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Senatorial election a caveat

-Cummings tells Weah's CDC



Pres. Weah



Mr. Cummings



P11

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Continental News

1,000 lost on one boat - this woman hopes to name them

On 18 April 2015 more than 1,000 refugees and migrants left Libya in an overloaded fishing boat bound for Europe. On a moonless night in the Mediterranean the vessel sank. But those who drowned are not forgotten - for the last five years a team led by an Italian forensic pathologist has been on a mission to name them. "There's a body that needs to be identified, you identify it - this is the first commandment of forensic medicine," says Dr Cristina Cattaneo, professor of forensic pathology and anthropology at the University of Milan. Cattaneo's obsession is naming the dead. That is normal if a plane crashes in Europe, she says. Why should it be different for migrant travellers?



tragic. It's the ultimate insult that someone can receive." Cattaneo and her team have opened files for more than 350 missing persons whose families believe they may have died on the shipwreck of 18 April 2015.

"This means 350 families have

approached some sort of authority looking for their dead in this incident. Five years have gone by and these people are still looking for their loved ones," she says.

The people who got on that old boat in Libya came from a dozen African countries,

including Senegal, Mauritania, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Mali, Gambia, Somalia and Eritrea. There were Bangladeshis on board too. The man steering the boat, a Tunisian, together with a Syrian, would later be convicted of manslaughter and human trafficking in an Italian court. The ill-fated voyage began at dawn on the beach at Garabulli, east of Tripoli. A nameless 20m-long fishing boat, painted a jaunty sky blue, bobbed on the waves.

On its bow was an inscription in Arabic, "Blessed by Allah".

Ibrahima Senghor had been waiting to get on the vessel since 3am. He had travelled from Senegal to this beach in Libya with other young men from his village, then in the milling crowd of hopeful passengers, he had become separated from them.

"We were in 10 groups of 100 people," he remembers.

"Seven of the groups boarded. I was in the eighth group. More people arrived in a refrigerated truck. They got on the boat too. We could see it was heavily loaded, and then the traffickers announced the boat was full. I said, 'That's impossible.' I insisted I had to go too." But the people-smugglers would not let Ibrahima Senghor board. He had paid the equivalent of around \$1,000 in local currency, but the traffickers prioritised those who had paid in US dollars. Ibrahima's friends had boarded early on and probably descended into the hold. He was left on the shore with 300 others, watching the boat depart. "The boat pulled away. But then it turned around. The captain called out that they were overloaded. The trafficker just ordered him to leave - he said if the captain didn't go, he would kill him on the spot. The trafficker drew his gun and shot into the air. BBC

Libyan Lockerbie bomb suspect charged after 32 years

The US has announced charges against a Libyan suspected of making the bomb that blew up Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988.

Abu Agila Mohammad Masud has been charged with terrorism-related crimes, Attorney General William Barr said on Monday, 32 years on from the atrocity.

The deadly bomb attack on the Boeing 747 killed 270 people, including 190 American citizens.

Prosecutors will seek the extradition of Mr Masud to stand trial in the US.

The US claims Mr Masud is an ex-Libyan intelligence operative. He allegedly carried out the attack on the orders of late Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. The bombing of the London to New York flight remains the deadliest terrorist incident ever to have taken place in the UK, and the second deadliest air attack in US history. Eleven people on the ground in Scotland were also

killed. The victims included 35 study abroad US students who were returning home for Christmas. The new charges bring Mr Barr's role in this lengthy terrorism investigation full circle, as he was also US Attorney General when charges were first announced against two Libyan suspects in 1991.

Back then, serving under President George HW Bush, Mr Barr tasked his criminal division head Robert Mueller to look into the bombing. Mr Mueller is now best known for leading the inquiry into alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election. Both Mr Barr and Mr Mueller have taken part in remembrance events with families over the years.

Police Scotland's chief constable, Iain Livingstone, said the charges were a "significant development" and that they will "continue to work closely" with the US and other international authorities. He said it was "inappropriate to comment further" at this time. Mr Barr said he was "pleased to announce that the United States has filed criminal charges against the third conspirator Abu Agila Mohammad Masud for his role in the bombing". BBC



A total of 270 people died in the Lockerbie bombing on 21 December 1988

Twitter's copyright policy 'used to silence activists'



Twitter accounts of several activists were targeted by the copyright attack

Twitter's policy that deals with the infringement of copyright is increasingly being used to maliciously target accounts run by Tanzanian human rights activists in order to silence them, internet rights campaigners allege. Every day on Twitter, Kigogo - a Swahili name that means a VIP or swashbuckling tycoon - doles out the latest gossip from Tanzania's corridors of power.

The details are embarrassing and shocking at times but Kigogo's nearly 400,000 Twitter followers love these revelations, dubbing Kigogo "our president of the Twitter republic".

But critics have accused

Kigogo of embellishing incidents and sometimes getting things wrong. "I'm a whistleblower and I expose corruption and human rights abuses in the country," Kigogo, whose identity is a closely guarded secret, told the BBC.

But shortly before the 28 October election, Twitter suspended the @Kigogo2014 account because of "more than 300" complaints to the social media platform that the account had breached its copyright policy - a charge Kigogo denied. Internet rights campaigners allege that the policy is increasingly being used by "repressive governments" such as Tanzania's to silence critics. BBC

EDITORIAL

Our disappointment from the senatorial election

WE ARE SAD and disappointed that the December 8, 2020 special senatorial elections in Gbarpolu and Grand Kru counties have degenerated to violence over contention whether there should be a rerun or recount in disputed districts of the counties.

WE, LIKE OTHER peace-loving Liberians have thought the polls that were generally peaceful throughout the country would have ended in similar manner in the two counties.

BUT REPORTS COMING out of the two remote counties since December 8 are very worrisome and distressing, to say the least, with the National Elections Commission yet to clearly announce when a rerun would be held in Gbarpolu to declare a clear winner, as will be decided at the ballot box by the people.

IN GRAND KRU County there is lack of concession between the National Elections Commission and the opposition Candidate Nathaniel N. Bahway of the Liberia National Union (LINU) whether to rerun poll or recount votes in Buluwin Town, electoral district#2.

ACCORDING TO REPORTS, NEC chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah has vehemently rejected call by LINU for a rerun, citing legal provisions governing elections and lack of notice by its Grand Kru county Magistrate for a rerun between governing Coalition for Democratic Change Candidate incumbent Senator Peter D. Coleman and his main rival Nathaniel N. Bahway.

WITH BOTH SIDES in Gbarpolu County using country devils as weapons to threaten supporters of rival candidates, it is obvious a new date for a rerun would not be announced soon by the NEC. We fervently pray and hope that would be done before the New Year to close this chapter, ahead of 2023 presidential and general elections.

THIS IS IMPORTANT to solidify the current democracy we enjoy as a nation when we had the first democratic transition in 2018 from a sitting president to another in more than 50 years. While we applaud the Weah administration for conducting generally a peaceful election, government should do everything necessary to close this chapter void of violence and protests.

IF POLLS IN Montserrado, Bong, Grand Bassa and Nimba were peaceful, there is no reason why this cannot be done in Gbarpolu and Grand Kru counties. The onus is on the government to ensuring that rerun and recount are held in both counties peacefully.

AS WE END the year 2020, the least any Liberian expect is lingering or unresolved electoral issues into the New Year, because an untreated symptom today could developed into a serious political crisis with unexpected consequences.

THE MINISTRIES OF Justice and Internal Affairs, and the NEC should exert all efforts urgently to resolve the electoral issues across the country to save our young democracy from crumbling, for we don't want a return to the dark days of our 14-year civil war.

COMMENTARY

By Todd G. Buchholz

Hamilton Beats MMT

Ultra-low interest rates have fueled growing support for Modern Monetary Theory, which holds that governments can simply print money and ignore rising public debt levels without having to face the consequences. It is a neat and tempting argument, as long as one ignores history and common sense.

SAN DIEGO - Was Alexander Hamilton a fool? Modern Monetary Theorists must think so. Hamilton, whose story is now sung by millions of schoolchildren, persuaded the young United States to absorb state debt, pay it back, and build a trustworthy reputation. "If we assume the debts," goes a lyric from the musical Hamilton, "the union gets a new line of credit, a financial diuretic. How do you not get it?"¹

Should Hamilton have simply torn up the states' Revolutionary War debt? MMTers seem to believe so, arguing that countries can often print money and ignore debt with little pain. I wish I could believe that government debt doesn't matter (or that Elvis is still alive). But debt matters a great deal, and we should be thankful that US President-elect Joe Biden's presumptive treasury secretary, Janet Yellen, is not an MMT acolyte.²

Nonetheless, MMTers have been picking up ever more support. Ultra-low interest rates have fueled a growing temptation to keep printing money and ignoring debt until the very moment inflation flares up. Whenever that moment comes, MMTers assure us that the government will simply cut spending to cool off the economy. They present a neat argument if you ignore history and common sense by trusting politicians to do precisely what they are most averse to doing.¹

This is not to suggest that governments should slash spending during the COVID-19 Great Cessation, which has pushed the US jobless rate close to 7%. I support big deficits now, but eventually the US and other governments will need to rein in their raging budgets. In ten years, the Medicare and Social Security trust funds will run dry, triggering 10-25% cuts in health and pension benefits for the elderly.¹

The age-old refrain from debt apologists is, "We owe the money to ourselves." But we don't just owe money to ourselves: about one-third of US debt is held by foreigners, including around \$1.1 trillion that is in China's hands. Moreover, even if we consider only the debt held by Americans, we must ask, "Who is 'we'?" Lenders who bought US Treasuries in good faith are not the same individuals who would benefit from tearing up the bonds or inflating away their value.

Today's debt apologists have many forerunners, some buried in the rubble of ancient Greece, where fourth century BC municipalities defaulted to the Temple of Delos. In 1793, Louis XVI lost his head while trying to placate the French monarchy's creditors. In the 1920s, the Weimar Republic experienced devastating hyperinflation until the central bank gained enough freedom from freewheeling politicians to stabilize a new currency. More recently, Chile, Peru, Zimbabwe, Argentina, and Brazil have all met with near ruin after implementing MMT. Venezuela's debt is now twice its GDP, and its inflation rate is best expressed using scientific

notation.¹

Of course, MMTers dismiss these cases as exotic examples from the dizzy tropics. As MMT popularizer Stephanie Kelton of Stony Brook University tweeted in 2012, "People who scream, 'Zimbabwe!' have no idea what caused hyperinflation there..."

Fine, then, let's look instead at "advanced" economies. In the 1970s, the United Kingdom was the "sick man of Europe" (a phrase first applied by Czar Nicholas I to the crumbling Ottoman Empire), suffering explosive inflation and a sinking currency. In 1976, following an extraordinary conversion, Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan begged the International Monetary Fund for a bailout, performed a fiscal about-face, and declared to debt apologists, "I tell you in all candor that that option no longer exists."¹

Fortunately, responsible budgeting can indeed revive a country's prospects. During the 1990s, Canada and Sweden faced dreadful economic crises that wiped out millions of jobs. In 1992, Sweden's central bank raised interest rates to 500% to protect the currency from collapsing after politicians had more than doubled the country's level of borrowing. Both Sweden and Canada adopted responsible measures to slash spending, and their economies soon boomed. For its part, the US created about 18 million net new jobs in the 1990s - a bonanza kicked off by a spending pact between President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, and congressional Republicans.¹

Faced with all of these examples, MMTers' only response is to claim that their approach has worked for Japan. Never mind that the Japanese have in fact rejected MMT in both word and deed. Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda specifically calls MMT "an extreme argument that won't be accepted."

Why does Japan not fit the MMT model? For starters, 90% of Japanese debt is Japanese-held, most of it by branches of government, not by private institutions. Second, Japan has doubled its consumption taxes to pare the debt, and reduced per capita spending for the elderly in recent years. Would MMTers support either of these policies?¹

In any case, even if we were to pretend that Japan is following the MMT playbook, why would anyone want to take credit for the results? The country has experienced 20 years of stagnation, with GDP growing at less than 1% per year, and private investment as a share of GDP eroding. Two decades ago, Sony and Toyota led the world; today, Apple and Tesla overshadow them.

Former IMF Chief Economist Kenneth Rogoff scoffs that MMT is neither modern, monetary, nor a theory. That is too harsh. MMT is indeed modern, but modern like a Jackson Pollock painting - colorful, hypnotic, and a mess. It may be alluring, but it is not safe for work or for school. Instead, children should rap to the wisdom of Hamilton.

New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

O-PED

By Eric Posner

The Trump Paradox

For all of the irresponsible and reprehensible things outgoing US President Donald Trump said while in office, he could not have posed as great a threat to liberal democracy as many of his critics have supposed. Trump's entire political project has rested on a fundamental paradox that real authoritarian leaders know to avoid.

CHICAGO - As US President Donald Trump's single term limps to an end, we should revisit a question that has dominated mainstream punditry for the past four years: Was America on the brink of an authoritarian takeover? Never before have so many commentators - including knowledgeable academics, seen-it-all-before political operatives, cynical journalists, and former government officials - argued as seriously that the United States was on the verge of a Weimar-style constitutional collapse. And yet, if Trump was an autocrat, he was a singularly ineffective one. When he wasn't raging at the moon, he advanced his policies - most of them standard Republican fare - through constitutionally approved procedures.

Trump certainly provided ample material for books with titles like *The People vs. Democracy: Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and How to Save It*, *Surviving Autocracy*, and *Trumpocalypse*. From the start, he has lied relentlessly, expressed admiration for dictators, denigrated and threatened to jail his political opponents, disparaged judges and other public officials, vilified Muslims and foreigners, demonized journalists, and inflamed racial divisions. Even if some of his rhetoric was tongue-in-cheek or garbled, that hardly excuses him.

Trump also mixed his financial interests with government business, placed his children and son-in-law in positions of power, and frequently talked as if the government were his personal fiefdom. His presidency finally collapsed after his baseless claims of electoral fraud and spurious litigation efforts failed to gain traction.

The doomsayers will insist that the events of the past month and a half easily could have swung in Trump's favor. But, constitutionally speaking, Trump has always been more bark than bite. His main accomplishments - a tax cut and the appointment of conservative federal judges - involved Congress, as the Constitution requires. Similarly, his efforts to reduce the flow of illegal immigration drew on longstanding statutory authority.

Indeed, from a strictly legal standpoint, Trump's migration-related enforcement actions were less controversial than were President Barack Obama's unilateral executive orders to protect people who were brought to the country illegally as children. Even Trump's highly controversial travel ban targeting migrants from Muslim-majority countries was upheld by the Supreme Court on more-or-less settled doctrinal grounds.

Trump's efforts to weaken environmental, safety, and financial regulations have also drawn on statutory authority. In foreign policy, Trump initiated a sea change by weakening US global commitments, withdrawing from international agreements and multilateral organizations, imposing tariffs on trading partners, and recklessly criticizing allies while cozying up to dictators. Again, Trump was drawing on the legal powers of his office, which are at their broadest in foreign affairs. Congress has given the president almost limitless power to adjust tariffs, and courts have ruled time and again that it is the president who conducts US foreign policy. Moreover, Trump - unlike most of his recent predecessors - did not launch any major foreign wars or enter treaties through constitutionally dubious circumvention of Congress.

Yes, Trump did try to interfere with the Russia investigation, and to withhold military aid from Ukraine to compel its government to investigate Joe and Hunter Biden. But both of these constitutionally suspect efforts were largely unsuccessful. Finally, Trump has abused his power by dangling pardons to cronies who were under investigation.

All these actions were morally wrong and politically irresponsible. But in terms of their impact, and of their role in the exercise or expansion of the president's power, they seem relatively minor. Virtually every president has cut corners. If Trump ruled as an autocrat and pushed the boundaries of his power, then so did every other president since Reagan. Yet none of those previous administrations came close to ending democracy in America.

Trump stands out not so much for his actions as for his words. The hue and cry against him is a reaction to his incendiary rhetoric, inattentiveness to the duties of his office, ignorance about the world, juvenile delight in the trappings of power, and obnoxious narcissism.

To be sure, the line between rhetoric and action is not always clear. Presidents rule through words - by issuing orders to subordinates, who either obey or disregard them. Trump's claims of election fraud could have led judges and Republican election officials to fix the outcome for him. They did not. His various calls to lock up his opponents could have encouraged ambitious Department of Justice lawyers or US Attorneys to launch investigations. They did not. Once judges, politicians, and other officeholders stopped heeding Trump's words, he was helpless.

Some people believe that constitutional democracy survived Trump because the system of checks and balances worked. Others give credit to the integrity of judges, government bureaucrats, the press, or Democratic (and a few Republican) elected officials.

But another explanation is that there was a basic contradiction in Trump's method. In 2016, he sought power by attacking the very government institutions that he would need to exercise power. As president, he kept up his attacks on the government that he headed, acting as his own opposition.

This had two effects that undermined his position. First, Trump's own appointees - including judges and executive-branch officials - could not have felt much loyalty to a boss who was constantly undermining their status, power, and position. And indeed, many of them refused to do his bidding. Attorney General Jeff Sessions refused to fire special counsel Robert Mueller. Attorney General William Barr refused to challenge the election results. The judges Trump appointed - including three Supreme Court justices - refused to rule that the election was flawed. The FBI refused to heed Trump's call for investigations of his political opponents. And the military refused to suppress protests.

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OPINION

By Michael Froman

Public-Private Climate Urgency

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced governments and businesses to re-evaluate their environmental impact while demonstrating the power of collective action. The task now is to deliver on climate commitments with a whole-of-society approach, and that starts with effective public-private partnerships.

NEW YORK - Less than 12 months ago, private-sector leaders came together at the World Economic Forum with a sense of optimism and a series of new commitments to re-energize the fight against climate change. Ambitious goals were set, and bold plans were announced. And then COVID-19 struck.

Owing to its ferocity and widespread impact, the pandemic has disrupted lives and businesses in ways unseen in our lifetimes as the world was forced to take drastic action - economic lockdowns, travel restrictions, school closures, and much else - in pursuit of self-preservation. Amid so much human suffering, there is a perverse irony in the fact that global greenhouse-gas emissions this year declined by a record-breaking amount. At least now we have all witnessed the potential impact of collective action.

But we should not treat temporary developments as a new normal. As COVID-19 vaccines are rolled out and the world gains its first glimpse of an exit from the crisis, we must chart a new course toward an inclusive recovery, ensuring that the race to reset the economy does not reverse the progress made on other fronts - not least climate and the environment.

If this year has showed us anything, it is that people and the planet's health and well-being are inextricably linked. Confronting the global threats that we are facing will require urgent and coordinated action. Rather than serving as an excuse to delay environmental commitments, COVID-19 underscores just how important it is for every organization - public and private - to re-evaluate its environmental impact and reaffirm its commitments.

We have long known that the climate crisis demands collective action. At the UN climate conferences in Copenhagen in 2009 and in Paris in 2015, governments set aside the view that climate change was the responsibility of only rich industrialized countries. While these countries have of course contributed far more cumulative emissions than the developing world, all signatories to the Paris agreement have assumed collective responsibility for tackling the problem.

According to an October 2020 Pew Research Center report, 70% of people across 14 countries say climate change is a major threat. And yet, owing to rising political polarization in many countries, progress since 2015 has stalled or, at best, been inconsistent. While multilateral approaches like the Paris framework remain critical, it has become clear that government action alone is not enough to prevent global warming from exceeding 2° Celsius (relative to pre-industrial levels). We need alternative ways forward.

Young people are pushing for bolder action from political leaders on climate change, and consumers are demanding more transparency from businesses about their role in causing social and environmental problems and their efforts to address them. Corporations and business groups have articulated promising aspirations, such as those underpinning the WEF's Trillion Tree Campaign, a cross-sector response in support of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration initiative.

The task now is to deliver on these initiatives, at scale. There has been healthy skepticism about whether companies can and will follow through on their "purpose" manifestos, and about who will hold them accountable if they do not. But the reality is that businesses can no longer get away with de-coupling purpose from profit. Sustainability is achievable only when it is embedded as a core feature of a business's growth strategy, rather than treated as a philanthropic afterthought.

To be sure, shareholders have placed mounting pressure on CEOs to document progress against environmental, social, and governance goals, and companies' eagerness to show that they are "doing their part" has fueled some healthy competition on as businesses race to meet common environmental standards. But it's not enough. Companies need to look beyond their own walls and take responsibility for bringing others along - across sectors, borders, and backgrounds.

Such engagement cannot come soon enough. While economic activity has been curtailed in 2020, weather- and climate-related disasters have continued to increase in frequency and severity. According to the National Centers for Environmental Information, in 2020, there have been at least 16 weather events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each - and that is just in the United States. There were 6.6 such events per year between 1980 and 2019, on average; but that figure rose to 13.8 in the 2015-19 period.

Real, scalable climate action can happen only if the public and private sectors come together behind jointly executed plans. Public-private partnerships and initiatives, as outlined in the 17th UN Sustainable Development Goal, have the advantage of leveraging essential policy changes and scalable business models to combat serious global challenges.

Moreover, these partnerships create their own kind of "network effect." Efforts like Microsoft's \$1 billion climate commitment demonstrate how companies can join forces to support existing programs that desperately need capital in order to scale across markets. Another example is Mastercard's Priceless Planet Coalition. This initiative brings together governments, nonprofit organizations, and businesses to plant 100 million trees as part of broader reforestation efforts, and takes the idea of collaboration a step further by helping consumers understand their own impact on emissions and providing an avenue for them to get involved directly.

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ARTICLE

ARTICLE

China's New Development Blueprint will Bring New Impetus and New Opportunities to World Win-win Cooperation

By H.E. Ren Yisheng, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Liberia

Not long ago, the 19th Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee convened its Fifth Plenary Session. It has made arrangements for the formulation of the "14th Five-Year Plan" for national economic and social development and long-range goals for 2035, and proposed new development stages, new development concepts and new development paradigm and other major thesis and important measures. For China's development, the "Five-Year Plan" is an important way for the CPC to govern the country, and it is also a significant landmark for measuring China's pace. From the beginning of New China's first "five-year plan" in 1953 to the completion of the "13th Five-Year Plan" in 2020, China has created a miracle of rapid economic development and long-term social stability that is rare in the world. The "Governance of China" has become more and more mature in this process.

During the "13th Five-Year Plan" period, 55.75 million rural poor people in China have been lifted out of poverty; the annual grain output has stabilized at more than 1300 billion Jin (650 billion kilograms) for five consecutive years; the world's largest social security system has been established, in which basic medical care insurance covers more than 1.3 billion people, and basic pension insurance covers nearly one billion people; it is estimated that China's GDP will exceed one trillion yuan (about 15 trillion USD) in 2020.

2020 is the decisive year for China to win the final victory in building a moderately prosperous society in an all-respects and the battle against poverty. Facing the severe challenges and difficulties brought about by the Covid-19 epidemic, the Chinese government acted swiftly and the people worked hard together to take the lead in controlling the epidemic. China's economic and social development has been on the right track, becoming the only country in the world to achieve positive economic growth. This has laid a solid foundation for China to complete as scheduled the poverty alleviation goals and tasks of building a well-off society in all respects. China has also actively provided continuous anti-epidemic assistance to the World Health Organization and other countries and regions in the world, and promised that upon completion of research and development and once put into use, Chinese produced vaccine will be given priority to developing countries as a global public product, which fully demonstrates China's sense of responsibility.

The "14th Five-Year Plan" provides a practical and effective development blueprint for China's future economic and social development. The Chinese economy will shift from a stage of rapid growth to a stage of high-quality development. The new stage of development will put the quality of development in a more prominent position, with the deepening of supply-side structural reforms as the principle line, adhere to the principle of quality first and benefit first, effectively transform the development mode, promote reforms of quality, efficiency and dynamic change, so that development results can better benefit all people.

In the new stage of development, the new development concept of innovation, coordination, greenness, openness, and sharing will run through the entire development process and all fields, thus to achieve higher quality, more efficient, fairer, more sustainable and safer development. China proposes to achieve new progress in the construction of ecological civilization, and the total discharge of major pollutants continues to decrease. This is China's firm commitment to protecting the environment and responding to climate change and other important issues shared by mankind.

The development of the new stage will accelerate the construction of a new development paradigm in which the domestic big cycle is the main body and the domestic and international double cycles supplement each other.

This is by no means a closed domestic cycle, but an open domestic and international double cycle. It is through open cooperation to promote the formation of a grand and smooth domestic economic cycle, better attract global resource elements, share development opportunities with other countries, and promote mutual benefit and win-win results. As the Covid-19 epidemic hits the world economy severely, this will not only benefit China's own sustainable development, but will also bring more attractive and broader markets to the world.

As the green and sustainable economy continues to develop, China will not only further consolidate the achievements of poverty alleviation, but also further make positive contributions to the realization of the United Nations sustainable development goals. I believe that China will take more solid steps in its future development. By 2035, China's per capita GDP will reach the level of a moderately developed country, and a modern socialist country will be fully built.

As one of the largest economies in the world, China's future development will inevitably have an important impact on the development of the world economy. It

will not only inject greater confidence in the recovery of the world economy, but also bring more opportunities for win-win cooperation to the world. China has always been adhering to the policy of strengthening solidarity and cooperation with countries around the world, and its future development will also make greater contributions to the prosperity and growth of African countries and other countries in the world.



The author: H.E. Ren Yisheng

Africa is an important strategic partner of China. During the "14th Five-Year Plan" period, China will realize a wider, broader and deeper opening up to the outside world, further strengthen cooperation with Africa, support the construction of a free trade zone on the African continent, and provide African countries with larger markets and more investment Cooperation opportunities. Liberia is an important country in West Africa. The relations between China and Liberia are excellent. China welcomes Liberia and other African countries to better participate in China's "14th Five-Year Plan" process by seizing the opportunity to strengthen the docking of the "Agenda 2063" of the "African Vision and Action Plan" and the "Pro-poor Plan for Prosperity and Development" with such platforms as the "Belt and Road" Initiative and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. The two sides shall further strengthen the pragmatic cooperation in public health, Covid-19 vaccine, infrastructure construction, trade and investment, industrial capacity, human resource training, agriculture, poverty reduction, peace and security, etc. China-Africa and China-Liberia will work together to realize the common development, promote the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, and work together to build a closer China-Africa community with a shared future.



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PROCUREMENT NOTICE

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

4A430/LERC/001-5

Supply and Delivery of Accounting Software, HR Software & Antivirus Lot 1, Phone System Lot 2, Laptops Lot 3, Emergency UPS Lot 4 and Backup Software Lot 5

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

MCA-Liberia now invites priced quotations from eligible firms/suppliers for the Supply and Delivery of Accounting Software, HR Software & Antivirus Lot 1, Phone System Lot 2, Laptops Lot 3, Emergency UPS Lot 4 and Backup Software Lot 5. More details on the requirement are provided in the Technical Specifications and the RFQ. The RFQ is open to all eligible entities ("Suppliers") who wish to respond. Subject to restrictions noted in the RFQ, Suppliers may associate with other Suppliers to enhance their capacity to successfully deliver the goods.

The RFQ is for:

Supply and Delivery of Accounting Software, HR Software & Antivirus Lot 1, Phone System Lot 2, Laptops Lot 3, Emergency UPS Lot 4 and Backup Software Lot 5

How to Participate in the Process:

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

Important dates:

No.	Activity	Dates
1	Release of RFQ	December 17, 2020
2	Last date for questions/clarifications	December 18, 2020
3	MCA-L Response to Questions/Clarifications	December 21, 2020
4	Deadline for Submission of Quotations	December 23, 2020 at 5:30 pm

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Judges, Magistrates cautioned to treat all citizens equal

By Ben P. Wese

The Judge of Civil Law Court 'A,' Peter Gbeneweleh is calling on his colleague judges and magistrates to treat citizens and residents appearing before them equally as party litigants. Speaking at the opening

political and religious affiliations.

"In words, the strong and the weak, and the rich and the poor, must equally be treated before us as judges. We are under the legal obligation as judges and magistrate to dispense justice without fear or favor and render

and efficiently.

"We are under oath to always discharge our judicial duties and functions with a high level of neutrality, fairness, impartiality, transparency, courage and professionalism to restore public confidence in our judicial system," he stresses further.

Addressing jurors at the opening of the courts, Judge Gbeneweleh notes that the statute requires their presence during each term of court to perform a civil duty to their country and the Liberian people.

He notes that their presence in this term of court should not be construed for commercial purpose.

"We will not hesitate to punish any juror for any misconduct during this term of Court," Judge Gbeneweleh warns.

He discloses that the New Judicial Law mandates that the court convenes on the third Monday in March, June, September and December each year.

Judge Gbeneweleh concludes by urging all members of the Liberian National Bar to pay their Bar dues, to attend and partake in the continuing legal education and obtain their license as sanctioned by the Supreme Court of Liberia.-- Edited by Winston W. Parley



ceremony of the Sixth Judicial Circuit Civil Law Court A & B, Judge Gbeneweleh noted Monday, 21 December that citizens within the territorial confines of Liberia are equal before the law, regardless of their status, race, ethnicity,

fair and impartial judgments in our cases before us," he adds.

The maintains that in the midst of the challenges they are facing as judges and magistrate, they should always remain resolute and committed in the discharge of their judicial functions and duties effectively

MCC opens recreation center

By Lewis S. Teh

Officials of the Monrovia City Corporation or MCC says doors of the newly renovated recreation center formerly known as city garden open to the general public today, Wednesday, December 23.

Giving a brief history of the garden Tuesday, in a news conference, MCC chief of protocol Ms. Laura Mai said the entire renovated work started far back as 2011 under the leadership of former Mayor Madam Mary T. Broh, who curved what later referred to as the park or the city garden, adding that the construction work was performed by in-

the vision he poses to beautifying the city, Mayor Koijee asked for the garden to be renovated again following the footsteps of former Mayor Broh; it is against this backdrop that renovation started in September and will be open to the public".

At the same time chief economist and consultant at the city government Mr. Vallou M. Dorley said the newly renovated city garden will contribute immensely to the growth, and development of the city government and the country at large.

He said services play a major role in the development of any



house persons of the MCC.

After the construction of the garden it was later used as farmers market, a place that every merchant will go and sell their fruits produce, and later it was used for business, children party, and small groups retreat, including weeding overflows and breakout session during workshops.

Ms. Mai continued that after the 2017 historic election that brought the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change government to power, and the subsequent appointment of Jefferson T. Koijee as mayor of the city of Monrovia, he thought it important to give the garden a facelift.

"Upon taking over and with

country, and such the opening of the city garden will create revenue for the national covers through the city government, adding that the opening will also provide empowerment opportunities for citizens.

"This project was referred to as the white elephant project, but with the opening of it today, we think it will help to bring relief to our people, because people around will want to spend some time", he added.

Giving the actual cost of the project, Dorley disclosed the project expenditure is around US\$ 250,000, but said this amount could be increased following the completion of the entire renovation work. - Edited by Jonathan Browne

LNP gets US\$40,000 renovation

The Liberia National Police (LNP) has received a dedication of ten renovated Women And Children Protection Section (WACPS) facilities in Montserrado and Grand Cape Mount Counties with funding from the EU-Spotlight Initiative through UNICEF Liberia.

The initiative is part of EU-Spotlight support through UNICEF to WACPS COVID-19 Response and UNDP pillar 4.1.6, constructed two new modern facilities with accommodation for SGBV victims/witnesses, at Zone 4 Base Police Station in Montserrado and Robertsport, Grand Cape Mount Counties.

The project also renovated and equipped WACPS Offices at the Central Headquarters, Zone 1 Base-Bong Mine Bridge, Zone 4 Depot 3- New Georgia Estate, Zone 6 Base-Brewerville, Zone 8-ELWA/RIA Highway and Zone 10- Doe Community to eliminate



violence against women and girls at a cost of over Forty Thousand United States Dollars (USD40,000.00).

Speaking at the program, the UNICEF Representative, Madam Laila Omar Gad, emphasized the need for joining hands with the Women And Children Protection

Section of the Liberia National Police in the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic to fight against SGBV cases.

"The Spotlight is truly a beacon of hope for Liberia through its partners," said Madam Gad.

Also speaking, the Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation to Liberia, Mr. Laurent Delahousse pointed out that Female Genital Mutilation as a form of violence against women and girls that are wrong. He reminded the LNP Authority of a biannual visit on the facilities.

For his part, the Inspector General of the Liberia National Police, Col. Patrick T. Sudue, who proxied on behalf of the Atty. General and Minister of Justice of Liberia, recognized the effort of the donor partners in renovating and erecting such facilities that the public use for

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Clergy urges Liberians not to give up during challenging times

By Lewis S. Teh

The Founder and General Overseer of the Success Evangelical Outreach Ministries (SEOMI), Pastor Henry Success Mayson has urged his congregation and the citizenry not to give up on

exclusive interview Sunday, 20 December at the church's edifice in Caldwell, New Georgia North Road.

Pastor Mayson's comment came as the church observed its 7th anniversary. He informs this paper that the church was established seven years back

vision God gave in 1996 following his return from exile where he had gone to seek refuge during the civil unrest in Liberia.

"At least to reach 7 years give me so much joy, this tells us that more unspeakable joy is about to come," he says.

Revealing his church's three years strategic plans, Pastor Mayson details that they are hoping to establish at least two separate additional branches and a school for the citizenry, including members.

He notes that SEOMI has embarked on sending some of its members to pastoral schools to acquire the rightful knowledge to head the project.

At the same time, Pastor Mayson praises Liberians for exercising their constitutional rights smoothly, saying Liberia's democracy is improving when compared to previous elections where there was chaos following the pronouncement of results across the country.

"We have fought for a long time, now that we have the peace, it's incumbent upon each and every citizen to uphold the peace for the growth of the country," he concludes.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



their vision in spite of numerous challenges that may confront them.

"We as a people and nation must continue to look up to the vision that God has giving us, don't give up if you must make it in life," he said in an

with the holding of its first service on 17 November 2013 as a result of the vision given him by God to establish a church.

According to him, the Success Evangelical Outreach Ministries International came into existence as a result of a

Liberian firm turns cashews nuts into food products

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Creaser, which is universally known as Cashews nuts, is being manufactured into different kinds of food products in Liberia for the first time by a Liberian-owned company known as Symmetrix Management Holding, Inc.

The SMH has two agricultural farms in Bomi and Grand Cape Mount counties, northwestern Liberia with dozens of Liberians employed to monitor growth of the products.

Breaking news about the agricultural activities of SMH in Liberia at its Clay Street Office in Monrovia, Head of Operations, Mr. Bai T. Moore Massaquoi, said the firm is the biggest producer of cashews nuts on the Liberia market.

He said cashews nuts were discovered 40 years ago by researchers who found out that besides rooting, the nuts can also be turned into other



eatable products.

According to Mr. Massaquoi, the production of cashews nuts goes through various stages such as drying, rooting, and peeling before being ready for consumption, adding that

cashews nuts are very nice for eating.

He noted that cashews nuts are grown in some communities in Liberia, and with the presence of a manufacturer here, more and

GOL comptrollers, accountants end w/shop in Bassa

A two-day workshop geared towards ensuring comptrollers and accountants of government line ministries and agencies have adequate understanding about the newly created Comptroller and Accountant General Department has ended in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County.

According to the Ministry of Finance and Development

of the transition process of comptrollers and accountants in the Ministry under the Comptroller and Accountant General Department.

Comptroller and Accountant General Janga A. Kowo, speaking at the start of the forum, said it is important that comptrollers come under the same "roof" for enhanced coordination and efficiency.

The transition will also



Planning, the workshop was organized by the Comptroller and Accountant General Department, under the theme: "Awareness and Orientation on the newly created Comptroller and Accountant General Department and the ongoing transition process".

Over 100 comptrollers and accountants attended the workshop, including principal deputies of some ministries and agencies under the reform which initiated the transition of the Comptroller and Accountant General Department at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

It is in line with the ongoing PFM reform exercise, and part

ensure that comptrollers and accountants are re-vetted for better deployment in their ministries and agencies. Professional certificate training has been earmarked for comptrollers and accountants, and it will be done by the LICPA, says CAG Kowo.

The Comptroller and Accountants General Office of Liberia transitioned from being a unit, under Fiscal Affairs Department to a Department through the Amended and Restatement of the Public Financial Management Act of 2009.

Under Section I of the Amendment and Restatement of the Public Financial

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more Liberians would be encouraged to venture into cashews nuts farming.

He explained that cashews nuts are sold in supermarkets and by individuals, though they are being imported into the country, nothing that as a Liberian-owned company involved in the production of cashews nuts for the local market, the company looks forward to engage in export in the future when enough cashews farms are available.

Massaquoi further

explained that in Bomi County, the company has two farms and there are two others in Grand Cape Mount County.

He said the SMH farms are about 3,000 acres and they are being expanded every year.

He noted that though Liberian owned, they are not receiving support from anywhere, adding that despite not receiving support, workers at the farms in both Bomi and Grand Cape Mount continue to produce cashews nuts for the

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Français

Le rapport du FMI sur le Libéria

« Une politique monétaire stricte, une gestion des finances publiques nettement améliorée, une mobilisation des recettes intérieures et un financement sans la banque centrale ont soutenu les efforts de l'administration pour parvenir à la stabilité des prix et des taux de change », a déclaré le Fonds monétaire international dans son examen de la facilité élargie de crédit du pays. (ECF).

Le FMI a octroyé au

gouvernement libérien un montant instantané de 38 millions de dollars EU pour répondre aux conditions énoncées dans le programme.

Les première et deuxième révisions font partie des conditions fixées dans le cadre de la facilité de crédit étendue, la demande de dérogation pour non-respect des critères de performance et la modification des critères de performance.

Le gouvernement libérien a demandé une dérogation pour non-respect de fin décembre

2019 et fin juin 2020.

Le FMI a déclaré que la décision politique prise par le gouvernement a contribué à préserver le pouvoir d'achat des pauvres qui étaient les plus touchés par la forte inflation au début du programme.

Selon le FMI, le gouvernement libérien a envisagé de placer le programme appuyé par la FEC à la tête de ses priorités et s'est engagé à respecter son plan de développement, le Programme en faveur des pauvres pour la prospérité et

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Les résultats des élections sénatoriales sont une mise en garde pour le pouvoir, (Cummings)

« Les élections sénatoriales spéciales du 08 décembre constituent une forte mise en garde pour le président George Manneh Weah et sa coalition au pouvoir pour le changement démocratique sur ce qui les attend pour les élections présidentielle et législatives de 2023 », a dit le chef de file de l'opposition et président de la coalition des

principaux partis politiques de l'opposition.

M. Alexander Cummings a déclaré sur un plateau de télévision lundi lors d'une interview que la direction et toute la structure de la plateforme de l'opposition sont satisfaites des résultats des élections sénatoriales. L'opposition a remporté six des 15 comtés, tandis que le parti au pouvoir en a remporté quatre et

les candidats indépendants cinq comtés.

M. Cummings, qui est également porte-étendard du Congrès national alternatif (ANC),

a affirmé que les résultats des élections qui viennent de se terminer sont un message fort du peuple libérien à l'endroit de l'administration actuelle.

Pour Cummings, l'administration Weah gère mal le pays. Selon lui, la victoire de l'opposition dans les comtés peuplés est le début de la bonne marche de l'opposition pour 2023.

Il a dit espérer que les nouvelles figures qui font leur entrée au Sénat n'accepteront pas les pots de vin qu'offre le pouvoir exécutif pour adopter aveuglément des législations. Il a fait savoir que la coalition de l'opposition est en train de rédiger « son programme législatif » pour ses législateurs à la Chambre des représentants et au Sénat libérien.



Que pensent les Africains de la Chine ?

ÉTUDE. Vingt ans après le premier forum Chine-Afrique, une enquête de l'Institut Afrobaromètre donne une idée de l'image de l'empire du Milieu sur le continent.

L'année 2020 marque le vingtième anniversaire du Forum sur la coopération Chine-Afrique (Focac), dont le premier sommet a été organisé à Pékin en 2000. Alors que le prochain sommet, prévu en septembre 2021 à Dakar, est en préparation, les responsables chinois et africains se penchent sur le bilan de ces deux décennies de coopération et sur ses prochaines orientations.

L'engagement croissant et multidimensionnel de la Chine avec l'Afrique a eu des effets importants, bien qu'inégaux, sur la croissance économique, la diversification économique, la création d'emplois et la connectivité en Afrique.

Mais, dans le même temps, il apparaît que les relations sino-africaines sont principalement organisées par le biais des gouvernements chinois et africains, et ne tiennent pas suffisamment compte des opinions et du bien-être des populations africaines.

En 2016, l'institut de recherche panafricain Afrobaromètre (Afrobarometer) a publié sa première étude d'opinion sur ce que les Africains pensent de l'engagement de leurs gouvernements avec la Chine.

L'étude a révélé que 63 % des citoyens interrogés dans 36 pays avaient une image largement positive de la Chine. Cette popularité s'explique avant tout par les projets d'infrastructure, de développement et d'investissement mis en œuvre par la Chine en Afrique. Cependant, les perceptions d'une qualité discutable des produits chinois et de la faiblesse du nombre d'emplois créés dans ce cadre en Afrique pour les Africains avaient contribué à atténuer cette perception.

En 2019-2020, Afrobaromètre a mené une autre série d'enquêtes d'opinion africaine. Les données de 18 pays ont été recueillies directement sur le terrain à partir d'un échantillon de personnes sélectionnées au hasard dans la langue choisie par le répondant avant la pandémie de la Covid-19. Les questions de l'enquête portaient, entre autres, sur la manière dont les Africains perçoivent les prêts chinois, les remboursements de la dette et la dépendance de l'Afrique vis-à-vis de la Chine pour son développement.

Les résultats préliminaires

de cette enquête révèlent que (1) la majorité des Africains préfère toujours davantage le modèle de développement américain (États-Unis) au modèle chinois et que (2) l'influence de la Chine est encore largement considérée comme positive pour l'Afrique même si (3) les Africains, au courant des prêts chinois, estiment que leurs gouvernements empruntent trop.

Dans un contexte où les dirigeants africains et chinois réfléchissent aux modalités de leur coopération, ces résultats sont importants et devraient leur permettre de construire une relation tournée vers l'avenir qui refléterait mieux les opinions et les besoins des citoyens africains.

États-Unis vs Chine

Les enquêtes ont montré que les Africains préfèrent toujours le modèle de développement américain au modèle chinois. Le modèle de développement chinois repose sur une planification politique et un capitalisme de marché dirigé par l'État tandis que le modèle américain met davantage l'accent sur l'importance du marché libre.

Sur les 18 pays, 32 % des enquêtés préféraient le modèle de développement américain, tandis que 23 % préféraient le modèle chinois. Dans l'ensemble, il y a peu de changements depuis 2014-2015, mais quelques revirements s'opèrent au niveau de certains pays.

Au Lesotho et en Namibie, les États-Unis ont dépassé la Chine en tant que modèle de développement privilégié. Au Burkina Faso et au Botswana, la Chine est désormais préférée aux États-Unis. Les Angolais et les Éthiopiens, qui n'avaient pas été inclus dans l'enquête de 2014-2015 (publiée en 2016), sont majoritairement partisans du modèle américain. Cependant, 57 % des Éthiopiens et 43 % des Angolais estiment que l'influence de la Chine a un impact positif sur leur pays.

Le modèle de développement chinois, dynamique et multiforme, est souvent plébiscité par les gouvernants africains. Ce modèle a cependant évolué en fonction du contexte et de la période. Les gouvernements africains doivent décider quels aspects du modèle chinois sont les plus adaptés pour leur pays, et tenir compte des limites de ce modèle.

Un examen plus approfondi des réponses des enquêtes 2014-2015 et 2019-2020 montre que dans les pays où la Chine

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Français

Le rapport du FMI

le développement (PAPD).

À cet égard, le FMI a déclaré que le rétablissement de la stabilité macroéconomique, la mise en place d'une base pour une croissance inclusive durable et la correction des faiblesses de la gouvernance restent les principaux objectifs de ce programme.

Statut du programme.

Le Conseil d'administration du FMI a approuvé un accord de quatre ans au titre de la FEC en décembre 2019.

Le Conseil a également approuvé, dans le contexte de la pandémie COVID-19, un allègement de la dette au titre du Fonds de confinement et de secours en cas de catastrophe en avril 2020 et un décaissement au titre de la facilité de crédit rapide (FCR) en juin 2020.

Performance du programme.

Selon le FMI, trois des six critères de performance (CP) fin 2019 n'étaient pas remplis.

En particulier, les critères de performance sur les réserves internationales nettes (NIR) ont été largement ratés en raison du taux de change, selon le FMI.

Le rapport indique en

outre que trois des six critères de performance de fin juin 2020 n'ont pas non plus été atteints à cause de l'impact de la pandémie qui a rendu les choses difficiles.

Cependant, il a révélé que deux repères structurels (SB) ont été respectés, quatre n'ont pas été atteints, ce, à cause de la pandémie qui a encore mis à rude épreuve la capacité de mise en œuvre.

Même ainsi, le rapport a fait valoir que l'un des quatre repères a été mis en œuvre avec un retard, tandis que des progrès notables ont été réalisés sur plusieurs autres repères.

Entre-temps, le FMI a indiqué que pour renforcer encore la performance du programme, les autorités libériennes ont mis en œuvre des mesures clés comme actions préalables pour l'exercice 2021, dont notamment l'adoption d'un budget conforme aux paramètres du programme et l'apurement de tous les arriérés du service de la dette, entre autres mesures.

Risques pour le programme

Selon le rapport du FMI, les risques sont élevés malgré des mesures de contrôle importantes intégrées dans les actions antérieures et les critères de performance.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Todd G. Buchholz

Hamilton gagnant contre la TMM

SAN DIEGO - Alexander Hamilton était-il un imbécile ? C'est ce que doivent penser les partisans de la théorie monétaire moderne. Hamilton, dont l'histoire est maintenant chantée par des millions d'écoliers, persuada les jeunes États-Unis d'absorber la dette publique, de la rembourser et de construire une réputation de fiabilité. « Si nous prenons les dettes à notre charge - disent les paroles de la comédie musicale Hamilton - l'Union obtiendra de nouvelles lignes de crédits, un diurétique financier. Comment ne pas le comprendre ? »

Hamilton aurait-il dû déchirer la dette accumulée par les États lors de la guerre révolutionnaire ? Les soutiens de la TMM semblent le penser, lorsqu'ils affirment que les pays peuvent à loisir imprimer de la monnaie et ignorer la dette sans en souffrir. Je serais heureux de pouvoir croire que la dette publique importe peu (ou qu'Elvis est toujours vivant), mais la dette importe, beaucoup, et nous devrions être reconnaissants au président élu Joe Biden d'avoir choisi pour secrétaire au Trésor, sous réserve de son approbation par le Sénat, Janet Yellen, qui n'est pas une adepte de la TMM.

Les partisans de la TMM voient cependant affluer des soutiens toujours plus nombreux. Des taux d'intérêt extrêmement bas ont nourri la tentation croissante de continuer à émettre de la monnaie et d'ignorer la dette jusqu'à ce que l'inflation ne reparte à la hausse. Lorsque ce moment arrivera, assurent les théoriciens monétaires modernes, il suffira de diminuer la dépense publique pour ralentir l'économie. L'argument est ingénieux, à condition d'ignorer l'histoire et de n'avoir pas de sens commun, car c'est croire que les élus accepteraient ce à quoi ils sont précisément le moins enclins.

Cela ne veut pas dire, bien sûr, qu'il serait opportun de couper dans les dépenses pendant la grande cessation d'activités liée au Covid-19, laquelle a fait remonter le taux de chômage aux États-Unis à presque 7 %. Si je soutiens le creusement actuel des déficits, il faudra que dans l'avenir les gouvernements des États-Unis et des autres pays limitent l'exubérance de leurs budgets. Dans dix ans, les fonds alloués à Medicare et à l'aide sociale s'épuiseront, ce qui déclenchera une baisse de 10 à 25 % des allocations de santé et de retraite des personnes âgées.

On connaît le vieux refrain des thuriféraires de la dette : « C'est à nous-mêmes que nous devons cet argent. » Mais nous ne le devons pas qu'à nous-même : un tiers environ de la dette des États-Unis est détenue à l'étranger, dont 1 100 milliards de dollars par la Chine. En outre, même si l'on ne considère que la dette détenue pas les Américains, nous devons nous demander qui est ce « nous ». Des prêteurs qui ont acheté de bonne foi des bons du Trésor sont à distinguer de ceux à qui profitera leur effondrement ou leur gonflement au-delà de leur valeur.

Les actuels laudateurs de la dette ont eu de nombreux précurseurs, dont certains sont enterrés dans les décombres de la Grèce antique, où certaines cités du IV^e siècle av. J.-C. ne purent rembourser leurs emprunts au temple de Délos. En 1793, Louis XVI a perdu sa tête alors qu'il tentait de calmer les créanciers de la monarchie française. Dans les années 1920, la république de Weimar a fait la cruelle expérience de l'hyperinflation, jusqu'à ce qu'une banque centrale obtienne de responsables politiques en perdition suffisamment d'autonomie pour stabiliser la nouvelle devise. Plus récemment, le Chili, le Pérou, le Zimbabwe, l'Argentine et le Brésil ont tous frôlé la ruine après avoir mis en œuvre les préceptes de la théorie monétaire moderne. La dette du Venezuela représente aujourd'hui deux fois son PIB, et il est devenu plus commode d'exprimer son taux d'inflation en utilisant la notation

scientifique - qui recourt aux puissances de 10.

Évidemment, les théoriciens monétaires modernes rejettent ces exemples qui ne relèvent à leurs yeux que de l'étourderie tropicale. Comme l'a lancé dans un tweet Stephanie Kelton, de l'université Stony Brook, qui a beaucoup fait pour la popularité de la TMM : « Les gens qui n'ont à la bouche que nom du Zimbabwe n'ont pas la moindre idée de ce qui a causé là-bas l'hyperinflation... »

D'accord, mais alors, regardons du côté des économies « avancées ». Dans les années 1970, le Royaume-Uni était l'« homme malade de l'Europe » (l'expression vient du tsar Nicolas Ier, qui désignait ainsi l'Empire ottoman), souffrant d'une inflation galopante et d'une monnaie qui faisait naufrage. En 1976, suite à une conversion pour le moins extraordinaire, le Premier ministre travailliste James Callaghan demanda l'aide du Fonds monétaire international et opéra un revirement budgétaire complet, déclarant aux champions de la dette : « Je vous dis en toute honnêteté [que son creusement] n'est plus envisageable. »

Fort heureusement, une politique budgétaire responsable peut, bien sûr, redonner des perspectives à un pays. Dans les années 1990, le Canada et la Suède durent faire face à d'épouvantables crises économiques, qui supprimèrent les millions d'emplois. En 1992, la Banque centrale de Suède releva ses taux d'intérêt à 500 %, afin d'empêcher l'effondrement de sa monnaie après que les élus eurent plus que doublé le niveau d'emprunt du pays. Mais la Suède et le Canada adoptèrent des mesures responsables pour réduire drastiquement leurs dépenses et leurs économies furent bientôt relancées. De leur côté, les États-Unis créèrent 18 millions d'emplois nets dans les années 1990 - une situation exceptionnelle que permit un pacte entre le président démocrate Bill Clinton et la majorité républicaine au Congrès.

Devant tous ces exemples, la seule réponse des théoriciens monétaires modernes est de prétendre que la méthode fonctionne au Japon. Peu leur importe que les Japonais aient rejeté la TMM en mots comme en actes. Le gouverneur de la Banque du Japon, Haruhiko Kuroda a pris le soin de qualifier la TMM de « raisonnement outrancier qui ne sera pas accepté ».

Pourquoi le Japon ne correspond-il pas au modèle de la TMM ? Pour commencer, 90 % de la dette japonaise sont effectivement détenus par des Japonais, mais pour l'essentiel par des organismes publics et non par des institutions privées. Deuxièmement, Le Japon a doublé ses taxes sur la consommation pour contenir sa dette, et réduit ces dernières années les pensions de retraite des personnes âgées. Les théoriciens monétaires modernes soutiendraient-ils l'une ou l'autre de ces mesures ?

Quoi qu'il en soit, si l'on prétend que le Japon suit réellement les principes de la TMM, pourquoi, dès lors, personne ne s'en attribue-t-il les mérites ? Le pays a connu vingt ans de stagnation avec un PIB dont la croissance n'atteignait pas 1 % par an, et la part de l'investissement privé dans le PIB est en baisse. Voici vingt ans, Sony et Toyota menaient le monde ; aujourd'hui, Apple et Tesla les ont doublées.

Kenneth Rogoff, ancien économiste en chef du FMI, raille la TMM pour n'être ni moderne, ni monétaire, ni même une théorie. C'est un peu rude. La MMT est évidemment moderne, mais moderne comme peut l'être un dripping de Jackson Pollock, hypnotique, vif, et désordonné. Elle peut séduire, mais n'est une manière prudente ni pour les emplois ni en classe. Les enfants devraient plutôt apprendre à rapper la sagesse d'Hamilton.

Les résultats des élections

construit des infrastructures, les perceptions sont restées stables ou sont devenues plus positives. C'est notamment le cas au Ghana, au Nigeria, en Ouganda, en Guinée et en Côte d'Ivoire.

La popularité de la Chine augmente au Sahel

Les perceptions de la Chine ont changé en mieux dans certains pays de la région du Sahel, en proie à de multiples défis politiques, sociaux et sécuritaires. Sur le plan stratégique, la Chine s'est beaucoup impliquée dans les activités de sécurité et de développement, les projets d'infrastructure liés aux nouvelles routes de la soie, et les opérations de maintien de la paix et de sécurité, notamment sous l'égide des Nations unies dans la région.

Au Burkina Faso, la popularité du modèle de développement chinois a presque doublé, passant de 20 % à 39 % au cours des cinq années écoulées depuis l'enquête précédente.

En Guinée, où les entreprises chinoises sont principalement impliquées dans des projets miniers, 80 % des citoyens perçoivent l'influence économique et politique de la Chine comme

positive - quatre points de pourcentage de plus qu'il y a cinq ans. Dans l'ensemble, l'implication croissante de la Chine dans la région du Sahel semble avoir eu un fort impact sur les opinions des citoyens.

Impact économique et remboursement de la dette

Une majorité de citoyens africains considèrent que les activités économiques de la Chine ont « assez » ou « beaucoup » d'influence sur les économies de leur pays. Mais cette proportion est passée de 71 % en 2014-2015 à 56 % en 2019-2020 dans les 16 pays étudiés. Alors que six Africains sur dix considèrent l'influence de la Chine sur leur pays comme positive, cette perception est passée de 65 % à 60 % dans 16 pays.

Par ailleurs, les puissances régionales africaines, les organisations régionales et des Nations unies, ainsi que la Russie, sont également perçues comme des entités ayant une influence positive. L'influence de la Russie est perçue comme étant positive par 38 %. Cela pourrait être le reflet de l'engagement politique, économique et sécuritaire croissant de la Russie avec l'Afrique.

ainsi que le rôle des médias russes, tels que RussiaToday et Sputnik.

SPECIAL

ARTICLE

Liberian voters did not understand the referendum

By J. Peter S. Dennis
(LMD Fellow)

Multiple civil society organizations and civic groups expressed deep concerns ahead of the elections that the Liberian voters lacked proper understanding of the referendum and the propositions. Despite the calls, the Liberian government and the NEC went ahead with the organization of the process.

The results now show that the Liberian people profoundly lacked knowledge of the process, as the NEC official data shows that there were more invalid votes than valid cast.

Most of the voters we spoke with said that they voted “No” on the propositions because they could not understand the symbols, or what the propositions were about.

The propositions to modify the national constitution included reduction of tenure for the presidency and the members of the House of Representatives from six to five years; reduction of the tenure of the Senate President Pro-Tempore from six to five years; reduction of the tenures for the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the House from six to five years, respectively; change of date of presidential elections from the second Tuesday in October to second Tuesday in

November to avoid the rainy season; reduction of the time for the National Elections Commission to hear complaints from 30 days to 15 days, and finally, allowing dual citizenship and other citizenship provisions for Liberian nationals.

KorpoLabelah, 34, from Totota, Lower Bong County said, “From the beginning, I never had any information on the referendum. I did not understand those things, so I voted ‘no’ to all.”

Like Korpo, 22-year-old Wilfred Loweal, another first-time voter, admitted that he voted “no” to the propositions because he was never educated. “Since this referendum business started, no one has ever convinced me on any of the counts. So, since I came to vote, I [marked] ‘No’ on all,” he said.

Days before the voting, President George Manneh Weah and executives of his ruling Coalition for Democratic Change party had encouraged Liberians to vote “Yes” to all eight propositions of the national referendum.

But the President did not provide sufficient justification why the public should vote “Yes” on everything.

President Weah also called on political parties and their leaders to encourage their respective supporters and supporters to remain peaceful during the election period. The President emphasized that peace and stability are

Referendum Results

Search:

#	PROPOSITIONS	YES	NO	VALID	INVALID	TOTAL
1	INALIENABILITY OF THE CITIZENSHIP OF NATURAL BORN LIBERIANS, DUAL CITIZENSHIP	13,446	11,878	25,324	49,405	74,729
2	CHANGE IN THE DATE OF ELECTION	15,003	8,697	23,700	51,029	74,729
3	SHORTENED TIME FOR NEC TO HEAR COMPLAINTS	11,501	10,013	21,514	53,215	74,729
4	REDUCTION OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE PRESIDENT	16,106	10,691	26,797	47,932	74,729
5	REDUCTION OF THE TERM OF THE SENATORS	15,294	10,275	25,569	49,160	74,729
6	REDUCTION OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE	14,485	9,354	23,839	50,702	74,541
7	REDUCTION OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF REPRESENTATIVES	14,439	9,204	23,643	51,086	74,729
8	REDUCTION OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER & DEPUTY SPEAKER	14,203	9,780	23,983	50,746	74,729

Showing 1 to 8 of 8 entries

Referendum Results in Bong county show that while most people voted in favor of the propositions, the number of invalid votes was almost double the number of valid ballots. Data Source: NEC

paramount to democracy, urging citizens to avoid violence.

However, days before the election, violent clashes occurred in Grand Cape Mount County, where the convoy of the rters of the ruling Coalition Candidate, Victor Watson, on Saturday, December 5, in Dambala Town, Porkpar District.

opposition CPP Senator-elect, Simeon Taylor, was reportedly attacked and set ablaze by alleged supporters

of the ruling Coalition Candidate, Victor Watson, on Saturday, December 5, in Dambala Town, Porkpar District.

The opposition CPP party condemned the attack and urged the government to “stop the state-sponsored intimidation.”

There were no major reports of electoral violence in Bong County, where the Deputy Speaker Prince Moye emerged as winner. Mr.Moye contested on the ticket of

opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP).

Lower Bong County NEC election magistrate, Daniel Newland, confirmed there was no violence. Newland added that his office has not received any complaint of electoral violence.

Senator-elect Moye took to his Facebook page to thank the people of Bong for their confidence:

“Fellow Bongese [...] We feel exceedingly elated, grateful, and humbled by the overwhelming support we received across the county and subsequently becoming the winner in the end.

The election is over. Bong County has won. Let's put aside our political differences and work collectively for the common good of Bong. Thanks a million, Bongese, we will not fail you!”

A diaspora son of Bong County Mr. Dennis Garsinii, wrote on December 13, 2020 ye as winner, wrote that “Never have I seen this much jubilation by the electorates for victory of their candidate of choice. It indicates that citizens of Bong County have been burdened and frustrated by division amongst the Bong Caucus and underdevelopment in the county. In you, they find a light of change and believe that you are the torch bear of the light.”

after the pronouncement of Moye as winner, wrote that nty. In you, they find a light of change and believe that you are the torch bear of the light.”



Senatorial election a caveat

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The national chairman of the main opposition Collaborating Political Parties says the December 08, Special Senatorial election is a strong caveat to President George Manneh Weah and his ruling Coalition for Democratic Change of what lies ahead for the 2023 Presidential and Legislative elections.

Mr. Alexander Cummings told SKY fm Monday in a live interview the leadership and entire structure of the CPP are happy with results from the senatorial elections. The

Liberian people to the current administration that it may serve only one term if it fails to play smart.

Cummings notes the Weah administration is wrongly handling the governance of the state and that CPP's win from those populated counties begins a smooth sail for opposition to 2023.

He continues that with the entry of those new senators, they too, will not join the collection of 'brown envelopes' from the executive branch of government to blindly pass legislations, disclosing that the CPP is drafting its legislative agenda for its lawmakers both in

He calls on the Weah administration to create jobs for the youth, improve governance, put up serious fight against corruption and double up on the economy to make a comeback or else, he warns, the political future of the CDC is 'doom'. According to him, 99 percent of the Liberian people who were better off during the ascendancy of Mr. Weah to the presidency are catching hell, and the poll results that terribly went against the CDC and Weah is a verdict from the Liberian people that things are falling apart economically.

He notes that very people at the echelon of the Weah administration are enjoying the country's wealth, while the vast majority languishes in poverty and misery.

However, the CPP leader calls on partisans and leadership of the main opposition not to be complacent with the results, instead; they should double their effort ahead of the 2023 presidential race, saying, "No time [for] victory flag yet. This is just the beginning for the several phases that take us to the 2023 race."

Cummings acknowledges that relatively, the electoral process was peaceful on a larger scale, noting that there are few places within some counties that need quick attention, while commending the National Elections Commission and its board of commissioners for a job done so far. But he was quick to add the CPP will give proper projection on the process once final results are announced by the NEC.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



opposition won six of the 15 counties, while the ruling establishment won four, and independent candidates won five counties.

Cummings, also standard bearer of the opposition Alternative National Congress (ANC) a constituent of the CPP says the results of the just-ended elections are strong messages from the

the House of Representatives and the Liberian Senate.

"We are planning to reach out to the independent senators for their support; we need numbers to keep the government feet to the fire. Trust me, nobody hates Weah or his government; the essence of this to keep proactive on the job in the interest of the Liberian people," he explains.

Cont'd from page 7

Management act of 2009, approved by the National Legislature on October 22, 2019, the Comptroller and Accountants General Office within the Department of Fiscal Affairs at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning received full authority through the National Legislature, and with the consent of the Minister of Finance and Development Planning to be a full department.

The section furthered that the Amendment and Restatement PFM Act of 2009 shall govern all matters related to the management of the Public Finance of the Republic of Liberia. This act details the fundamental procedures for the

GOL comptrollers

preparations, adaption, executions and final accounts of the National budget and related matters, including internal control, accounting and auditing of public finance assets, as well as the arrangement for public debt and government guarantees.

According to the Act, it shall be supplemented by enabling regulations promulgated by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning with approval by the President to further specify the procedures in each of the areas mentioned herein which may be amended from time to time.

For his part, Deputy Director for Administration at IAA, Akoi, said the reform which brought about the creation of the IAA made it possible.

Akoi said all auditors employed by government will now be monitored, supervised and deployed on an annual basis by the agency. The Internal Audit Agency, according to him, has a mandate to perform all internal audits related to government functions.

The CSA role in the transition of comptrollers and accountants to the CAG Department was also highlighted.

LICPA President Victor S. Tanwone, speaking on the role of trained professionals in the reform process encouraged comptrollers and accountants to form part of the training program at LICPA, in order to be certified and marketable locally and internationally.

CBL admits

Starts from back page

Management Team to respond to the prevailing liquidity challenge.

The bank assures that in order to be able to exercise full monetary authority, it will need full autonomy over the printing of currency like most

other central banks across the world. The recent amendment of the CBL Act to give a three-year latitude to the Bank to print without frequent Legislative approvals is a positive step in the right direction.

Liberian firm turns

Cont'd from page 7

Liberian market.

He revealed SMH has a dream to expand to all 15 counties of Liberia, indicating that presently, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr. Ahmad Massaquoi, is in Nimba County, talking with citizens to get involved in cashews farming.

CEO Massaquoi said while SMH does not have financial ability now, it is prepared to work with fellow Liberians to grow the crops for themselves and his company will provide technical support, and eventually, buys from local farmers.

Head of Operations Bai also said the company is producing cashews nuts in 10, 50, and 500 grams respectively to meet customers' demand.

Cashews nuts belong to the family of Anacardiaceae, which includes mangoes and pistachios, and are originally native of coastal areas in northeastern Brazil

. They are kidney-shaped seeds and are widely cultivated in tropical climates.

According to SWOT analysis, cashews nuts are processed organically to meet dietary needs of various clients, but the product has post-harvest handling losses from spoil void, poor post-harvest management

practices; poor infrastructural facilities, transportation and unstable power supply that continues to plague the Liberian processing industry.

Bai emphasized a need for promotion to increase local consumption of cashew, including awareness on health benefit of cashew consumption as well as educate farmers on proper post-harvest handling practices, and study tour to producing countries like Vietnam, India and Brazil by officials to study cashew processing industries.

He said cashews are very nutritious and a powerhouse of proteins and essential minerals, including copper, calcium, magnesium, iron, phosphorus, potassium, and zinc.

It also contains vitamins such as vitamin C, vitamin B 1 (thiamin), vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B3 (niacin), vitamin B6, folate, vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol) and vitamin K (phylloquinone); a good source of magnesium, which is vital for the healthy development of bones, muscles, tissues, and body organs as well as helps to maintain healthy blood pressure and nerve function, and sustain immune system, among others. **-Editing by**

LNP gets US\$40,000

Cont'd from page 6

reporting Sexual and Gender - Based Violence cases to the Police.

Sudue recommended to donor partners to add the 'male juveniles' to their nomenclature ('women and girls' to 'women and children') who are also weaker vessels and victims of SGBV in communities.

The Police Chief officially dedicated those structures and urged his WACPS Officers to be confidential in their day-to-day functions and warned

against revictimizing of victims in the Section.

The dedicatory program was also attended by the Deputy Resident Representative for Operations/UNDP, Mr. Mulugeta Abebe, Prosecutor and Child Justice Coordinator/MOJ, Atty. J. Alben Greaves, and Representatives from the Ministry of Gender. Others are CSP. Dixon N. Jlateh, Chief of WACPS, Susie T. Bility and Deputy Inspector General of Police for CSD/Intelligence, Col. Prince Mulbah.

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Carrow Botoe, Auditor Manager at the GAC, presented on the importance of partnership between the

newly created CAG Department and the General Auditing Commission. **-Press Release**

CBL admits liquidity issues in banking system



of this constraint, the CBL has been strategically infusing the L\$4.0 billion through the commercial banks with substantial amount already infused into circulation.

As additional measure, the CBL opines it has been working with all key stakeholders, both in the private and public sectors, to mitigate the liquidity pressure. Specifically, the Bank is currently engaged with commercial banks and mobile money operators (MNOs) to promote the use of mobile money and other electronic forms of payment in addition to withdrawal of cash.

The CBL says it wants to reassure the public that it is doing everything necessary to ensure the availability of both US and Liberian dollar liquidity for the festive season. The Bank has also put into place a Liquidity Monitoring Framework, including the establishment of an Internal Liquidity

The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) admits that it is fully aware of the current liquidity pressure in the banking system, particularly the limited supply of Liberian dollars.

The bank further admits that "the pressure on the Liberian dollar this year is unusual and can be attributed to the increased demand for Liberian dollars overtime,

which has been exacerbated by COVID-19".

In its effort to preempt this seasonal pressure, the CBL notes in 2019 forecast L\$7.5 billion based on its analysis but was authorized to print only L\$4.0 billion. This amount which was brought into the country in July this year, was inadequate to replace the current amount of mutilated banknotes and at the same meet the liquidity demand in the banking system. In spite

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

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