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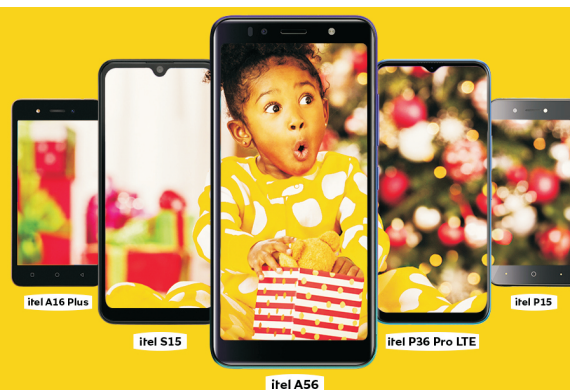
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Continental News

Billionaire on trial over huge Guinea mining deal

A billionaire French-Israeli diamond magnate, Beny Steinmetz, has arrived in court in Switzerland to face trial over alleged corruption linked to a major mining deal in Guinea.

He has always denied his company, BSGR, paid multi-million dollar bribes to obtain iron ore mining exploration permits in southern Guinea in 2008.

He travelled to Geneva from Israel for the two-week trial.

If convicted he could face up to 10 years in prison.

Steinmetz, 64, was previously sentenced in absentia to five years in prison by a court in Romania for money laundering.

Swiss prosecutors say Steinmetz paid about \$10m (£7.4m) in bribes, in part through Swiss bank accounts, to gain the rights to Guinea's iron ore deposits in the Simandou mountains.

The area is believed to contain the world's largest untapped iron ore deposits.

His lawyer Marc Bonnant says "we will plead his innocence". According to the

prosecutors, the bribes to Guinean public officials were paid with the help of Mamadie Toure, the widow of Guinea's former president Lansana Conte. They also allege that Steinmetz forged documents linked to the deal.

The BBC's Imogen Foulkes in Geneva says Ms Toure has been described as the star witness for the prosecution, but her presence in court is unlikely -

she now lives in the United States. She has not yet commented on this trial.

Mr Bonnant told Reuters news agency last month that Steinmetz had "never paid a cent to Mme Mamadie Toure" and said she was not married to Lansana Conte. "She is not a public agent and therefore cannot be corrupted," he said.

What's Guinea like?

Despite its vast natural

resources, Guinea remains one of the poorest countries in Africa, and has gained little from the Simandou iron ore riches. Steinmetz secured the rights in exchange for an investment of around \$160m, but he then sold half of them on to Brazilian multinational mining company, Vale, 18 months later for \$2.5bn, netting a massive profit.

At the time it was referred to as a "jackpot" deal in the financial press. But it also raised questions about why the initial rights were granted so cheaply.

Mo Ibrahim, the Sudanese

telecom billionaire and anti-corruption campaigner, asked at the time: "Are the Guineans who did that deal idiots, or criminals, or both?"

Steinmetz has always insisted he did nothing wrong. In a rare interview in 2012 he told the Financial Times that "people don't like success" and it was normal to pursue "opportunities in an aggressive way".

Guinea's government stripped BSGR of its mining rights in 2014, citing evidence of corruption, which the company denied. BBC



Beny Steinmetz arriving for the trial: he denies any wrongdoing

Zambia leader sacks health minister



Zambia's President Edgar Lungu has dismissed Health Minister, Chitalu Chilufya, who was arrested in June for corruption but was later cleared.

Mr Chilufya was charged with four counts of being in possession of property reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime. He was cleared for lack of evidence and resumed his duties.

President Lungu on Sunday gave no reason for the

minister's dismissal, but said the decision took effect immediately. The BBC's Kennedy Gondwe reports that the health ministry has been rocked by a string of corruption allegations, the latest being the supply of \$17m (£12m) worth of faulty condoms and surgical gloves.

Opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema said "the sacking of Dr Chitalu Chilufya does not go far enough and comes in too little too late". BBC

Foreign Workers, Mostly Chinese, Flee Post-Election Violence in C.A.R.

CAMEROON - Cameroon authorities say more than 250 foreign workers, most of them Chinese, have fled post-election violence in the Central African Republic (C.A.R.) to the border town of Garoua Boulay. The foreign workers say they are being targeted by rebel groups

disgruntled with the C.A.R.'s December 27 presidential election that saw Faustin-Archange Touadera reelected.?

Li Yu, 43, calls himself a spokesman for Chinese workers who fled post-election violence in the Central African Republic to Cameroon.

He says 152 Chinese merchants, construction

engineers, and those working on mining sites escaped to Cameroon in the past week. Li says armed rebel groups began threatening Chinese mining workers after the December 27 elections in the C.A.R. He says the situation worsened during the first week of January when groups of heavily armed men started searching their homes, looting and asking all Chinese citizens to leave or be killed. Li says he is happy that Cameroon is hospitable to them. Li says more than 60 of the Chinese were working on mining sites in the C.A.R. and some of them trekked through the bush for days before arriving in Cameroon.

He says some Chinese and other foreign workers were assisted to the border by the Central African Republic's military.

Cameroon authorities say over 250 foreign workers in the C.A.R. had crossed over to Cameroon within the past week.

Cameroon Territorial Administration Minister Paul Atanga Nji visited the fleeing

workers Sunday in Garoua Boulay. Nji says Cameroon's President Paul Biya dispatched him to the border to ensure their safety and to provide aid.

He says Biya asked him to make sure that all foreign workers escaping the violent clashes in the C.A.R. are safe in Cameroon, especially the Chinese. Nji says the mattresses, food, and first aid products they are handing out are from Biya to help the fleeing workers in Garoua Boulay. He says Cameroon's military will help transport Chinese citizens who want to go

to their embassy in the capital, Yaoundé.

Nji says 4,500 civilians have fled election-related violence in the C.A.R. to Garoua Boulay since December.

He says the violence has also blocked close to 2,000 trucks at Garoua Boulay trying to get from Cameroon's coastal city of Douala to the C.A.R.'s capital, Bangui.

The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic, MINUSCA, on Sunday said violence was rising to an alarming extent. VOA



Chinese fleeing CAR violence are seen in Garoua Boulay, Cameroon, Jan. 10, 2021

EDITORIAL

Liberians deserve nothing, but service leadership

VICE PRESIDENT JEWEL Howard Taylor, President of the Liberian Senate, sounded a reawakening call to senators of the 54th Liberian Legislature Monday, 11 January 2020, reminding them that with the constitutional authority they have, there should be no more excuses, apologies and promises for another day in delivering services to the people.

“...**FOR TRUTH BEING** told, you are members of the First Branch of Government and you have the full authority to make their dreams come true”, VP Taylor bluntly said as members of the 54th Legislature that includes both the Senate and the House of Representatives returned to the Capitol Monday after their annual break.

TRUTH OF THE MATTER is, not that lawmakers on Capitol Hill are ignorant of their responsibilities to the electorate, who in the first place gave them the power they wield, but for greed and sheer selfishness, representatives and senators just turn their backs on the people, once they get the power.

MOST OFTEN, THEY never complete projects embarked upon in their respective constituencies during the entire tenure in office until the year of election then they run back to their constituents, seeking re-election. Of the 15 senators that contested in the December 8, 2020 special senatorial election, only two returned, accompanied by new faces.

THIS RESULT CLEARLY indicates that voters had never received services promised by politicians in their campaigns. For instance, in Maryland County, southeast Liberia where Speaker Bhofal Chamber hails from, citizens, including marketers and educators are enraged over abandoned projects that should have benefited their lives.

IT IS NOT only sad, but highly disappointing that elected officials would renege on delivering services promised to the people, but always want to represent them in the First Branch of Government. In reality, they get elected to serve their personal interests rather than the people.

VICE PRESIDENT JEWEL Taylor herself a former senator, flared some of the burning issues confronting Liberians generally, ranging from insecurity, banknotes shortage, high cost of living, a sluggish economy characterized by lack of basic services and distrust and mistrust, amid allegations and counter-allegations.

IN ALL OF these, the common man in the street feels the pinch more, because he stands at the margin of society and is therefore, the first to take the shocks. Yet, politicians always go to him and other poverty-stricken citizens across the country for votes with wide promises that they don't really intend to deliver.

VICE PRESIDENT TAYLOR is challenging lawmakers to make a complete turn-around and prioritize welfare of the people: justice and security, economy, reconciliation and unity, opportunities and development.

WE JOIN MADAM Taylor in sending this message down the minds of lawmakers returning at the Capitol. Our people deserve better. Service delivery should take priority in all businesses that would come on the floor in the interest of the people, rather than the other way around.

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

COMMENTARY

By Melvyn Krauss

The Brexit Boon to Europe and the US

More than four years after the Brexit referendum, the United Kingdom has finally left the European Union, and the timing could not be better. With Britain gone, Europe has nothing preventing it from adopting a new economic-policy model that is better equipped for contemporary conditions, not least a strengthening euro.

STANFORD - Most Europeans are happy that Joe Biden will be the next president of the United States. Whether they realize that Biden's economic policies will put the euro and Europe in a bind is another matter. The new US administration will want the euro to remain strong against the dollar in order to keep the US economy humming.

With the goal of boosting spending on the pandemic response, the environment, and infrastructure, the Biden White House will undoubtedly pressure the US Federal Reserve to keep the value of the dollar low, regardless of how much more fiscal stimulus it can coax out of Congress. And having done so many favors for Donald Trump, the Fed chair, Jay Powell, will be in no position to refuse Biden. In this context, it was a stroke of genius for Biden to appoint Janet Yellen to serve as Secretary of the Treasury. As Powell's predecessor at the Fed, she still has significant influence there. For good reason, Wall Street is betting heavily against the US dollar for the next year or two.

The expected Biden policy approach will have a dramatic effect on the European economy, which remains heavily reliant on exports. In 2019, exports accounted for 46.9% of Germany's GDP, 31.8% of France's, and 31.5% of Italy's. Europeans cannot afford to sit idly by and watch the euro strengthen to the point that it strangles their exports.

The best solution would be for Germany to deploy a fiscal stimulus, as this would "internalize" a good amount of EU trade, rendering the euro's appreciation against other currencies irrelevant. Instead of exporting to the US, Italians could export more to Germany and other northern eurozone countries, since the additional stimulus will have provided the means for increased purchases from the south. Europeans have a huge internal market; it is time to use it, even if only to militate against a runaway euro that could otherwise split the European Union.

Just as the US forced quantitative easing on Europe to save its own economy from an overvalued euro in 2014, Biden's policies are likely to force an expansionary fiscal policy on the Germans for the very same reason. If it happens, the deciding factor this time around will have been Brexit. Had the United Kingdom not left the EU, the chances for German fiscal stimulus and a new model of internalized EU trade would have been close to zero.

As Karl Kaiser, a former director of the German Council on Foreign Relations, tells Roger Cohen of The New York Times, "Brexit made [German Chancellor] Angela Merkel willing to abandon positions that had been sacred." Merkel was afraid that others would

leave the EU if Germany did not change its financial policies. By the same token, the EU's new €750 billion recovery fund, perhaps Merkel's greatest achievement, would not have happened had the British stayed in the bloc. As Cohen explains, "The European Union can now borrow as a government does - a step toward sovereign stature and a means to finance the \$918 billion pandemic recovery fund that a British presence would probably have blocked."

It would appear that the British left the EU at just the right moment. The new US president, facing a raft of urgent policy demands at home, will be in a strong position to nudge the Germans in precisely the direction they need to go - toward a new model of greater EU fiscal stimulus and internalized trade.

Since this shift, which could prove a strong antidote to European populism, would help to harmonize US-EU relations and benefit both the US and European economies, no one in Washington, DC, or Brussels should shed any tears for Britain's departure. The Germans may not be eager to embrace an internalized trade model, but they should recognize that Brexit, in this case, is good for Europe. It has introduced the possibility of a mixed fiscal-and monetary-policy model that would be far more effective than the strictly monetary-based approach that has dominated EU policymaking since the 2008 financial crisis.

Yes, the European Central Bank has performed wonders with its expansionary monetary policy of the past dozen years. ECB President Christine Lagarde and her predecessor, Mario Draghi, deserve great credit for their bold policy decisions. With the sovereign-bond-yield spread between northern and southern eurozone countries having narrowed dramatically, the ECB has managed to integrate the two regions financially for the first time ever. Moreover, the yields on higher-risk periphery assets are now at or close to all-time lows.

These financial developments have been great for European unity and solidarity. But history shows that monetary policy alone cannot finish the job of delivering strong economic growth. Though the euro keeps reaching new heights, the European economy is in a slump, and the ECB is still consistently undershooting its inflation target of "below, but close to, 2%." In seven of the last eight years, inflation has been closer to 1% than 2%, and the market expects this to continue for the next decade.

This is unacceptable. Fortunately, by allowing fiscal policy to be brought into the EU policy mix, Brexit is precisely what Europe needs to pursue a more effective macro-economic stabilization policy, and to deal with a "beggar-thy-neighbor" currency policy on the part of the Fed.

O-PED

By Dani Rodrik

Europe's China Gambit

The new EU-China agreement underscores a fundamental question of the post-pandemic world order: How should strategic and economic relations between major powers with very different institutional and political arrangements be managed? Can democracies remain true to their values while engaging in trade and investment with China?

CAMBRIDGE - Just as 2020 was ending, the European Union and China announced the completion of a Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) between the two economic giants. This "will be the most ambitious agreement that China has ever concluded with a third country," boasted the official announcement from the European Commission.

The CAI gives European firms enhanced access to the Chinese market, removes (or relaxes) Chinese government requirements on joint ventures and technology transfer in some sectors, and promises equal treatment with state enterprises and greater regulatory transparency. Moreover, the Chinese government has undertaken some obligations on environmental sustainability and labor rights, notably by agreeing to make "continued and sustained efforts" to ratify the Forced Labor Convention.

On paper, this is a win not only for European industry, but also for human rights. But the reception the CAI has received has not been uniformly positive. The US reaction ranged from disappointment to outright hostility. For hardliners, including officials of the outgoing Trump administration, Europe's decision looked like caving in to Chinese economic might and handing the country an important diplomatic win.

But many moderates, including President-elect Joe Biden's designated national security adviser, were dismayed as well. The incoming Biden administration would have preferred presenting a unified front against China, by striking an economic deal with Europe first.

For others, it was the EU's apparent naivete on China's human rights promises that rankled. Guy Verhofstadt, a former Belgian prime minister and member of the European Parliament, tweeted that "any Chinese signature on human rights is not worth the paper it is written on."

The Europe-China agreement underscores a fundamental question of the post-pandemic world order: How should strategic and economic relations between major powers with very different institutional and political arrangements be managed? In particular, can democracies remain true to their values while engaging in trade and investment with China?

To answer this question, we must recognize two facts. First, it is impossible to envisage a significant decoupling of the Chinese economy and the economies of the West that does not induce economic catastrophe. Second, there is little that Western countries can do, individually or collectively, to reshape China's state-driven economic model or repressive human- and labor-rights regime.

Trade and investment agreements cannot transform China into a Western-style market economy or turn it into a democracy. Our best hope, then, is to seek a new global regime that recognizes the diversity of economic and political settings without severely undermining the gains from international trade and investment.

None of this implies that Western countries should put human rights or political considerations aside when they engage China in the economic sphere. It simply means that the US and Europe should pursue more limited, more attainable, and ultimately more defensible goals.

Two such goals are paramount. First, trade and investment rules should ensure that Western firms and consumers are not directly complicit in human-rights abuses in China. Second, such rules should safeguard democratic countries against Chinese practices that could undermine their domestic institutional arrangements on labor, environment, technology, and national security. The objective ought to be to uphold and protect the West's own values, rather than export them.

So, the important question on the CAI is not whether the EU will be able to alter the Chinese economic system or improve China's human rights and labor regime. Even if the treatment of the mostly Muslim Uighur minority improves, the repression of dissidents and free speech will continue. And even if China ratifies the Forced Labor Convention and enforces its provisions - a doubtful matter - Chinese leaders do not plan to recognize independent unions. The relevant question is whether the EU has given up its freedom to pursue policies that limit complicity in human rights and labor abuses or safeguard European national security and labor standards.

The European Commission has claimed that the CAI allows the EU to maintain its "policy space," especially in "sensitive" sectors such as energy, infrastructure, agriculture, and public services. In the remaining areas, the EU is already fairly open to Chinese investment. That raises the question of what the Chinese government thinks it is getting with the agreement.

The answer seems to be that China is buying insurance against future restrictions in Europe. The agreement contains an arbitration scheme that enables the parties to bring violation complaints against each other. If consultations fail to resolve the matter, disputes are to be brought to arbitration panels with specific compliance procedures. While the European Commission views this as a mechanism to prevent Chinese backsliding from commitments, it could also serve as a means for the Chinese government to challenge specific entry barriers against Chinese firms.

A dispute resolution framework is essential to any workable global order. But what if, say, a European country wants to bar a Chinese firm that treats its workers badly or operates in Xinjiang? France already requires that large French companies abide by international human rights and environmental norms in their foreign operations.

What happens if European countries adopt tougher measures preventing Chinese firms with problematic labor or environmental practices from operating in the EU? Would the arbitration mechanism find these regulations compatible with the CAI? Similarly, how much deference will panels show to exceptions to market access based on "national security" considerations?

The answers to such questions are not clear. Much will depend on the final text of the CAI, and the degree to which arbitration panels choose to prioritize market access over countries' self-described "public purpose."

In any case, neither the US desire to forge a united front against China, nor the reality that the CAI will fall short of creating a freer, more market-oriented China is a valid argument against the CAI and other similar trade and investment agreements. We should not judge the CAI by whether it enables Europe to export its system and values. We should judge it by whether it allows Europe to remain true to its own.

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OPINION

By Shashi Tharoor

Narendra Modi's Potemkin Democracy

India's prime minister has an "edifice complex" that has given rise to grand new government buildings, including a planned new parliament. Sadly, the spirit of deliberation and debate that animated the old parliament building risks being left there.

NEW DELHI - Indian legislators woke up in the new year to two realizations. First, the annual winter session of parliament, from which they should just have been emerging, had not taken place at all. And, second, New Delhi's magnificent parliament complex, a tourist attraction since it was built in 1927, had been turned into a construction site.

These two facts sum up the reality of Indian democracy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). On one hand, the government has shrugged off the very concept of accountability to the people's representatives, the cornerstone of parliamentary democracy. On the other hand, Modi, an increasingly larger-than-life figure whose flowing beard and other-worldly air make him resemble the "Raj Rishis" or emperor-sages of ancient days, is doing all he can to transform the republic physically as well as politically. A new, grander parliament building is to arise alongside the old one, as part of his determination to leave his visible mark on the national capital.

Modi's "edifice complex" includes plans to construct an array of new government buildings alongside New Delhi's Central Vista, the grand sweep of which leads past parliament to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the presidential palace. A new residential-cum-office complex for the vice president and the prime minister are also part of the plans. Environmentalists have obtained a stay on construction from the Supreme Court, but did not challenge the ground-breaking ceremony for the new parliament building to proceed.

Parliament itself barely met in 2020. The official reason, of course, was the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the shortening of the year's first two sessions and the cancellation of the third.

Parliament sat for only 23 days in the budget session that began the legislative year, before being adjourned in March because of the pandemic. The government then showed no desire to convene the monsoon session, which normally starts in late June or mid-July and continues until August. It might happily have ruled by decree were it not for the constitutional requirement that parliament convene within six months of the end of the previous session.

The monsoon session was belatedly called on September 14 to meet for just 18 days with no weekend breaks. But it was abruptly adjourned after ten days, again because of the virus. And the winter session, which should normally have started in mid-November and continued until Christmas (on some occasions, it has even extended through the holiday session) simply never happened.

There is no doubt about the current dangers of 750 MPs and hundreds of officials and journalists crowding into the parliament complex. Three ministers, two dozen MPs, and several parliamentary officials tested positive for the coronavirus during the monsoon session; three MPs and a minister of state died after contracting COVID-19. But it seems absurd that a country claiming to be a world leader in information technology finds itself unable to connect its MPs virtually through videoconferencing, as so many other national parliaments have done.

A national crisis is precisely the time when parliament should be meeting to discuss its cause, in this case the pandemic and how policymakers are managing it. But that appears to be exactly what the government wants to avoid. As the truncated monsoon session showed, it sees the legislature as a mere rubber stamp for decisions it has already taken. Key legislation - including hugely controversial labor and farm bills - was pushed through both houses without significant debate.

The government imposed its own priorities, ensuring that the presiding officers took up its bills (mainly those ratifying previously issued executive decrees) while deferring debate on the issues that opposition parties wanted to raise. These included the border standoff with China, during which 20 Indian soldiers were killed in June, a controversial draft Environment Impact Assessment, the government's New Education Policy, and financial and tax compensation to state governments.

Under the previous Congress-led government from 2009-14, 71% of all bills were first scrutinized in parliamentary standing committees. Under the BJP government, that rate has decreased to 25%, and since Modi's re-election 20 months ago, not a single bill has benefited from such scrutiny. This sorry record includes the three farm laws whose passage sparked major protests, with angry farmers besieging the capital for several weeks in late 2020.

The protests again proved the utility of thorough legislative consideration before bills are passed. But the government seems to believe that its electoral mandate is all the approval it needs, with parliamentary examination and debate being a mere formality.

Parliamentary committees have struggled to meet in recent months even after the easing of the initial draconian lockdown, because travel restrictions and quarantine rules in MPs' home states have made it difficult to assemble a quorum. Pleas by committee chairs, including me, to connect some members virtually by secure videoconference have been rejected on confidentiality grounds.

The irony of conducting a groundbreaking ceremony for a new parliament building during the pandemic, while suspending the work that should have been taking place in the old one, was lost on the government. Even the confidentiality excuse does not apply to regular parliamentary sessions, which, unlike committee meetings, are televised. The inescapable conclusion is that the government would rather dispense with the inconvenience of being accountable to the legislature.

Such tendencies were apparent even in the shortened monsoon session, when parliament dispensed with Question Hour, the one time when MPs can demand unscripted answers from ministers. I have previously noted the Modi government's propensity to sidestep debate on important issues and use its majority to reduce parliament to a noticeboard for its decisions. This is an administration that does not like to be questioned.

India will eventually have a new building to showcase its democracy. Sadly, under Modi and the BJP, the spirit of deliberation and debate that animated the country's old parliament will be left there.

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'Intelligence, character, consciousness'
-Speaker Chambers urges colleagues

By Bridgett Milton

House Speaker Bhofal Chambers has called on members of the House of Representatives to start their work in 2021 with "intelligence, character and a deep sense of patriotic consciousness," as the legislature commenced its regular session this Monday, 11 January.

Speaker Chambers said there should never again be any space for narcissistic investment as was in the past, adding that this kind of investment creates an atmosphere for the sake of self-gratification to the disadvantage of the people and the state.

"We must change the narrative, the time is now," Chambers noted.

The lawmakers' convocation

on Monday was in consonance with Article 32 (a) of the Liberian Constitution, which states that the legislature shall assemble in regular session once a year, on the second working Monday in January.

Speaking at the opening of the House of Representatives, the House Speaker said in the year 2020, lawmakers experienced severe shocks, springing from politics, health and the economy.

He explained that in terms of the politics, they saw a polarized field, while on the economy, the paucity of the Liberian dollar was pronounced, especially at the advent during the festive season, and for health, the COVID-19 pandemic created serious panic among the population, and thereby rendering the people vulnerable to the economy.

Speaker Chambers warned that the shortage of the Liberian dollar in circulation is alarming, but however gave hope that workable solutions were within reach.

He recalled that in the United States, in 1933, owning

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



House Speaker Bhofal Chambers

Bong Superintendent's son wanted for rape

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Police in Gbarnga, Bong County, have launched a manhunt for Phillip Bestlow, the son of Bong County Superintendent, Esther Walker, for allegedly raping a 13-year-old girl.

Bestlow reportedly raped the girl on the night of July 26, last year, at the residence of his mother, on the Dementa Road in Gbarnga.

Bong County Police Commander, Fredrick Nepay,

police.

Mr. Juakollie claims that suspect Philip Bestlow has been plying the streets of Gbarnga freely and even driving his mother around Gbarnga.

Mr. Juakollie is demanding investigation into the alleged rape case involving the son of Superintendent Esther Walker.

According to him, the case was reported to the Women and Children Protection Section of



Superintendent, Esther Walker

Red Cross donates food to disabled couple

A vulnerable couple has received some of their needs when the Liberian Red Cross presented two bags of 25kg rice and two mattresses donated by an honorary member of the Red Cross, Rohit Suji, who is also the president of the Association of the Indian Community in Liberia.

In a press release issued in Monrovia, the Liberian Red Cross explained it made the donation Saturday, 9 January for John Mulbah and Patience Kollie, a vulnerable couple living in Gbarnga, Bong County.

According to the release, the couple is facing the regretful side of life as they barely get daily meals to eat because of their disabilities. Johnson is visually impaired and feeds his family on digging and selling sand from a river, while Patience is paralyzed from her second child delivery operation at one of the hospitals in Gbarnga.

"Life is not easy on us. Things often become more difficult when the sand I dig from the river is not being bought on time by customers so that we can buy food," John lamented.

John's condition is tear-dropping, as he uses his imagination, hands and feet to feel objects beneath the river, while he digs the sand for sale.

"I sell a pile of the sand for seven hundred (\$700) Liberian dollars, but getting it from the river to the shore is a challenging process for me," he explained to the Red Cross team.

John is the father of three children, which means he faces

During the presentation, the National Society expressed solidarity and demonstrated humanity in presenting the food and non-food items to the vulnerable family.

Mr. Suji's quick intervention was intended to identify with



some high level of stress and suffering to get daily bread for his family to survive.

He was not born visually impaired. According to John, he got blind on 28 July 2005 after he and his friends swam in a stream in Bong County. He wished that his sight could be restored someday.

the disabled couple to offer support and bring hope to them in the midst of their distress.

For Patience, John's fiancée, life is extremely boring, as she is not able to move about to fetch food or do

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

has confirmed that the case was reported since 28 July 2020, adding that the Phillip has been declared wanted by the Police but he is on the run.

However, the claim by Commissioner Nepay that "Philip is on the run," has received counter-reactions, with Aaron Juakollie, the executive director of the Foundation for International Dignity (FIND) describing the assertion as a clandestine maneuvering on the part of the

the Bong County Police Detachment on 28 July, but the police are yet to arrest Philip and investigate the matter.

At a news conference recently in Gbarnga, Mr. Juakollie said he sensed a "clandestine maneuvering," in an effort to compromise the case.

He asserted that it would be selective justice if Philip Bestlow was not investigated.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

VP Taylor decries sluggish economy

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Vice President of Liberia and President of the Liberian Senate says the prime duty of members of the 54th Legislature is to ensure Liberians remain safe and happy.

Madam Jewel Hoard Taylor

many issues but there exists a glimmer of hope.

Speaking at the opening of the 4th session of the 54th Legislature in the chambers of the Liberian Senate on Monday, she said in spite of it all, Democracy is alive and growing stronger in Liberia, saying, the

at all levels." VP Taylor says.

She continues that in preparation of their duties, it is imperative that legislators remind themselves of trending national issues that have beset the Nation over the years, and points at critical issues need immediate attention such as ever-rising cost of living, limited basic services for all, minimal opportunities for growth and development, high taxes and high crime rate, amongst others.

"Being the first female Vice President and the Gender Advocate, these prevailing issues are further compounded by the alarming incidence of sexual and gender based violence being perpetrated against our most vulnerable citizens, girls under the age of 18 and at times as young as 2 years old; and the sodomy of our sons."

She laments that these ever increasing numbers tend to show the Liberian society is slowly degenerating at an alarming rate, with very little permanent solutions at hand

VP Taylor warns if permanent solutions to these societal ills are not found and measures put in place to secure a safer society, these lapses will not only cast doubts on their collective

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



VP Jewel Hoard Taylor

notes that though Liberia is beset by a myriad of issues, ranging from high insecurity, lack of banknotes, high cost of living, a sluggish economy, lack of basic services, distrust, mistrust, allegations and counter allegations on

voices of the people were loud and clear in the just ended 2020 Special Senatorial Elections.

"They have sent a clarion message to all and sundry that they no longer accept things as they are; but they expect much more from their representatives

"ABWA Congress Will Bring Commercial Value"

-Madam Joy Adewuyi

By Lewis S. Teh

The Current president of the Association of Accountancy Bodies in West Africa or (ABWA) Madam Dame Onome Joy Adewuyi says the hosting of the next ABWA Congress here in Liberia by the Liberia Institute of Certified Public Accountants or (LICPA) will bring commercial values to the country and its people.

"If you bring about 200 intelligent men and women together the share skills and experiences they get from networking one cannot fortified it," she said adding "when they come they buy things, pay hotel bills and this I think they will bring commercial values, and generates revenues for this country"

She made the statements in an interview with scores of Journalist at the climax of a three day ABWA Council meeting hosted under the auspices of the Liberia Institute of Certified Public Accountants held at the Farmington hotel in HarbelMargibi County.

Shenoted that in every economy people will need the services of chartered accountants that will help support the growth, and development of those economy.

According to her, Liberia as a country needs chartered accountants to help in the running of the country, saying these are things ABWA is involved with by conducting capacity building, training, and to help

various accountancy bodies to reach a professional standard.

Madam Adewuyi opined that the ABWA delegation has come to see how LICPA is preparing for its biggest assignment given them by the council of ABWA.

Touching on issues discussed at the meeting, Madam Adewuyi said key

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Constituents' fatigue

-Pro-Tempore terms elections results

By Ethel A. Tweh

The President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate, Albert T. Chie, has said that the very long nine-year tenure, which leads to constituents' fatigue, is a major hindrance to re-election bids, and thus stressed the importance of reducing the tenure of elected public officials in any constitutional amendment.

Speaking at the opening of the 4th Session of the 54th Legislature Monday, 11 January, Mr. Chie said the misfortune of his former colleagues at the polls still has a major role to play in both public and private sectors with the many years of experience they have gained in governance at the legislature.

He however thanked the National Elections Commission

Defense; Security, Intelligence and Veteran Affairs; Chair, Committee on Education and Chair, Committee on Public Works.

Pro-Tempore Chie also said that the position of Chair on the Committee on Gender and Health is indeterminate at this stage, as there are various challenges and other factors as well to consider.

He noted that besides these positions, there are no other vacancies on the Leadership Committee until January 2024, in line with the Constitution and the Standing Rules of the Senate.

He added that some of the issues on their Legislative Agenda for this session which will definitely be increased through inputs from colleagues include liquidity issues



Pro-Tempore Albert T. Chie

(NEC) for delivering a free, fair and transparent election, saying that the commission has shown self-respect, self-dignity and patriotism.

According to Mr. Chie, the NEC's Board of Commissioners has justified the confidence the Liberian Senate reposed in it to have confirmed members of the board.

He noted that election loss of some of their colleagues has left a void on the leadership committee of the senate, saying that the following positions have to be filled through a consensus or elections, and winners selected by a majority of the entire membership of the senate.

He named them as Chair on the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Chair Committee on

involving both Liberian and US dollar currencies at the banks and in the market, restoration of confidence in the banking sector and measures to strengthen the Liberian economy.

He also mentioned the review of certain concession agreements by the Executive Branch, as the review period indicated in some of them has since elapsed, adding that for other concessions, profound changes in current circumstances necessitate reviewing them to achieve a win-win situation for investors and the government.

Pro-Tempore Chie intimated that they have on their agenda a review of legislations for the pension of various categories of public servants to ensure they

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

China Foreign Minister Deliver 7 Preposition to upgrade China-Africa Cooperation

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that the 2018 FOCAC Beijing Summit was a full success and a new milestone in China-Africa friendship and cooperation. He gave a brief review of what has been accomplished during the past two years.

Mr. Wang explained that China and Africa have worked closely on all eight major

in African countries. Interactions in the fields of culture, arts, sports, health, and tourism and between young people have been most fruitful. Eleven pairs of sister cities have been newly established, bringing the total number to 150.

Mr. Wang narrated that COVID-19 has not kept China and Africa from advancing their

China's preparedness to help Africa increase its infrastructure, trade and financial connectivity, in a joint effort to build a connected Africa.

"China will step up agricultural cooperation with Africa, including on food production, storage and transportation. China is prepared to help Africa



initiatives, namely industrial promotion, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, green development, capacity building, health care, people-to-people exchange, and peace and security. Over 70 percent of the Summit outcomes have been delivered.

According to the Foreign Ministry release issue Monday January 11, 2021, the Minister noted that China and Africa have steadily advanced the Belt and Road cooperation.

Despite the pandemic, he opined that over 1,100 cooperation projects have kept going and nearly 100,000 Chinese technicians and engineers worked dutifully under the limitations caused by COVID-control. Their efforts, he said contributed in important ways to the economic and social well-being of the local communities.

Minister Wang said China and Africa have further enhanced their people-to-people ties.

The China-Africa Institute was inaugurated

A number of Confucius Institutes have been opened

cooperation. China and Africa plan to have the next FOCAC meeting in Senegal later in the year. China will communicate closely with African friends. In light of the new developments, new imperatives and new opportunities in their cooperation, China and Africa will make good preparations on the deliverables of the meeting to upgrade and enhance their cooperation.

China will step up health cooperation with Africa to jointly defeat the coronavirus. China is prepared to help Africa on major disease prevention, in a joint effort to build a healthy Africa.

According to the Chinese Foreign Minister, China will step up industrial capacity cooperation with Africa, promote clustering and synergy of cooperation projects and make them more advanced in industrial operations and more locally based.

He said China is prepared to help Africa enhance its home-grown production capacity, in a joint effort to build a strong African manufacturer.

The minister further stressed that China will step up cooperation with Africa on regional connectivity, and explore free trade cooperation with Africa. He indicated

enhance food security, in a joint effort to build a bumper African harvest.

China will step up digital cooperation with Africa. With its technological strengths, China is prepared to help Africa seize the opportunities of ICT revolution, in a joint effort to build a digital Africa.

China will step up environmental cooperation with Africa in pursuit of sustainable development. China is prepared to help Africa on climate change response, in a joint effort to build a green Africa.

China will step up military and security cooperation with Africa, and promote political settlement of hot spot issues in Africa. China is prepared to help Africa enhance peace-keeping and counter-terrorism capacity, in a joint effort to build a secure Africa," he explained.

Mr. Wang expressed his confidence that with joint efforts from both China and African countries, FOCAC cooperation will continue to produce fruitful outcomes and make still bigger contributions to an even closer China-Africa community with a shared future. **-Press Release.**

Police search political leader's home for weapon

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Armed security officers have searched the official residence of Mr. Roland W. Jacobs, the political leader of the Party of Hope (POH), for weapons.

But police did not find weapon at Mr. Jacobs' residence in the Rice Store Community of Logan Town in Montserrado County District #15.

Several journalists who were at Mr. Jacobs's residence were prevented from entering the compound, which was being searched by security forces.

However, information obtained indicates that the search followed a complaint filed against Mr. Jacobs by a female (name not disclosed) to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), claiming that the POH political leader is in possession of weapons in his compound.

Mr. Jacobs participated in the 2017 general and presidential elections but made no significant political impact on the electorate during the election.

However, since the 2017 elections, the national headquarters of the Party of Hope, situated within District#15, has been turned

into a private dwelling place, as if the party had ceased to exist as a political institution.

Following the search operation at Mr. Jacob's residence, he was invited to the Central Police Headquarters on Capitol Hill, along with the unnamed female, who made the complaint to the Ministry of Justice for further investigation.

Earlier, a man who claimed to be a nephew of Mr. Jacobs told our reporter that even though his uncle's residence was searched by the police, there was nothing like a weapon or any other dangerous object found in the home.

He however informed the NewDawn that the POH political leader could not speak with the press because he was engaged in a meeting with some other people.

When our reporter sought Mr. Jacobs' comment on the matter, a private security guard assigned to the POH political leader's compound said Mr. Jacobs had left his home to attend to other business in Monrovia.

Efforts to get a comment from the Ministry of Justice and the Liberia National Police failed.--**Edited by Winston W. Parley**



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Français

La Cour suprême suspend l'annonce des résultats de l'élection de Gbarpolu

La juge associée présidant les chambres de la Cour suprême du Libéria, Mme Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh, a ordonné à la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) de suspendre toutes les activités relatives à l'annonce des résultats de l'élection des zones touchées du comté de Gbarpolu, en attendant l'audition et la décision de la plainte déposée devant le magistrat électoral du comté.

La semaine dernière, les élections ont été reprises dans une ville frontalière de Nomodatahum, dans le district n° 3 du comté de Gbarpolu, près de la Sierra Leone, après avoir été bloquées pendant des semaines en raison de la violence électorale née de la sortie d'un masque sacré le jour du scrutin, le 8 décembre 2020.

«Par directive de Son Honneur Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh, juge adjointe présidant les chambres, vous êtes informé par la présente de suspendre toute action / ou déclaration ou annonce sur l'élection de la ou des zones touchées du comté de Gbarpolu, en attendant l'audience et la décision dans

la plainte déposée devant le magistrat des élections du comté de Gbarpolu, jusqu'à et y compris l'audition et la décision d'appel par toute partie, même jusqu'à la Cour suprême », lit-on dans l'ordonnance du 8 janvier.

Avant l'ordonnance du tribunal, la reprise du scrutin avait déjà eu lieu la semaine dernière. On n'attendait que la publication des résultats officiels. Mais maintenant le processus a été interrompu par le tribunal. Cependant, des

rapports non officiels semblent donner Mme Kanhepour gagnante face au représentant Alfred Koiwood. A noter que les résultats officiels ne sont pas encore disponibles.

La Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) au pouvoir, au nom de son candidat au Sénat, le représentant Alfred Koiwood, a déposé une requête devant la Cour suprême pour obtenir un bref d'interdiction contre

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Lutte contre la pauvreté : Des intrants distribués aux agriculteurs libériens

Le gouvernement de Son Excellence George Manneh Weah, par l'intermédiaire du ministère de l'Agriculture (MOA), a commencé à distribuer des engrais, de l'eau, des pulvérisateurs agrochimiques, des bottes et

des équipements de sécurité aux agriculteurs libériens.

Plus de 500 groupes d'agriculteurs des comtés de Margibi, Grand Bassa, Bong et Nimba ont reçu du jeudi au dimanche 10 janvier des intrants du ministère de l'Agriculture.

La distribution d'intrants agricoles a débuté en décembre 2020 avec les agriculteurs de Montserrado et se poursuivra dans les comtés de Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu et Lofa la semaine prochaine.

Le ministre Robert Fagans, qui s'est exprimé au nom de la ministre Jeanine Milly Cooper, a déclaré que les intrants avaient été achetés dans le cadre du plan national d'urgence de la COVID-19 pour la sécurité alimentaire, la nutrition et les moyens d'existence du Ministère de l'Agriculture, élaboré au mois d'avril, l'année dernière, pour atténuer les impacts de la pandémie sur les agriculteurs.

C'est le projet de transformation de l'agriculture des petits exploitants et de revitalisation de l'agro-industrie (STAR-P) géré par le Ministère de l'Agriculture, financé par la Banque mondiale, qui

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Côte d'Ivoire : de la Bceao à la primature (Alassane Ouattara, Moriba, livre)

Retourné au FMI en octobre 1984 après avoir passé 11 ans (72-83) à la Bceao (directeur des études, conseiller spécial, vice-gouverneur), Alassane Ouattara est à nouveau sollicité en octobre 1988, par les chefs d'état de l'institution sous-régionale, avec Félix Houphouët-Boigny en tête pour redresser les finances d'une banque en rupture de liquidité auprès du Trésor français où elle déposait ses réserves de change, du fait de la dérive financière des chefs d'état membres de l'UEMOA.

Nommé officiellement gouverneur en novembre 1988 après la mort de son compatriote ivoirien, Abdoulaye Fadiga, Ouattara deviendra le 7 novembre 1990, le tout 1er premier ministre de la Côte d'Ivoire indépendante.

Appelé au chevet de la Bceao plongée dans une situation comateuse, Alassane Ouattara qui connaît bien la maison fera d'abord face à l'arrogance de certains chefs d'état qui jusque-là avaient la mainmise sur leur leurs banques centrales respectives.

« Alors que la Bceao était au bord du chaos, les chefs d'Etat de l'union, réunis à Cotonou en août 1988, décident de doubler le plafond alloué au Bénin afin de permettre à son gouvernement de payer les fonctionnaires. Cette décision n'est pas du goût du nouveau gouverneur qui dès son installation en novembre 1988 le signifie aux chefs d'Etat. Au point d'avoir des démêlés avec certains d'entre eux. Il ira même à un moment donné jusqu'à menacer de démissionner si on ne lui laissait pas les mains libres » écrit Moriba Magassouba dans le chapitre III de son livre « Alassane Ouattara, la passion du devoir » paru en octobre 2020.

« Le gouverneur Ouattara au secours du « vieux » le titre dudit chapitre montre comment l'économiste chevronné du FMI et qui retourne dans une institution (Bceao) après y avoir passé onze années, a contribué à la redresser avec brio et rigueur. Une rigueur qui fera de lui le dauphin du « vieux ». Ainsi c'est par la rigueur au travail et la conscience professionnelle qu'Alassane Ouattara entre en politique et devient le N°2 du parti-état, l'unique formation politique de l'époque, le PDCI-RDA.

Comment Ouattara a sauvé la Bceao

Face à la dérive et gabegie financières des chefs d'Etat de l'UEMOA, Alassane Ouattara proposera deux options : l'ajustement économique en réduisant de manière drastique

les dépenses des Etats ou en procédant à la dévaluation du Fcfa.

Finalement la seconde option fut adoptée.

Ouattara au chevet du « vieux » à Abidjan confronté à une fronde sociale

« En franchissant le lourd portail de la présidence, ce samedi 17 février 1990, aux environs de 13 heures, Alassane Ouattara est frappé par l'impression du vide qui plane sur les lieux (...) La décision du chef de l'Etat de faire appliquer le plan Moïse Koumoué Koffi, ministre de l'économie et des Finances d'alors, qui prévoyait la diminution des salaires compensée par l'abaissement des prix des denrées avait mis le feu aux poudres (...) La Côte d'Ivoire au bord du chaos, la situation est pratiquement insurrectionnelle. La contestation a gagné la rue. Marches des travailleurs, des étudiants et des chômeurs se multiplient. Houphouët est décrié. Les manifestants n'hésitent pas à l'appeler voleur ou encore d'Ali Baba et les 40 voleurs. Un tract du Syndicat national de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur (SYNARES), fondé par Laurent Gbagbo dresse la liste de plusieurs milliardaires et exige le retour du multipartisme » écrit en substance l'auteur.

Devenu médiateur entre Abidjan et les institutions de Breton Wood, Alassane Ouattara, tout en gardant son poste de gouverneur de la Bceao, est contacté fin mars 1990 par Charles Konan Banny, alors directeur général de la Bceao.

Houphouët a l'intention à ce moment-là de nommer Ouattara Premier Ministre. Une offre que ce dernier refusera.

Dans sa réflexion, Alassane Ouattara lui propose en retour la création d'un comité interministériel qu'il met en place le 16 avril 1990.

Ce comité est chargé de sortir le pays de la grave crise économique, financière et sociale.

« Il s'agit de suspendre la mise en œuvre des mesures annoncées sous Koumoué Koffi, de renforcer le programme d'ajustement structurel en lui donnant une meilleure base pour la croissance économique » poursuit l'auteur.

Dans les coulisses, Alassane Ouattara est présenté par Houphouët comme le meilleur économiste africain.

Après six mois d'activité à la tête du comité, (avril-octobre 1990) Ouattara est appelé à faire le bilan lors du neuvième congrès du PDCI à Yamoussoukro du 1er au 5 octobre 1990.

Français

La Cour suprême suspend

la NEC.

Des violences électorales avaient éclaté à Gbarpolu après que des jeunes en colère agissant sur les instructions du chef de clan ont pris d'assaut les centres de vote le jour du scrutin, le 8 décembre, et emporté des urnes et autres matériels de vote.

Des informations faisaient état d'intimidation. Beaucoup d'habitants avaient signalé la présence d'un masque sacré, qui serait sorti sur ordres du chef de clan, un partisan inconditionnel de la coalition au pouvoir, dans la ville.

En décembre, des délégués de la plateforme des principaux partis politiques

de l'opposition, dont le chef du secrétariat du parti, Me Aloysious Toe, ont été arrêtés par les forces de l'ordre dans le comté de Gbarpolu sur fond de violences électorales. Selon les résultats préliminaires de la sénatoriale dans le comté, la candidate indépendante Gbotoe Kanneh avait une légère avance sur son adversaire direct, à savoir le représentant Alfred Koiwood, candidat du parti au pouvoir.

Selon la Collaboration des Partis Politiques de l'opposition, ses délégués avaient été arrêtés et détenus au-delà de la période statutaire alors qu'ils s'étaient rendus dans le comté en une mission d'enquête sur les violences.

Lutte contre la pauvreté :

procède à la distribution des intrants aux différents agriculteurs.

D'autres projets financés par des donateurs ont acheté plusieurs transformateurs de manioc et de riz, des motoculteurs, des produits agrochimiques et des semences de légumes.

Un lot partiel de semences de légumes assorties ainsi que des produits agrochimiques utilisés pour empêcher la destruction des cultures par les insectes est arrivé dans le pays. Les machines de traitement du manioc et du riz sont attendues d'ici février.

Des boutures de manioc et des scanners de sol pour déterminer l'aptitude du sol à l'agriculture ont également été achetés. Ces outils agricoles vitaux seront remis

aux agriculteurs du pays.

Une équipe de haut niveau du Ministère comprenant des sous-ministres, du ministre adjoint de l'administration, Ernest Jenkins Clarke et d'autres directeurs principaux ont supervisé la distribution des intrants.

La directrice générale de l'Agence de développement coopératif (CDA), Regina Soka-Teah, faisait partie de la délégation.

Les agents de terrain de la CDA et des comtés du MOA ont minutieusement examiné les plus de 100 groupes d'agriculteurs pour s'assurer qu'ils sont des agriculteurs réels et nécessiteux.

Depuis la pandémie de COVID-19, il y a eu des pénuries d'intrants agricoles vitaux en raison de l'épuisement des stocks dans les magasins.

Crise politique en Guinée : le P.U.R plaide pour la libération des opposants détenus

La détention de nombreux opposants au 3^{ème} mandat du président Alpha Condé préoccupe le Parti de l'Unité et du Renouveau (P.U.R). Au nom de la paix et de la quiétude, la formation politique exhorte les autorités guinéennes à libérer tous les prisonniers politiques. C'est son président Mamadou Louda Baldé qui a lancé cet appel à l'occasion d'un match de gala auquel il a participé ce samedi, 9 janvier 2021, à Dixinn, a constaté un reporter de Guineematin.com qui était sur place.

Ils sont plus de 300 personnes : des responsables et militants de l'opposition ainsi que des activistes de la société civile, qui sont détenus aujourd'hui, la

plupart sans jugement, à la maison centrale de Conakry. Ils ont été arrêtés et écroués à cause de leur opposition au 3^{ème} mandat du président Alpha Condé. Et, cette situation ne laisse pas indifférent le président du P.U.R, Mamadou Louda Baldé. Le jeune leader politique joint sa voix à celle de nombreux acteurs politiques et sociaux du pays pour exhorter les autorités à libérer ces opposants pour faire baisser les tensions dans le pays, et à ouvrir un dialogue pour aplanir les divergences entre le pouvoir et l'opposition.

« Tout le monde appelle à la paix. Mais pour obtenir la paix, il y a des préliminaires, c'est-à-dire le dialogue. Et pour baisser la tension dans notre pays, il faut libérer tous les détenus politiques.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Melvyn Krauss

L'aubaine du Brexit pour l'Europe et les USA

STANFORD - La plupart des Européens se réjouissent que Joe Biden devienne bientôt le prochain président des États-Unis. Il est moins sûr qu'ils réalisent que la politique économique de Biden mettra l'euro et l'Europe dans une impasse. La nouvelle administration américaine voudra que l'euro reste fort par rapport au dollar afin de continuer à faire tourner l'économie américaine à plein régime.

Dans le but d'augmenter les dépenses consacrées à la réponse à la pandémie, à l'environnement et aux infrastructures, la Maison-Blanche de Biden fera sans aucun doute pression sur la Réserve fédérale américaine pour qu'elle maintienne la valeur du dollar à un niveau bas, quel que soit le nombre de mesures de relance budgétaire qu'elle parvient à faire accepter au Congrès. Et, après avoir accordé tant de faveurs à Donald Trump, le président de la Fed, Jay Powell, ne sera pas en mesure de dire non à Biden. Dans ce contexte, ce fut un coup de génie pour Biden de nommer Janet Yellen au poste de secrétaire au Trésor. En tant que prédécesseur de Powell à la Fed, elle y exerce toujours une influence significative. Wall Street a raison de parier fortement contre le dollar américain pour un an ou deux.

L'approche politique attendue de Biden aura un effet spectaculaire sur l'économie européenne, qui reste fortement dépendante des exportations. En 2019, les exportations représentaient 46,9% du PIB de l'Allemagne, 31,8% de celui de la France et 31,5% de celui de l'Italie. Les Européens ne peuvent pas se permettre de rester les bras croisés et de regarder l'euro se renforcer au point d'étrangler leurs exportations.

La meilleure solution serait que l'Allemagne déploie une relance budgétaire, car cela « internaliserait » une bonne partie du commerce de l'UE et diminuerait ainsi l'importance de l'appréciation de l'euro par rapport aux autres devises. Au lieu d'exporter vers les États-Unis, les Italiens pourraient exporter davantage vers l'Allemagne et d'autres pays du nord de la zone euro, puisque la relance supplémentaire aura fourni les moyens d'augmenter les achats en provenance du sud. Les Européens ont un énorme marché intérieur ; il est temps de l'utiliser, ne serait-ce que pour militer contre un euro galopant qui, autrement, pourrait diviser l'Union européenne.

Tout comme les États-Unis ont imposé un assouplissement quantitatif à l'Europe pour sauver sa propre économie face à un euro surévalué en 2014, la politique de Biden imposera probablement une politique budgétaire expansionniste aux Allemands pour la même raison. Si cela se produit, le facteur décisif cette fois-ci aura été le Brexit. Si le Royaume-Uni n'avait pas quitté l'UE, les chances d'une relance budgétaire allemande et d'un nouveau modèle de commerce internalisé au sein de l'UE auraient été proches de zéro.

Comme Karl Kaiser, un ancien directeur du Conseil allemand des relations étrangères, l'a expliqué à Roger Cohen du New York Times, « Le Brexit a rendu [la chancelière allemande] Angela Merkel prête à abandonner des positions qui étaient sacrées ». Merkel craignait que d'autres

quittent l'UE si l'Allemagne ne modifiait pas sa politique financière. De même, le nouveau fonds de relance de l'UE de 750 milliards d'euros, peut-être la plus grande réussite de Merkel, n'aurait pas vu le jour si les Britanniques étaient restés dans le bloc. Comme l'explique Cohen, « L'Union européenne peut désormais emprunter comme le fait un gouvernement - un pas vers une stature souveraine et un moyen de financer le fonds de relance pandémique de 918 milliards de dollars, qu'une présence britannique aurait probablement bloqué ».

Il semblerait que les Britanniques aient quitté l'UE au bon moment. Le nouveau président américain, confronté à une série de demandes politiques urgentes dans son pays, aura fortement tendance à pousser les Allemands exactement dans la direction qu'ils doivent prendre - vers un nouveau modèle de relance budgétaire européenne plus forte et de commerce internalisé.

Étant donné que cette évolution, qui pourrait s'avérer un antidote puissant au populisme européen, aiderait à harmoniser les relations entre les États-Unis et l'UE et profiterait à la fois aux économies américaine et européenne, personne, ni à Washington, DC, ni à Bruxelles, ne devrait pleurer le départ de la Grande-Bretagne. Les Allemands ne sont peut-être pas désireux d'adopter un modèle commercial internalisé, mais ils devraient reconnaître que le Brexit, dans ce cas, est bon pour l'Europe. Il a introduit la possibilité d'un modèle mixte combinant politique budgétaire et politique monétaire, qui serait bien plus efficace que l'approche strictement monétaire qui a dominé l'élaboration des politiques de l'UE depuis la crise financière de 2008.

Certes, la Banque centrale européenne a fait des merveilles avec sa politique monétaire expansionniste des douze dernières années. La présidente de la BCE, Christine Lagarde, et son prédécesseur, Mario Draghi, méritent d'être félicités pour leurs décisions politiques audacieuses. L'écart de rendement des obligations souveraines entre les pays du nord et les pays du sud de la zone euro s'étant considérablement réduit, la BCE a réussi à intégrer financièrement les deux régions pour la première fois. De plus, les rendements des actifs périphériques à plus haut risque sont maintenant à des niveaux historiquement bas ou proches de ceux-ci.

Ces développements financiers ont été importants pour l'unité et la solidarité européennes. Mais l'histoire montre que la politique monétaire ne peut pas, à elle seule, assurer une forte croissance économique à long terme. Bien que l'euro continue d'atteindre de nouveaux sommets, l'économie européenne est dans un marasme et la BCE est toujours en dessous de son objectif d'inflation « en dessous mais proche de 2% ». Au cours de sept des huit dernières années, l'inflation a été plus proche de 1% que de 2%, et le marché s'attend à ce que cela se poursuive au cours de la prochaine décennie.

C'est inacceptable. Heureusement, en permettant d'intégrer la politique budgétaire dans le mix politique de l'UE, le Brexit est précisément ce dont l'Europe a besoin pour mener une politique de stabilisation macro-économique plus efficace et pour faire face à la politique monétaire non coopérative de la Fed.

GOL launches newly designed license plates

By Emmanuel Mundaye

The Ministry of Transport (MOT) in collaboration with the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) launches new categories of license plates for vehicles, tricycles and motorbikes plying the streets, with a caveat to members of the Legislature for breaching traffic rules.

Speaking during the formal launch at the Ministry of Transport in Monrovia, the Chief for Public Safety of the Liberia National Police (LNP) John Saah, who deputized for the Inspector General of Police Col. Patrick Sudue, disclosed that the police have observed that some legislators and vehicle owners usually transfer one of their license plates to other vehicles in violation of the traffic law of Liberia.

He said to discourage this practice, the Ministry of Transport and the Liberia Revenue Authority have introduced Windshield Stickers, as a new requirement for all moving vehicles in Liberia.

Mr. Saah said it is unfortunate that the Police would have to go after vehicle owners whenever their license plates expired, contrary to other countries where license plates are renewed voluntarily.

He noted that the practice here does not only deny government needed revenue but also defraud it from collecting lawful taxes.

He disclosed that besides, the police have observed that

most vehicle owners register their vehicles as private, but at the same time use them for commercial purposes, saying, this has come to an end with the introduction of the windshield stickers in the country.

Saah explained that with this new measure, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for any vehicle owner to defraud government of revenue, as the stickers carry license plate numbers, which cannot be removed through any means.

Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Transport, Deputy Minister for Land and Rail J. Darius Kollie, said the new windshield stickers are a new requirement for all moving vehicles in the country.

He said they bear mark, model, and VIN numbers of all vehicles, making it easier for routine inspection by both the Ministry and the Liberia National Police (LNP).

Deputy Minister Kollie revealed it is customary that the ministry changes or modifies designs of all vehicle license plates every five years.

He said the team, which includes MDMC, Techno Brain, LRA, and employees of the Ministry of Transport began the process about six months ago with the objectives of improving current license plates, matching international standards, and making it almost impossible to duplicate, obliterate risk of fraud, as well as add technology to service delivery, operational efficiencies, ensure National Security Compliance in terms of identification of all Land Transport, while increasing

government revenue by an astronomical proportion.

Besides, he disclosed that in coming months, government will introduce new modes of payment such as Mobile Money, Online Payment, and Visa Mastercard Payment.

The Commissioner for Taxes at the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) who deputized for Commissioner General Thomas Doe-Nah at the occasion, assured the new process will be convenient for everyone, including those residing in the counties.

This process, he continues, will further assist government in generating between four to six million dollars. The Managing Director of the MDMC Mr. John Youbouty whose company printed the new license plates, said the MDMC since the regime of former President Charles Taylor has been printing license plates for the government and will continue to work with the Ministry of Transport in the process.

He said license plates remain the same but in various colors for vehicles such as SOE, GOL, PMC, CMC, among others.

Mr. Garlo Brown, Chairman of the Committee on license plates at the Ministry of Transport who provide an overview of the process expressed gratitude to members of the committee for their hard work, while paying tribute to one of its fallen members. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Incomplete senate

Starts from back page

before the hearing officer of the commission and the Supreme Court for allegations leveled against them by their respective major contenders.

She narrated that the commission being law-abiding and a subscriber to the rule of law has placed preliminary hold on the certification program until the matters are concluded legally.

Those certificated by the commission include; Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon; Grand Bassa County Senator NyonbleeKarna Lawrence;

former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representative, now Bong County Senator Prince Moya; former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Margibi County Senator James Emmanuel Nuquay, and former soccer star, River Gee County Senator Jonathan (Boy Charles) Sengbew.

This is first in recent Liberian electoral history that the NEC conducted elections with such low result, while 90 percent of the contenders are now using the legal system to seek elective post. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Citizens on Speaker's

Starts from back page

Chambers made huge cash donations, including food items, medical supplies and sanitary materials without mentioning any intention of completing the projects he has embarked upon.

According to the aggrieved citizens, while in the county last year, the Speaker toured

incomplete projects are Speaker Chambers' Legislative Projects that were funded during the previous regime, but came to standstill in 2017, due to his constant attacks on the then administration.

Responding to the allegation, the constituency coordinator in the Office of the



Cont'd from page 5

'Intelligence, character

more than a \$100-worth of gold bullion, coins or certificates became a criminal act, called hoarding, according to investopedia.

He added that hoarding in gold bullion became illegal again in the US in 1974, saying with these measures instituted by the United States in 1933 and 1974 which are

worth copying, those examples can create sound conditions of action-oriented frameworks, knowing that whether hoarding of commodities or hoarding of currency can cause tragedies and spark up painful economic instability.

Chambers suggested that there is a compelling need to institute serious action-oriented

frameworks or laws to address the evil network of hoarding.

During the third sitting of the 54th Legislature at the House of Representatives, there were 69 regular sessions, 47 special sessions and 20 appearances of Ministers and Directors.-- *Edited by Winston W. Parley*

several towns, villages and held meetings with them, rather focusing on need to revisit the Concession Agreement with the Cavalla Rubber Cooperation (CRC) and the Maryland Oil Palm Plantation (MOPP).

They disclosed the

Speaker Robert P. Weah said, Chambers hasn't abandoned the projects, adding that plans underway to ensure they are completed and dedicated.

Mr. Weah said about US\$36,000 is being earmarked for completion of those projects. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Cont'd from page 5

Red Cross donates

any other tangible thing. Patience's two legs are paralyzed and becoming smaller with her toes sticking tightly together.

Patience is breast-feeding her third child, but she looks poor in health owing to the lack of food and medication, a situation compounded by no good sleeping place for them.

Meanwhile, the Liberian Red Cross, as a premiere humanitarian institution in

the country, has indicated that while there is no major disaster and other emergencies at the moment, there are increasingly compelling humanitarian needs on the ground that demand urgent support.

Better livelihood, improved access to safe-drinking water, adequate food and better healthcare for vulnerable people are needs that cannot be ignored, it stated.

The Liberian Red Cross is not

only providing relief assistance to people living with vulnerabilities, including various disabilities, but is also building their resilience and restoring hope to ensure a better living condition.

It is also currently financially challenged, and is therefore calling for increasing support from everyone, including the government, corporate institutions and donor partners, to enable it to address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the communities.



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA IMMIGRATION SERVICE (LIS)
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
MONROVIA



CONFIRMATION CLEARANCE

This confirms that **Ms. Christina Chea** of the City of Brewerville, reported to the Liberia Immigration Service (LIS) reference to his damaged Liberian passport with number **PP0017194** issued in Monrovia. As an attestation, please see **(Interpol Confirmation Clearance)**. We at LIS have inserted said information into our damaged/lost/stolen passport database.

In view thereof, this is for your official information as it constitutes our official attestation of the above mentioned fact and request that you render her any assistance as it relates to his stolen passport.

Given under my hand and seal this 11th Day of January A. D. 2021, in the City of Monrovia, Republic of Liberia.

Robert W. Agb...
COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF IMMIGRATION

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NEC orders ballots recount in Rivercess

The Board of Commissioners (BoC) of the National Elections Commission (NEC) has ordered a recount of ballots in 7 of the 111 polling places in Rivercess County, weeks after it declared journalist Willington Gevon Smith the winner of the December 8 election in that part of the country.

NEC took the decision in a ruling Monday 11 January 2021 following a motion filed against the result by

NEC Chair Davidetta Browne Lansanah ordered the recount following the ruling of the NECs BOC that a re-count will be conducted in 7 out of the 111 polling places in Rivercess County.

In other cases Monday, the NEC BoC also handed down ruling in cases involving CDC, Alex Tyler, Appellant Verse NEC and Edwin Snowe first and second respondents respectively.

Others were the Grand Gedeh County case, Liberia

representing Alex Tyler, that the full minutes from previous hearings be served.

In the Board's Ruling Monday, in the case, Liberia Restoration Party, through Thomas Yaya Nimely verses NEC, and Zoe Penneh in the Grand Gedeh county case alleging electoral irregularities, the BOC through its Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah granted the motion for the full minutes to be given to



Senator-Elect, Willington Gevon Smith



NEC BOSS, Davidetta Browne Lansanah

independent candidate Steve Tequah.

Lawyers representing Mr. Tequah were praying that the BOC will order a re-count in all of the 111 centers across Rivercess County.

Liberians went to the polls on December 8, 2020 in a midterm election to elect 15 new senators. NEC on Friday certificated five of the 15 senators saying the results of 10, some of whom it had initially declared as winners were being disputed.

Restoration Party, by and through Thomas Yaya Nimely, Appellant, verses CDC, by and through Zoe Emmanuel Penneh, Appellee and the Maryland County case, CDC, by and through James Bannie verses H. Dan Marias, Independent.

In the Bomi county case, CDC, by and through Alex Tyler verses NEC first respondent and Edwin Snowe second respondent, the BOC, through its Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah granted the motion of Cllr. Amara Sheriff

appealing party.

The BOC, in the Maryland County case, with motion electoral irregularities, Dan Morias Independent Candidate verses NEC and James Bannie, the NEC's BOC, through its Chairperson granted the motion for continuous as pray for by both lawyers, Cllr. Stanley Kpakaline and Charles Harris representing their separate parties.

VP Taylor celebrates CDC's defeat in Bong

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor has hailed the decision of Bong County residents to have voted against the re-election bid of former Senator Henry Yallah on 8 December, last year.

Mr. Yallah has been replaced at the Liberian Senate through the ballot box by former Deputy House Speaker, Mr. Prince Moye, a confidante of Mrs. Howard-Taylor.

Henry Yallah was whipped by Deputy Speaker Prince Moye with over 14,000 votes difference in the just-ended special senatorial election.

The Liberian Vice

President, who heads the National Patriotic Party (NPP), a constituent party of the ruling CDC, argues that Senator Yallah was not worthy of the votes of the Bong County people, as he had squandered the opportunity given him to serve the county in 2011.

The former Bong County senator stated that the outgoing Senator Yallah mismanaged several positions and opportunities, during his reign as Senator and Chair of the County's Legislative Caucus.

Commenting on Senator Yallah's selection by the CDC as its candidate, VP Howard-Taylor explained that she was overruled by some officials of the Coalition for Democratic Change, and, as such, the party

deserved the result.

Madam Taylor indicated that she was vocal about her stance not to support Mr. Yallah, because she was aware that he was not the choice of the people.

Meanwhile, former Senator Yallah has commended the people of Bong County for their decisions.

"I am happy that you were able to cast your ballots for me. If over 24,000 people can vote for me, that means that you know my importance and that I am still your choice in future elections," he concluded.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

VP Taylor decries

Cont'd from page 6

ability to govern, but the ability to give the citizenry the kind of Nation they truly deserve.

Meanwhile, she reports that records of the Liberian Senate show that there were 34 legislations introduced during the period under review, noting that of those, 27 were passed, 2 were vetoed and 5 were sent to various committees for scrutiny and advice. She says the senate has an initial workload of only 5 draft legislations to begin this session, which she note, is commendable compared to previous years.

"As you consider important issues for attention and resolution, permit me to draw your attention to the results of

the just-ended Referendum and the need to carve a way forward for a much needed holistic review of our constitution, Gender Equity quotas, local vendor payments due, delayed salary payments in some institutions, the need for a more aggressive approach to the provision of basic services, National security, the need to expand the national tax base by creating new taxes in the tourism and agricultural sectors, which will reduce the current burden on our people, and the need to ensure a realistic budget for the National Pro Poor Agenda." VP Taylor recommends to the 4th session of the 54th Legislature. - Editing by Jonathan Browne

"ABWA Congress Wil

Cont'd from page 6

among the issues were how to promote the accountancy profession in the West African region.

"Everything we do at these sub meeting is to see how we can handle all accountancy professional who are members of ABWA, and ensure that they run their institutes at the international level that is acceptable worldwide," she added.

For his part the president of the Ghanaian Institute of Chartered Accountants Prof. Williams AbayaaweinAtuilik praised LICPA preparedness of hosting the ABWA Congress in August of next year, and the country's interest in making the institution member to the international body.

"One of the many reason why we hosting this meeting here in Liberia is to assess the preparedness of Liberia to host the second ECOWAS ABWA Congress, and we are satisfied about the things we saw the infrastructure, Hotel, Security among others"

According to him the Association of Accountancy Bodies in West Africa or ABWA has selected Liberia to host the 2022 ABWA Congress in Liberia through LICPA, based on its interest and preparedness showing. The decision to select Liberia was reached at the end of a three day ABWA governing Council meeting.

Meanwhile the President of LICPA Victor Tawone said the hosting of the Congress in Liberia is a great achievement for his leadership and a boost to the struggling Liberia economy.

"I want to extend thanks and appreciation to the President of ABWA, the President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Ghana, Council members for accepting Liberia's request to host ECOWAS ABWA congress in Liberia" He said.

Mr. Tawone noted that at the end of the congress, recommendations will be made on how governance can be improve in the public sector in Liberia and the sub-region.

Mr. Tawone at the same time called on past presidents, council members and members of the Institute for collaborative effect in making the congress a success.

LICPA was established by an act of the National Legislature in June 2011 to regulate the accounting profession in Liberia.

The institution is empowered to set standards, license accounting and assurance practitioners, build capacity and do all things appertaining to regulating the accounting and assurance professions aimed at building a strong and vibrant public accounting sector in the country.

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Incomplete senate resumes work



majority, which constitutes 20 senators of the membership, may conduct business on behalf of the entire Senate or else, the sitting would be illegal and unconstitutional.

This means any attempt for one senator to stay away from the official resumption, the entire senate would have remained closed constitutionally.

Of the 15 elections that were conducted throughout the country last December, the National Elections Commission only certificated five senators-elect, leaving the ten in the hands of hearing officer at the NEC and the Supreme Court.

Last week, during the certification program of winners from the Special Senatorial elections, the NEC was expected to have certificated 15 winners from the senatorial race, but Chairperson Browne Lansanah said, of the 15 winners, ten winners according to records from the NEC, face challenges

senators from each county. But the conduct of the recent Special Senatorial election which should have produced 15 new senators failed due to electoral dispute cases currently before the National Elections Commission.

According to the Constitution of Liberia, a two-thirds

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Twenty of the 30 senators at the Capitol resumed official work Monday, January 11, after their annual break.

Statutorily, there are 30 senators representing all 15 political sub-divisions of the country, meaning two

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

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Citizens on Speaker's back for abandoned projects

Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

Angry citizens of Maryland County Electoral District#2 have frowned on Speaker Bhofal Chambers, who is their representative, for failing to complete projects initiated in the county.

The projects include market and school buildings, among others. Marketers at the Pleebo district small market, students and others

want the Speaker to complete projects he started in the district.

Speaking to this paper over the weekend, they said Speaker Chambers began these projects during the 2017 election, having earlier served the district under former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf thus, the long-serving Representative ever in the history of the County.

According to them, despite his long-term service, the PleeboSodoken District



Lawmaker is yet to complete three of his projects identified since 2017.

They added that since Speaker Chambers' election for third term, he has always visited the county but his last visit there during the December senatorial by-election, he was overwhelmingly welcomed with the hope that he would have addressed their concerns.

But during his visit,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

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