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# Election tantrum?

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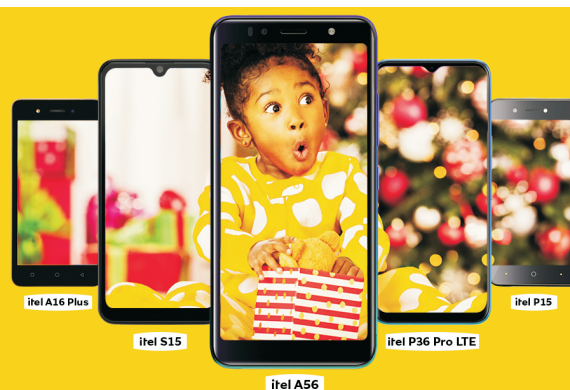
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# Continental News

## Ugandans cheer return of internet after election

Ugandans are celebrating the resumption of internet services after a shutdown was imposed ahead of last week's election.

However, social media platforms remain blocked and are only accessible using Virtual Private Networks (VPN). President Yoweri Museveni, who won an unprecedented sixth term in office, had accused the platforms of being biased.

Bobi Wine, presidential candidate for the opposition National Unity Platform, alleged the poll was marred by fraud. The party's spokesperson Joel Ssenyonyi accused Mr Museveni of shutting down the internet to prevent them from sharing evidence of fraud.

He told the BBC's Newsday programme that the party was in the process of collecting election results forms that have evidence of irregularities.

Mr Ssenyonyi told the Reuters news agency that NUP's offices had been raided.

"They don't want work to continue at our offices because they know that we

are putting together evidence to show the world how much of a fraudster Museveni is," he said. President Museveni said on Saturday that the poll could be the "most cheating-free" in the history of the country.

The electoral commission declared Mr Museveni the winner with 59% of the vote, with his closest challenger Bobi Wine, a pop star whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, garnering 34%.

Mr Museveni has ruled Uganda since 1986.

His party is also on course to secure an overwhelming majority in the 500-member parliament. Bobi Wine has alleged that he was cheated out of victory, accusing Mr Museveni of fraud.

But he has to prove these claims in court and time is running out.

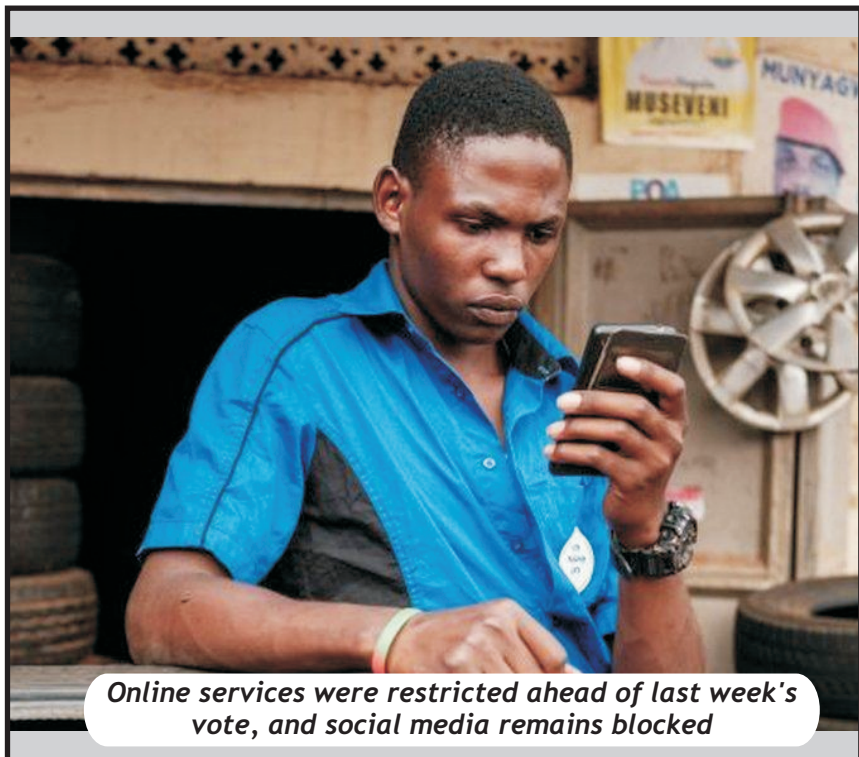
According to Ugandan law, petitioners have 15 days,

after the winner has been announced, to challenge the results at the Supreme Court.

Three days have passed since the declaration and Bobi Wine's supporters worry that he will not get the chance to argue his case in court as soldiers continue to blockade his home. Senior police officers say the move was aimed at preventing the politician from inciting violence. The Africa Elections Watch coalition, which deployed 2,000 poll observers, said it had observed

irregularities.

The European Union and the US did not deploy observer teams, but the US State Department has called for "independent, credible, impartial, and thorough investigations" into "many credible reports" of irregularities in Uganda's general election last week. East African observer missions and also those from the African Union concluded that voting was largely peaceful and noted there were no major incidents to disrupt the exercise. BBC



## Schools reopen across Nigeria despite virus fears



Schools have reopened in Nigeria despite concerns about rising cases of Covid-19.

Pupils arrived wearing face masks and were instructed to wash their hands at the school gates.

It's the first time they've been back since mid-December, when the country declared a second wave of new infections. The academic calendar has been staggered after schools were closed for more than six months last year due to the pandemic.

University students are also resuming face-to-face learning on Monday. They have

been at home for nearly a year due to a strike by lecturers.

Lawmakers had earlier asked the federal government to postpone the planned reopening of schools by three months because of the rising number of coronavirus cases.

The country has recorded more than 10,000 new infections in the last seven days.

A total of 110,387 cases have so far been confirmed, with 1,435 deaths.

Across Africa, cases are continuing to rise, particularly in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. BBC

## Mass starvation fears in Ethiopia's Tigray region

"Hundreds of thousands might starve to death" in Ethiopia's Tigray region, according to a government official quoted in a leaked copy of notes taken at a meeting of humanitarian workers.

The government-run Tigray Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) is assessing needs following the conflict there. The federal government declared victory at the end of November.

But sporadic fighting has continued and the UN has

described the humanitarian situation as "severe".

It added that "reports indicate that food is not available or is extremely limited in markets, posing increased risks of malnutrition". The ECC says that 4.5 million people need emergency food aid in Tigray, according to a figure quoted in a UN report. The population of Tigray is between 5-7 million. More than 500,000 have fled to neighbouring Sudan.

In a statement on Friday, the Ethiopia embassy in London said the authorities wanted to help those in need.

"The government of Ethiopia remains committed to working closely with its humanitarian and development partners to address any outstanding challenges that could hinder the safe, effective, and efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance to all affected populations," it said.

The UN has said that access

to parts of Tigray is still limited but some aid is getting through.

Communication with much of the region remains difficult as phone lines and the internet have been cut making the verification of reports hard. According to the leaked notes taken by a participant at an ECC meeting on 8 January, an official from the interim administration of the central part of Tigray "said that the situation [on] the ground is dire". "Food and non-food items or other livelihoods are either looted or destroyed. He also added that if urgent emergency assistance is not

mobilised hundreds of thousands might starve to death." "People are dying because of starvation. In Adwa people are dying while they are sleeping," he was quoted as saying.

Another official, quoted in notes from a meeting on 1 January describing the humanitarian needs, said that "while we were on the road and visit different places, people asked our escort for a single biscuit".

Ethiopia's defence forces entered Tigray early in November to oust the region's ruling party after its troops had captured federal military



The conflict in Tigray has caused widespread destruction



# EDITORIAL

## Govt. should pay poll workers

IT IS SADDEN, disgraceful and very embarrassing that poll workers hired by the National Elections Commission for the December 8, 2020 special senatorial election and national referendum are crying and protesting for stipend owed them over a month since the polls were conducted across the country. We just can't comprehend that the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning would delay in providing money to the NEC to pay stipends such as US\$50, US\$75 or US\$100 to poll workers who served under very strenuous circumstances during the poll.

ON THE EVE of the election in December 2020 we vividly recalled that polling staff across Montserrado County demanded stipend before being deployed. The ugly situation they tried to avoid has now caught up with them: The elections are over but pay cannot come. When will they receive it? Only heaven knows.

NEC CHAIRPERSON DAVIDETTA Browne-Lansanah last week appealed to protesting polling staff to exercise patience as the Commission continues to engage the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to make funds available to complete payment for all poll workers throughout the country.

MADAM BROWNE-LANSANAH SAID Thursday, 14 January the Commission, through its Finance Section is in daily discussion with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to quickly disburse remaining Five Million United States dollars (US\$5 Million) to clear all debts it owns not only poll workers, but vendors who also rendered electoral related services, including car rentals, printing, and the media.

BUT CHAIRPERSON BROWNE-LANSANAH should have known ever since that when she sliced her US\$17 million budget for the 2020 special senatorial elections and the National Referendum by US\$4million, she was already running into trouble such as the one before the doorstep of the Commission, for none of her predecessors had conducted nationwide election on a meager budget of US\$13 million.

WE BELIEVE HER decision to have accepted to operate on such a low budget for the senatorial election, national referendum and two by-elections for the House of Representatives was a very big mistake that she might be difficult, if not impossible, to correct under this administration.

MADAM BROWNE-LANSANAH WOULD face a serious task in convincing both lawmakers at the Capitol and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to have an operational budget above US\$17 million for future election. She brought the bar very low for an important national endeavor that has left the Commission walloping in debts and strangled.

Apart from donor's support, we stand to be corrected, but the Government of Liberia's contribution to the December 8, 2020 senatorial election did not pass US\$5 million. We Liberians, including government always want others to do for us what ought to do for ourselves, as a nation.

THOUGH THE GOVERNMENT is faced with shortage of cash in banks, crucial issue like election should not be taken lightly. It requires adequate planning and funding to make outcomes successful, including payment to polling staff and vendors.

THE MINISTRY OF Finance and Development Planning should exert all efforts in providing money for the National Elections Commission to enable the electoral house meets its financial obligations to vendors, media houses and polling staff for services rendered during the election.

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

# COMMENTARY

By Michael Chui  
& Matthias Evers

## Long Live the Bio-Revolution

*The COVID-19 pandemic has increased threats to food security around the world, underscoring the need for innovation to make agriculture and aquaculture more resilient and efficient. Fortunately, the biological innovations needed to do just that are quickly becoming competitive and scalable.*

SAN FRANCISCO - In November, the United Nations World Food Program and the International Organization for Migration warned of the “unprecedented” threat to food security brought about by COVID-19. The pandemic’s collateral damage could turn out to be even worse than the disease itself.

Most leading international institutions with an interest in food security have now called for action to prevent future outbreaks of infectious disease, and to make food systems more resistant to shocks. Biological innovation must factor into our thinking as we strive to meet the dual challenge of feeding a growing population and managing natural resources sustainably.

Even before the pandemic, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) warned that more than 820 million people did not have enough to eat. With the global population expected to grow by roughly two billion people by 2050, improving access to affordable and healthy food will be critical in reducing malnutrition and the associated health-care costs.

Innovation in farming and food production is as old as agriculture itself, yet it is sorely needed today. Recent research by the McKinsey Global Institute finds that biological innovation in agriculture, aquaculture, and food production could yield economic returns of up to \$1.2 trillion over the next decade or two. To put that into context, the global food and agribusiness industry is worth about \$5 trillion today.

What could deliver this growth? The most promising innovations include alternative proteins, marker-assisted breeding, genetic engineering of plant and animal traits, and microbiome mapping and modification. Consumer interest in alternative protein sources is increasing globally, owing to concerns about health, the environment, and animal welfare.

Plant-based meat substitutes are already widely sold, though the economics of their production needs to be improved. Plant-based milk, for example, accounts for 15% of retail milk sales in the United States and 8% in Britain. And companies like Clara Foods are using advanced yeast engineering and fermentation technologies to produce animal-free egg-white proteins.

Likewise, cultured meat and seafood - whereby muscle tissue grown from cells in the lab is made to mimic the protein profile of animal meat - is on the horizon. Earlier this month, Singapore became the first government to approve the sale of lab-grown meat (cultured chicken created by the San Francisco-based company Eat Just). Over the next ten years, cultured meat and seafood could become cost competitive with conventional animal proteins.

Selective breeding of plants and animals is not new, but marker-assisted breeding has made the process cheaper and significantly faster, because it enables the selection of desirable traits even if the precise genes that generate them have not yet been identified or understood. The plunging cost of DNA sequencing means that thousands of potential markers can be detected simultaneously. Whereas developing new crop varieties previously could require 25 years, it now can be done in as few as seven. And because

marker-assisted selection is not yet as prevalent in developing countries as it is in advanced economies, there are significant opportunities for growth.

Since the development of the first genetically engineered plant (tobacco) in the early 1980s, genetic engineering has become well established. But, again, the technology is still improving rapidly. New tools like CRISPR have made gene editing more precise, allowing for crops to be tailored much more effectively to local conditions such as temperature and soil type. CRISPR-edited produce could land on grocery store shelves in the US over the next ten years, starting with sweeter strawberries that have a longer shelf life.

Another promising area of innovation is portable DNA-sequencing devices, which could soon be used by farmers to diagnose plant diseases, possibly improving quality and yield while eliminating or reducing use of pesticides. Genetic editing to improve health and productivity in food animals such as dairy and beef cattle, swine, and poultry is still nascent, but interest in the field has soared since the 2019 outbreak of African swine fever.

Similarly, the mapping of the microbiome - including bacteria, fungi, and viruses - is helping researchers find ways to increase the resilience of crops, animals, and soil to drought and disease. Here, too, advances in computing and sequencing are accelerating the pace of discovery, such that the biotech company Novozymes is already offering genetically engineered microbes to use in place of yield- and quality-boosting chemicals.

Many of these biological innovations can help us address not only hunger but also resource depletion and broader climate risks. According to the FAO, raising livestock for meat, eggs, and milk generates 14.5% of global greenhouse-gas emissions; and one-third of all cropland is used to produce animal feed. Agriculture is also the largest contributor to deforestation, occupying 43% of the world’s ice-free and desert-free land. The plant-based “Impossible Burger” embodies 89% fewer emissions than a traditional beef burger.

Climate change reinforces the need for biological innovations, such as crops that have been engineered to withstand severe weather, or to grow in new environments, including areas with extreme temperatures, high salinity, or frequent droughts.

Many innovations are already contributing to food security, and the full potential of affordable DNA sequencing and CRISPR technology will continue to be revealed over time. It will take longer for lab-grown meat to make inroads, but when it does, the impact is likely to be felt far and wide.

Regulation and public perceptions have long played a role - both positive and negative - in biological innovation. The first wave of commercially available genetically engineered products has not yet reached many countries, and 19 EU member states still support partial or full bans on their sale. In Africa, genetically modified food products are legal in only a tiny handful of countries.

Safety is clearly paramount. But if regulators and consumers’ concerns can be addressed, the bio-revolution could take us a long way toward tackling global challenges like food security and climate change.



# Europe's Vaccination Debacle

*With under-supplied vaccination facilities and overcrowded COVID-19 wards, the European Union is reaping what it sowed last summer when it decided to put the European Commission in charge of preordering vaccines. There was neither a legal basis nor any economic justification for central planning.*

MUNICH - A storm is raging over the European Union's failure to have ordered more of the approved COVID-19 vaccines ahead of time. Stéphane Bancel, the CEO of the US pharmaceutical company Moderna, which gained approval for its vaccine shortly after Pfizer/BioNTech, claims that the EU has relied too much on "vaccines from its own laboratories."

Did the European Commission prioritize supporting its own pharmaceutical industry over protecting human lives? In fact, matters are not as simple as that. Contrary to what Bancel wants us to believe, the EU has actually ordered too little of its own vaccine. After all, the vaccine that is being administered most widely across the West was developed by a German company, BioNTech, and thus comes from the EU (though it was tested and partly produced in partnership with Pfizer in the United States and with Fosun Pharma in China).

Far from having ordered too little of the "American" vaccine, the EU sat back while the US and other countries stocked up on doses of a vaccine that was created and produced in a German lab. The EU is guilty not of protectionism, but of institutional inflexibility. The slow vaccine rollout in many European countries is the result of the EU's failure to coordinate the interests of the various member states. Whereas some countries balked at the price of BioNTech's mRNA vaccine, others were skeptical about its new gene-based technological underpinnings, and still others simply did not recognize the urgency of the situation, having assumed that the worst of the pandemic had already passed.

To be sure, an inter-European rivalry between national vaccine producers may have contributed to the EU's unwillingness to preorder more of the German vaccine last summer, as America and other countries did. As a small start-up from Mainz, BioNTech had little chance of being heard above the din of lobbying at the European Commission by established European pharmaceutical giants.

Whatever the reason, the severe delay in the supply of vaccines in Europe is now a fact. While the US, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Canada jostled last July and August to secure huge batches of the BioNTech vaccine, the EU initially placed its orders only with Sanofi and AstraZeneca, both of which subsequently admitted difficulties in clinical trials. Not until November - when journalists started asking pointed questions - did the EU strike its first deal for a batch of the BioNTech vaccine. This was followed in December and early January by further purchases, including from Moderna.

Due to the delay in ordering, the deliveries are coming late. After all, producers are operating on a first-come, first-served basis and need time to build up new production sites. As a result, European news media are filled with forlorn images of empty vaccination centers that have run out of supply, alongside footage of overstretched intensive care units. A sense of imminent horror has seized a frightened European public. At this rate, the EU will have no chance of catching up with the US, the UK, Israel, and other leading vaccinators until this summer.

The EU contends that it diversified its orders early on because it couldn't know which vaccine candidates would succeed. But that is a cheap excuse, considering that it still didn't order nearly enough from any producer to be able to vaccinate its people in the event that only one vaccine candidate reached the approval stage - a distinct possibility at the time.

If the EU had taken the risk of purchasing enough doses to cover two-thirds of its population from each of the six producers it dealt with, it would have needed to spend just €29 billion (\$35 billion). For comparison, that is how much income the EU economy has been losing over the course of just ten days of the COVID-19 crisis. And given that not one but two vaccines have now turned out to be highly effective, the EU would have ended up with a surplus of high-quality doses, which it could have donated to some 300 million people across the developing world.

No single decision-maker bears the blame for Europe's vaccination debacle. But this episode should make clear that EU member states were wrong to entrust the European Commission with the purchase of vaccines last summer. Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union subjects the EU to the Subsidiarity Principle, which leaves political actions up to member states, except in cases where supranational action can be proven to be more efficient. When it came to securing an ample supply of vaccines, this principle was willfully ignored. There is neither the legal necessity nor a convincing economic justification for central planning in the procurement of vaccines. Had member-state governments been able to buy vaccines independently and in direct competition with other countries worldwide, they might have had to pay a slightly higher price, but they would have placed their orders much earlier to avoid missing the boat. And if orders had been placed earlier, vaccine producers would have been able to invest more in expanding their production capacities.

In the end, central planning and lobbying by established producers created Europe's vaccine debacle. Europeans will now have to live with the consequences of an avoidable tragedy.

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# Merkel Minus Angela

*Armin Laschet's surprise victory in the CDU leadership contest makes him the front-runner to become Germany's next chancellor, but it doesn't guarantee him the job. Laschet will need to defeat Markus Söder, the ambitious and politically flexible leader of the CDU's Bavarian sister party.*

HAMBURG - The election of a European party leader - one of roughly 200 in the European Union - is normally not big news. But it is when the party is the strongest political force in the EU's largest and richest country.

Over the weekend, Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) anointed Armin Laschet, the unassuming, friendly-faced prime minister of North Rhine-Westphalia, as its chairman. Laschet is not exactly a star on the world stage. But remember the name. Statistically, a Christian Democrat is the odds-on favorite for the chancellor's job.

Five of Germany's eight postwar chancellors have hailed from the CDU - from Konrad Adenauer to the current incumbent, Angela Merkel. And Merkel's party currently leads in national polls by a wide margin, making it a safe bet that Merkel's successor will again hail from the conservative camp after the general election in September.

Laschet faces a two-step process: first CDU chair, then chancellor candidate. Historically, the party chair has had first dibs as standard-bearer, but not necessarily a lock on the nomination, which is scheduled for March.

But, before we get to the complications, let's look at Laschet, who went into the convention predicted to lose. With his surprise victory, he is now the front-runner for the chancellor candidacy. So, let's posit that he will form the next government. What is to be expected?

In three words, "Merkel minus Angela" - maximum continuity. Laschet does not promise a new dawn, or a break with 16 years of Merkel's centrism and its creeping leftward tilt. That shift has now been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is driving a massive expansion of government spending and redistribution across the West. Trillions of euros are being showered on individuals and "system-relevant" corporations.

Expect "Merkelism" in foreign policy as well. In the three-way race for the top party job, Laschet's two rivals - Friedrich Merz and Norbert Röttgen - promised to rebalance German interests in favor of "Westernism": more for defense and NATO, fewer goodies for Russia and China. Laschet, though, would follow in Merkel's footsteps.

Call it "diplomatic centrism." Don't let the United States drag Germany into conflicts with the two giants to the East. Keep your distance from Washington. Try to be on good terms with each and all, as befits Berlin's position in the heart of Europe.

As Chancellor, Laschet would not defy Russia by cutting the Nord Stream 2 pipeline that will pump Russian gas directly into the country, circumventing Poland and Ukraine and increasing German energy dependence on the Kremlin. Nor will Germany exclude Chinese 5G technology from its networks.

A sign of things to come is the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, concluded under German leadership just three weeks before US President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration. With the CAI, Biden's hope of recruiting the EU into a strategic coalition against China evaporated. Indeed, together with the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership - which 15 Asian countries, including China, concluded the previous month - the EU-China deal has left the US out in the cold.

On Europe, the future under Laschet also promises continuity. That means open spigots for the European Central Bank, together with an ever-larger shift of spending and taxing powers to the European Commission, the EU's unelected executive.

In her early years as chancellor, Merkel fought massive transfers of clout and cash to the EU tooth and nail. Now, the debt and transfer union is locked in, never mind who the next chancellor is. Even out of power, Merkel will thus continue to shape the EU's future.

Although probability suggests that Laschet will be Mr. Chancellor once the Federal election ballots are counted on September 26, he will have to strain hard to unify the CDU and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU). Coming from behind at the convention last weekend, he barely made it on the second ballot, winning just 521 of 1001 votes.

Worse, in nationwide polls, just one-third of respondents thought Laschet might "make a good chancellor candidate." Some 55% opted for the CSU's boss Markus Söder, who is sure to challenge Laschet for the nomination. Indeed, Söder has been angling nonstop for the top prize.

What does Söder stand for? A more accurate question would be, "What doesn't he stand for?" Söder has been shifting his positions with great alacrity, moving smoothly from right to left and back, be it on domestic security, immigration, "family values," lockdowns, industrial policy, or a German version of the "Green New Deal." Söder has insisted on Russia sanctions, but he has also made nice with Russian President Vladimir Putin while visiting the Kremlin.

Is there much of a difference between the two leaders of the two wings of German Christian Democracy? Laschet, to repeat, is "Merkel minus Angela." Söder is a politico who tries to project charisma and fortitude, though his past suggests relentless flexibility, also known as indecisiveness or opportunism.

For the rest of the world, it matters little whom the party nominates in March. German multiparty coalition politics is not designed for sudden lurches, as in the case of Donald Trump following Barack Obama in the US. It is always a few degrees to the left or the right, plumbing the depths and steering clear of treacherous shoals - all while remaining finely tuned to the changing moods of the electorate.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# China and Africa: A Closer Community for a Better World

The world will never be the same after COVID-19. Yet in a world changed and changing in ways unseen before, certain things do endure. The fraternity between China and Africa is one of them. Forged in the early nationhood of the People's Republic of China and African countries, such friendship has grown into a towering tree defying winds and rains over the decades.

And certainly, it will not be deterred by COVID-19. From 4 to 9 January 2021, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi started his official visits to the world with a five-nation tour to Africa, a proud tradition upheld by every Chinese foreign minister over the past 30 years. Rain or shine, China and Africa are always there for each other. President Xi Jinping visited Africa on his maiden foreign trip in 2013. Many African leaders, like Tanzanian founding father Julius Nyerere, visited China quite a few times. From building TAZARA to fighting Ebola, China never hesitates to help African brothers and sisters. From applauding China's return to the UN to rebutting unfair accusation against China, Africa always stands with China.

The timing of Foreign Minister's visit cannot be more relevant: 2021 is an anniversary year of diplomatic ties between China and several of the five African countries; the concluding year for the follow-through of Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Summit; and, most importantly, a year when solidarity is vital for humanity to emerge from the challenges of our lifetime.

True friends don't leave each other at the sign of danger, according to an African proverb. When the world is in the depth of winter, due to a coronavirus which no one knew before, solidarity between China and African countries sends a warm spring breeze. For China, it is a snowfall of goodwill letters from African leaders and assistance in kind, priceless as an expression of friendship. For Africa, it is the medical supplies and professionals sent from China in addition to the online experience sharing sessions that China held with African friends.

For example, when Botswana detected its first COVIDcase last March, China was among the first to send medical supplies. Last September, a 46-member



Chinese medical team braved the pandemic to begin their two-year long work in Botswana. At the Princess Marina Hospital in Gaborone and the Nyangabgwe Hospital in Francistown, the Chinese doctors threw themselves into the treatment of urgent cases, including a little boy with acute abdominal disease, often before the patients were tested COVID-positive.



It was more than courtesy when Sethomo Lelatisitswe, Botswana's assistant minister of health and wellness, once commented this, "Botswana will forever cherish the assistance from China".

Now, with China and Africa working together to make vaccines more affordable and accessible in the

developing world, there is a greater chance for humanity to prevail over this trying time.

But the world needs to look beyond the pandemic. China is pursuing national rejuvenation and a better life for its people. So is Africa. With the African Continental Free Trade Area taking off on 1 January 2021 and China reinforcing its domestic market and the international one, a lot more can be done by the two coming together. When it comes to getting things done, China and Africa are no talkers but doers: an MOU was signed between China and Nigeria during Foreign Minister Wang's visit to spearhead bilateral cooperation across the board; Chinese companies like Huawei have been helping with ICT training for the next-generation Nigerian talents; D.R. Congo and Botswana became the 45th and 46th members joining the big family of Belt and Road cooperation; a grand blueprint has been drawn up for China-Tanzania cooperation in infrastructure, human resources training, investment and trade; a demonstration zone of South-South cooperation on climate change will be built to support climate change response in Seychelles, a paradise on the Indian Ocean.

Heading to a shared future with their strengths combined, China and Africa can work together toward a healthy Africa with greater public health capacity, an Africa strong in manufacturing, a connected Africa with across-the-continent infrastructure, trade and financial links, a green Africa that prospers while preserving its grasslands, mountains and lakes, a digital Africa that thrives on the fourth industrial revolution, a bumper African harvest for all Africans, a secure Africa where guns are silenced and peace restored, and an Africa drawing on a greater pool of professional talents.

Sincerity, real results, affinity and good faith. This is the guiding principle set out by President Xi Jinping during his visit to Tanzania in 2013. Up to date, China has built for Africa 6,000 kilometers of railways, the same mileage of highways, over 130 medical facilities and more than 170 schools. China sees to it that every promise be turned into real results.

When the world today suffers the greatest recession since the 1930s, what else is more needed than solidarity and partnership? When the 1.4 billion Chinese and 1.3 billion Africans prosper together, humanity will have a brighter future.

In the 21st century, as in the past, a closer China-Africa community is a force for good for this world.



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## NEC reserved ruling in electoral disputes

The Board of Commissioners of the National Elections Commission, (NEC) has reserved rulings into motions of appeals in the Bomi and Grand Gedeh Counties elections irregularities cases involving Senators Elect Edwin Melvin Snowe and Zoe

after final arguments between lawyers representing both the Complainants and resistance in the Bomi and Grand Gedeh counties cases.

The BOC in the first motion of appeal case, CDC, by and through Alex Tyler versus NEC and Intervener Edwin Melvin Snowe ruled through its

two parties.

In the Grand Gedeh County motion of appeal praying for a re-run in Grand Gedeh County, involving Thomas Yaya Nimely verses Zoe Emmanuel Penneh, the BOC through Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah said ruling into the matter will be reserved for a later date. This was preceded by final arguments between Cllr. Jimmy Bombo, representing Zoe Penneh and Cllr. J. Laveli Supuwood, representing Thomas Yaya Nimely.

In the final motion of appeal case, H. Dan Morais verses NEC, and CDC, through James Biney, the BOC, through its Chairperson said matters into the case will be rescheduled soon for assignment.

Earlier, lawyers representing H. Dan Morais, Cllrs. Wilfred Sayer and Stanley Kparkllen after the case was called for hearing, asked the BOC will grant them their prayer, saying without the full transcribed minutes and documentary evidence it would be difficult to proceed with the case. But lawyers representing James Biney, led by Peter Kerkuleh and Charles Harris took exception to the BOC's decision, saying this was a delay tactic by the complainants to further delay the matter.

Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah said following arguments by lawyers Amara Sheriff and Arthur Johnson, representing Alex Tyler and Attorneys Cephas Teewia, A. Teage Jalloh and Ebenezer Gibson, representing NEC the Intervener, the BOC will reserve ruling and serve notice to the

Emmanuel Penneh respectively.

NEC has at the same time rescheduled the Maryland County case of electoral irregularities involving Senator elect James Biney and H. Dan Morais.

The BOC took the decision on Monday, 18 January 2021

## Government Ban on Airing Costa Show on D-15FM violates Liberia's Constitution

The Center for Media Studies and Peacebuilding (CEMESP) says the action of the Government of Liberia, banning the relay of the "Costa Show" on D-15 radio, violates Liberia's constitution and contradicts the country's expressed commitment to the intent of the Declaration of the Table Mountain to promote strong, free and independent press to watch over public institutions.

Liberia was amongst the first group of countries that signed Declaration of Table Mountain, a continental press freedom agreement that calls on governments to play a germane role that prevents the press from being hindered and punished through 'insult laws' and criminal defamation.

The Government of Liberia on Sunday, January 17, 2021, warned D-15FM, a privately owned commercial station not

to relay the "Costa Show", arguing the host and political commentator, Mr. Henry P. Costa is a "fugitive" from justice, and hence "cannot host radio programs from the United States

meant to communicate to the Liberian audience."

Without attempting to divert from its core focus of

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



## ECOWAS President reports to sub-regional group Parliament

The President of the ECOWAS Commission Jean-Claude Kassi Brou has presented a report on the implementation of the Community's work programme to the ECOWAS Parliament.

President Brou made the presentation during virtual 2nd Ordinary session of the year 2020, of the fifth legislature of the ECOWAS Parliament which commenced the 13th of January 2021.

The session with the President which held in accordance with the provisions Article 32 of the Supplementary Act of the Parliament, also provides the opportunity for the consideration of the Community budget, ensuring that the estimates are directed towards programmes that address the needs of community citizens, among others.

Planning of Ghana.

There were also presentations by the Commission's Commissioners for Telecommunications and Information Technology as well as that of Energy and Mines.

Responding to the various issues raised by the Parliamentarians, President Brou urged members to join hands in the efforts to bring about harmonized methods by which the countries in the regions fight the COVID-19 especially as it relates to procedures for testing, quarantine and other requirements. This he said, was in order to close the discrepancies in the discretionary actions taken by individual countries. He noted that there was a high need for a collective implementation of regional decisions on COVID-19 with a harmonization that should involve all key ministries



ECOWAS Commission Jean-Claude Kassi Brou

The president used the occasion to reaffirm the Commission's Commitment to cooperation with the ECOWAS Parliament in order to advance the cause of regional integration.

The presentation gave insights to the state of affairs regarding outlook, projections and challenges in the various sectors including strides being made in the implementation of community programmes and projects, as the region grapples with the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the session there was also a presentation on the monitoring and evaluation policy of the ECOWAS Commission by Madam Finda Koroma, Vice President of the Commission following introductory remarks on the subject by professor George Yaw Gyan-Baffour, Minister of

of all ECOWAS 15-member countries.

The president also highlighted positive strides in the Industry, energy, Education (with particular reference to girl-child education and Diplomas equivalence) as well as youth development sectors during the period under review.

By the 19th of January 2021, when the session winds up, the Parliamentarians are expected to have considered and adopted, among others, the draft report of the July 2020 Virtual Extraordinary Session, the draft Report of election observation missions and of the election of Community Members of Parliaments by Direct Universal Suffrage, the draft Strategic Plan of the Parliament for the fifth legislature as well as the year 2021 activities plan of the Parliament.



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Deaf and dumb group writes Land Authority

### -following threat of eviction

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The national director of the Organization for the Social Integration of Liberian Deaf (OSILD) Mr. Adrian Z. Sandi, has filed an official complaint before the Liberia Land Authority over threat by heirs of the Brosius Interstate Estate in Mein Clan, Toddee District, in Montserrado

Information gathered reveals Mr. Brosius recently arrived in Liberia from the United States of America but is in hiding to avoid arrest for alleged double transaction of 100 acres of land with the institution.

In an official complaint filed to the Commissioner of the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) Cllr. Kula L. Jackson, Mr. Sandi disclosed that from 2007 to 2009

and John Brosius now serving as Acting administrators.

The Organization for the Social Integration of Liberian Deaf was established since July 1, 1999 to cater to the welfare of people with deaf and dumb complication.

Since its inception, OSILD has collaborated with the Ministries of Health (MOH), Gender, Children and Social Protection (GCSP), Education, the National Commission on Disabilities and international NGOs such as UNHCR, CRS, ZOA Refugee Service and Jesuit Refugee Service, among others.

According to the organization, one of its projects established through support from ZOA Refugee Service is the Wodee School of Integration and Deaf Orphanage in Toddee District over which it is being threatened with eviction besides other issues that are detrimental to its operation thus, forcing it to suspend activities since 2014.

The complaint also narrates that besides, OSILD purchased 60 acres of farmland from Administrator George D. Brosius after entering a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the purchase of 100 acres of land.

However, Mr. Sandi said the MOU was modified to 60 acres, fifty of which was fully paid for at the amount of US\$2,500.00, while the balance ten acres were allegedly offered freely to assist OSILD survey

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County to evict the organization from 60 acres of land purchased from one of the family members.

OSILD allegedly bought the land from Administrator Mr. George D. Brosius of Wodee Town, Toddee Statutory District, Montserrado County, who is allegedly on the run.

OSILD purchased 60 acres of land from Mr. George D. Brosius on which the organization constructed a five-room dormitory, cultivated a farm and other assets, but is being allegedly asked by other members of the Brosius Family to leave the premises, particularly Miss Alice Brosius

## PUL consults lawyers over govt's threats to Bushrod Radio 98.1

The Press Union of Liberia says it is consulting its lawyers for legal opinion to inform the union's position on the government's statement against Radio Bushrod (D-15) and Politician Henry Costa.

According to a PUL release, the outcome of the legal consultation will pave the way for the union's next course of action which could include but not limited to legal action before the Supreme Court of Liberia for interpretation of the Weah Administration's statement.

The Union sees the protection of free speech and freedom of the press as its code mandate and will do everything in protecting this sacred fundamental right enshrined in article 15 of the



Constitution of Liberia.

The Union is at the same time in advance conversation with the management of D-15 and the

Ministry of Information aimed at finding an amicable way forward in the interest of the country's reputation.

## I will support developmental agenda only

-Sen. Jonathan Sogbie

By Lewis S. Teh

Newly elected Senator of River Gee County Jonathan Boy Charles Sogbie, vows to work in the interest of the people of River Gee and the country at large, saying, "I didn't become senator for one county but for the interest of this country."

"My work at the Liberian Senate is to support any developmental agenda that will be in the interest of our people, and not in the interest of the executive."

Speaking Monday, 18 January on 'Prime Morning Drive' a live talk show, Senator Sogbie said despite being a member of the opposition

pose serious hardship to citizens.

Senator Sogbie notes that when people take risk to put their vehicles on the dilapidated roads to venture in business, they should profit, and that those who also purchase goods from the interior must equally benefit, which is not happening due to the road condition.

He says the deplorable state of the roads in the southeast, has led to hike in prices, adding that as an opposition lawmaker, "not everything the executive does will make you go on the contrary; though I belong to both the ANC, and the CPP but I'm working for the Liberian people and will do whatever is right or is being proposed by the



Sen. Jonathan Boy Charles Sogbie

Alternative National Congress (ANC) and by extension the Collaboration Political Parties, he will work and support any agenda that seeks the interest of the Liberian people generally.

According to him, he remains fully committed to supporting any agenda from the executive only if it is in the interest of the Liberian people, saying the issues are too many and should be placed in chronological order.

He says cardinal among many missing opportunities, are roads not only to River Gee, but the entire southeastern region, which continues to

executive even if the CPP doesn't like it, I will support it."

"We shouldn't play game with our people, their lives matter most, the decision we make or refuse to make will hamper the lives of our unborn children and for me, I'm not going to play game simply because I don't like you."

Meanwhile, Senator Sogbie vows to resist anything that will want to induce him to twist his arm to go against the will and interest of the Liberian people, saying that such attitude will not happen in his service in the senate. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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# Français

## L'ex-présidente Sirleaf se souvient encore du jour de son accession à la magistrature suprême du Libéria

L'ancienne présidente du Libéria, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, s'est remémorée sur son compte Twitter le jour où elle est entrée dans l'histoire il y a 15 ans en tant que première femme présidente du Libéria et de l'Afrique.

«En ce jour, il y a 15 ans, j'ai été profondément honorée d'assumer la responsabilité de la présidence du Libéria. Ce fut l'honneur de ma vie de faire ma part pour reconstruire notre nation, et je suis éternellement reconnaissante au peuple pour m'avoir donné cette occasion», a écrit Mme Sirleaf samedi dernier.

Mme Sirleaf a prêté serment en tant que première femme présidente du Libéria le 16 janvier 2006 à la suite de sa victoire face au président actuel George Weah au second tour de la présidentielle de 2005.

Elle était arrivée deuxième derrière Weah au premier tour du scrutin et avait gagné avec 59% au second tour contre 40% pour Weah, qui avait contesté les résultats.

Mme Sirleaf a prêté serment en tant que 24<sup>e</sup> présidente du pays et a

été élue en 2011 quelques semaines à peine après avoir reçu le prix Nobel de la paix en reconnaissance de ses efforts pour la participation des femmes au processus de maintien de la paix. Elle a reçu de nombreux autres prix pour son leadership.

Son investiture a eu lieu le 16 janvier 2006. De nombreux dignitaires étrangers y ont participé, dont la secrétaire d'État américaine Condoleezza Rice et la première dame Laura Bush. En janvier 2010, Sirleaf a

annoncé qu'elle se présenterait pour un second mandat en 2011 à l'élection présidentielle dans son discours lors d'une session conjointe de l'Assemblée législative.

L'opposition était aussitôt montée au crédo pour exprimer sa déception, en reprochant à la présidente de n'avoir pas tenu sa promesse faite lors de sa campagne de 2005 de ne servir qu'un seul mandat si elle était élue. Mais

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## Attaque des casques bleus ivoiriens au Mali : le Général Doumbia aux côtés de ses hommes

Le Chef d'Etat-Major Général des Armées était auprès des casques bleus ivoiriens de la Minusma à Tombouctou. Une visite qui intervient quelques heures après l'attaque que le contingent ivoirien a subie dans cette localité et qui a

fait quatre morts et trois blessés.

Objectif : Traduire la compassion de toute la nation à ses soldats et encourager ces hommes et femmes engagés dans la lutte contre le terrorisme au Mali.

Aéroport de Tombouctou. Ici,

les visages sont au recueillement, les mines graves. Le souvenir de l'attaque djihadiste du mercredi 13 janvier est encore vivace dans la mémoire collective. L'annonce de la visite du Général de Corps d'Armée, LASSINA DOUMBIA, Chef d'Etat-Major Général des Armées, ce samedi 16 janvier 2021, vient illuminer cette atmosphère particulière. Honneurs militaires, civilités, échanges avec la troupe, point de situation, visite des installations, repas de corps... le programme est dense. A son arrivée sur le camp de Tombouctou, le Général Doumbia, a été accueilli par le Général Wael Shawky, Commandant le secteur Ouest de la Force de la MINUSMA avant de recevoir les honneurs militaires rendus par un détachement ghanéen.

Sur le récit des circonstances de l'attaque du convoi de la compagnie ivoirienne en mission de

► CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### Qu'attend le gouvernement pour payer les travailleurs électoraux ?

Les agents électoraux enrôlés dans le cadre de l'organisation des élections sénatoriales et du referendum constitutionnel n'ont d'autres choix que de protester afin d'espérer entrer en possession de leurs émoluments plus d'un mois après la fin des élections. C'est triste et très honteux.

En tout cas, nous avons du mal à comprendre pourquoi le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement n'a jusque-là débloqué les fonds afin que la commission électorale puisse payer à ses travailleurs les miettes (50 USD, 75 USD ou 100 USD) qu'elle leur doit.

On se souvient qu'à la veille des élections en décembre 2020, les agents électoraux du comté de Montserrado avaient exigé leur argent avant d'être déployés. La situation laide qu'ils essayaient d'éviter les a maintenant rattrapés. Les élections sont terminées, mais, ils ont du mal à recevoir leur argent. Quant à quand ils recevront cet argent, seul le ciel le sait.

La présidente Davidetta Browne Lansanah, s'adressant aux agents électoraux en colère qui s'étaient rassemblés devant le siège de la commission électorale à Sinkor, Monrovia, le jeudi 14 janvier tôt le matin, avait déclaré que la Commission, par l'intermédiaire de sa section des finances, était en discussion quotidienne avec le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement pour décaisser rapidement les cinq millions de dollars américains restants pour couvrir toutes ses dettes, non seulement envers les agents de vote, mais aussi les fournisseurs qui ont également rendu des services liés aux élections, notamment la location de voitures, les imprimeries et les médias.

Madame Lansanah a plaidé auprès des agents électoraux pour donner au moins une semaine à la NEC, le temps de finaliser les accords de paiement avec le ministère des Finances, en particulier pour ceux qui n'ont jusqu'à présent pas reçu de salaire depuis les élections du 8 décembre 2020.

Mais la présidente Browne-Lansanah aurait dû savoir depuis que quand son budget de 17 millions de dollars américains a été réduit de 4 millions de dollars américains, elle aurait des problèmes, car aucun de ses prédécesseurs n'a organisé des élections nationales avec un maigre budget de 13 millions de dollars.

Nous pensons qu'elle a commis une erreur en acceptant d'organiser les élections sénatoriales couplées avec le referendum constitutionnel et deux autres élections législatives avec un si maigre budget.

Mme Browne-Lansanah aurait peut-être eu du mal à convaincre les législateurs et le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement pour accepter le budget opérationnel de 17 millions de dollars pour les élections. Elle a ramené la barre si bas au point que la Commission sombre maintenant dans les dettes.

La contribution de l'Etat du Libéria aux élections sénatoriales du 8 décembre 2020 n'a pas dépassé 5 millions de dollars. Nous, Libériens et gouvernement, voulons toujours que les autres fassent pour nous ce que nous devons faire pour nous-mêmes, en tant que nation.

Bien que le gouvernement soit confronté à une pénurie de liquidités dans les banques, une question cruciale comme les élections ne doit pas être prise à la légère. Il faut une planification et un financement adéquats pour que les résultats soient couronnés de succès.

Le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement devrait déployer tous les efforts possibles pour fournir des fonds à la Commission électorale nationale afin de s'acquitter de ses obligations financières envers les fournisseurs, les médias et le personnel pour les services qu'ils ont rendus pendant le scrutin.



# Français

## L'ex-présidente Sirleaf

Mme Sirleaf a été reconduite en tant que candidate du Parti de l'unité à la présidentielle lors du congrès national du parti le 31 octobre 2010.

Le même jour, le vice-président Joseph Boakai a été nommé par Sirleaf et confirmé par les délégués comme son colistier.

L'attribution du prix Nobel de la paix à Sirleaf quatre jours avant l'élection a été critiquée par les partis d'opposition, le candidat du Congrès pour le changement démocratique, Winston Tubman, qualifiant le prix de "non mérité" et "d'ingérence politique dans la politique de notre pays".

Sirleaf a qualifié le

moment du prix de coïncidence et a évité de mentionner le prix pendant les derniers jours de la campagne.

Sirleaf a obtenu 43,9% des voix au premier tour, plus que tout autre candidat mais en deçà des 50% nécessaires pour éviter un second tour. Tubman est arrivé deuxième avec 32,7%, le confrontant à Sirleaf au deuxième tour.

Tubman a appelé au boycott du second tour, affirmant que les résultats du premier tour avaient été frauduleux.

Sirleaf a nié les allégations et les observateurs internationaux ont indiqué que le premier tour de l'élection avait été libre, juste et transparent. À la suite du boycott, Sirleaf a remporté le deuxième tour avec 90,7% des voix.

## Attaque des casques bleus ivoiriens au Mali :

reconnaissance, le commandant du bataillon ivoirien (CIV-BAT) le lieutenant-colonel Kouamé Jean-Marie a révélé le caractère particulièrement violent de l'affrontement. L'on retiendra que ce n'est pas la supériorité tactique ni capacitaire qui était l'ennemi ce jour-là, mais plutôt la perfidie, la trahison et la lâcheté. L'on note également la prompte réaction des Forces ivoiriennes qui ont réussi à repousser cette attaque complexe sous des feux nourris pendant plus d'une heure avant l'arrivée des renforts et des secours.

Aux casques bleus ivoiriens, le Chef d'Etat-Major Général des Armées, a transmis les condoléances du Président de la République, Chef Suprême des Armées, la compassion du Premier Ministre, Chef du Gouvernement, Ministre de la Défense et le soutien de toute la nation ivoirienne. Aux soldats, il a demandé de tenir bon, car engagés dans un combat qui est noble et juste. Adresse au cours de laquelle, il a indiqué à ses hommes, que les meilleures unités ne sont pas forcément celles qui ne subissent pas de pertes. Les meilleures unités sont celles qui savent réagir et n'abandonnent jamais leurs hommes, morts ou blessés, et matériels sur le terrain. Toutes choses qu'il a retrouvées en cette unité. Et de préciser, que sont considérées comme excellentes, celles qui ne se laissent pas démoraliser lorsqu'elles prennent des coups, et poursuivent leur mission avec le même niveau

d'engagement. Les invitant ainsi à se réarmer moralement. Puis de leur rappeler les valeurs qui fondent le soldat ivoirien, faites de courage, de dépassement mais également de résilience. A tous, il a dit que ce mauvais coup est désormais bien derrière avant de leur rappeler leur engagement : celui de se tenir aux côtés du peuple malien dans un cadre multinational pour ramener la paix et la stabilité dans ce pays meurtri.

L'ambassadeur de Côte d'Ivoire au Mali, SEM Bakayoko Cheick, a félicité l'ensemble du bataillon pour le sens élevé du devoir et du professionnalisme unanimement reconnus et appréciés des acteurs présents sur le théâtre malien.

A cours de cette visite, le Général Doumbia, a inspecté les installations du CIV-BAT pour s'assurer que ses hommes é v o l u e n t d a n s u n environnement propice et disposent de bonnes conditions de vie et de travail. Puis suivra une visite aux blessés légers de l'attaque, internés à l'hôpital de niveau 2 du Camp de Tombouctou. L'officier Général a eu des mots de réconfort pour chacun.

Et conformément aux traditions militaires, les casques bleus ivoiriens ont partagé un repas de corps avec le Chef d'Etat-Major. Un moment bien particulier constitué de mets typiquement ivoiriens que le Chef d'Etat-Major Général des Armées a pris soin d'emporter avec lui, et qui a permis de dissiper les souvenirs encore tenaces et galvaniser des hommes qui, après avoir accusé le coup sont revigorés et plus déterminés que jamais.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Michael Chui  
& Matthias Evers

## Vive la bio-révolution !

SAN FRANCISCO - Au mois de novembre, le Programme alimentaire mondial des Nations Unies (PAM) et l'Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM) ont lancé l'alarme : la crise du Covid-19 fait peser sur la sécurité alimentaire une menace « sans précédent ». Les dommages collatéraux engendrés par la pandémie pourraient s'avérer pires encore que la maladie elle-même.

La plupart des grandes institutions internationales concernées par la sécurité alimentaire appellent désormais à l'action pour éviter que ne se déclarent de nouvelles épidémies de maladies infectieuses et pour rendre les systèmes alimentaires plus résistants aux chocs. L'innovation biologique doit inspirer notre réflexion au moment où nous nous efforçons de relever le double défi qui consiste à nourrir une population croissante et à gérer de façon durable les ressources naturelles.

Avant même la pandémie, l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO) avertissait que plus de 820 millions de personnes n'avaient pas assez à manger. Avec une population mondiale censée augmenter d'environ deux milliards d'habitants d'ici 2050, il sera indispensable d'améliorer l'accès à une alimentation abordable et saine pour réduire la malnutrition et les coûts associés de soins de santé.

L'innovation dans les techniques agricoles et la production alimentaire est aussi vieille que l'agriculture, mais elle est plus que jamais nécessaire. Il résulte de récentes recherches, menées par le McKinsey Global Institute, que l'innovation biologique pourrait produire, dans l'agriculture, l'aquaculture et la production alimentaire, des gains économiques supérieurs à 1 200 milliards de dollars au cours des vingt, voire des dix, prochaines années. Pour placer les choses dans leur contexte, les industries agroalimentaires et alimentaires sont aujourd'hui valorisées à 5 000 milliards de dollars environ.

D'où cette croissance viendrait-elle ? Les innovations les plus prometteuses portent notamment sur les protéines de substitution, la sélection assistée par marqueur génétique pour les élevages, le génie génétique, qui permet de créer des végétaux et des animaux transgéniques, ainsi que sur le recensement et la modification du microbiome. L'intérêt des consommateurs pour des sources de protéines de substitution va croissant dans le monde, en raison des inquiétudes sanitaires et environnementales, et de l'attention portée au bien-être animal.

Des viandes de substitution à base de végétaux sont d'ores et déjà largement vendues, quoique l'économie de leur production nécessite d'être améliorée. Le lait végétal représente par exemple 15 % des ventes de détail de lait aux États-Unis et 8 % en Grande-Bretagne. Une entreprise comme Clara Foods utilise l'ingénierie des levures et les nouvelles technologies de fermentation afin de produire des protéines de blanc d'œuf sans recourir à des ressources animales.

Il en va de même pour la culture des viandes et des produits de la mer - qui permet d'obtenir en laboratoire, à partir d'une souche cellulaire, un tissu musculaire imitant le profil protéine de la viande animale - dont l'arrivée est proche. Au début de ce mois, Singapour est devenu le premier État approuvant la vente de viande cultivée en laboratoire (en l'occurrence du poulet de culture, créé par la société Eat Just, dont le siège est à San Francisco). Au cours des dix prochaines années, viandes, poissons et crustacés de culture

pourraient avoir un coût compétitif au regard des protéines animales conventionnelles.

La sélection des plantes cultivées et des animaux d'élevage n'est pas une nouveauté, mais la sélection assistée par marqueur génétique permet d'accélérer significativement le processus et d'en abaisser les coûts, car elle permet de conserver les caractères désirables quand bien même les gènes exacts qui les portent n'auraient pas été identifiés ou compris. La chute des coûts du séquençage de l'ADN signifie que des milliers de marqueurs potentiels peuvent être détectés simultanément. Alors que l'obtention d'une nouvelle variété de plante cultivée pouvait auparavant demander vingt-cinq ans, il ne nécessite plus aujourd'hui que sept ans. Et comme la sélection assistée par marqueur génétique n'est pas aussi répandue dans les pays en développement que dans les économies avancées, les opportunités de croissance sont importantes.

Depuis l'obtention du premier végétal génétiquement modifié (un plant de tabac), au début des années 1980, le génie génétique a gagné sa reconnaissance. Mais la technologie s'améliore encore rapidement. De nouveaux outils, comme les courtes répétitions palindromiques groupées et régulièrement espacées (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats - CRISPR), affinent la modification des gènes, permettant d'adapter les plantes cultivées plus efficacement aux conditions locales, notamment à la température et au type de sol. Des fruits et légumes modifiés grâce à l'utilisation des séquences CRISPR pourraient atterrir dans les rayons des magasins d'alimentation aux États-Unis au cours des dix prochaines années, à commencer par des fraises au goût plus sucré et pouvant être conservées plus longtemps.

Les outils portables de séquençage de l'ADN ouvrent un autre domaine prometteur pour l'innovation : ils pourraient être utilisés par les agriculteurs pour diagnostiquer les maladies des plantes, et probablement améliorer leur qualité et leur rendement en éliminant ou en réduisant l'usage de pesticides. Le recours à la modification génétique pour améliorer la santé et la productivité des animaux comestibles comme le bétail laitier ou élevé pour sa viande, les porcs ou les volailles en est encore à ses balbutiements, mais ce domaine suscite un intérêt croissant depuis l'épidémie de peste porcine africaine de 2019.

De même, le recensement du microbiome - qui comprend les bactéries, les champignons et les virus - aide les chercheurs à trouver des moyens d'accroître la résistance des plantes cultivées, des animaux d'élevage et des sols à la sécheresse et à la maladie. Là aussi, les progrès de l'informatique et du séquençage accélèrent le rythme des découvertes, au point qu'une société de biotechnologie, Novozymes, propose déjà des microbes génétiquement modifiés en remplacement des intrants chimiques destinés à l'amélioration des rendements et de la qualité.

Nombre de ces innovations biologiques peuvent nous aider à vaincre non seulement la faim mais aussi l'épuisement des ressources et, plus largement, les risques climatiques. Selon les chiffres de la FAO, l'élevage du bétail et des animaux de basse-cour pour la viande, les œufs et le lait est responsable de 14,5 % des émissions mondiales de gaz à effet de serre ; et un tiers de toutes les terres cultivables est utilisé afin de produire de la nourriture pour les animaux d'élevage. L'agriculture est aussi la principale cause de la déforestation, puisqu'elle occupe 43 % des terres non gelées et non désertiques de la planète. Le burger « Impossible », à base de végétaux, représente par rapport à un burger traditionnel à la viande 89 % d'émissions en moins.



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## FIND strengthens support to SGBV survivors

The Foundation for International Dignity (FIND), with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has launched a new project in Montserrado County to protect survivors of Sexual Gender Based Violence.

A press release issued recently by FIND Executive

LIBERIAN PEOPLE”, the project is in the tone of US\$ 39,433.00 (Thirty Nine Thousand Four Thirty Three Dollars).

Major activities include providing legal services to survivors at the One-Stop Center, providing reintegration support to survivors who are reintegrated into the community and reviewing existing protocol and policy on

Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MGCSP), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Sex Crime Unit, Woman and Children Protection Section (WACPS) of the Liberia National Police (LNP) as well as women groups network and UN Women to revise protocols and policy for the establishment and management of the Safe Home and One -Stop Center.

The project communities in Montserrado County include Bensonville, Todee, Careysburg, Brewerville, Arthington, Clay-Ashland and Louisiana, targeting at least 300 people in the course of ten months.

FIND has extensive work experience over the years in advocacy, awareness in human rights promotion, especially women rights. Between 2007 and 2019 FIND and its international partners, including the American Refugee Committee (ARC), UNDP, UN Women and several national institutions intervened by providing legal Aid to survivors of SGBV as well as Safe Home management in Bong and Lofa Counties. Besides, FIND, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender for Children and Social Protection, established Rape Observatory committees in Lofa, Cape Mount, Bomi counties, the release noted. - **Press Release**



FIND Executive Director, Mr. Aaron G.V. Juakollie

Director, Mr. Aaron G.V. Juakollie, said the purpose of the project is to strengthen its One -Stop Center in a bid to provide comprehensive integrated services to survivors of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Montserrado county.

Titled “STRENGTHENING THE RULE OF LAW IN LIBERIA: JUSTICE SECURITY FOR THE

safe homes and One-Stop Centers for SGBV survivors.

To have these activities carried out, FIND staff will work with “our pro bono lawyer for legal representation for SGBV survivors and the psychosocial counseling for counseling and reintegration of Survivors in communities”, says the release.

FIND will also work with partners like the Ministry of

## Court halts sale of Cooper's Interstate Estate

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The Monthly and Probate Court at the Temple of Justice presided over by Judge J. Vinton Holder has ordered the Clan Chief of Todee Town, Montserrado County Stephen Gobah to halt sale of estate properties of the late James Francis Cooper, lying and situated in Careysburg and Todee districts, respectively.

The court in its 19th session, said the informant, an Administrator of the Intestate Estate of the late Aaron E. Cooper filed a five-count Bill of Information on May 9, 2019 along with the last Will and Testament of the late James Francis Cooper, informing the Court that the Respondent as Administratrix of the Testate Estate of the late James Francis Cooper has

been receiving benefits from the Estate to the exclusion of informant and his siblings.

The Court document notes that informant relied on clause 17 of the last Will and

Testament of the late Cooper which states that, “All the rest and residue of my Estate, real, personal and mixed wheresoever found and of whatever it may consist, I give bequeath and devise unto my heirs, share alike to them and theirs forever”.



## Deaf and dumb

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the land purchased.

However, he said upon payment of the last US\$600.00, Mr. George Brosius never issued OSILD any receipt under pretense that he would have subsequently issued the organization a global receipt bearing the total amount of US\$2, 500.00 only to have learnt that he (Brosius) traveled to the United States of America.

The complainant continues that following George Brosius' return to Liberia three years later in November 2012, OSILD decided to pursue him for the receipt, but he allegedly dodged the organization.

Mr. Sandi said Administrator George D. Brosius was spotted at Stephen A. Tolbert Estate in Gardnersville and when approached, he promised to discuss the matter with him (Sandi) before leaving Liberia in February 2013, but since then all attempts made to have the land and other matters amicably resolved have proved futile as he has eroded all promises and continue to be on the run.

Moreover, ZOA Refugee Care Liberia, one of OSILD partners, is pressurizing the organization following a recent inspection to the school and dormitory at Wodee. In a communication to OSILD, the Country Director of ZOA Refugee Care Liberia, Nic

Street, expressed concern that there is no activity on the OSILD farmroad and the school dormitory is still not occupied.

“You will recollect that we met in December last year when the whole issue of OSILD commitment, both physically and financially, to occupying the Wodee site was questioned; on the basis of assurances given by you at that time did the project of constructing the dormitory proceeded; you will also remember my telling you that the source of the US\$36,682 spent on this construction was raised by Dutch students working their holidays in cafes in the Netherlands to raise money for this specific project”, Country Director Street reminded in his communication.

When this reporter contacted the brother of George D. Brosius, John Brosius, who currently serves as acting administrator of the Brosius Interstate Estate in Mein Clan Todee District via mobile phone, his number rang continuously without any response.

But the LLA confirms receipt of written complaint from OSILD against Land Administrator George D. Brosius. Officials in the Land and Survey Department of the Land Authority said the organization has been asked to pay a fee of US\$50.00 in order to conduct a survey of the land in question. - **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

The Informant then informed the Court to ensure that he and his siblings benefit from the residues of their late Grandfather, James Francis Cooper.

But the Respondent, the Court record disclosed, filed a seven-count resistance and prayed the Court to deny and dismiss in its entirety forever informant's Bill of Information. The Respondent in her resistance attached a 1966 Ruling from the Honorable Supreme Court of Liberia in which the father of informant received a certain amount as his benefit and as such, the informant is not entitled to any benefit.

However, the Monthly and Probate Court issued several Assignments to hear said Bill of Information but the Respondent or her lawyer failed to appear and Counsel for informant prayed the Court to grant unto his client a judgment by default primarily because of the failure of the Respondent and Counsel to appear, a request that was granted by the Court.

The Court: Wherefore and in view of the foregoing, the informant requests to benefit from the residue of the Testate Estate of the late James Francis Cooper is hereby granted and the cost of these proceedings is hereby ruled against the Respondent.”

A Clerk's Certificate under the signature of Edwin S. Boimah, Sr. Clerk, Monthly and Probate Court, dated 4th September 2020 and issued in ref: The Intestate Estate of the Late James Francis Cooper reads: This is to certify that upon careful perusal of the records in the above caption Estate file to ascertain as to whether the Respondent's Counsel has filed its Bill of Exceptions to the Court judgment since 29th July 2020, and Exceptions Noted on the minute of Court, the Respondent has failed to file its Bill of Exceptions within the statutory period of ten (10) days; hence, this Clerk's Certificate shall constitute your legal authority. - **Editing by Jonathan Browne**



# Election tantrum?

By Winston W. Parley

Liberia's immediate past Foreign Minister and defeated senatorial candidate Gbehzohngar Milton Findley is seeking divorce of his wife Kaddieyatu Darrah Findley,

has necessitated a writ of summons against Mrs. Findley, with specific instruction for her appearance before the court to answer to the complaint filed against her.

The court has mandated that upon Madam Findley's failure to

January.

Mr. Findley who contested and lost the just - ended 2020 senatorial election in Grand Bassa County is said to have been in a prolonged strained relationship with his wife Kaddieyatu.

The Liberian politician who held the post of Senate President Pro - Tempore during former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's administration, left the then ruling Unity Party to form new political alliances with the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) in 2017 nearing the presidential election.

A day after President George Manneh Weah took the oath office, Findley was appointed Liberia's Foreign Minister and the Liberian Senate on 26 January 2018 confirmed the nomination, making him the Dean of the Cabinet in President Weah's administration.

But Mr. Findley resigned the top job as Liberia's chief diplomat in July last year to run for a Senate Senate in Grand Bassa County, though he lost the race. He previously represented the same county in the Senate during the rule of Mrs. Sirleaf.



Mrs. Kaddieyatu Darrah Findley

according to a document from the Civil Law Court in Monrovia.

The document titled "Action of Divorce for Incompatibility of Temper,"

appear, it will enter judgment by default against her. Additionally the court has ordered Mrs. Findley to file her response or answer in the office of the judge on or before 23

# US\$50m needed for southeast roads

Deputy Speaker Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa says at least US\$50 million is needed to construct road corridors in southeast Liberia.

He promises to vigorously lobby in the next three years of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change-led government with his colleagues to ensure budgetary allocation for roads in the southeast.

The Grand Kru County lawmaker said he will aggressively push for budgetary allocation, noting that with the estimated cost of US\$1m for one mile of road, at least US\$50million, which is equivalent to 50 miles, will be lobbied for in the national budget.

"We cannot wait for the big loan estimated at US\$100million to address the long- time road challenge in the Southeast," Deputy Speaker Cllr. Koffasays.

In his calculation, given the long stretch of road, US\$50m can be directed to road initiative to tackle 50 miles annually with the total of US\$150m for three years to construct 150 miles of roads.

In his first post-Deputy Speaker interview on state broadcaster ELBC/LNTV Monday, the Grand Kru County District #2 Representative pointed out that it will be a significant progress for the country's development drive

especially, roads when fully supported and implemented, which is a key focus of President George M. Weah.

Rep. Koffa explains when roads across the country are constructed; they will help facilitate economic growth, while improving local capacity, work and business

rural communities from accessing essential products and public services, such as education, healthcare, water, and markets to sell crops and goods.

Amid heavy downpours owing to climate change, the southeast road is usually difficult to ply on during dry



Deputy Speaker Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa

opportunities, and livelihoods.

Liberia lacks reliable roads, especially in the southeast, which comprised five remote counties: Sinoe, Rivergee, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru and Maryland.

The southeast road is impassable due to seasonal heavy rains thus, affecting economic growth, as it prevents

season, and in the succeeding rainy season, it can be nearly impossible.

Meanwhile, Deputy Speaker Koffa emphasizes that working in the common interest of the Liberian people will top his Legislative agenda as second in command in the House of Representatives.

# Government Ban

Cont'd from page 6

the current freedom of expression violation and get into the travel document controversy involving Mr. Costa, CEMESP states that Article 13(b) provides that "Every Liberian Citizen shall have the right to leave and to enter Liberia at any time." And that in the case of a crime, Liberia should exercise its extradition treaty agreement with the United States to have Mr. Costa answer to any charges.

More importantly, the government ban on Mr. Costa from broadcasting violates Article 20 of the Constitution of Liberia that guarantees that "No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, security of the person, property, privilege or any other right except as the outcome of a hearing judgment consistent with the provisions laid down in this Constitution and in accordance with due process of law..."

Mr. Costa has never been convicted of any crime in any court and therefore he cannot be deprived of his right to freedom of expression guaranteed in Article 15 of the Constitution that, "Every person shall have the right to freedom of expression, being fully responsible for the abuse thereof" and that "This right shall not be curtailed, restricted or enjoined by government save during an emergency declared in accordance with this Constitution,"

If the Government proceeds to maintain its ban on Mr. Costa, stopping him from broadcasting and or revoke D-15's broadcast license for pursuing its partnership with Mr. Costa to relay his show, the government would be denying Mr. Costa and several other

Liberians the "equal opportunity for work and employment". This would be a further violation of Article 18 of Liberia's 1986 constitution.

This ban comes fifteen months after Roots FM, the radio station of Mr. Costa was shut down and equipment seized by state security for not having licence to operate.

This will become the third visible action by this administration to shut Mr. Henry Costa who many consider a critical voice- firstly with Voice FM (Mr. Costa previous FM being denied licence operation), secondly with Roots FM being shut down and vandalized, and lastly, an apparent attempt to stifle a registered owned and licenced station to relay The Costa Show.

CEMESP therefore draws the attention of the Government of Liberia on the disadvantage there is for governance as they try to stifle the press, and shut down critical voices.

The government cannot proceed with these old regime tactics after celebrations of the enactment of the Kamara Abdullai Kamara KAK press freedom law that abolishes libel and promoting a free press and a society of divergent views.

Roots FM (The Costa Show) and Punch FM are the two radio stations that have been shut down with no plan by government to issue them licence.

This is evident that it is not within the government's interest to have them broadcast, rather an attempt to keep alternative voices at bay.

The Government of Liberia should do the right thing by revoking all threats and allow the D-15- Costa Show partnership to proceed.

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He says though debates will be more robust on issues of national concerns with different political ideologies, but the people's interest will remain paramount with the collective contributions of Speaker Bhofal Chambers and members of the 54th National Legislature.

He renews commitment to his district, county and the entire country in the discharge of his duties with competence, experience and effectiveness.

Rep. Koffa frowns that hundreds of Ghanaians

engaged in illegal mining in Grand Kru and other parts of the country need strict measures to curb the activity.

According to him, hundreds of Ghanaians illegally entered Grand Kru, through canoe and other coastal counties which is becoming a serious problem.

He expresses frustrations over the influx of illegal foreign miners in the county and inability of officers of the Liberia Immigration Service (LIS) to curtail them because of lack of numerical strength. -Editing by Jonathan Browne



## PSG targeting Lionel Messi - Leonardo claims



PSG sporting director Leonardo has fuelled speculation over Lionel Messi's next move, claiming that the Argentine will 'always' be on his club's list of targets.

Messi, famously, has just six months left on his current deal in Catalonia. After doing everything he could to force a move in pre-season, he has given little concrete

indication that he will stay beyond 2020/21.

Barcelona's presidential elections in March may yet have an impact on his future, but speculation has been rife over where he could go should he leave. Manchester City and Inter have been regularly linked, as has a sensational move to MLS, where David Beckham has distant ambitions of bringing him to Inter Miami.

Among the handful of clubs on the planet who could possibly afford his stratospheric wages are French champions PSG. Club chief Leonardo is not prepared to rule a deal out.

"Great players like him will always be on PSG's list," he said to France Football. "Now is not the time to discuss or even dream of it."

"We are seated at the table of those keeping tabs on it. In fact, not seated, but with a place reserved -- just in case. Four months is an eternity in football, especially in these times."

Leonardo went on to discuss the futures of Neymar and Kylian Mbappe, who are both out of contract in 2022.

Reports have predicted that the pair could be sold for cut-price fees in the summer as they enter the final year on their respective deals.

Leonardo, though, remains optimistic it won't come to that.

He went on: "I hope they are convinced that PSG is a good place at the moment for an ambitious football player."

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## Ozil adds spice to German minister's trip to Turkey

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas tried his diplomatic best on Monday to sidestep the delicate issue of German international Mesut Ozil's high-profile transfer from Arsenal to Istanbul's Fenerbahce.

"Yes, this issue is more sensitive than the vaccination issue," Maas said with a cautious smile at a press briefing in Ankara that was otherwise devoted to Turkey's uneasy relations with EU member states.

"I know people in Turkey are

very emotional fans," the German minister added coolly. "I want him to be successful when he plays in Turkey."

The transfer saga of the 32-year-old Arsenal outcast -- a 2014 World Cup winner with Germany who has Turkish roots and outspoken political views -- culminated with his confirmation over the weekend that he is signing with his favourite Turkish team.

"God has given me the chance to wear the Fenerbahce shirt," Ozil told Turkey's NTV television on Sunday.



But Ozil's arrival added unexpected drama to what was otherwise meant to be a mundane press appearance for Maas and his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu.

Ozil managed to create outrage in Germany by posing with Erdogan -- a tough-talking leader who cracked down on political dissent after surviving a failed coup -- in a picture that went viral on social media in 2018.

Erdogan was also the best man at Ozil's wedding in Turkey in 2019.

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