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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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Speaker's convoy in tragic accident



Flashback: Speaker Chambers' convoy in accident in 2020



Pres. Weah in Betu, Grand Kru County

Reaching the unreachable

-Weah puts spotlight on Betu and other rural communities

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Continental News

Tanzania leader in hospital with Covid - reports

Tanzania's President John Magufuli is being treated in hospital in Kenya and is in a critical condition, opposition leader Tundu Lissu has told the BBC, citing well-placed sources.

He has had coronavirus and a cardiac arrest, Mr Lissu said he had been told. The BBC has not been able to confirm these reports.

Mr Magufuli, who has not been seen in public for 11 days, has faced criticism for his handling of Covid-19 - his government is refusing to buy vaccines.

The East African nation has not published its coronavirus cases since May. The 61-year-old president has called for prayers and herbal-infused steam therapy to counter the virus.

Earlier this month, at a funeral for a top presidential aide, Mr Magufuli said Tanzania had defeated Covid-19 last year and would win again this year.

The aide died hours after the vice-president of the country's semi-autonomous

islands of Zanzibar, who was being treated for Covid-19. Mr Lissu said he had been told that President Magufuli was flown to Kenya for treatment at Nairobi Hospital on Monday night.

There has been no official response from the government, which has warned against publishing unverified information about the Tanzanian leader, who was last seen at an

official event in Dar es Salaam on 27 February. Nairobi Hospital also said it could not comment.

Mr Lissu told the BBC that the government's silence was fuelling rumours, was irresponsible, and the president's health should not be a private matter.

It would not be a surprise to Tanzanians that Mr Magufuli

had contracted coronavirus as he had been reckless in the face of the virus, he said. "He has never worn a mask, he has been going to mass public gatherings without taking any precautions that people are taking all around the world," Mr Lissu told the BBC's Africa correspondent Leila Nathoo from exile in Belgium.

"This is someone who has repeatedly and publicly trashed established medicine, he's relied on prayers and herbal concoctions of unproven value."

The 53 year old alleged that Tanzania's Finance Minister Philip Mpango was also being treated at the same hospital in Kenya's capital.

Mr Lissu, who came second in presidential elections for the opposition Chadema party in October with 13% of the

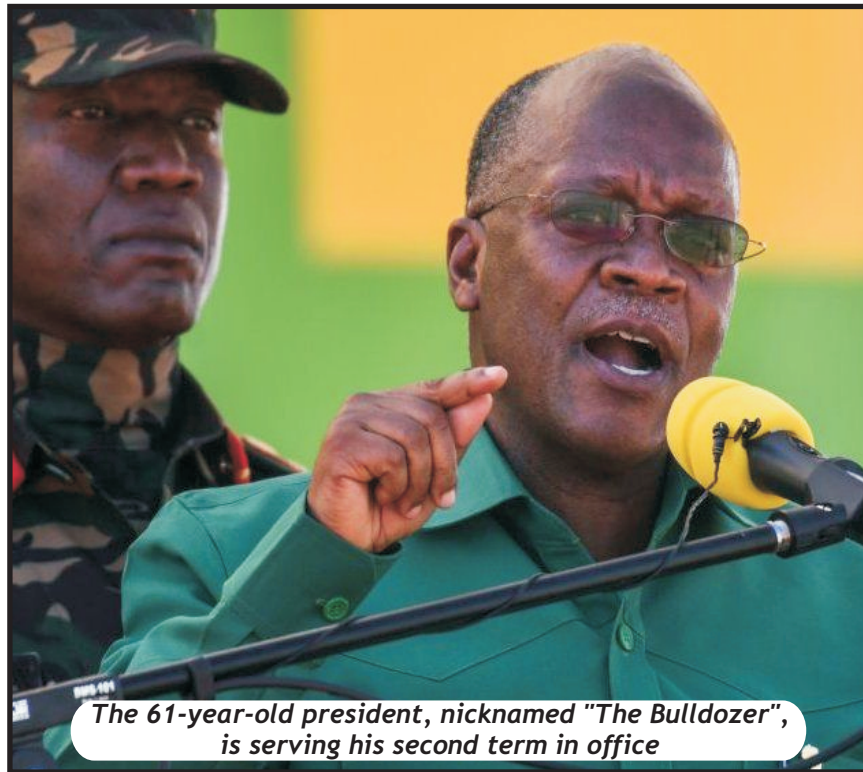
vote, said he considered his rival's reputation to be in complete tatters.

"He's built a reputation as a patriot, that he doesn't travel outside the country, that he's a president for the poor - and he's refused to do anything to ameliorate the situation in Tanzania by telling people we are fine."

Last week, the Catholic Church in Tanzania urged people to take Covid-19 precautions more seriously, saying 60 nuns and 25 priests had died in the last two months after showing symptoms of coronavirus.

Mr Lissu first went into exile in 2017 after surviving an assassination attempt. He returned to take part in last year's polls, the results of which he says were rigged.

He left the country again in November, saying he had received more death threats. BBC



The 61-year-old president, nicknamed "The Bulldozer", is serving his second term in office

Satellite images show Equatorial Guinea destruction

New satellite images reveal the extent of destruction in Equatorial Guinea's main city Bata following explosions at a munitions depot on Sunday.

The official death toll has now reached 105, with at least 600 injured.

Rights groups say the casualty figures could be significantly higher and have

called for an independent investigation, with questions being asked about why stockpiles of explosives were being stored in a populated area.

"Based on the number of bodies pulled from the rubble" says Human Rights Watch citing local observers, "the actual number of victims is much higher." Images captured before

and after the event show the scale of the explosion. Buildings inside the barracks were destroyed and people's homes in the surrounding area were also affected. Green spaces circling the army complex were obliterated.

Analysing satellite imagery over the past two decades, it's possible to see how the population rapidly expanded around the barracks.

When the complex was being built in 2004, it can be seen on Google Earth surrounded by forest. Just under two decades later, the city has rapidly expanded into this area. "If you are a responsible government, you do not have a military barracks where bombs are going to be handled in the middle of a city. You don't have families living in that area," Tutu Alicante, a human rights lawyer, told the BBC. President Obiang Nguema said the base had "caught fire due to neighbouring farmers clearing land by setting it alight, leading to the explosion". The president also blamed the "negligence" of the team responsible for guarding the



UN surveys some sites for Tigray's homeless



Many thousands of people in Tigray have been forced to flee their home since the conflict began in November

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) says it has counted more than 131,000 people displaced in 39 accessible locations in Ethiopia's Tigray region and neighbouring Afar and Amhara - but said this was not an indication of the total number of people who had fled their homes since the conflict began.

Earlier this month, the UN estimated that 521,200 people had been displaced and 61,001 had sought safety in eastern Sudan.

The UN has had limited access to Tigray, where conflict erupted at the

beginning of November.

The IOM data was gathered through a Displacement Tracking Matrix, its new survey which gathers and analyses data on population estimates, vulnerabilities, and the needs of displaced populations.

IOM said it had identified 30,383 displaced households. The IOM says many of those displaced, including women and children, "reportedly are in need of emergency shelter, food and access to clean and safe drinking water".

The numbers represent about 2% of Tigray's population of between five million and seven million. BBC

stores of dynamite and explosives. "Unverified accounts circulating in the country allege the fire was started by soldiers ordered to burn brush and that it then

spread to the armoury, or that it was started during training on the use of explosives gone awry," said Human Rights Watch. BBC

EDITORIAL

Welcoming the 96,000 Covid-19 vaccine doses

HEALTH AUTHORITIES IN Monrovia joined by senior officials of the Government of Liberia and foreign diplomats received the first consignment of 96,000 doses of the coronavirus vaccine at the Roberts International Airport in Margibi County on Friday, March 5, 2021.

ACCORDING TO THE Ministry of Health, the consignment is the first of a total of 384,000 Covid-19 vaccine doses expected in the country and that formal vaccination commences within two weeks, starting with health care workers, members of the executive, the Legislature, the Judiciary branches of government, followed by the Military and para-military, marketers and the general population.

UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR to Liberia Michael A. McCarthy, speaking at the RIA Friday, congratulated the Government of Liberia for its continued commitment to reducing transmission and curbing the spread of COVID-19 both in the country and in the region.

HOWEVER, AMBASSADOR MCCARTHY warned that the work does not stop here, hoping that Liberians will take the opportunity to receive safe and effective vaccines, if offered.

AND THIS IS WHERE our concern lies: Effective and impartial administration of the vaccine doses to protect the population. We do not want this exercise to be conducted the “Liberian way” where personal interest overrides the general good.

WE RECALL VIVIDLY during the peak of the Coronavirus in 2019 when front-liners such as doctors, nurses, midwives and other health workers were left unprotected due to lack of PPEs despite emergency funds provided by donors.

BUREAUCRATIC BOTTLENECKS AND political influence suffocated a process that should have been professionally handled thus, leading to the deaths of several doctors and nurses.

THIS TIME AROUND, we hope that things would be done differently, so that areas and people that are most in need, including the elderly would get preference.

AUTHORITIES AT THE Ministry of Health should be able to advise the President on the way to proceed, because COVID-19 vaccine doses are intended to stabilize the entire population, beginning with most-at-risk persons such as health workers, security forces manning our borders and residents in congested communities.

AS AMBASSADOR MCCARTHY cautioned, the work does not stop at receiving the doses of vaccine. No, they are not to be stacked in warehouses and in private clinics for personal gains while the population remains vulnerable. Rather, we should endeavor to reach the most needed in order to make impact.

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

COMMENTARY

By Nancy Birdsall ,
Brian Webster

Unleashing the Climate Market

WASHINGTON, DC - Progress against climate change has long crept at a snail's pace, and the costs of inaction are increasingly clear to see. Hardly a week goes by without a natural disaster or an extreme weather event that destroys the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable populations in the developing world. Among the latest horrors is a devastating flood in India, owing to glacial melt, and the wave of Category 4 hurricanes that struck Honduras in November.

With a per capita carbon footprint that is 4-5 times larger than the average low- or middle-income country, the United States is deeply implicated in these tragedies. Fortunately, 2021 is shaping up to be a year when meaningful US climate action finally takes off, owing to a groundswell in the global financial industry. That's right: Big Finance has started to go green as major institutional investors seek out safe, long-run returns in global markets.

Among many other positive developments, ExxonMobil, under pressure from Blackrock, the world's largest asset manager, recently wrote down some \$20 billion of its fossil-fuel assets. The New York State Common Retirement fund, with more than \$200 billion under management, has announced that it will divest from fossil-fuel firms. And, as The Economist recently noted, energy firms' share of the S&P 500 has fallen from 10% in 2011 to 3% today, reflecting not just the effects of the pandemic but also investor “gripes beyond COVID-19.”

Insurance markets are abandoning fossil fuels. Already in 2019, insurers accounting for 37% of the industry's global assets were pulling out of coal investments, having deemed the industry increasingly “uninsurable.” And this past December, Lloyd's, the world's biggest insurance market, announced that it will stop issuing new coverage for coal and other dirty energy projects within a year.

Finally, in the auto industry, electric vehicles (EVs) are gaining momentum. For example, BMW recently announced that it will build 250,000 more EVs over the next two years than it had originally planned. And GM (which has committed to being carbon neutral by 2040) and Ford will both release their new EV models this year, as will several start-ups.

Although there are still plenty of divides between industry leaders and regulators, the historic resistance to stronger climate standards is melting, and many in the private sector are expressing a willingness to work with US President Joe Biden's administration.

Where did this wave of financial greening originate? Some of the credit should certainly go to the journalist and climate activist Bill McKibben, the co-founder of 350.org. McKibben got the ball rolling years ago by calling on university students to push their schools' endowment funds to divest from fossil fuels. This approach took time, but as the costs of producing clean energy fell, and

as the ESG (environment, social, and governance) investment movement gained steam, it became easier for university boards to reconcile student demands with respectable market returns.

Just in the last year, the University of Michigan, George Washington University, Cornell University, and the University of Cambridge joined the growing ranks of academic institutions agreeing to limit their investments in emissions-intensive energy sources. And over half of all universities in the United Kingdom have already made such commitments.

Where McKibben has been building up the grassroots, former Bank of England Governor Mark Carney has emerged as a key thinker on the policy front. In 2015, when he was still at the BOE, he pressed financial regulators to encourage firms to publish data on the carbon intensity of their assets, arguing that such information would generate demand for even more disclosures and ultimately build resilience into the market. Now, the UK and the European Union are both implementing their own climate-reporting requirements for firms. And in the US, Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen is considering a series of climate-risk stress tests for major financial institutions.

Of course, financial markets ultimately respond to expected prices and returns, which are significantly influenced by public policies (such as green-energy subsidies and fuel-efficiency standards). And public policies, in turn, should reflect public attitudes. It is therefore simplistic to say that the financial industry is going green on its own. According to YouGov, climate change is now a top issue for US voters (just behind health care and the economy), after ranking low on the priority list just five years ago.

The question for the Biden administration is how to harness this momentum. For starters, Brian Deese, the new director of the White House National Economic Council (who formerly oversaw sustainable investing at Blackrock) should sit down with Gary Gensler, the incoming head of the Securities and Exchange Commission. The moment has come for the US to follow the UK and the EU in requiring publicly traded companies to publish standardized information on their climate exposure. Gensler has a reputation as an assertive regulator. Once he is confirmed, he will be empowered to take action with a Democratic majority among the SEC commissioners.

Moreover, mandatory disclosure of climate risks would likely find broad support within the financial industry, which prefers a level playing field for all competitors. Just last month, 11 industry groups issued a joint policy agenda that includes standardizing climate disclosures. Rarely in the US has there been such a large open window for enacting climate policies.

The stars are aligning for 2021 to be a year of significant action on climate change. A comprehensive push by the SEC would bend the curve even more profoundly toward a more sustainable future.



REPUBLIC LIBERIA
THE FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

P. O. BOX 3010
Whein Town, Mount Barclay
Monrovia, Liberia

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) as an Implementing Agency received financial support from African Development Bank (AfDB) under the Fund for Africa Private Sector Assistance (FAPA) to promote the private sector by scaling up the participation of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in the secondary wood processing industry to promote inclusive green growth, employment and economic diversification in the Republic of Liberia.

The FDA-AfDB-FAPA Project Implantation Unit and Joint Technical Committee TCO and Project is to conduct Mid-Term Progress Review workshop with stakeholders to review and discuss progress reports and deliverables on the FDA-AfDB-FAPA Project activities. The forthcoming Mid-Term progress review will take a broad synopsis of all the capacity building trainings that were conducted for Seven (7) weeks at BWI and also, the training in Chainsaw milling Operations and tree identification, as well as, log and timber scaling techniques in line with the Two modules conducted at Forestry Training Institute (F.T.I). In addition to other consultancies and activities to be rolled out by the FAPA PIU. The Workshop is scheduled to take place at the Corina Hotel, Snkor, Monrovia, Liberia and to be held on March 30 and 31, 2021. The Cooperation of all stake holders' members for this workshop is highly appreciated.

Fund for Africa Private Sector Assistance (FAPA) Project
Project Coordinator
Forestry Development Authority
Whein Town, Bernard Farm



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The Cooperation of all stake holders' members for this workshop is highly appreciated.

Fund for Africa Private Sector Assistance (FAPA) Project
Project Coordinator
Forestry Development Authority
Whein Town, Bernard Farm

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

SG goes after Samukai's lawyer

By Winston W. Parley

Following a court conference prompted by Movement for Progressive Change (MPC's) request to prohibit Lofa County Senator-elect Brownie Samukai's certification, Liberia's Solicitor General Cllr. Saymah

I have ever seen. He appeared for National Elections Commission in a matter where his client's fate is being decided. For us, we take serious exception to that," Cllr. Cephus told an interview Tuesday, 9 March at the Temple of Justice.

The crux of Cllr. Cephus' contention is that Cllr. Wright

Chambers Justice Joseph Nagbe held a conference with the National Elections Commission (NEC), Samukai and businessman - turned politician Simeon Freeman's MPC to a conference on Tuesday, following the MPC's petition for a writ of prohibition filed against the NEC's planned certification of Mr. Samukai.

Journalists were not given access to the conference held in the chambers of Associate Justice Joseph Nagbe on Tuesday, but some lawyers and other political parties' representatives who were present indicated outside the court that Justice Nagbe had decided that he was convinced to issue the writ of prohibition to stay all further proceedings.

Following the conference, Cllr. Cephus told journalists that he wanted the list of lawyers that made representations on behalf of the various parties in the case, and Cllr. Wright's name appeared for NEC.

"He represented Brownie Samukai from the beginning of the case in Criminal Court "C" up to the Supreme Court," Cephas narrates, making reference to the criminal case in which Samukai and his two deputies were convicted.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



Senator - elect Brownie Samukai

Syrenius Cephus says he will complain Samukai's lawyer Cllr. Michael Wilkins Wright to the Judiciary's Grievance and Ethics Committee for allegedly representing conflicting interest.

"That's the most egregious abuse or ethical transgression

represented Brownie Samukai in a criminal case, and therefore he cannot represent the NEC in an election case in which the commission has been sued and Cllr. Wright's client Samukai, is supposed to appear as a respondent, or an adverse party to the NEC.

MSF provides training for visiting hospital staff

Eighteen staff members from Liberia's James N. Davis Jr. (JDJ) Memorial Hospital have completed a seven-day training program at the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Children's Hospital in Monrovia since the beginning of the year.

The training program, which concluded yesterday, was designed to help JDJ hospital staff treat children with serious conditions such as severe pulmonary infections. Each day, staff from the JDJ hospital visited the MSF Children's Hospital, also known as Bardnesville Junction Hospital, to learn protocols and techniques for safe oxygen delivery, such as through masks or nasal cannulas.

These skills are essential to meeting the medical needs of pediatric patients in Liberia, especially during the current months of Liberia's dry season, when more

children suffer from malnutrition or respiratory tract infections, said Dr. James Jikdang, the head of the medical team at the MSF Children's Hospital.

"We frequently admit children at our hospital at this

time of year with bronchiolitis, or lung infections, who are in quite critical condition and need oxygen," Dr. Jikdang said. "By inviting colleagues from

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Superintendent jailed in Maryland

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

Due to failure to pay bill in a land dispute case, Maryland County Fiscal Affairs Superintendent, Anthony Wloflo Bedell, has been arrested and incarcerated at the Harper Central Prison in the county.

Superintendent Bedell was arrested on Monday afternoon, March 8, 2021 while at his Gbolobo road residence in Pleebo Sodoken district.

According to Police charge sheet, the assistant superintendent was charged for contempt due to his failure to comply with bail cost after the Supreme Court of Liberia had ruled against him in September, 2020 in a land dispute case.

The dispute is between him and Judy Howe, former Labour Commissioner of Maryland County.

to the land.

Mr. Howe disclosed that the Howe Family requested the Bedell Family to turn over their land after the death of caretaker Wledy Howe, former girlfriend of the late Alphonso Sunday Bedell.

He said after they have made such request, Superintendent Wloflo Bedell wrote on behalf of his family on April 2, 2002 to turn over the land but didn't do so until the Liberian Civil War.

Her said few years after the war ended, the caretaker of the Howe Family decided to turn it over to the other relatives when the Fiscal Affairs Superintendent went back to them and claim that the land belongs to him because his late father was loving to Wledy Howe, who was then caretaker for the premises.

He laented that the situation of who owns the land started in 2008 and ended in 2013 when



Maryland County Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs on his way to prison

Assiatnt Superintendent Bedell was served the writ of arrest on March 8, 2021 by the clerk of the Fourth Judicial Circuit Court in the County, and mandated to pay Five Thousand, Ninety-five (\$5,95.00) United States Dollars plus One Hundred Fifty-seven Thousand, Three Hundred-Fifty (\$157,350.00) Liberian Dollars to Mr. Judy Howe as bail of cost for expenses Mr. Howe has been incurring since 2008 up to the final verdict of the case in 2020.

Speaking in an interview via mobile phone from Barclayvill City, Mr. Howe explained his late aunt Wledy Howe and the late Alphonso Sunday Bedell, father of Assistant Superintendent Bedell were loving and that is how the superintendent gained access

the court asked Assiantnt Superintendent Bedell to turn over the property, but he alledgedly refused and took an appeal to the Supreme Court of Liberia, but the Highest Court also ruled against him (Anthony Wloflo Bedell) in September 2020, asking him to pay the said amount to the Howe Family.

He added that based on the mandate, he wrote a commitment notice to pay the money but since then he has refused to do so.

Mr. Howe disclosed that before the court proceeding, Associate Justice Jamesetta Wolokollie intervened, and asked the matter to be withdrawn from court and settled at home, but this was not heeded. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

SPECIAL FEATURE

Reaching the unreachable

-Weah puts spotlight on Betu and other rural communities

By Othello B. Garblah

As ink gets dry on reports from President George Manneh Weah's six-county tour, analysts have concurrently begun to put their final word on what they consider their takeaways, negative or positive, from the trip. It is true the news media have done some great work covering and reporting every step of the way; reporting on the movement of the presidential caravan and their interactions with the rural hosts. The reception of the people was incredibly massive everywhere and the President did not leave conditions of the people as they were upon arrival; he took decisions, made presentations that instantly changed situations or will change the people's conditions in the not too distant future. Celebrations broke out amongst the people who not inundate the president with various appeals that would lift them up but also with gifts to appreciate a president for showing them much care and love.

Amid the euphoria of celebrations and exchange of good tidings between the hosts and the guests, there were extraordinary exploits that characterized President Weah's 18-day visit to Bong and Grand Kru counties, through Nimba,



Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Maryland which newsmen's cameras and microphones grossed over and rarely captured. After all, some people

think a president's visit to the hinterland is a common practice; that it is a time for political leaders who benefit from the suffrage of the masses to reciprocate with visits and face-to-face meetings and the exchange of dry-goods gifts. Thus, as the version of President Weah's countryside visit is being discussed, it will be not a surprise that some pundits would mistake it as such, and dismiss it in a hurry.

But it would be a huge mistake to do so. First, analysts must get the distinction. Rarely had any Liberian president spent over two weeks in a single outing into the countryside, and covered six counties in a chunk spreading over more than half a month. Second, most presidential visits if not all had been about the provincial capitals as prime targets, as the prime host and the lodging place. And third, and most importantly, not many presidents or say no president in the past had ever veered from the primary route of their

upcountry tour into the jungles of the jungles, to spend time with the remotest of the remotest communities, and to see and interact with the poorest and most neglected of Liberians.



Mr. Weah, on his first visit to the hinterland did. He did so not in a rush. He slept in provincial capital cities as well as in outlying towns and hamlets. He was never in a haste, nor did he do so for the mere pomp of a presidential visit. For him, the visit to some of Liberia's most marginalized and forgotten communities, amongst them Betu in Grand Kru and Gbi and Duru in Nimba County, was precipitated by a thoroughly thought-through motive and plan anchored in liberation of a suffering and neglected people from squalor and disconnecting them with the larger society.

Thus, as he and his caravan combed the countryside, aware of pervasive socioeconomic challenges amongst the people, he however had in mind already that all communities were not the same in terms of access to minimal modern standards of life, in terms of public and private support and in terms of direct relationship with central government. He had researched and found that there were towns and villages and



▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

Reaching the unreachable

tribespeople that are lands unto themselves, woefully cut off and isolated from the rest of Liberia; communities and people never heard of by the outside world. And as he arrived in the various counties and interact with their locals, he was not oblivious of his original plan to trace, open up such communities and connect them with the rest of the country.

Such thoughtfulness and plans took the President to Gbi&Duru in Nimba, and later Betu in Grand Kru. These are communities that even local administrations and ordinary citizens in those counties admitted have long been cut off, given little or no attention and left alone to nurse their own wounds of exclusion.

What is true also is that most Liberian rural communities, Gbi/Duru and Betu no exemption, however remote, far-flung and ignored are not just parched, dry and empty lands lacking resources that can be used for their transformation and the transformation of the larger Liberian nation. Gbi&Duru, for instance, are exceptionally endowed with arable soil for year-round agriculture activities; its belly carries immeasurable quantum of minerals and valuable species of timbers that dot the landscape like bats on turfs of cotton tree.

There also is Betu, another faraway town, carrying every potential for tourism, eloquently heralding Liberia's beauty in no uncertain term that nothing else does better. Several kilometers away from Sasstown, there lies Betu River, after which the town is named, weaving (wrapping itself) around the Atlantic Ocean in spectacular ecstasy as beaches of glittering sands line up in witness of God's supreme artistic prowess.

The question is, how come a small country like Liberia, small in terms of its population and geographic size, has existed for 174 years and yet there are still corners and hamlets and citizens effectively cut off from the rest of the country—so cut off that many locals as old as 20 to 25 years have never seen motor cars, let alone have access to ordinary niceties of modernity. How come there are some territories and some tribesmen in this country are generally unheard of as part of this country, and that no one shows concern in dismantling their disconnect from Liberia, and pull them out of,

their century-old exclusion and marginalization.

If there is any better takeaway from President Weah's six-county tour, marking a distinction of his recent upcountry visit from other presidential tours in the past, it is his physical courage, thoughtfulness and political



will to venture deeper into the woods, far away from regular towns and near-urban citizens to reach out to the unreachable and to bridge the unbridgeable to the rest of Liberia. The president drove five hours to go and five hours to come from Gbi&Duru where the presidential convoy beat its own road into the jungle. He

similarly crossed streams and winding terrains to wend his way into Betu.

Visiting these heretofore unknown communities and people, the President put national spotlight, adequate embers of public awareness upon, and possibly set the pace for development interventions for them. Not only do they now have some hope that they, too, belong to the country called Liberia, the President's visit also gives them visibility that thrusts them in arms of national, international and private individuals and institutions having fiduciary and altruistic interest in supporting marginalized and indigent communities and people.

And strategically, the President travelled with policy makers and policy implementers who, along with him, saw the desperate conditions searing fellow Liberians in those parts of the country. The presence of all these people from Monrovia in the woods and with rural Liberians is bound to trigger and/or inform a new development intervention paradigm that intentionally prioritizes rural communities and people who far-flung from the seat of government benefit from the national cake, be it in agriculture, health, education, roads, etc.

For a president who is a nonconventional and un-elitist person, the chief mission for the tours in the countryside finds ultimate conclusion in Gbi&Duru and Betu, which are a macrocosm of Liberia's development paradox and a stimulant for effective breakaway into a more equitable, justice and holistic development program.



Français

Ebola : certains pays voisins de la Guinée ne sont pas prêts à affronter une nouvelle épidémie (OMS)

Selon l'OMS, une récente évaluation sur l'état de préparation des pays voisins de la Guinée - le Sénégal, la Guinée-Bissau, le Mali, la Côte d'Ivoire, la Sierra Leone et Libéria - a révélé des lacunes. « La Guinée a six pays voisins, et nous avons procédé à une auto-évaluation de l'état de préparation », a déclaré Abdou Salam Gueye, Directeur des urgences du bureau régional de l'OMS pour l'Afrique lors d'une vidéo conférence organisée depuis Brazzaville (République du Congo).

« Deux des pays ne sont pas prêts, un pays est à la limite et trois pays sont plus ou moins prêts », a-t-il ajouté. Selon l'agence onusienne, l'impréparation de certains des pays voisins de Conakry se manifeste aussi dans la logistique pour la vaccination.

Des systèmes de santé assez fragiles

Les vaccins contre Ebola, comme ceux contre le coronavirus, requièrent un stockage en chaîne ultra-

froide qui présente des défis logistiques.

« Nous sommes confrontés à des systèmes de santé assez fragiles, notamment à un manque de capacité à relever de nombreux défis de santé publique, de sorte que la gestion des vaccins contre la Covid-19 et Ebola reste un défi », a déclaré le Dr Michel Yao, Directeur des opérations sanitaires stratégiques à l'OMS.

« Mais ces pays voisins se sont mis d'accord sur une coopération et une coordination transfrontalières pour contrôler l'épidémie », a-t-il fait valoir, relevant l'importance d'une approche régionale dans la réponse.

« Cette épidémie survient dans des zones frontalières », a affirmé de son côté, le Dr

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Les libériens sont invités à oublier le passé pour aller de l'avant

« Il est grand temps que vous oubliiez le passé afin d'avancer », c'est en substance le message du patron de l'Église de la Congrégation de Dieu, le révérend Patrick Appleton.

« Si le Libéria veut suivre la bonne trajectoire, alors il est temps d'oublier le passé et de se préparer pour l'avenir qui l'attend », a-t-il conseillé.

Prêchant lors d'un culte à l'église de New Kru Town, le

révérend Appleton a dit « la coupe du passé ne pourra passer au-dessus du Libéria que si la nation et l'église mettent de l'ordre dans leurs maisons ».

S'exprimant sur le thème : « Tout est possible avec la prière », il a dit que seules les prières enlèveront la coupe qui pend au-dessus du Libéria.

Il n'a pas dit de quel type de coupe il s'agit, mais il a indiqué que l'esprit du passé continue de hanter les Libériens dans la

mesure où ils commencent à penser que le pays retournera à l'époque où il y avait du bain de sang dans le pays. Selon le révérend Appleton, l'émeute du riz du 14 avril 1979 qui a été caractérisée par l'effusion du sang était l'œuvre de quelques politiciens avides. Il a exhorté les Libériens à ne plus penser qu'un tel incident se reproduirait, affirmant que la manifestation avait été une expérience et une marque si terribles dans le pays que les citoyens vivent toujours dans la psychose à l'approche du mois d'avril chaque année, croyant que cela se reproduirait.

L'émeute du riz a été organisée par l'Alliance progressiste du Libéria (PAL), dirigée par le regretté activiste politique Gabriel Baccus Matthews, dans le contexte d'une augmentation proposée du prix du sac de riz de 100 lb de 22 \$ à 26 \$.

Selon les rapports officiels, l'intention de cette augmentation était de soutenir les efforts des agriculteurs libériens pour maximiser la production et la viabilité économique des producteurs d'aliments de base du pays.



Éditorial

Le travail ne s'arrête pas à la réception des doses de vaccin

Les autorités sanitaires de Monrovia, accompagnées de hauts responsables du gouvernement libérien et de diplomates étrangers, ont reçu le premier lot de 96. 000 doses du vaccin contre le coronavirus à l'aéroport international Roberts dans le comté de Margibi, le vendredi 5 mars 2021.

Selon le ministère de la Santé, le lot est le premier d'un total de 384. 000 doses de vaccin de la Covid-19 attendues dans le pays. La vaccination pourrait formellement commencer dans deux semaines par les agents de santé, les membres des pouvoirs exécutif, législatif et judiciaires de l'État. Après, ça sera le tour des militaires et des paramilitaires, ensuite viendront les commerçants et la population en général.

L'ambassadeur des États-Unis au Libéria Michael A. McCarthy, s'exprimant à la RIA vendredi, a félicité le gouvernement du Libéria pour son engagement continu à réduire la transmission et à freiner la propagation de la COVID-19 tant dans le pays et que dans la sous-région.

Cependant, l'Ambassadeur McCarthy a averti que le travail ne s'arrête pas là, espérant que les Libériens saisiront l'occasion pour recevoir des vaccins sûrs et efficaces.

Et c'est là que réside notre préoccupation: une administration efficace et impartiale des doses de vaccin pour protéger la population. Nous ne voulons pas que cet exercice soit mené à la « libérienne » où l'intérêt personnel prévaut sur l'intérêt général.

Nous nous souvenons vivement du pic du coronavirus en 2019, lorsque des agents de première ligne tels que des médecins, des infirmières, des sages-femmes et d'autres agents de santé ont été laissés pour compte sans protection en raison du manque d'équipements de protection individuelle malgré les fonds d'urgence qui avaient été mis à disposition par les donateurs.

Les goulots d'étranglement bureaucratique et l'influence politique ont étouffé le processus qui aurait dû être ainsi géré professionnellement. Conséquences : il y a eu des morts dans le rang des médecins et des aides-soignants.

Cette fois-ci, nous espérons que les choses seront faites différemment et que les régions et les personnes qui en ont le plus besoin, à savoir notamment les personnes âgées, seront prioritaires.

Les autorités du ministère de la Santé devraient être en mesure de conseiller le président sur la manière de procéder, car les doses de vaccin de la COVID-19 sont destinées à stabiliser l'ensemble de la population, à commencer par les personnes les plus à risque telles que les agents de santé, les forces de sécurité qui sont aux frontières et les résidents des communautés congestionnées.

Comme l'a mis en garde l'ambassadeur McCarthy, le travail ne s'arrête pas à la réception des doses de vaccin. Non, ils ne doivent pas être empilés dans des entrepôts et dans des cliniques privées à des fins personnelles tant que la population reste vulnérable. Nous devons plutôt nous efforcer d'atteindre ceux qui sont les plus dans la nécessité pour que cela ait un impact positif.

Français

Ebola : certains pays voisins

IbrahimaSoce Fall, Sous-Directeur général chargé des interventions dans les situations d'urgence à l'OMS. « C'estpourquoi, il est important que les pays voisinsaient les capacités de détection, de surveillance, d'isolement et de traitementrapide des cas pour éviterune expansion de l'épidémie », a détaillé le Dr Fall.

L a dernièreépidémied'EbolaenGuinée, qui a débutéen 2014, s'estrapidementétendue aux pays voisins, le Libéria et la Sierra Leone, avec quelque 28.000 cas et 11.000 décès.

18 casd'Ebolasignalésdont quatre décèsenGuinée

Par ailleurs, les experts de l'OMSS'accordent sur la valeurajoutée de l'expérience. Avoir déjà étéconfronté à des épidémiesd'Ebolapporte « un avantageconsidérable aux autoritéssanitaires ». « Il est important de tirer les leçons de cesépidémies », a déclaré le Dr Georges Alfred Ki-Zerbo, Représentant de l'OMSenGuinée, enévoquant la nécessitéd'obtenirl'adhésion des communautés locales dans toutes les zones où des campagnes de vaccination sontprévues.

L'agenceonusienneentend ainsis'appuyer sur les capacitésnationales. « Nous mettonsenprioritél'engagement des communautés locales pour qu'elles'approprient la réponse », a précisé le Dr Fall.

Avec 18 casd'Ebolasignalésdont 14 confirmés et quatre décès à ce jour, la Guinée, a lancéunecampagne de vaccination. Plus de 1.600 personnesontétévaccinéesjusqu'à présent. Maiscettecampagne de vaccination appelle à la prudence. « Làoù nous lançons la campagne de vaccination à Gouecke, à quelqueskilomètres de là se trouve le village de Wome. C'estlàqu'uneéquipe de fonctionnaires et d'intervenants a étépiégée et effectivementtuélors de la dernièreépidémieen 2015. Nous devonsdoncetenircomptelors que nous nousengageonsauprès des communautés pour nous assurer que nous les écoutons », a détaillé le Dr Ki-Zerbo.

Pas assez de vaccinscontre Ebola

« Nous utilisons la vaccination enanneau », a poursuivi le Dr IbrahimaSocé Fall, enfaisantréférence à la

stratégie qui consiste à inhiber la propagation d'unemaladie, en ne vaccinant que les cas contacts et les personnes les plus susceptibles d'être infectées.

« Nous vaccinons les contacts des cas, les contacts des contacts, et leurs contacts. Grâce à cetteratégie, nous sommes en mesure de contrôlerce type d'épidémie. Mais nous allonsavoirbesoin de plus de vaccins », a-t-il ajouté.

Quelque 30.000 vaccinscontre le virus Ebola sontactuellementdisponibles pour la Guinée, sur un stock mondial d'un demi-million. Et sil'épidémiedevrait'étendre à d'autres pays, se poseral'équation de la disponibilité face à des stocks limités.

« Mais il faut souligner que nous n'avons pas encore assez de vaccins et le plaidoyer doit continuer pour la production de vaccins, comme Ebola, comme on l'a vu avec la Covid-19. Mais pas seulement pour Ebola Zaïre parce que nous avons des souchesd'Ebola pour lesquelles nous n'avons pas de vaccin », a prévenu le Dr Fall.

De multiples épidémiesconcomitantes dans le futur

Alors que la Guinée et la Républiquedémocratique du Congo (RDC) sontconfrontésenmême temps aux virus Ebola et coronavirus, le Dr Fall a estimé que le monde sera de plus en plus confronté à un nombre croissant d'épidémiessanitaires, en particulier du fait que les habitats humainsempiètent sur les zones forestières.

« Nous devons nous attendre à avoir de multiples épidémiesconcomitantes dans le futur. Il est important que les pays et le monde aient les capacités de répondre à plusieursévénementsenmême temps », a fait remarquer le Dr Fall.

A cesujet, il cite le cas de la régionafricaine de l'OMSoù « tous les trois jours, il y a une nouvelle épidémie ». « Chaqueannée, il y a au moins plus de 120 épidémies qui sontenregistrées. Quand on regarde bien, au moins 75% de cesépidémiesontd'originezootique », a alerté le Sous-Directeur général chargé des interventions dans les situations d'urgence à l'OMS.

Pour le Dr Fall, il faut donc que les pays soientenmesure de faire face à de multiples épidémies, mais surtout de façonpréventive pour éviterqu'on arrive à de larges épidémies.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Nancy Birdsall,
Brian Webster

Exploiter le potentiel du marché climatique

WASHINGTON, DC - Depuis des années, les progrès en matière de changement climatique sont particulièrement lents et les coûts de notre inaction finissent par nous sauter aux yeux. Pas une semaine ne se passe sans qu'une catastrophe naturelle ou un événement météorologique extrême ne détruise les vies et les moyens de subsistance de populations vulnérables du monde en développement. Parmi les dernières horreurs, on compte une inondation dévastatrice en Inde, due à la fonte des glaciers et la vague d'ouragans de catégorie 4 qui a frappé le Honduras en novembre.

Avec une empreinte carbone par habitant 4 à 5 fois supérieure à la moyenne des pays à revenu faible ou moyen, les États-Unis se doivent de tirer les conséquences profondes de ces tragédies. Heureusement, 2021 s'annonce comme une année où une action importante des États-Unis sur le climat va s'amorcer, en raison d'une vague de fond dans le secteur financier mondial. Vous avez bien entendu : les grandes sociétés de finance s'orientent vers le secteur de l'environnement alors que les principaux investisseurs institutionnels recherchent des rendements sûrs et à long terme sur les marchés mondiaux.

Parmi de nombreux autres développements encourageants, ExxonMobil, sous la pression de Blackrock, le plus grand gestionnaire d'actifs au monde, a récemment réduit de près de 20 milliards de dollars ses actifs en combustibles fossiles. Le Fonds de retraite de l'État de New York, doté d'un portefeuille de plus de 200 milliards de dollars, a annoncé qu'il allait céder ses investissements dans les sociétés de combustibles fossiles. Et comme l'a récemment fait remarquerThe Economist, la part des entreprises de l'énergie au sein du S&P 500 a chuté de 10 % en 2011 à 3 % à l'heure actuelle, ce qui traduit non seulement les effets de la pandémie, mais également la « grogne des investisseurs au-delà de la COVID-19 ».

Les marchés des assurances abandonnent les combustibles fossiles. Déjà en 2019, les assureurs représentant 37 % des actifs mondiaux de ce secteur d'activité se retiraient des investissements dans le charbon, ayant jugé que ce secteur était de plus en plus « non assurable ». Et en décembre dernier, Lloyd's, le plus grand marché mondial des assurances, a annoncé qu'il cesserait d'émettre une nouvelle garantie pour le charbon et pour d'autres projets d'énergie sale d'ici un an.

Enfin, dans le secteur automobile, les véhicules électriques (VE) gagnent du terrain. Par exemple, BMW a récemment annoncé qu'elle allait construire 250 000 véhicules électriques de plus au cours des deux prochaines années par rapport à ce qui était prévu à l'origine. Et GM (qui s'est engagée à zéro émissions carbone d'ici 2040) et Ford vont lancer leurs nouveaux modèles de VE cette année, ainsi que plusieurs autres start-ups.

Malgré de nombreux points de désaccord entre les dirigeants de ce secteur et les commissions de contrôle, la résistance historique à des normes climatiques plus strictes est en train de fondre et un grand nombre d'acteurs du secteur privé expriment leur volonté de collaborer avec l'administration du président américain Joe Biden.

D'où vient cette vague de réorientation du secteur financier vers l'économie verte ? C'est en partie au journaliste et activiste climatique Bill McKibben, co-fondateur de 350.org, que revient une partie du mérite dans ce changement. Il y a des années, McKibben a amorcé cette dynamique en demandant aux étudiants universitaires de pousser les fonds de

dotation de leurs écoles à se désinvestir des combustibles fossiles. Cette approche a pris du temps, mais à mesure que les coûts de production d'énergie propre ont chuté et que le mouvement d'investissement dans les ESG (dans les questions d'environnement, de société et de gouvernance) a pris de l'ampleur, il est devenu plus facile pour les conseils d'administration universitaires de concilier les exigences des étudiants avec les rendements convenables du marché.

Rien que l'année dernière, l'Université du Michigan, l'Université George Washington, l'Université Cornell et l'Université de Cambridge sont venues grossir les rangs des établissements universitaires qui ont accepté de limiter leurs investissements dans les sources d'énergie à forte intensité d'émissions. Et plus de la moitié de toutes les universités du Royaume-Uni ont déjà pris des engagements allant dans ce sens.

Alors que McKibben a entrepris de constituer une base associative, l'ancien gouverneur de la Banque d'Angleterre Mark Carney est apparu comme un penseur clé sur le front politique. En 2015, alors qu'il était encore à la BOE, il a fait pression sur les régulateurs financiers pour encourager les entreprises à publier les données sur l'intensité en carbone de leurs actifs, en arguant que des informations de ce type allait engendrer une demande pour encore plus de transparence, ce qui, en fin de compte, allait renforcer la résilience du marché. Aujourd'hui, le Royaume-Uni et l'Union européenne mettent en œuvre leurs propres exigences en matière d'évaluation climatique des entreprises. Et aux États-Unis, la secrétaire au Trésor Janet Yellen envisage une série de tests de résistance liés au risque climatique pour les grandes institutions financières.

Bien sûr, les marchés financiers réagissent en dernière instance aux anticipations d'évolution des prix et des rendements, qui sont fortement influencées par les politiques publiques (comme les subventions aux énergies vertes et les normes de rendement énergétique). Et les politiques publiques, à leur tour, doivent être à l'image des comportements de l'opinion publique. Il est donc simpliste de dire que l'industrie financière s'oriente de son propre chef vers l'économie verte. Selon YouGov, le changement climatique est de nos jours un enjeu majeur pour les électeurs américains (juste après le secteur de la santé et l'économie), alors que cette préoccupation était en bas de la liste des priorités il y a à peine cinq ans.

La question pour l'administration Biden est de savoir comment tirer parti de ce regain d'intérêt. Premier point, Brian Deese, le nouveau directeur du National Economic Council de la Maison-Blanche (qui a précédemment supervisé les investissements durables à Blackrock) devrait collaborer avec Gary Gensler, le nouveau directeur de la Securities and Exchange Commission. L'heure est venue pour les États-Unis de suivre le Royaume-Uni et l'UE en exigeant que les entreprises cotées en bourse publient des informations standardisées sur leurs divulgations en matière climatique. Gensler a la réputation d'être un régulateur faisant montre de fermeté. Une fois entré en fonction, il sera habilité à agir au nom de la majorité du Parti démocrate au sein des commissaires de la SEC.

En outre, la divulgation obligatoire des risques climatiques pourrait probablement trouver un large soutien au sein du secteur financier, qui préfère créer des conditions égales pour tous les concurrents. Le mois dernier, 11 groupes industriels ont publié un programme politique conjoint qui comprend la normalisation des divulgations climatiques. Rarement les États-Unis ont disposé d'une si grande ouverture pour la mise en œuvre de politiques climatiques.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Liberian women are disproportionately affected

-U.S. Ambassador McCarthy

United States Ambassador to Liberia Michael McCarthy says the fact that women are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of the need to do more in removing entrenched barriers against women empowerment and uprooting the structural impediments to gender parity that make women and girls so vulnerable to shocks like the pandemic.

He notes that there is perhaps no greater impediment to achieving gender equality than the deeply rooted cultural norms and practices that favor the education of men and boys over the education of girls and women.

"The facts and figures tell us what we stand to gain when we give women and girls equal access to

education: A child born to a literate mother is 50 percent more likely to reach his or her fifth birthday. Women with some education enjoy increased agricultural productivity and income than their uneducated counterparts, and they are less likely to be victims of sexual- and gender-based violence", Ambassador McCarthy explains.

19. They are the cookshop and restaurant owners, the hair salon operators and the neighborhood "waiter market" sellers who lost customers and income because of the negative economic impact.

He says unlike many of their male counterparts, women have no other sources of income - no salaries from government or private sector jobs on which they can fall back to support their families.

He stresses that women deserve special attention as the world designs and implements policies to counter the broad social and economic impacts of the pandemic, saying, "And this is what we have tried to do in designing United States assistance to Liberia's COVID-19 response."

The ceremony was attended by President George Manneh Weah and other senior level officials of the Liberian government, including various national women groups.

school feeding program that ensures their children are fed hot meals when they attend school.

The U.S. Envoy then describes Education as a powerful game-changer for women and girls, underscoring that it is an indispensable tool for their social, economic, and political empowerment, and key to ending the scourge of inter-generational poverty.

"This is why the United States' development assistance to Liberia attaches special importance to educating women and girls. Our current emphasis is on increasing access to education for out-of-school children and adolescent girls between the ages of 8-15, providing them safe learning environments where they can acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills and ultimately transition to formal schooling."

Reflecting over the 120 years, he says the annual celebration of International Women's Day globally has served to remind the world of certain undeniable truths; that respect for women's rights should not and does not come at the expense of men's rights; that everyone, including men and boys, have a role to play in the fight for gender equality; and achieving gender balance means more than simply expressing ideals about equal treatment of people under the law. Finally, he says it is also about how communities, societies and countries can prosper and benefit by fully tapping the energy, talents, and abilities of all their people - women, girls, boys, and men.

"As we celebrate International Women's Day today, let us therefore recommit ourselves to doing all we can to give Liberian women and girls equal access to the rights and privileges enjoyed by men and boys; to unlock doors to opportunities that have been shut to them for so long; and to draw on their immense abilities and resources so that they are active players in Liberia's journey to self-reliance", Ambassador McCarthy concludes and assures that in working together to do so, Liberia can count on the continued support of the United States, saying, "We've been here, we are still here, working together."

Story by Jonathan Browne



Ambassador Michael McCarthy

Making remarks in Monrovia during celebration of International Women's Day on Monday, March 8, he said Liberian women, like women in many parts of the world, are disproportionately affected by the secondary impact of COVID-19, including the economic uncertainties created by the disease, adding, they are the small farmers unable to farm or sell their produce in local markets because of COVID-

The national theme for this year's celebration is, "Women in Leadership: Breaking Down Barriers in the Dispensation of a COVID-19 World."

Despite priding itself for historically elected the first female President in Africa, Liberia is still yet to take women along their male counterparts as equals with women here seriously underrepresented in all sectors of public life, including politics.

Says Ambassador McCarthy: Our cash transfers program, for example, specifically targets market women, farmers, and other vulnerable groups, providing them monthly payments of \$50 for three months - money they can use to invest in their small business, pay school fees, or meet other needs. And then there is our

SG goes after

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"I said after the conference, I entered to make sure that he was on the list, and I did not stop there, I made sure to see the names of representatives," he explains.

According to him, the whole argument about whether or not Samukai should be certificated, is bordered on the conduct of the election conducted by the National Elections Commission.

Cllr. Cephus argues that if the NEC is sued on the basis of an election it has conducted in which Cllr. Wright's client is a convict and is supposed to appear as a respondent, "then it means Cllr. M. Wilkins Wright is not qualified to make representation for and on behalf of the Elections Commission because he is conflicted."

"The Republic of Liberia will write the [Grievance and] Ethics Committee of the Liberian Judiciary to complain Cllr. Wright for ethical transgression," he adds.

When quizzed whether Cllr. Wright is working with the NEC as in-house lawyer or a contracted lawyer, Cllr. Cephus responds that the accused should be the one to tell "at what time he is Brownie Samukai's lawyer, and at what time he is NEC's lawyer."

"The question will be best for him ... no, no, the burden will not shift to me, it will shift to him," Cllr. Cephus says, adding that "the action is against NEC, growing out of a conduct of a process conducted against Brownie Samukai."

Up to press time, this paper did not receive a response from Cllr. Wright following several phone calls and a text message seeking his response to Cllr. Cephus' allegation.

Last week Justice in chambers Joseph Nagbe, through the Clerk of the Supreme Court, wrote NEC Chairperson, Madam Davidetta Brown - Lansanah, to stay all further actions in relation to the election matters concerning Lofa County Senator - elect Brownie Samukai.

"Meanwhile, you are hereby ordered to stay all further proceedings and / or

actions in the matter, pending the outcome of the conference," the communication dated 5 March reads.

"By directive of His Honor Joseph N. Nagbe, Associate Justice presiding in Chambers, you are hereby cited to a conference with His Honor on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, at the hour of 2:00 p.m. in connection with the above case."

Despite pressure mounted by the Ministry of Justice to thwart Samukai's certification, the National Elections Commissions had, in honor of the Supreme Court's mandate, scheduled to certificate the former Defense Minister early March before the MPC petitioned the court for a prohibition against the certification.

The Justice Ministry wants to deny Samukai of being certificated to sit in the Senate on the basis of his conviction in a criminal case in which he and his two deputies were found guilty of spending soldiers' personal pension savings without their consent.

After being elected as Senator in Lofa, the Supreme Court later upheld a lower court's decision convicting Samukai and the two other former officials.

But the court gave the convicts a suspended sentence, with the options to make restitution within a year, or face jail term for two years each if they failed. The time for restitution has not elapsed.

The Supreme Court had decided that Ahmed and James, and Kesselly and Peter who filed a complaint of elections irregularities in Lofa County, had not standing to challenge the results as they were not political parties and candidates.

That complaint originally delayed Samukai's certification. Based on the Supreme Court's decision in the election irregularities case, the NEC's Board of Commissioners ordered its Certification Committee to officially arrange and workout all modalities to certificate Samukai.

The planned certification got halted again by MPC's sudden petition before the Supreme Court for a writ of prohibition.

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Speaker convoy in tragic accident

A 40 year old woman, now in critical condition lost her five months old pregnancy and sustained a broken spine, while her mother legs are reported broken when the speeding convoy of House Speaker Boahfal Chambers ran into them early Tuesday morning at 6: am on 20

This paper has learned that the said escort vehicle also ran in to another car, but details about the second vehicle and occupants are still scanty.

The devastated husband of the victim, Mr. Geeba Williams told this paper on Wednesday morning that Doctors at the JFK said they could not perform any operation on his wife as at

Speaker Chambers visited his family at the hospital on Tuesday following the accident and had promised to underwrite the cost of the treatment.

Efforts to contact the Speaker on Wednesday proved futile. The Speaker did not return calls placed by this reporter neither did he return



Street.

The mother only identified as Mrs. Gbayou and her pregnant daughter Doris Gbayou, now hospitalized at the John F. Kennedy Hospital were on their way for treatment that early morning when one of the escort vehicles ran into them.

Wednesday because of the excruciating pains she's undergoing but only announced to him that the child she was carrying had died in her stomach as a result of the accident.

"They did the x-ray but I have not seen the result," Mr. Williams explained.

He told the New Dawn that

a text message sent to him regarding the accident.

Police Spokesman Moses Carter and his Deputy Lewis Normal also failed to answer their phones or return text messages to their phones.

Electricity regulator craves for unhindered funding

By Lewis S. Teh

The Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Liberia Electricity Regulatory Commission (LERC) Dr. Lawrence D. Sekajipo has urged the Government of Liberia and its implementing partners to provide uninterrupted funding to the commission for effective operation.

"LERC needs uninterrupted funding to implement its operations, because it would be difficult to function independently in keeping with the 2015 electricity laws without sustainable funds", he said.

Dr. Sekajipo made the call on Tuesday, March 10, 2021 at the commission head office in Congo Town, when it awarded six licenses to the Liberia Electricity Corporation in keeping with its operation.

He noted that funding challenges could create difficulties in retaining trained qualified, experienced and reliable

staff at the commission.

According to him, investment in the LERC would unlikely achieve the intended objectives of transforming the electricity sector of the country without continued stakeholders' participation and involvement.

The LERC is a statutory body

created in 2015 by the electricity laws of Liberia with the mandate to oversee and regulate the sector.

The commission began operation in 2018, as the lead entity for facilitating transformation and development of the electricity sector to attract



MSF provides

Cont'd from page 5

Liberia's JDJ hospital to complete a training program in our hospital, we have been sharing lessons from our experience in this critical aspect of medical care."

The training participants included 16 health workers such as physician assistants, nurses and midwives. Each day, these participants observed staff in the emergency room and intensive care unit of the MSF hospital and carried out medical activities under MSF's supervision. Another two participants, an electrician and a biomedical technician, focused on biomedical equipment and maintenance.

"We have them work together with our regular staff at the patient's bedsides," said Kebeh Zagbah, MSF's head nurse. "Then, toward the end

of the day, they meet with me and our training nurse to discuss what they have observed and learned."

A second aspect of the training program focused on infection prevention and control, such as through hand hygiene, the sterilization of equipment, and protocols for preventing diseases including COVID-19 and Ebola.

MSF opened the MSF Children's Hospital in 2015 to address gaps in pediatric care during the Ebola epidemic. The hospital treats children under the age of 15 for a wide variety of medical conditions, including pediatric surgery, and facilitates training for Liberian health workers in various aspects of pediatric care. In 2020, the hospital admitted a total of 4,251 patients. -Press release

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investment, improve availability and adequacy as well as quicken the pace of access to electricity in a liberalized sector.

Dr. Sekajipo detailed that the 2015 electricity laws of Liberia and the regulations allow that an entity may engage in more than one electricity supply industrial activities, saying however, such an entity must obtain license for each of the distinct activities for which a license is required.

Terms and conditions of each type of license according to him, are defined in the license package, adding that by law, the LEC is required to obtain license for all aspects of its operations, and has complied accordingly, for which it was issued the six licenses for existing hydro and thermal plants.

Others include Transmission for operating the high voltage network, Distribution for operating the low voltage network, System operation for independent coordinating and control of flow of power, and energy on Liberia's interconnected transmission system, as well as importing electricity through existing cross border lines.

Receiving the licenses, and making remarks on behalf of the Management of the LEC, Chief Operation Officer, Prish Govender said, LEC in the last three years has received huge growth from its customers base in the energy sector, adding, the growth has been supported by the Mount Coffee Hydro Power Plant, and the

Bushrod Power Plant.

According to Govender, the growth has also been welcomed and supported by the CLSG transmission lines, and a significant investment in the energy sector.

"We are a energy sector that continue to experience challenge as it relates to commercial loses, as they try to connect all of customers", he noted.

He then thanked the chairman of the Board of LERC and the government for support provided, while looking forward to having more of such discussions to deepen relationship and move the country forward.

The acting head of the EU delegation to Liberia, Miss Stefanie Marrone said, it is an honor to have represented the EU here, describing the awarding of licenses as a milestone event for the private operators in the energy sector of Liberia.

"I'm tired of repeating that the benefit of electricity are reaching all parts of society, together with the important economic growth that accompanies it", she reiterated.

At the same time Miss Marrone emphasized the benefit of electricity in promoting social and human development for women, who have access to better quality of life, for children who can benefit from electricity to complete their education and to all, for the increase in security that electricity brings along. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Cummings affirms support for women on IWD



The political leader of the Alternative National Congress (ANC) and former Chairman of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Mr. Alexander Cummings has reaffirmed his support for women here.

"We will affirmatively support you to ensure the historical and current obstacles to women's progress are eliminated," Mr. Cummings stated in a message of solidarity to

women within his party and the country at large as they joined other women around the globe to celebrate International Women Day (IWD).

"This is especially needed in our still highly patriarchal and male dominated country," Cummings continued.

The former Coca-Cola Executive also acknowledged the achievements of a few women, and recognized that there is a lot of work to do starting with his party, adding

that they are working and will continue to take on challenges faced by women within his own party.

"Hope you all had a wonderful celebration," Cummings noted.

Liberian women are among women around the world celebrating International Women's Day calling for an end to gender inequality, while celebrating and reflecting on progress made on women's right.

In an article written in the Vanguard, former Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf notes that as the world reflects on the past year on this International Women's Day, it is clear that the world needs more women leaders—both across Africa and around the world.

She pointed out that in Africa, women currently hold 24% of positions across upper and lower chambers, just below the global average of 25%. Only Rwanda has achieved parity with men in its representation of women in its parliamentary system.

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Mbappe breaks Messi UCL scoring record

The France striker opened the scoring against the Blaugrana in the last-16 second leg at Parc des Princes

Kylian Mbappe has become the youngest player in Champions League history to reach 25 goals in the competition, breaking Lionel Messi's record.

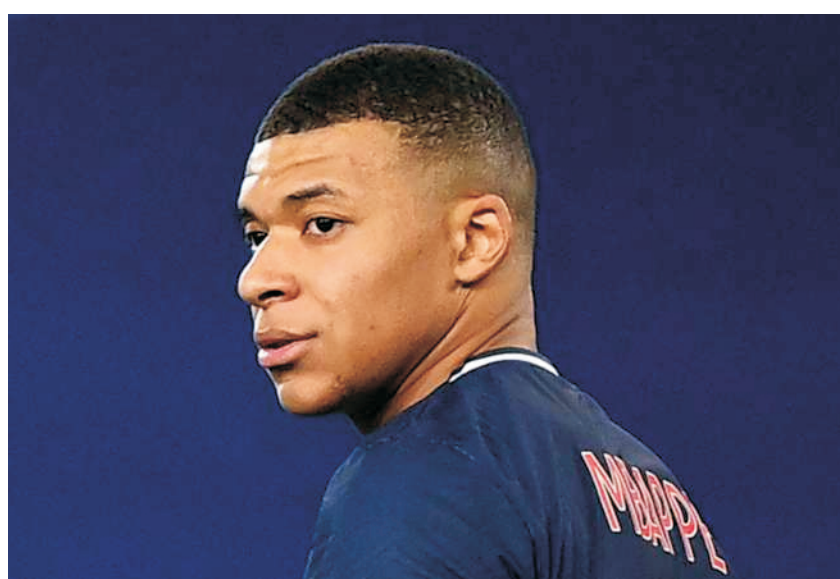
Mbappe opened the scoring for PSG against Messi and Barcelona on Wednesday, netting from the penalty spot in the 31st minute of their last-16 second leg clash.

At 22 years and 80 days, Mbappe broke a record Messi set aged 22 years and 286 days.

Mbappe gave PSG a huge lead going into the second leg by scoring a hat-trick in the first leg at Camp Nou - a 4-1 win for the Ligue 1 giants.

With his goal at home on Wednesday, Mbappe set yet another record.

The striker has four goals against Barca in this year's Champions League, becoming the first player to score that many goals against the Blaugrana in a single season of



the competition.

With Neymar currently sidelined through injury, Mbappe has become PSG's unquestioned attacking star in recent weeks.

Mbappe has six goals in his last seven Ligue 1 games in addition to his Champions League heroics against Barcelona.

As PSG chase their first ever Champions League title they are also involved in a tight domestic race. Mbappe and co are currently in second place in the Ligue 1 table, trailing Lille

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