Boakai Kanneh a dit à ce journal mercredi soir que les forces de l'ordre étaient toujours en train d'arrêter les partisans de Mme Botoe, bien que ce journal n'ait pas été en mesure de vérifier ces informations.

Au cours d'un entretien sur la radio Prime FM tôt mardi, le directeur adjoint de la Commission électorale nationale, Prince Dunbar, avait indiqué que les conditions sécuritaires n'étaient pas assez réunies pour permettre au scrutin d'avoir lieu mardi. « Mais avec l'aide de la sécurité de l'État, les élections se tiendront vendredi, 18 décembre 2020 », avait-t-il dit.

A en croire M. Dunbar, la présidente de la NEC, Mme Davidetta Browne-Lasanah, a donné instruction à tout le personnel de la NEC de la région de quitter le comté et de se présenter au siège social de Monrovia jusqu'à ce que les choses rentrent dans l'ordre.

craignent qu'il tire profit d'une modification de la Constitution pour faire valoir que les compteurs sont remis à zéro et briguer le moment venu un troisième mandat, comme viennent de le faire ses homologues et voisins guinéen Alpha Condé et ivoirien Alassane Ouattara. La consultation vise aussi à modifier les règles en matière de nationalité, une question qui continue à diviser la société du Liberia, plus ancienne république d'Afrique noire fondée au XIXe siècle sous l'impulsion des États-Unis pour des esclaves affranchis.

Si l'adoption de la proposition de révoquer l'interdit de 1973 sur la double nationalité se confirme, les

COMMENTAIRE

Par Mohamed Nasheed
& Loren Legarda

Compte à rebours avant la catastrophe climatique

MALÉ/MANILLE - La Jamaïque, le Rwanda, les Îles Marshall et la Mongolie comptent parmi les pays les plus vulnérables de la planète face au climat, et ne représentent qu'un infime pourcentage des émissions au niveau mondial. Cette année, l'économie de ces pays a été impactée par la pandémie de COVID-19. Or, tous ces États ont présenté aux Nations Unies leur plan climatique respectif actualisé, comme prévu par l'accord de Paris 2015 sur le climat, avant l'échéance fixée à la fin de cette année.

Autrement dit, ces pays qui ont le moins contribué à la crise climatique figurent aujourd'hui parmi les plus déterminés à la résoudre. Cela doit servir d'exemple aux pays développés, y compris aux États-Unis, dont les plans de réduction des émissions - qui en principe doivent être rendus avant le 31 décembre à minuit - n'ont toujours pas été communiqués.

Outre l'exigence de plans climatiques, l'accord de Paris appelle à une aide financière des pays riches pour soutenir l'action climatique. Également due pour la fin de l'année 2020, cette aide reste à ce jour insuffisamment honorée. L'OCDE estime que seulement environ 79 milliards \$ sur les 100 milliards \$ promis annuellement sont apportés aux pays qui en ont le plus besoin.

Les pays vulnérables ressentent d'ores et déjà l'impact financier du changement climatique. D'après l'ONU, la vulnérabilité climatique a élevé le coût de la dette de ces pays de plus de 60 milliards \$ ces dix dernières années. Il faut s'attendre que ce que les paiements d'intérêts explosent jusqu'à atteindre 168 milliards \$, pour les mêmes raisons. Les économies les plus à risque ont besoin d'une injection immédiate de liquidités, ainsi que d'une restructuration et d'un allègement de la dette.

Aujourd'hui, le COVID-19 exacerbe ces difficultés économiques, et il apparaît évident que cette pandémie ne sera pas la dernière en son genre. Changement climatique, déforestation et destruction des habitats naturels accentuent en effet le risque d'apparition de nouvelles maladies à transmission vectorielle.

Les économies développées ont pour responsabilité de contribuer à ce que les pays en voie de développement ne se retrouvent pas submergés par la dette en même temps que menacés par les défis connexes du COVID-19 et du changement climatique. Mais au-delà de cette aide aux pays vulnérables, il leur faut également revoir leurs propres plans de relance face au COVID-19.

Ce n'est malheureusement pas le cas actuellement. Plusieurs milliers de milliards de dollars sont aujourd'hui orientés vers des plans de relance dont les économistes nous disent qu'ils appuient les secteurs responsables de la pollution. Les Perspectives économiques mondiales 2020 du Fonds monétaire international soulignent par ailleurs la nécessaire responsabilité des pays du G20

dans la mise en œuvre de plans de croissance réduisant le recours aux combustibles fossiles. Il est vital que les gouvernements comprennent que si nous aspirons à un monde plus sûr pour les générations futures, une reconstruction efficace et plus écologique ne doit pas constituer l'objectif pour la seule année prochaine.

Les pays vulnérables en ont assez de l'inaction. Et ils ne se contentent pas d'appeler à l'aide, mais sont bel et bien déterminés à montrer l'exemple. La Banque centrale des Philippines a par exemple adopté récemment un cadre de finance durable destiné à préserver le système financier face à l'évolution du risque climatique. Ce nouveau cadre encourage les banques à associer un prix aux risques physiques du climat et de la transition, ainsi qu'à valoriser les opportunités de résilience climatique et de faible empreinte carbone. La Banque centrale est par ailleurs tenue de communiquer sa propre exposition aux risques environnementaux, ce qui pourrait à l'avenir la conduire à exclure de ses politiques certains actifs spécifiques, tels que les combustibles fossiles. Fin octobre, le pays a également imposé un moratoire sur les nouvelles centrales électriques à charbon.

À l'échelle de la planète, la Banque mondiale et le FMI coopèrent avec le G20 pour attirer davantage d'investissements vers les pays pauvres, en réduisant les coûts associés aux projets « verts ». Aux États-Unis, le président élu Joe Biden a promis de réengager son pays dans l'ONU, dans les accords multilatéraux tels que l'accord de Paris, et dans le droit international. Le retour de l'Amérique à une position de leadership mondial dans la lutte contre le changement climatique est une bonne nouvelle. Pour autant, à l'instar d'autres pays développés, il reste encore aux États-Unis à communiquer leur plan climatique actualisé.

La crise du COVID-19 souligne la nécessité urgente de mesures plus ambitieuses. Pendant la Première Guerre mondiale, le Royaume-Uni avait émis des obligations de guerre pour financer à la fois le combat et la reprise ultérieure. Des instruments similaires pourraient être utilisés pour aider les pays du Sud à s'extraire du désastre lié à la fois à la pandémie et au climat. Les grandes banques de développement et les investisseurs privés doivent par ailleurs faire preuve de leadership en appliquant la vision de l'accord de Paris autour d'une réorientation mondiale des investissements loin des énergies polluantes et en direction des énergies propres.

L'action climatique ne saurait être reportée plus longtemps, et les dirigeants des économies développées doivent agir en suivant l'exemple que montrent d'ores et déjà plusieurs pays en voie de développement. Les vrais chefs d'État ne sont pas ceux qui parlent le plus fort ou tweetent le plus souvent, mais ceux qui tiennent leurs promesses. Nous appelons les pays riches à soumettre leurs plans climatiques actualisés avant la fin de l'année, ainsi qu'à honorer les autres promesses formulées dans le cadre de l'accord de Paris sur le climat - pour notre bien à tous comme pour celui des générations futures.

Referendum formula unveiled

By Othello B. Garblah

As the nation awaits the much trumpeted referendum results, authorities at the National Elections Commission (NEC) on Wednesday unveiled a formula which it says will be used to determine the outcome of last Tuesday's referendum.

Liberians voted on Tuesday December 8, in a referendum at the same time they elected 15 new senators in an election that have seen the opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), independent candidates and two smaller opposition parties winning 12 of the 15 seats.

current 9 years to 7 years and reduction in the tenure of Representatives from 6 years to 5 years respectively. Both Senate Pro-tem and House Speakers will also see a reduction in their respective tenures from 6 years to 5 years.

The changes in the Constitution also seek an amendment to Article 50, to have a reduction in the Presidential and Vice Presidential tenures from 6 years to 5 years. It further seeks to amend Article 83 (a) to change the date of the General Elections from the 2nd Tuesday in October to November.

According to NEC, Section 4A.4 of the Elections Law, under

votes cast by adding all of the "Yes votes to all of the "No votes". Of this sum, you have to ascertain whether the yes votes on each proposition reach the two-thirds requirement for approval. If they do, the proposition is approved. If not, the proposition is rejected.

The commission notes that because the referendum is a national election -- the "Yes and No votes from the fifteen Counties (on each proposition) must be added together to determine whether the yes votes reach the two-thirds requirement for approval. This process, it added will be done for each of the proposition.

The ruling CDC has campaigned for a "Yes" vote to all of the propositions, while the opposition parties led by the CPP, which comprises four parties including the former ruling Unity Party, Liberty Party, All Liberian Party and Alternative National Congress has not been cleared on its message. Rather, the opposition CPP has called for a boycott though it has not officially dismissed the propositions but insist the time is too short to hold it at this time. Another sticky issued surrounding this impending referendum is the fear that a change in the Constitution particularly the presidential tenure could reset President George Weah's time limit, a fear the president has dismissed.

Weah's dismissal of that fear is backed by Article 93 of the Constitution which makes it very clear that if the constitution is amended, under the term of a President that president does not benefit.

Article 93 states: 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.

President Weah congratulates the State of Qatar on National Day Observance

President George Manneh Weah has sent a congratulatory message to His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar on the occasion marking the National Day of that country.

According to a Foreign

that as Liberians join their Qatari counterparts in observing this historic occasion, the bonds of friendship subsisting between both countries in the spirit of mutual cooperation and partnership will be strengthened for the enhancement of the two



Ministry release, President George Manneh Weah extended heartfelt felicitations and warmest wishes to the Government and People of the State of Qatar on behalf of the Government and People of Liberia and in his own name.

He expressed confidence

peoples' relations.

He also prayed that the Almighty Allah will continue to endow His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, with abundant wisdom, strength and good health as he leads his people to higher heights and prosperity.--Press release



About little over 30% of the 2,476,356 registered voters turned on Election Day. A 'Yes' or 'No' votes by two-third of the number of registered voters in the referendum would see a change in the Liberian Constitution or retain it just as is.

Voters decided on 8 propositions, each of the propositions is intended to amend different articles within the country's 1986 Constitution.

The propositions seek amendments to Article 28 to allow dual citizenship, Article 45 and 48 reduction in Senatorial tenure from the

referendum Result, states:

"The fraction of two thirds (2/3) required for approval of a question in a referendum is calculated by dividing the number of valid votes cast in approval of the question by the total number of the valid votes cast on the question."

The electoral body relies on a September 20, 2011, Supreme Court ruling which held that invalid votes shall not be included in the sum of the total votes to determine the actual number upon which its final calculation will be based.

There it said in keeping with the Supreme Court ruling, NEC says "you get to the total valid

Representatives urged

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represents.

Further, he explains that as chairperson on the Committee on Labor at the House of Representatives, Rep. Duncan has handled labor issues, working closely with the Ministry of Labor to resolve some labor-related issues.

Amb. Nyenswah notes that Duncan has a good working relationship in the House, adding that he has the skills to lobby with his colleagues in the

House, having served as representative for about three years in addition to serving in other positions prior to his election as lawmaker.

He states that when elected, Rep. Duncan's priority would be about bringing peace and stability in the House of Representatives and working closely with the Speaker and his colleagues to ensure that Liberians' interests are protected in decision-making.

VP Taylor wants NEC to investigate claims of intimidation in Gbarpolu

The Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor has expressed serious concern over claims of intimidation of one of leading female candidates, Madam BotoeKanneh, in the Senatorial election of Gbarpolu County.

The Vice President believes that females who muster the courage to aspire for national leadership positions should be protected and tactics of intimidation



and harassment have no place in a civilize democracy.

Madam Howard-Taylor is therefore calling on the National Elections Commission (NEC) to act swiftly to ensure that the situation is amicably resolved.

She also wants the Liberian National Police to do all in its power to ensure that Madam Kanneh is protected.

The Vice President has meanwhile welcome statement of solidarity by

Women groups, civil society organizations, religious institutions, the media and the general public against the actions meted against Madam Kanneh which has the proclivity to dent our democratic credential and undermine the Nation's peace and security.- Press release

CPP delegates arrested in Gbarpolu

By Winston W. Parley

Delegates of the main opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) including the party's head of secretariat Cllr. Aloysious Toe have been arrested by state security officers in Gbarpolu County, amid continuing electoral violence that has stalled a senatorial election which has been led by female independent candidate Gbotoe Kanneh.

The CPP says its delegation got arrested and detained beyond statutory period when it traveled to the county on a fact - finding mission to possibly lend technical support to Madam Kanneh following reports of alleged political harassment against the female candidate and violation of human rights to circumvent the will of the people in Gbarpolu.

Due to the election violence in the county, authorities at the National Elections Commission (NEC) announced this week that no date has been set for the rerun of the Gbarpolu Senatorial election in Nomodatahum, District #3 area where a Clan Chief has unleashed a Traditional Devil.

NEC said it has pulled out all its staff from the area and will only conduct the rerun when the situation normalizes. So far no specific date has been set after a rerun. Nomodatahum is a bordering town with Sierra Leone.

In a phone interview with police Spokesman Moses Carter Thursday evening, 17 December, he confirmed to this paper that seven members of the CPP delegation including Cllr. Aloysious Toe were arrested and taken to Bopolu City on Thursday for allegedly instigating electoral violence and throwing ballot boxes into the river.

"The truth here is all those that were brought to Bopolu today were people that are responsible for the electoral violence that occurred in Nomo ... in Gbarpolu County," Mr. Carter tells this paper.

According to the Police Spokesman, among those taken to Bopolu City is the Secretary General of the opposition Alternative National Congress (ANC), a constituent party of the CPP, Cllr. Aloysious Toe for allegedly instigating violence.

"The total number of persons [is] seven. Some were held liable for the throwing of the ballot boxes into the river

called ULC ... and some other persons were held liable for their involvement into the violence," Carter explains.

Regarding reports that some women were allegedly raped, Mr. Carter says there is no woman among all those arrested by police, casting doubt on the report of alleged rape.

"How come a woman was raped? No woman is arrested and detained by the police among those seven," he says.

Additionally, Carter says the police have not received any

a fact - finding mission for the possibility of lending technical support to female candidate Madam Gbotoe Kanneh who was leading the polls in the county.

"The delegation was detained for more than 48 hours against our laws. After mounting pressure from the CPP and the media, they were released. This morning while on their way to town, attempting to come to Monrovia, they were

Representative Alfred Koiwood who is contesting the senatorial election with government backing explains that the situation was inflamed by information reported to his rival Madam Gbotoe Kanneh by one of her supporters that her brother Cllr. Boakai Kanneh had allegedly been kidnapped and killed.

Mr. Koiwood insists that he is not aware that a country devil was brought out in the town during the election related crisis, adding that it is

the other for females, adding that this country is a country of law and those who violated the election law have to be prosecuted.

The election violence emerged after angry youth acting on the instructions of the Clan Chief stormed voting centers on Election Day, 8 December and took away the boxes containing ballot papers and other voting materials.

Currently, as per the NEC provisional results, Madam Botoe Kanneh, an independent candidate is topping the race by



Alfred Gayflor Koiwood

Madam Botoe Kanneh

report of rape in relation to the electoral violence in Gbarpolu County. However, he says if any such report comes and a medical report shows that a victim was tampered with or raped, whoever that will be held liable will face the full weight of the law.

Regarding the whereabouts of candidate Botoe Kanneh, Mr. Carter notes that police have made contacts with supporters and some hierarchies of her camp, but the supporters allegedly declined to reveal their candidate's whereabouts for security reasons.

Earlier, opposition CPP official Mr. Kla Edward Toomey told local broadcaster OK FM that a couple of days ago, the CPP's head of secretariat Cllr. Aloysious Toe was arrested in Gbarpolu.

He laments that the arrest was made when the CPP delegation went to Gbarpolu on

rearrested and as we speak they're being treated like common criminals," Mr. Toomey says.

"Their only crime so far is the fact that they decided to travel in that part of the country, in their own country to lend support to a female candidate who ... two members of her delegation have been reported raped and manhandled," Toomey alleges further.

He describes the alleged acts as blatant violation of the rights of Liberians, cautioning that this goes against the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) - led government's human rights credentials.

He claims that the goal of the political harassment and the violation of human rights is to circumvent the will of the people in Gbarpolu County.

Gbarpolu County

unfounded if somebody alleges that the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Nathaniel McGill is masterminding [a plot] for his (Koiwood's) ascendancy to the Senate seat.

"If somebody comes and says Honorable McGill has been masterminding for my ascendancy as a senator, it is absolutely unfounded, it is not true," Mr. Koiwood says.

He accuses Madam Kanneh of allegedly erecting two check points on the route leading to the town in question, one for males and

some 449 votes ahead of the ruling CDC candidate Alfred Gayflor Koiwood in the county's senatorial election. A win in the town with 2021 registered voters could seal her victory.

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

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Sports

With **Emmanuel B. Juduh**

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Bronze named Fifa best women's player



Manchester City defender Lucy Bronze has won best women's player at Fifa's 2020 awards.

The 29-year-old defender is the first English player to win the Best Fifa Football Awards prize.

Bronze beat Denmark's Pernille Harder and France's Wendie Renard to claim the award at a virtual ceremony in Zurich.

Netherlands coach Sarina Wiegman, who will take over from Phil Neville as England

boss next year, was named the Fifa best women's coach of 2020.

Bronze said: "What a surprise, to even be nominated alongside the two other players, they are both incredible players and outstanding human beings well.

"I don't think I have the words right now to explain how I am feeling. If there is anything 2020 has taught us it is to appreciate every moment you have, never look too far ahead and live in the here and now.

"I will appreciate winning this

award now more than ever and I will remember this moment for the rest of my life."

Lyon and France's Sarah Bouhaddi won the other individual award on offer, being voted the best Fifa women's goalkeeper.

Bayern Munich and Poland striker Robert Lewandowski was named the best men's player.

The winners were decided by nominations from national team captains and head coaches, an online ballot of fans and 200 media representatives.

Bronze, who was also shortlisted in 2019, when Megan Rapinoe won the award ahead of fellow American Alex Morgan, was named BBC Women's Footballer of the Year in March.

The 29-year-old won a league, cup and Champions League treble with Lyon this year before returning to Manchester City to win the FA Cup in November.

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