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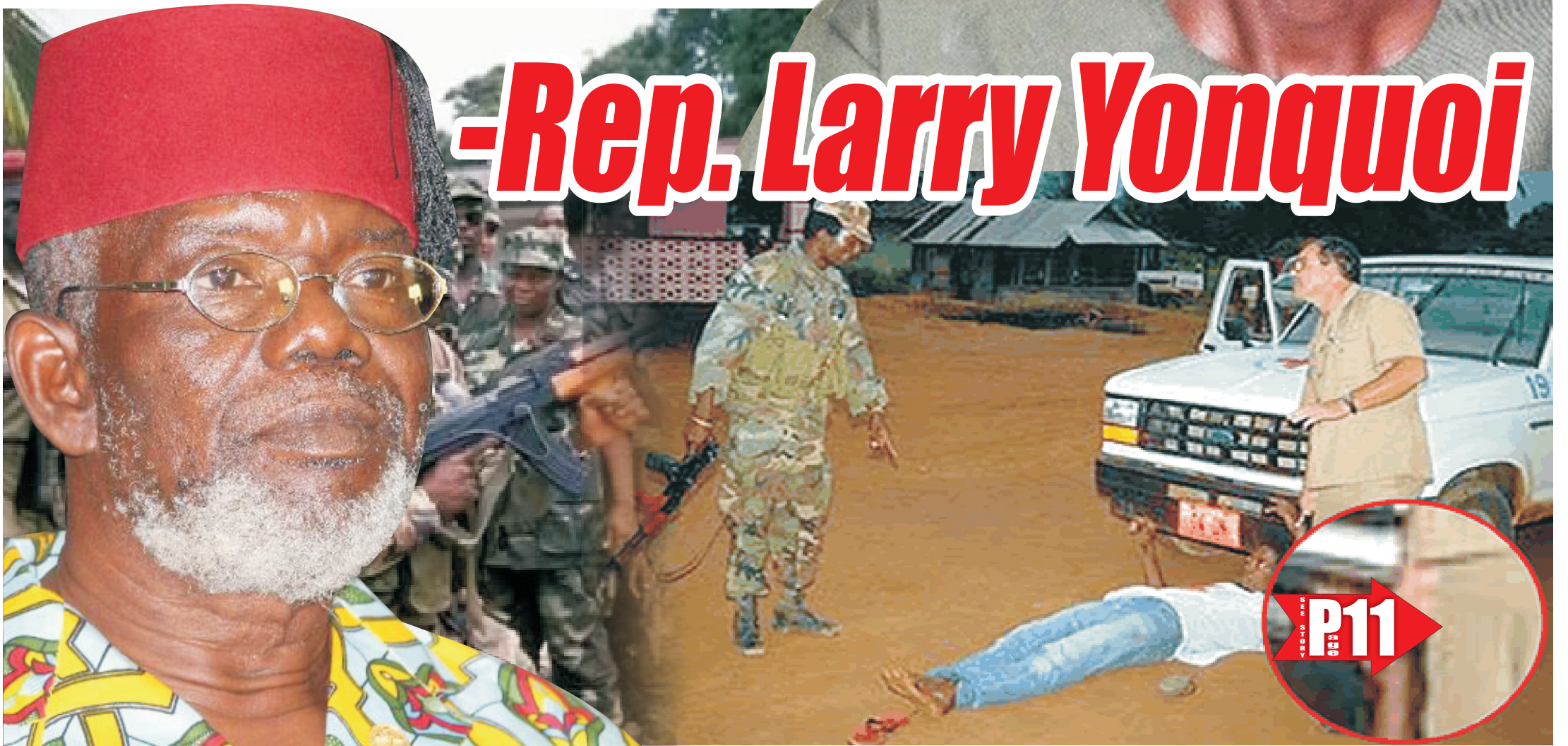
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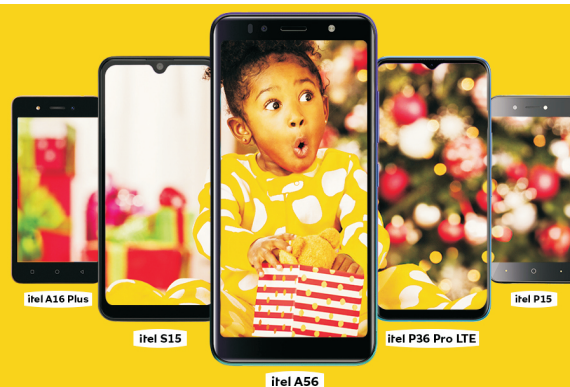
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Continental News

Ships Positioned on Somalia's Coast for US Troops' Drawdown

The Pentagon has sent several naval vessels and a marine expeditionary unit to the coast of Somalia to support an operation repositioning hundreds of U.S. troops to bases elsewhere in East Africa.

The USS Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group and the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit reached Somali waters on Monday. It joined the USS Hershel Woody Williams, an expeditionary sea base that arrived on December 16, according to the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM). The vessels are supporting Operation Octave Quartz, with a mission to relocate U.S. forces in Somalia "while maintaining pressure on violent extremists and supporting partner forces," the Pentagon said in a statement Tuesday.

In November, it was announced that U.S. President Donald Trump planned to draw down U.S.



The Makin Island Amphibious Readiness Group prepares for a replenishment-at-sea

troops in Somalia, part of an effort to pull back forces globally — including in Afghanistan and Iraq — before he leaves office on January 20. The United States has approximately 700 military personnel in Somalia to train Somali troops and conduct counterterrorism

missions.

The Pentagon has sought to reassure Somalis of its continued support in strengthening their forces and degrading the al-Shabab militant group. The Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group consists of three

vessels, including the amphibious assault ship of the same name. Combined with the expeditionary sea base USS Williams, they have nearly 5,000 troops to conduct maritime security operations.

The vessels have the combined "capability to boost firepower and protect and enable the repositioning of U.S. forces," AFRICOM spokesperson Col. Christopher P. Karns told VOA Somali Service in an email Tuesday. "Also, if provoked, (they can) strike al-Shabab terrorists swiftly and with precision."

"For this operation, a full range of military capability is available to project power from sea, land or air," he wrote. "... The ability to bring forth robust capability quickly should reassure partners. Also, al-Shabab should take notice and recognize what awaits those seeking to do harm. U.S. forces are clear-eyed and focused on completing this mission. U.S. Africa Command has an ability to bring forth added capability as situations warrant."

Karns declined to provide details about AFRICOM's strategy or timeline. But he insisted it would continue to develop Somali forces and conduct airstrikes against the militant group. "This decision couldn't have come at a worse time. Its impact will directly affect the conduct of offensive operations," said Samira Gaid, a national security expert in the Horn of Africa who was senior security adviser to former Somali Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire.

Even with the presence of U.S. forces and more than 20,000 African Union soldiers, al-Shabab militants have posed a persistent threat to Somalia and neighboring countries. On December 18 in the central Somalia town of Galkayo, a suicide bomber killed 21 people, including the commander of U.S.-trained forces in the town and his predecessor. That same day, militants abducted a local official in Kenya's northeastern region bordering Somalia. His severed head was found Monday. VOA

Russia sends 300 military instructors to Central African Republic

Russia has sent an additional 300 military instructors to the Central African Republic (CAR) to deal with what its foreign ministry calls a "sharp degradation of security".

It said the CAR government, which is threatened by rebel groups ahead of Sunday's presidential election, had asked for help. Former President François Bozizé denies plotting a coup.

UN peacekeepers have

said the rebel advance has been halted.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov said the Russian military was not involved in fighting in the CAR and that the military instructors were "not the army nor the special forces".

But a CAR government spokesman, quoted by AFP news agency, said Russia had sent "several hundred soldiers and heavy weapons" to support the government.

The spokesman, Ange Maxime Kazagui, said the

Russian forces had been invited as part of bilateral agreements, AFP reports.

Private Russian security guards have been working in CAR providing security for the government and helping safeguard key economic assets. Rwanda, which has troops serving in the UN mission in CAR, has also announced it is bolstering their numbers in support of the government.

The newly deployed forces will have "different rules of engagement which will enable them to protect our forces from being attacked, and protect civilians", Rwandan President Paul Kagame said.

At least 750 Rwandan soldiers and police officers have been operating under the UN peacekeeping force Minusca. Minusca forces have also been deployed beyond the capital, Bangui, "to block armed elements", AFP quoted a UN spokesman as saying.

CAR President Faustin Archange Touadéra has insisted Sunday's election will go ahead, saying the presence of the army and UN peacekeepers means people have nothing to fear.

UN retakes CAR town from rebels



The United Nations says the town of Bambari in the Central African Republic (CAR) has been retaken from rebels who seized it on Tuesday.

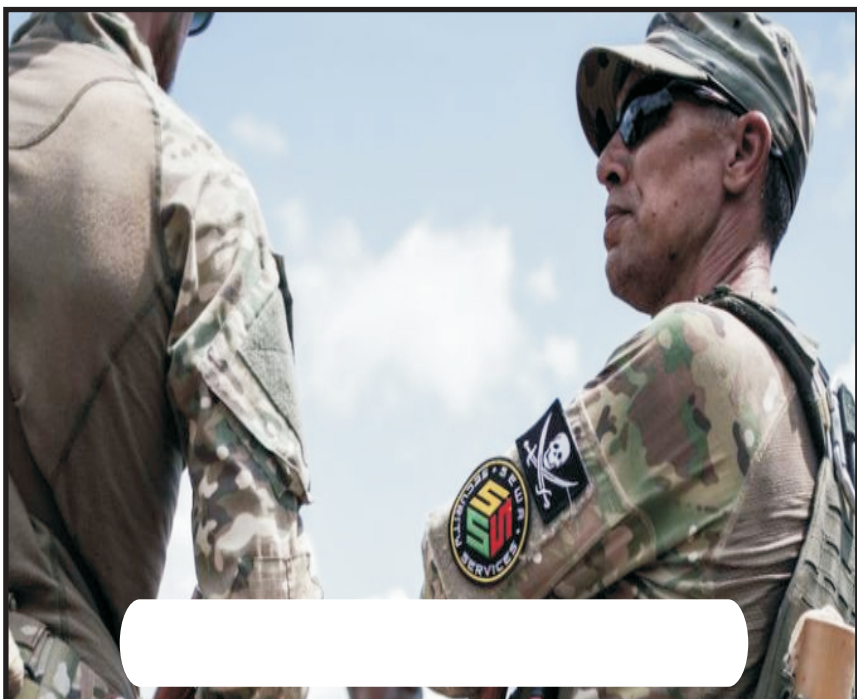
A spokesperson said UN peacekeepers and national security forces were in control, having pushed the militants back into the bush.

He said civilians who had fled the fighting were starting to return.

The CAR is due to hold

elections on Sunday. The government has accused the former president, François Bozizé, of joining up with armed groups in an attempt to stage a coup - something he has denied.

Russia and Rwanda have sent hundreds of additional troops to bolster the government, as the rebels try to advance towards the capital Bangui. Watch: Why is Russia cosying up to the CAR? 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.

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COMMENTARY

By Stephen S. Roach

The Pandemic's Long Economic Shadow

While mass vaccination points to an end to the COVID-19 pandemic in the next year or so, it does not provide immunity against longer-term economic damage. And research on the aftermath of previous pandemics suggests that the impact on supply and demand is likely to be far-reaching and profound.

NEW HAVEN - The outlook for economic and financial markets hinges on the interplay between two cycles - the COVID-19 cycle and the business cycle. Notwithstanding the true miracles of modern science that we are now witnessing, the post-pandemic economy is in need of more than just a vaccine. Extraordinary damage was done by last spring's lockdown. Now, a second and more horrific wave of the coronavirus is at hand - not dissimilar to the course of the 1918-20 influenza outbreak.

In the United States, the adverse economic repercussions are evident in mounting jobless claims in early December and a sharp decline in retail sales in November. With partial lockdowns now in place in about three-quarters of US states, a decline in economic activity in early 2021 seems likely.

The history of the US business cycle warned us of the possibility of a double dip. Eight of the last 11 recessions featured just such a pattern. Yet financial markets still made a big bet on a V-shaped recovery. Investors were lulled into a false sense of complacency by reading too much into the dead-count bounce of a 33% annualized surge in real GDP in the third quarter, as initial lockdowns were lifted. But reopening after a sudden stop hardly qualifies as a self-sustaining economic recovery. It is more like a fatigued swimmer gasping for air after a deep dive.

The source of the coming economic relapse hardly comes as a surprise. It is the echo effect of the first wave of COVID-19. Despite extraordinary breakthroughs in vaccines, therapeutics, and treatment protocols, the second wave is far worse than the first in terms of infection, hospitalization, and death rates. While the new restrictions on economic activity are not as tight as those last April, they are already having an adverse impact on aggregate economic activity. The double dip of early 2021 will be a painful reminder of the lingering vulnerability of the US business cycle in the aftermath of a major recessionary shock.

The longer-term consequences of the COVID-19 cycle are likely to be more severe. While mass vaccination points to an end to the pandemic itself (one hopes by late 2021), it does not provide immunity against lasting economic damage. Recent research on the impact of 19 major pandemics dating back to the fourteenth century - each with death counts in excess of 100,000 - highlights the long shadow of the economic carnage. Real rates of return on "safe" European assets - a measure of the interplay between aggregate supply and demand - were found to be depressed for several decades following these earlier horrific outbreaks.

The long shadow of the COVID-19 cycle looms as well. Lost in the celebration of an imminent V-shaped economic recovery have been many hints of lasting damage. In the US, employment is still 9.8 million jobs below its pre-pandemic peak, and consumer expenditures on services - restrained by persistent and understandable fears of face-to-face interaction - have recouped only 66% of the plunge that occurred during the March-April lockdown.

Moreover, a second wave of partial lockdowns will only reinforce dislocations that are now painfully evident in most major US cities, including excess office and public-transit capacity, along with the devastation of hospitality, entertainment, and retail businesses. The permanent destruction to aggregate supply and demand, in conjunction with fundamental shifts in behavioral norms, aligns the long-shadow contour of the COVID-19 cycle with comparable patterns in the aftermath of earlier major pandemics.

The interplay between the short-term dynamics of the US business cycle and the longer-term pattern of the COVID-19 cycle bears critically on the current policy debate. Yet hope is widespread that this time is different - that creative new policy strategies can offer new solutions to old economic problems.

That is certainly true of so-called Modern Monetary Theory, which supposedly gives fiscal authorities open-ended license to binge on debt. But MMT is neither modern nor a theory. What is new is something far more basic: the supposed death of inflation. As long as inflation remains subdued, goes the argument, then both monetary and fiscal authorities can ignore the risks of higher borrowing costs and work in tandem in providing relief for a pandemic-stricken real economy.

But nothing in economics is forever - not even the death of inflation. Here is where it gets especially tricky.

US inflation is hardly immune to further dollar depreciation, which seems increasingly likely, given a sharp deterioration in the US current-account deficit, the strengthening of the euro, and the weak-dollar bias of a Federal Reserve that remains wedded to zero-interest rates. Supply-chain disruptions - reversing the powerful disinflationary forces of globalization - should also boost underlying inflation. And, of course, there are painful memories of policy mistakes made in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when overly accommodative monetary policy set the stage for a wrenching and lasting acceleration of inflation. How different is today's seemingly enlightened penchant for open-ended quantitative easing?

The confluence of the pandemic cycle and the business cycle - the second wave of COVID-19 and a double-dip in the US economy - has left US policymakers with little choice but to approve another relief package, this time for \$900 billion. Never mind, argues MMT, if that puts US federal debt on the cusp of exceeding the previous record of 108% of GDP, reached in 1946, in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

Yet back then, the mounting debt overhang was finessed by a reflationary surge in GDP, which caused the debt-to-GDP ratio to plummet to 47% by 1957. "All" it took was a 6.4% average consumer inflation rate from 1946 to 1951. Maybe that is all it will take this time as well. But what might that spell for interest rates, debt service, and incredibly frothy financial markets? Don't look to MMT for an easy answer.

O-PED

By Mark Leonard

Five Cheers for 2021

After a year of death, despair, and deep uncertainty, there are glimmers of light on the horizon. Not only is responsible leadership returning to the United States, but there is new momentum behind efforts to address some of the biggest and most urgent challenges of our time.

LONDON - A lot of chickens came home to roost this year. The COVID-19 pandemic was not some random thunderbolt from out of the blue, but rather a man-made “natural” disaster, holding up a mirror to so many of our bad habits and dangerous - indeed, lethal - practices.

After all, the coronavirus’s transmission from bats to humans was a product of mass urbanization and destructive encroachment on natural habitats, and its rapid spread was a result of over-industrialization, frenetic trade, and contemporary travel habits. Likewise, the world’s inability to come together to contain the crisis reflects the extent to which governance capacity lags behind hyper-globalization.

Many of these failings were evident before the virus hit, with people in many countries embracing nationalist and populist leaders who promised decisive action in a world that seemed out of control. But though this has been a difficult year, there are at least five reasons to be cheerful about 2021.

The first and most obvious reason is US President Donald Trump’s defeat. It is a relief to be able to wake up in the morning without worrying about what the world’s most powerful person said on Twitter while you were sleeping. The United States will soon be back in capable hands. In addition to making America more predictable and responsible, President-elect Joe Biden’s victory holds important implications for democracies around the world.

Europe’s own Trumpians - Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Poland’s deputy prime minister and de facto ruler, Jaroslaw Kaczynski - have already been orphaned by Trump’s political demise. As Europeans look ahead to their own elections - in the Netherlands and Germany in 2021, and in France in 2022 - populist parties will have less claim to be channeling the tide of history. In the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Boris Johnson - a consummate political weathervane - is already shifting with the new political winds. Following Trump’s loss, he finally fired his populist Brexit guru, Dominic Cummings, and signaled that he would be crafting a new identity for the post-Trump world.

The second reason to be cheerful is that COVID-19 vaccines are on the way. This will allow for a gradual return to normality, and the way they were developed should reaffirm our support for international cooperation. It was nothing if not inspiring to see the first vaccine come from BioNTech, a European Union-funded company led by two German scientists of Turkish descent. Given justifiable concerns about “vaccine nationalism,” it is important that the people have seen that internationalism, not parochialism, is the path out of this and other global crises.

That brings me to the third reason for optimism: encouraging news on the climate front. As many commentators have noted, climate change could lead to an even bigger crisis than COVID-19. But following a massive 7% decline in greenhouse-gas emissions this year, we at least know what is possible. And now that governments have proved capable of spending whatever it takes in an emergency, they will face growing pressure to invest in the technologies needed for a rapid transition to clean energy.

The fourth cause for cheer is the return of faith in government. COVID-19 has reminded everyone just how valuable competent public administration can be. It also has brought new attention to the need for redistribution. After the 2008 financial crisis, many hoped that the prevailing neoliberal orthodoxy would give way to social democracy and greater political control over the economy. Instead, we got bank bailouts and other glaring examples of “socialism for the rich and capitalism for the poor.”

After a decade of painful austerity and the political upheavals it caused, governments are finally taking more responsibility for public welfare. Mainstream parties, including the Democrats in the US, are pushing policies to support workers and the middle class, offering hope that structural inequality, which leaves many feeling “left behind” (and thus open to populist appeals), will finally be addressed.

That brings us to the last reason to be cheerful. The pandemic has triggered a reconsideration of the global system. In place of unregulated hyper-globalization, many leading powers are looking for ways to reconcile the appetite for cheap goods, advanced technologies, and other benefits of trade with greater control over domestic affairs. Whether it is talk of “decoupling” in the US, “dual circulation” in China, or “strategic autonomy” in Europe, long-overdue policy debates are now underway.

Here, I find the European conversation particularly heartening, since it is focused on channeling the desire for more control in ways that preclude self-defeating nationalism. The EU’s quest for sovereignty spans at least five areas (economic and financial issues, public health, digitalization, climate policy, and security), and Europeans have been making good progress in all of them. The creation of a €750 billion (\$915 billion) recovery fund shows that countries like Germany are willing to cross their traditional red lines in the interest of solidarity.

Of course, it is too early to declare victory in any of our current battles. Biden will struggle to govern a polarized country in the face of Republican resistance. Delivering vaccines to the entire world will be an enormous logistical challenge. Competing great powers could yet derail the climate agenda in the lead-up to the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow in November. The threat of recession and new debt crises could exacerbate inequality, auguring a return to more toxic politics. The revival of the European dream will depend on the outcome of highly contested national elections.

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OPINION

By William Germano
& Kit Nicholls

The Magic of the Syllabus

Using the pandemic to reimagine the goals of teaching might be the unexpected upside of a miserable situation. Today’s university environment may also reveal something essential that had previously been hidden - namely, the mechanism by which learning happens, and the need for imaginative and inspiring pedagogy.

NEW YORK - During the 2007-08 financial crisis, many experienced what literary scholars call a “crisis of representation.” Globally, more than \$15 trillion seemed to evaporate, and people wondered, “Wait a second, what is money? How could all of this value just disappear? If this thing that represented that other thing can vanish, was there ever anything there in the first place?”

Those of us who teach at universities are currently going through something similar because of COVID-19. Losing most of the physical markers of academic life - no classrooms or offices, and students instead beamed into our homes via Zoom - has forced us to question what a university is and what higher education means.

In 2020, the answer is not obvious - and not only because the pandemic-induced economic crisis will probably cause a host of small colleges, especially in the United States, to vanish like so much money. Virtual teaching, like online business, socializing, or prayer, is nothing like the real thing. Subtract dorm life, parties, physical classrooms, and office hours in actual offices from the higher-education experience, and what remains is quite sterile.

But this pared-down environment may also be revealing something essential that had been hidden by all the climbing walls, cafeterias, and culture wars - namely, the mechanism by which learning happens. What should students be able to do at the end of the course that they can’t do at the beginning? What happens when we ask that question? By building their courses backwards in this way, professors could then add the needed skills in stages. This simple idea is not exactly new, but it is not at the center of current higher-education debates.

Partly because faculty have not organized themselves to answer the essential question of what and how universities teach, that task has fallen increasingly to administrators responsible for “assessment.” A set of “measurable objectives” is set in various planning and accreditation documents, and “student outcomes” are standardized at the institutional level. Many professors fear that these administrative structures and strictures are gaining greater purchase during the pandemic. Online courses can be monitored and recorded, and may come to resemble algorithms rather than learning communities.

But long before college presidents had MBAs and academic human resources managers had more job security than professors, US higher education had its own planning document: the humble course syllabus.

Many professors worry that the syllabus has itself fallen prey to too many bureaucratic requirements, including quasi-legal disclaimers about academic honesty, accommodations for special learning needs, and grievance policies. Yet, at its heart, the syllabus is a piece of writing that a teacher crafts in order to imagine a classroom community into being.

That is not the traditional view, of course. Back in the mid-twentieth century, the syllabus was mostly a list of the knowledge a professor would deliver to students. But today, the syllabus is an opportunity to plot a story in which the students - not teachers - are the protagonists. Devising one gives any teacher the chance to do what good writers do, and engage empathetically with others’ experiences. That way, teachers can create classes that take students through difficulty and change to somewhere new.

We are not advocating making every class somehow “vocational,” much less sentimentalizing the hard work of learning. Rather, teachers should plan their courses backwards by developing assignments - readings, experiments, and projects - in a progression so that students learn how as much as what, week by week, even class by class.

Technology of all kinds can be critical, and especially now, when almost all of us are teaching on screen. But it is, and must be, a tool, not a proxy. No classroom teacher ever thought that the blackboard or chalk was doing the teaching, yet today we risk imagining that our sophisticated technology can make up for the lack of a robust, practical pedagogy. Professors who are asking how tech can improve their teaching are asking the wrong question.

Using the pandemic to reimagine the goals of teaching might be the unexpected upside of a miserable situation. Teachers can find within this crisis the opportunity to rethink the precious classroom dynamic. After all, teaching students how to learn, and to learn how to do things themselves beyond the classroom, is education’s necessary gift to society.

Giving that gift, and making sure it is received, will require a lot of good writing - not the bureaucratic or disposable kind, but something more imaginative. That may not sound like the syllabus you remember from your own university days, but it is what we need now.

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Gbarpolu: Paramount Chief not held accountable for election violence and threats

By D. Solomon Tayblah (LMD Fellow)

Uncertainty and anxiety looms in Gbarpolu County over the recently held Special Senatorial Election on December 8, which remain unconcluded as of December 22.

The elections in Gbarpolu hang in uncertainty after a local paramount chief in Normondatonu, Chief McGillWleh, confiscated the ballot boxes on the morning on the elections, leaving voters stranded. His justification was that he believed citizens from Sierra

KannehBotoe and locals in Normondatonu clashed in multiple acts of violence that targeted NEC staff as well.

Following renewed violence on December 14, town residents and supporters of KannehBotoe took refuge in the bush when the local town chiefs brought out the “country devil,” also known as the chief of the Poro secret society.

Security forces deployed and assured people to

and said, Ma Bendu, I want you to escort me just to go over there to be around me. And who am I to say no, as [leader] for the women. That’s how I followed them, and we came [here]. When we came, the next morning we slept in Kongbor and passed went to the place where they [were] supposed to have the election. We took some food with two motorbikes and went. But when we got there, this is my first time to see this kind of thing. The security that was present told the children to offload the motorbike and put the food down. We told him that we brought some food for our people who were coming from far off for the election. So he said we were not allowed. So I took my ID card and said I am the head of the women, I want to enter



Alleged Sierra Leonean citizens with voter's registration cards for Liberian elections. Photo taken on Dec. 15, 2020 in Nomodatanau town, Kongba District, Gbarpolu county, Liberia. Photo Credit: Solomon By D. Solomon Tayblah

Leone planned to cross the border and vote in Liberian elections, an information that has not been proved to be real.

Law enforcement arrested seven, however, the Paramount Chief remains untouched.

The National Elections Commission (NEC) tried to organize a rerun on December 15, but that plan was aborted following more violence on December 14, during which supporters of Independent candidate,

return to their home while the NEC takes time to set up a new date for the election rerun.

KannehBotoe, who ran as Independent, is opposed by ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) Candidate, incumbent Representative Alfred G. Koiwood who is seeking to transition into the Senate.

Preliminary results released by the NEC put Kanneh, a businesswoman trading dried meat goods, in the lead with a total of 4,767 votes, representing 25.79% of the total valid votes, followed by Rep. Alfred GayflorKoiwood with 4,281 votes, representing 23.16%.

Women leaders and campaigners have condemned what they see as a “hijack” of the poll by local chiefs because they did not agree that the voting results are not in favor of the ruling party candidate.

In fact, based on official NEC data, ruling party candidates have performed extremely poorly with the voters, with just 4 seats confirmed out of the 15 that were in play. The majority of the seats were won by the CPP with 6 seats out of 15.

BenduJah, president of Rural Women of Gbarpolu, said the current state of tension and violence is because the traditional leaders are bent on denying a woman access to leadership positions.

Jah provided her own independent account of recent clashes in Gbarpolu as they tried to support independent candidate, BotoeKanneh.

there to speak to other people. So he said for that I was not even entering. We were taking it to be fun. The people kept us in the sun from 2 to 3pm without water to drink. Others wanted to force it to go, but I told them no; we are here for peace, wait the people will allow us in.”

They were never allowed into the town; instead, country devil chased them into the bushes, Jah said.

Joint security forces arrested seven persons, who were allegedly involved in electoral violence in Normondietono on December 15, 2020 and dispatched them to Monrovia for investigation. However, Paramount Chief McGillWleh, who seized the ballot boxes and disrupted the poll remains free.



Bendu Jah, Rural Women Gbarpolu President



Botoe Kanneh, Senatorial Candidate, Gbarpolu Co.

“I was in Monrovia when Madam Kanneh called me

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

NEC Sinoe County Office Set on Fire

By Patrick T. Wiah
(LMD Fellow)

Unknown, unidentified individuals set fire to the National Elections Commission (NEC) office in Sinoe County on December 15, following the release of the results for the Special Senatorial Elections (SSE).

sheets for polling staffs, and others.

Assistant Magistrate Shannon stated that a complaint was filed with the authorities to initiate an investigation.

"You know, recently the National Elections Commission office here in Sinoe County released its preliminary results

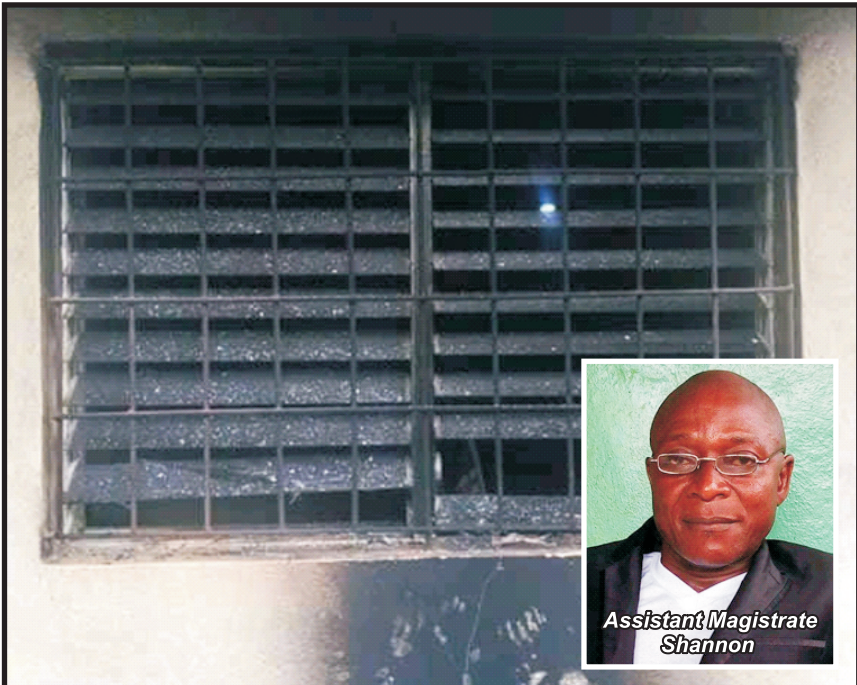
release of the results from district 2, one of the defeated candidates, Othello Doe Nagbe, complained to the NEC about irregularities that he allegedly observed during the by-election, referring to the late arrival of ballot boxes at precinct centers in Kunwiah, Nanakru, and Settakru.

According to the NEC staff, Othello Doe Nagbe allegedly also complainant about issues with NEC workers denying his observers complaint sheet, and that this action sparked serious tension at some polling places in the county.

The burning of the Assistant Magistrate office has left many residents, and especially the NEC staff, outraged, urging the police to speedily conduct an investigation into the matter.

Angeline Nimely, an NEC Presiding Officer (PO) at the Butaw Blah polling center was shaken by the fire event: "We hope the police will act swiftly and have those involved arrested." Another NEC staff, JerreylineBoe who participated in the just ended electoral process at the Saywon Town Public School said that the arson event should not be taken lightly by authorities.

Police Commander of the Sinoe County, DouwueGoldoe, assured the public that the police is dedicated to finding out the truth and bringing the



Section of the burned NEC office in Sinoe County, which destroyed important documents. Officials opened an investigation.

The fire seems to have been started around the office of the Assistant Magistrate, Nelson A. Shannon, and reportedly damaged several essential documents, including financial records, contract

on the conduct of the elections that announced Sampson Q. Wiah as winner for the Representatives by-election and Cllr. Augustine S. Chea as winner for the senate seat."

Magistrate Shannon explained that following the

Gateway Medical Clinic opens in Slipway Community

By Emmanuel Mondaye

A private medical institution known as Gateway Medical Clinic has been opened in Slipway Community to solve all the health problems of sick Liberians and other residents in Montserrado County Electoral District #8.

The NewDawn has been informed by the management of the institution that the clinic provides a 24 - hour service, including holidays for patients.

A document from the institution discloses that the clinic is engaged in providing Emergency Room and Ambulance Services Management; Medical and Surgical Management; Antenatal Care and Delivery; Postnatal Care for mother and infants including vaccination and men and women infertility instigation treatment.

Speaking to this paper, the happy residents including Ma

Howa Coleman, FatumataDorley and Charles Duncan explained that inhabitants of the area were compelled to transfer their sick patients including children to other health centers in Monrovia due to the absence of a modern health clinic to resolve critical medical problems faced by their patients.

For his part, a medical student at the United Methodist University in Monrovia Josiah Hens believes that the presence of the Gateway Medical Clinic will save the inhabitants of Slipway and other adjacent communities the continuous embarrassment in accessing a modern medical clinic.

He adds that with the presence of the Gateway Medical Clinic in the area, the emergency cases would be minimized.

He encourages the management of the clinic to also consider opening branches in other parts of the country.

Hens also advises inhabitants of Slipway Community to take

advantage of the medical services being rendered to them by ensuring that they visit the clinic to know the status even if they are not feeling sick.

He recalls that several persons had reportedly died in the community before reaching a health center in previous years.

The clinic is said to have professional and highly qualified medical staff including a doctor who caters to specialized ultrasonography, cancers, tumors investigation and treatment.

Additionally, it is said to have quality laboratory investigations; dispensary and pharmacy of quality drugs and medicines; and health preventive education and awareness.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

LCP honors ECOWAS Ambassador Ajisomo

The Liberia Crusaders for Peace (LCP) has honored the outgoing Special Representative of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission in Liberia for partnering and supporting peace interventions efforts and other social justice, including women led programs in the country.

The Executive Director of LCP, Cultural Ambassador JuliEndee, said relationship with ECOWAS Ambassador BabatundeOlanrewajuAjisomo has grown stronger especially, from "the passionate way we both shared our views and

Ambassador Endee stressed that the ECOWAS Commission has contributed to Liberia greatly to ensuring peace and stability here.

She noted that ECOWAS' tremendous sacrifices here led Liberia to successfully conducted free and fair electoral processes which led to the peaceful transfer of power for the first time since 1944.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Ajisomo expressed delight and gratitude to LCP and Ambassador Endee for the honor and promised to promote the cultural and artistic works of Liberia through the LCP.

He described Ambassador Endee as a gift to West Africa to



perspectives on peace, security and the rule of law."

Ambassador Endee made the statement Tuesday at a farewell program held at the LCP's Head Office in Monrovia for Ambassador Ajisomo, as he ends his assignment in Liberia after seven years.

She acknowledged the remarkable contributions and services Ambassador Ajisomo has made to Liberia and its people over the years.

"As an institution, we want to personally thank you for the longstanding [relationship] with the LCP and the support to Liberia's peace and development processes", she added.

enhance the beauty of tradition and culture in the region.

He suggested a need to promote and develop Liberian culture through tourism spearheaded by the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism which could create more jobs and generate some revenues for government.

Ambassador Ajisomo emphasized that Liberians should continue to maintain and sustain peace and stability of the country and promote developmental drive, noting that ECOWAS was mandated not just to maintain peace, but also to ensure the development of Liberia. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Liberians warned against dumping garbage at Palm Grove Cemetery

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Social worker Mr. Jefferson H.B. Carter has expressed dismay over the continuous dumping of waste and feces at the Palm Grove Cemetery on Center Street by some Liberians, noting that this is creating grave health implications for people using

potentially poses to nearby residents.

The Palm Grove Cemetery was officially declared closed to the public by former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf during her second-term in office.

Raising awareness about the prevailing health implications associated with the presence of garbage and feces at the

fallen compatriots as a dumpsite.

The Liberian social worker calls on the relevant institutions including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) to act now by removing the garbage dumped at the cemetery.

He also admonishes the two government institutions to ensure that the bush which has overtaken the cemetery be brushed continuously as a means of giving the area a face-lift during the festive seasons.

He further calls for the arrest and prosecution of anyone involved in the dumping of waste at the cemetery.

Mr. Carter particularly requests the Monrovia City Corporation to relocate the waste management site from Center Street to a suitable area.

As the situation stands, flies, roaches and rats leave the dumpsite and make their way into nearby homes for their. This is highly a health risk because cooked street food sellers near the cemetery are having a challenging moment in combating these dangerous insects as their customers battle to contain the flies while eating. Liberia remains challenged in terms of good hygiene practice.



that route and also giving the facility a bad image.

Some unscrupulous individuals have selected the national cemetery which has been shut down by the government for their garbage and feces, ignoring the serious health problems it

cemetery, Mr. Carter warns that if the situation is not controlled, many persons stand the risk of developing health problems.

Mr. Carter, a student of the University of Liberia (UL) notes that it is unfortunate and shameful for Liberians to use the grave site of their fellow

LNBA condemns acts of torture & electoral violence in Gbarpolu

The Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) strongly condemns the acts of torture and electoral violence that were recently perpetrated in Gbarpolu County during the December 8, 2020 midterm senatorial elections in that county. The LNBA especially condemns, in no uncertain terms, the public manhandling and torturing of two Liberian lawyers, Cllr. BoakaiKanneh and Atty. Aloysius Toe by residents who reportedly acted on the orders of a local paramount chief and state security personnel in the area. LNBA calls on Government to bring to justice those responsible for these reprehensible acts.

The LNBA says that it is strange, illegal and unacceptable for a local official to interfere with and to attempt to disrupt an electioneering process which



purely involves the exercise of the democratic rights guaranteed under Chapter Three of the 1986 constitution of Liberia and under international human rights

instruments to which Liberia is a state party. The LNBA says that while it respects rights of the people to associate in any manner, form or shape, including being members of

NaFAA collects final fees for 2020

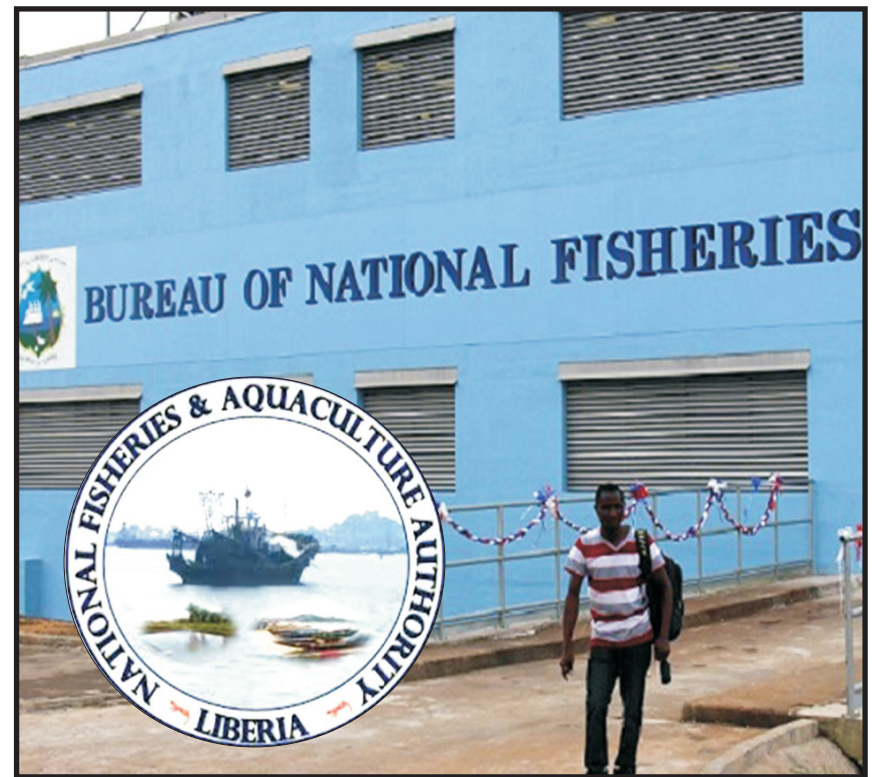
A joint fisheries enforcement and compliance team has begun touring fishing communities across Liberia to collect remaining 2020 license fees and create awareness for 2021 fishing license fees.

According to a press release, the fisheries enforcement and compliance

Grand Kru and Maryland counties with several teams.

Currently, a southeast team is touring fishing communities in Grand Bassa County, following its initial tour of fishing communities through Marshall City Margibi County.

Speaking upon arrival of the team on the beaches of little



team comprising NaFAA, the Liberia National Coast Guard, Liberia Immigration Services, and the Liberia National Police is touring coastal beaches and also conducting sea patrols.

The tour is taking place in all nine coastal counties namely; Montserrado, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, Grand Bassa, Rivercess, Sinoe,

Bassa Tuesday, December 23, 2020, the Deputy Director General for Technical Services William Y. Boeh urged local fishermen to cooperate with the government by paying their 2020 fishing license fees.

Mr. Boeh, who was accompanied by some

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Season Bonanza

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the poro, it very strongly denounces, deprecates and condemns the use of any authority or power available to any organization, including the poro to abuse the rights of other citizens and to violate the Penal Law of Liberia as was recently done in Gbarpolu County of Gbarpolu County.

The LNBA further maintains that the account of the ordeal as revealed by Cllr. BoakaiKanneh, a citizen of Gbarpolu and Atty. Toe who is an official of the party whose

candidate, GbotoKanneh, was prevented from entering Norman Town on the date the elections were rescheduled to take place in Norman Town on December 15, 2020, is replete with graphic images of torture, incarceration and abuse of power at the hands of a local paramount chief, who ordered the country devil to appear and obstruct the scheduled re-run of the election in Norman Town, Gbarpolu County, given that the poro tradition prohibits men

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Français

Le commerce intra-africain, essentiel pour amortir les effets des tensions commerciales et des chocs extérieurs

Le commerce mondial devrait se contracter de 9,2 % en 2020, après une baisse de 2,8 % en 2019.

- La part de l'Afrique du commerce mondial est retombée à 2,7 % en 2019, à comparer aux 4 % enregistrés dans les années 1970.

- Le commerce transfrontalier informel (CTI), qui est une composante essentielle du commerce intra-africain, est d'une composition très diverse.

- Le Rapport sur le commerce en Afrique estime qu'en Afrique australe, le CTI est très élevé et pourrait représenter 80 % de la valeur du commerce officiel dans certains pays.

- L'Afrique du Sud est le pays qui a le plus contribué au commerce intra-africain en 2019, avec 23 % des échanges. Le plus grand bond est venu de la RD Congo, qui est

par les guerres commerciales et la hausse des droits de douane qui ont entraîné un fort ralentissement du commerce mondial. Cette situation a été aggravée par le Covid-19, et de ce fait, après une baisse de 2,8 % l'an dernier, le commerce mondial devrait se contracter de 9,2 % en 2020.

Le Rapport annuel sur le commerce en Afrique propose une étude approfondie du commerce transfrontalier informel (CTI). C'est la première fois que l'on tente de mesurer de manière détaillée le volume et la composition du commerce informel. Malgré les variations régionales, le rapport souligne l'importance du CTI pour la création d'emplois et de revenus, estimant qu'il apporte une source de revenus à environ 43 % de la population africaine et qu'il est dominé par les femmes. En Afrique australe (le

suppression des obstacles techniques et non tarifaires au commerce, ainsi que la simplification des processus, l'amélioration de l'accès aux financements et la création de systèmes de paiements numérisés réduisant les risques permettront aux commerçants de se développer et de progresser dans la chaîne de valeur. Dans le commerce transfrontalier informel, les transactions s'effectuent uniquement en espèces.

Le rapport contient de nombreuses recommandations qui deviendront encore plus pertinentes avec le lancement de la Zone de libre-échange continentale africaine (ZLECA). Afreximbank, pour sa part, met en place son Système panafricain de paiements et de règlements (PAPSS) pour



devenue le deuxième acteur du commerce intra-africain, totalisant 10,4 % du total des échanges. Le Nigeria s'est classé au troisième rang, avec 7 %.

- Le continent demeure trop dépendant des exportations de matières premières, le pétrole et le gaz représentant plus de 37 % des exportations totales.

- L'indice des produits de base d'Afreximbank a décliné de 20 % depuis l'an dernier, mais affiche une reprise en forme de V depuis le creux du mois d'avril.

LE CAIRE, Égypte, Le 16 Décembre, 2020, -/African Media Agency (AMA)/- Afreximbank a publié hier son Rapport annuel sur le commerce en Afrique (ATR). Ce rapport passe en revue l'évolution commerciale et économique en Afrique, lors d'une année 2019 dominée

bloc de la SADC), les femmes représentent environ 70 % du commerce transfrontalier informel. En Afrique de l'Ouest, les produits alimentaires et agricoles constituent 30 % du commerce intra-régional.

Commentant le rapport, Prof. Benedict Oramah, Président d'Afreximbank [photo], a précisé : "Même si le commerce transfrontalier informel représente une part importante des achats intérieurs et est devenu une source majeure de revenus permettant de maintenir les niveaux de consommation des ménages, sa contribution au PIB n'est guère reconnue".

En s'appuyant sur des données factuelles pour mesurer le CTI, le rapport met en évidence les transformations à apporter pour développer le commerce intra-africain et faire passer le CTI dans le secteur formel. Par exemple, la

permettre aux acheteurs et aux vendeurs d'effectuer des transactions en monnaie locale, tout en réduisant le risque associé aux transactions en espèces.

Commerce mondial
Entre janvier et août 2020, le commerce de marchandises de l'Afrique s'est contracté de 12 % par rapport à la même période de l'an dernier, les mois d'avril et de mai ayant affiché les plus forts reculs. Les perspectives pour 2021 sont bonnes : le commerce de l'Afrique devrait connaître un rebond important, dans le sillage de la reprise de l'activité économique mondiale et l'augmentation de la demande en matière d'exportations africaines.

La part des exportations africaines à destination de l'Asie a augmenté pour atteindre 30,79 % en 2019,

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 Nomodatonau, 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 Nomodatonau, 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'État, 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 !

Français

Le commerce intra-africain,

tandis que la part de l'Union européenne est tombée à 24,6 %. La Chine et l'Inde ont été les principaux moteurs de l'essor des échanges commerciaux entre l'Afrique et l'Asie, ces deux pays ayant absorbé 27 % des exportations totales de marchandises de l'Afrique en 2019.

On observe une tendance similaire dans la provenance des importations des pays africains. Même si l'UE a toujours constitué la principale source, sa part dans les importations africaines n'a cessé de diminuer et l'Asie rivalise aujourd'hui avec l'UE.

Commerce intra-africain

La valeur du commerce intra-africain total a diminué de 5,2 % en 2019, réduisant sa part dans le commerce africain, qui est passée d'environ 15 % en 2018 à 14,4 % en 2019.

L'Afrique du Sud est le pays qui contribue le plus au commerce intra-africain, avec 23,1 % du total des échanges commerciaux intra-africains en 2019. La

République démocratique du Congo (RDC) a consolidé sa position : avec une part de 10,4 % des échanges commerciaux intra-africains, elle est devenue le deuxième acteur du commerce intra-africain en 2019. Malgré une baisse de 4,7 % des échanges en valeur, la part du Nigeria est restée constante à environ 7 %, plaçant ce pays au troisième rang du commerce intra-africain.

Matières premières

Le poids des matières premières dans la valeur des exportations africaines est très élevé. Le pétrole et le gaz, malgré une baisse significative des cours, représentaient encore 37 % du total des exportations africaines en 2019. Afreximbank, à travers son AfricanCommodity Index, un indice pondéré qui suit les 13 principales matières premières africaines, a présenté une reprise en forme de V entre février et octobre. Bien que l'indice soit environ 30 % inférieur à ce qu'il était en décembre 2018 et 20 % inférieur à ce qu'il était au début de l'année.

La CBL se dit consciente du manque de liquidité dans le système bancaire

La Banque centrale du Libéria (CBL) a dit reconnaître l'insuffisance de liquidité en dollars libériens dans le système bancaire depuis quelques temps.

« La pression qui est exercée sur le dollar libérien cette année est inhabituelle et peut être attribuée à la demande de cette monnaie au fil des heures ».

Selon la banque, dans son effort pour prévenir cette pression saisonnière, elle avait exprimé en 2019 au terme d'une analyse approfondie le besoin d'imprimer 7,5 milliards de dollars libériens, mais elle a été autorisée à n'imprimer que 4,0 milliards de dollars. « Ce montant, qui a été introduit dans le pays en juillet de cette année, était insuffisant pour remplacer le montant actuel de billets mutilés et en même temps répondre à la demande de liquidité du système bancaire », a dit la banque avant d'expliquer qu'en dépit de cette contrainte, elle a eu à injecter « stratégiquement » les 4 milliards à travers les banques commerciales et qu'une quantité substantielle de ce montant est actuellement en circulation.

« Comme mesure supplémentaire, nous avons

travaillé avec toutes les parties prenantes clés, tant dans le secteur privé que dans le secteur public, pour atténuer la pression de liquidité », a-t-elle dit. La Banque collabore actuellement avec des banques commerciales et des opérateurs d'argent mobile (ORM) pour promouvoir l'utilisation de l'argent mobile et d'autres formes de paiement électroniques en plus de l'argent en espèces.

La Banque centrale du Libéria tient à rassurer le public qu'elle fait tout ce qui est nécessaire pour la disponibilité des liquidités en dollars américains et libériens surtout en ces temps de fêtes de fin d'année. La Banque a également mis en place un cadre de surveillance de la liquidité et une équipe de gestion interne des liquidités pour répondre au défi actuel de liquidité.

Pour pouvoir exercer la pleine autorité monétaire, elle aura besoin, selon elle, d'une autonomie totale sur l'impression de la monnaie comme la plupart des autres banques centrales à travers le monde. La récente modification de la loi de la CBL pour donner à la Banque une latitude de trois ans pour imprimer sans approbations législatives fréquentes est un pas dans la bonne direction.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Stephen S. Roach

L'imposante ombre économique de la pandémie

NEW HAVEN - Les perspectives des marchés économiques et financiers reposent aujourd'hui sur une interaction entre deux cycles - le cycle du COVID-19 et le cycle des affaires. En dépit des véritables miracles auxquels nous assistons dans la science moderne, l'économie post-pandémique aura besoin de beaucoup plus qu'un simple vaccin. Des dommages considérables ont été causés par les confinements du printemps dernier. Et voici qu'une deuxième vague de coronavirus encore plus terrible se présente, qui n'est pas sans rappeler l'épidémie de grippe des années 1918-1920.

Aux États-Unis, les retombées économiques négatives s'observent de manière flagrante dans la multiplication des demandes de chômage début décembre, ainsi que dans la chute brutale des ventes au détail au mois de novembre. Des confinements partiels étant désormais appliqués dans près de trois quarts des États américains, il faut également s'attendre à un déclin de l'activité économique début 2021.

L'histoire du cycle des affaires aux États-Unis nous avertit sur le risque de récession à double creux. Huit des 11 dernières récessions ont précisément suivi cette tendance. Or, les marchés financiers ont principalement parié sur une reprise en forme de V. À tort, les investisseurs ont été rassurés par une interprétation excessive de l'augmentation annualisée de 33 % du PIB réel au troisième trimestre, au moment de la levée des confinements. Seulement voilà, une réouverture après un coup d'arrêt brutal ne signifie nécessairement une reprise économique durable, mais s'apparente davantage une remontée à la surface après une longue apnée.

Les causes de la rechute économique tout proche n'ont rien de mystérieux. Elles sont l'écho de la première vague de COVID-19. Malgré de formidables avancées sur le front des vaccins, produits thérapeutiques et protocoles de traitement, la deuxième vague se révèle bien pire que la première en termes de nombre d'infections, d'hospitalisations, et de mortalité. Bien que les nouvelles restrictions sur l'activité économique ne soient pas aussi strictes qu'au mois d'avril, elles impactent d'ores et déjà négativement l'activité économique globale. Le double creux de début 2021 constituera un rappel douloureux de la vulnérabilité persistante du cycle des affaires aux États-Unis après un choc récessionniste majeur.

Les conséquences à plus long terme du cycle du COVID-19 seront probablement plus graves encore. Si la vaccination de masse permet d'entrevoir la fin de la pandémie elle-même (espérons-le d'ici fin 2021), elle ne nous immunisera pas contre les dégâts économiques à long terme. Une récente étude sur l'impact de 19 pandémies majeures remontant jusqu'au XIVe siècle - ayant fait chacune plus de 100 000 morts - souligne l'ombre colossale du carnage économique. Les taux de rendement réels des actifs européens « stables » - qui nous éclairent sur l'interaction entre offre globale et demande globale - apparaissent dans cette étude en situation de dépression pendant plusieurs décennies après l'apparition des différentes épidémies majeures.

L'ombre imposante du cycle du COVID-19 nous menace elle aussi. De nombreux indices d'un impact prolongé ont été éclipsés par la célébration d'une imminente reprise économique en forme de V. Aux États-Unis, le chômage concerne aujourd'hui 9,8 millions de personnes supplémentaires par rapport au pic pré-pandémique, et les dépenses de consommation dans les services - limitées par la crainte persistante et compréhensible des interactions entre individus - n'ont regagné que 66 % de la plongée survenue pendant les confinements de mars-avril.

Une deuxième vague de confinements partiels ne fera par ailleurs qu'accentuer les dislocations aujourd'hui douloureusement évidentes dans la plupart des grandes villes américaines, notamment un excès de capacité de bureaux et de transports publics, ainsi que l'état de délabrement des activités de tourisme, de divertissement et de vente au détail. La destruction permanente de l'offre et de la demande globales, en parallèle de changements fondamentaux dans les modèles comportementaux, vient aligner les contours de l'ombre colossale du cycle du COVID-19 sur ceux des phénomènes observés au lendemain des grandes pandémies du passé.

L'interaction entre la dynamique à court terme du cycle des affaires aux États-Unis et la tendance à plus long terme du cycle du COVID-19 pèse considérablement sur l'actuel débat politique. Or, beaucoup semblent penser que cette fois-ci les choses seront différentes - que de nouvelles stratégies politiques inventives permettront d'apporter des solutions inédites à des problèmes économiques de longue date.

C'est clairement le cas de la fameuse théorie monétaire moderne (TMM), qui semble donner aux autorités budgétaires carte blanche dans le recours à la dette. Or, la TMM n'est ni moderne, ni même une théorie. Sa seule nouveauté réside dans un aspect beaucoup plus basique : la prétendue mort de l'inflation. Selon cette conception, tant que l'inflation reste maîtrisée, les autorités monétaires et budgétaires peuvent se permettre d'ignorer le risque de coûts d'emprunt plus élevés, et travailler en tandem pour apporter leur aide à une économie réelle frappée par la pandémie.

Seulement voilà, en matière d'économie, rien n'est éternel - pas même la mort de l'inflation. Et c'est ici que les choses se compliquent particulièrement.

L'inflation aux États-Unis n'est pas à l'abri d'une nouvelle dépréciation du dollar, qui semble de plus en plus probable, compte tenu d'une forte détérioration du déficit de la balance courante américaine, du renforcement de l'euro, et du penchant de la Réserve fédérale pour un dollar faible, elle qui demeure attachée à des taux d'intérêts zéro. Les perturbations au niveau des chaînes d'approvisionnement - qui inhibent les puissantes forces stabilisatrices de la mondialisation - devraient par ailleurs faire augmenter l'inflation sous-jacente. Et, bien entendu, les douloureux souvenirs des erreurs politiques commises dans les années 1960 et 1970 demeurent, lorsque des politiques monétaires excessivement assouplies avaient posé les bases d'une accélération importante et durable de l'inflation. Qu'y a-t-il de si différent dans l'actuel penchant prétendument éclairé pour l'assouplissement quantitatif systématique ?

La confluence du cycle de la pandémie et du cycle des affaires - deuxième vague de COVID-19 et récession à double creux de l'économie américaine - ne laisse d'autre choix aux dirigeants politiques américains que d'approuver un nouveau programme d'aide, cette fois-ci à hauteur de 900 milliards \$. Peu importe, considère la TMM, si cela conduit la dette fédérale américaine à s'approcher voire à dépasser le précédent record de 108 % du PIB, atteint en 1946, au lendemain immédiat de la Seconde Guerre mondiale.

Or, à l'époque, le creusement de la dette avait été nuancé par une forte augmentation réflationniste du PIB, qui avait conduit le ratio dette/PIB à retomber à 47 % en 1957, au prix d'un taux d'inflation moyen des prix à la consommation de « seulement » 6,4 % entre 1946 et 1951. Peut-être faudra-t-il accepter bientôt un tribut comparable. Mais alors, que cela signifiera-t-il pour les taux d'intérêt, pour le service de la dette, et pour des marchés financiers incroyablement effervescents ? Ne comptez pas sur la TMM pour répondre à cette question.

SPECIAL

ARTICLE

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

(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 hundred 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



The Author: H.E. Ren Yisheng

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.

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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PYJ killed more Nimbaians

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Nimba County Representative Larry Yonquoi describes his fellow kinsman, Senator Prince Johnson as the only ex-warlord who killed more Nimbaians than any other warring faction leaders during the 14 years Liberian Civil War.

Speaking to OK Morning Rush, a live broadcast hosted by OK fm 99.5 in Monrovia Wednesday, December 23, Rep. Yonquoi, a bitter critic of Senator Johnson, noted that despite massive and uncontrollable killing of Nimbaians by Johnson and his defunct Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), during the war, the people still awarded

politics by referring to one of the contenders from the county as a Mano woman, who contributed less to the development of people in the Gio region.

Representative Yonquoi, of the former ruling Unity Party says the actions and deals of Senator Johnson warrant his removal and that the people have done much for him, but the only reward he gives back is create division and plant seeds of discord between the two main tribes: the Gioes and the Manoes.

However, when Sen. Johnson was contacted via mobile phone on several occasions for reaction, his phone rang endlessly. Since the election of Representative Yonquoi to House, he has remained a stern

has accused the National Elections Commission of manipulating the election's results in the county in favor of Senator-elect, Koung.

In her allegation, Gongloe-Weh, who contested on the ticket of the opposition Collaborating Political Parties, claimed the vote tallying process was fraudulent to deprive her of victory.

According to her, the current NEC results that made her rival winner are unacceptable and unbelievable because she won in popular districts of the county.

"It is sad that they are trying to overturn the election results. There is no way that the votes from Districts 4 and



him with two 9-year terms (18 years) at the Liberian Senate, besides unsuccessfully voting twice for the presidency.

He laments that in spite of the gracious rewards the people of Nimba and Liberians generally to the Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction standard bearer, Senator Johnson is a key proponent of division among tribes of the county.

According to him, each year, the Senator would introduce tribal politics by branding some influential individuals of the county as Gio man or Mano woman, something that has greatly divided Nimba.

Yonquoi continues that during the just held Special Senatorial election, Johnson reportedly introduced tribal

critic of Johnson, who many Nimbaians consider as hero for capturing and killing President Samuel Kanyon Doe.

Doe and the Nimba people had serious mistrust throughout his entire reign, beginning from the April 12, 1980 coup that he led to the rebel incursion on December, 24, 1989 through Buutuo, Nimba County, a border town with neighboring Ivory Coast.

The defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia rebels that were commanded by jailed ex-president Charles Ghankay Taylor comprised of predominantly people from Nimba.

Since the declaration of Representative Jeremiah Koung as winner from the Special Senatorial election, his main rival Madam Edith Gongloe-Weh

5 can overturn my victory, when I have already won the Lower Nimba belt, which comprises of districts 6, 7, 8 and 9 and also two districts in the Upper Nimba belt," Edith protested.

Upper Nimba, which has 5 districts, is a vote-rich battle ground, which usually decides who becomes next senator of Nimba County. It was votes from there that sealed the fate of Candidate Gongloe-Weh in 2011, an election that brought Senator Thomas Grupee to power.

Having joined her party to accuse the government and the electoral body of changing the results, the CPP candidate also insisted she won District 1 (which includes Ganta) with over 5,000 votes, compared to Koung's 3,000 votes from the district.

Madam Gongloe-Weh added that in District 2, she also won with 5,000 votes, arguing that combined with received in lower Nimba, she defeated Koung with 19,179 votes against his 10,081 votes. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

LNBA condemns acts

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who are non-poro members and women from being outdoors when the country devil appears in town. Consequently, no election under such atmosphere can be considered free and fair by any parity of reasoning.

The LNBA calls upon the Government of Liberia to investigate the local paramount chief and all persons associated with the torturing and incarceration of Cllr. Kanneh and Atty. Toe in Gbarpolu County and that the findings be made public and the appropriate disciplinary actions instituted. When this is done, the LNBA observes, it will send out a clear message that never again should such action be condoned, for a local chief to seize ballot boxes as it is said to have happened in the instant case in Gbarpolu County. The LNBA says failure on the part of the Weah Government to conduct an investigation and to institute the appropriate disciplinary actions in this matter, it would be construed as an act that was sanctioned and instigated by the Liberian Government, particularly the ruling CDC and could become a pattern, and thereby undermine the free and fair conduct of the 2023 elections in the country, something which could disrupt the peace and stability of the country.

The LNBA is further concerned that if lawyers who are regarded by ordinary people as superior citizens of

the country can be subjected to such torture and mayhem by the state actors and their associates in such a demeaning manner with a conspicuous silence of the government, then it suggests that the country is fast sinking into lawlessness, jungle justice and thereby igniting a harsh reminder of the dark days in Liberia when gruesome murder and the killing of innocent citizens at the hands of state actors were perpetrated with impunity.

The LNBA reminds Pres Weah that any government associated with such wanton human rights violation is creating the necessary conditions for its own rejection. Therefore, the LNBA calls upon the CDC Government to act swiftly to hold all local government, traditional leaders and other persons to account for the acts of electoral violence and torture committed recently in Gbarpolu County, against the two Liberian lawyers, so as to create public confidence that the Government is capable of defending every Liberian, regardless of status or political affiliation, amongst other things, especially in connection with free and fair elections. The Government should take note that if nothing is done to those who perpetrated torture and violence against the two lawyers, it will be sending a clear signal that government lacks the political will to protect the rights of ordinary citizens and foreign residents.

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NaFAA collects

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technicians, including Associate Directors Patrick Davies and Anthony Yokie, stressed that no fishermen will go fishing without making fully payment.

He stated that the fishing fees are pivotal to NaFAA's contribution to the national budget which impact continuous development projects in the country.

Boeh warned all fishermen who have not paid their 2020 license fees since January 2020 to immediately begin payment, as their action is in complete violation of the 2019 Fisheries Law and Regulations of Liberia.

As a matter of enforcement, the NaFAA Deputy Director for Technical

Services pointed out that "no fisherman will be allowed to go fishing beginning now until full payment is made of 2020."

More than 80 fishermen in little Bassa, and Bassa Point fishing communities were ordered not to go fishing until they pay their 2020 fishing license fees.

Meanwhile, the joint fisheries enforcement and compliance team has a 24-day mandate from the Director General Emma MetiehGlassco to tour all fishing communities across Liberia to ensure the collection of the remaining 2020 fishing license fees and at the same time increase awareness for 2021 collection. - Press Release

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Ancelotti reveals why he rejected Man- U coaching job



The Italian tactician was offered the gig at Old Trafford but was forced to decline

Everton boss Carlo Ancelotti has admitted he rejected the chance to manage Manchester United because he was about to take the head coach role at Real Madrid.

Ahead of the Wednesday's Carabao Cup quarter-final against the Red Devils at

Goodison Park, the Toffees manager revealed he was offered the job at Old Trafford by Sir Alex Ferguson prior to the Scottish legend's retirement.

But Ancelotti was on the verge of accepting the lead role with Los Blancos and was forced to decline the offer, with no other chance to join the Red Devils eventuating since.

"You want to know from me [about coaching at Man Utd]?!" Ancelotti said.

"I can say that I still keep a fantastic relationship with Sir Alex, and we met when he decided to stop (retire).

"But I was close to Real Madrid, and so I appreciate the fact that at that time he talked to me. And that's it, no other opportunity [to manage United]."

Everton are flying high in the Premier League so far with this season, with the Merseyside club sitting in fourth position after 14 matches played.

The Toffees have met Man Utd once this season - in the league in November - with Ancelotti's team going 1-0 ahead in the opening stages before the Red Devils struck back twice through Bruno Fernandes to eventually win 3-1.

Ancelotti explained the regard he holds for the Red Devils institution, indicating he placed them alongside some of the biggest clubs in world football.

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