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VOL.11 NO. 033

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2021

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P10

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Continental News

Shock and uncertainty after death of Ivory Coast PM Bakayoko

ABJIJAN (Reuters) - Ivory Coast faced shock and uncertainty on Thursday following the death of Prime Minister Hamed Bakayoko, the West African nation's second premier to die in office in less than eight months.

A close ally of President Alassane Ouattara, Bakayoko, who died of cancer a few days after his 56th birthday, was appointed prime minister in July 2020 after the death of his predecessor Amadou Gon Coulibaly, Ouattara's handpicked successor.

Although Ouattara named his chief of staff Patrick Achi as interim prime minister on Monday while Bakayoko was in hospital, Bakayoko's passing leaves a vacuum for Ouattara to fill as he continues his search for a potential successor.

"It will be difficult to replace him because of his standing, his way of doing things," Abidjan resident Maturin Bamouni said. "Even when they are not from his political side, he still

managed to sort things out."

A central figure in Ivorian politics over the past two decades as the country was plunged into a prolonged conflict and a partition, Bakayoko, a jovial character with roots in media and showbiz, emerged as a conciliatory figure, able to talk to all sides of the conflict.

"Bakayoko meant everything

for Ivorians, a minister who listened to the whole population, even the opposition," Abidjan resident Kevin Bigore told Reuters.

His capacity to gain the trust of all sides including former rebel soldiers who staged a series of mutinies in 2017, threatening a fragile peace in the world's top cocoa producing nation, saw him

appointed as defence minister in 2017, and kept the portfolio when he became prime minister.

He ended the mutinies and carried out reforms that helped keep soldiers away from the political scene during the October 2020 presidential election, said Abidjan-based historian and military analyst Arthur Banga.

"He succeeded in building trust between the soldiers, the chain of command and the regime, which contributed a lot to the stability observed

from 2017 until now," Banga said.

Guillaume Soro, a former rebel leader who later led a government with Bakayoko as a minister before falling out with the current government, said he had lost a friend and a brother.

"The circumstances of life have unfortunately led us to take different political paths, opposed and sometimes conflicting, but we have known, above all, to keep and preserve our brotherhood and our mutual affection," Soro said.



Ivoriens react to death of prime minister Bakayoko, in Abidjan

Tanzania minister slams 'nonsense' rumours over missing president

Tanzania's minister for legal affairs on Thursday threatened those spreading "nonsense" rumours over the health of President John Magufuli with jail, without offering details of the leader's whereabouts.

Tanzania's opposition leader Tundu Lissu has demanded information on where Magufuli is, suggesting

the president is sick with Covid-19 and fuelling a storm of rumours on social media in recent days.

Magufuli has not been seen in public since February 27, and much of the speculation has come from his unusual absence from two Sunday church services and his skipping a regional summit of heads of state.

"The country's leader is not a

parish worker who should always appear in church duties. The country's leader is not a TV host whose absence in a show you can question. The country's leader is not a leader of a jogging club who should always appear in the streets," the minister Mwigulu Nchemba posted on Twitter.

Lissu wrote on Twitter earlier this week that "the president's wellbeing is a matter of grave public concern".

Commenting on Lissu's posts, Nchemba warned of the country's stiff cybercrimes laws, such as the publication of "false information" which can lead to a three-year jail term. "Let's stop this nonsense even if we have nothing to do."

Information Minister Innocent Bashungwa again warned about "using rumours to spark panic in the country."

Kenya's Daily Nation newspaper reported Wednesday that "an African leader" from a neighbouring country was admitted to a Nairobi hospital.

However despite the



President John Magufuli has not been seen in public for almost two weeks

Morocco government backs legalising hashish for medical use

The government of Morocco, the world's top hashish producer, on Thursday ratified a draft bill to legalise the medical use of cannabis but upheld a ban on its recreational use.

Parliament, however, still needs to give its final approval to the legislation.

The proposed law calls for the creation of a national agency to regulate the industry, and for the establishment of cooperatives that would grow "certified" cannabis plants.

The move would "reconvert illicit" cannabis plantations into "legal and durable activities that generate jobs" in the medical, cosmetic and industrial sectors, according to the text of the draft legislation.

"It is the end of a political taboo and caps efforts launched some 10 years ago" by authorities, said sociologist Khaled Mouna.

According to a report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) last year, the North African country is the world's biggest producer of cannabis resin, or hashish.

The official MAP news agency said, citing unnamed experts, that Morocco has a lot to gain from legalising hashish for medical use due to "the ancestral know-how of farmers, a propitious

ecosystem".

It also noted Morocco's proximity to Europe, where medical cannabis is widely used.

Legalising cannabis for medical use will position Morocco in a global market that is growing at an annual rate of 30 percent, and by 60 percent a year in Europe, according to Morocco's interior ministry.

State regulation will improve farmers' living conditions and protect them from illegal drug trafficking networks, the ministry had said.

Morocco's production of cannabis was estimated at more than 700 tonnes in a 2020 study by the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime.

In its 2020 report UNODC said: "Morocco... continues to be the most frequently mentioned source country for cannabis resin worldwide" followed by Afghanistan.

Figures released by Moroccan authorities this week showed that 55,000 hectares (around 136,000 acres) of land in the northern mountainous Rif region were being used to illicitly grow hashish in 2019.

Authorities did not give more recent estimates but in 2018 production had taken place on an estimated on 47,500 hectares of land.

mounting pressure, no official statement on the exact whereabouts of Magufuli has been forthcoming.

Magufuli insisted for months that Covid-19 had been fended off by prayer,

refusing measures such as masks and lockdowns, but last

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.

COMMENTARY

By Dani Rodrik

How Economists and Non-Economists Can Get Along

CAMBRIDGE - Economists have never been shy about taking on the big questions that disciplines such as history, sociology, or political science consider their own province. What have been slavery's long-run implications for contemporary American society? Why do some communities exhibit higher levels of social trust than others? What explains the rise of right-wing populism in recent years?

In addressing these and many other non-economic issues, economists have gone well beyond their bread-and-butter preoccupation with supply and demand. This transgression of disciplinary boundaries is not always welcomed. Other scholars object (often correctly) that economists do not bother to familiarize themselves with existing work in relevant disciplines. They complain (again rightly) about an inhospitable academic culture. Replete with interruptions and aggressive questioning, economics seminars can seem to outsiders more akin to the Inquisition than a forum for colleagues to communicate results and probe new ideas.

Perhaps the most important source of tension, however, arises from the methods economists bring to their research. Economists rely on statistical tools to demonstrate that a particular underlying factor had a "causal" effect on the outcome of interest. Often misunderstood, this method can be the source of endless and unproductive conflict between economists and others.

Understanding the advantages (and limitations) of economists' method clarifies the value they can add to analysis of non-economic questions. Equally important, it underscores how economists' approach can complement but never replace alternative, often qualitative methods used in other scholarly disciplines.

It helps to begin with the idea of causality itself. In the sciences, we acquire knowledge about causation in one of two ways. Either we start from a cause and try to identify its effects. Or we start from the effect and try to ascertain its cause(s). The Columbia University statistician Andrew Gelman has called the first method "forward causal inference" (going from cause to possible effects) and the second "reverse causal inference" (going from effect to likely causes).

Economists are obsessed with the first of these approaches - forward causal inference. The most highly prized empirical research is that which demonstrates that an exogenous variation in some underlying cause X has a predictable and statistically significant effect on an outcome of interest Y.

In the natural sciences, causal effects are measured using lab experiments that can isolate the consequences of variations in physical conditions on the effect of interest. Economists sometimes mimic this method through randomized social experiments. For example, households might be randomly assigned to a cash grant program - with some

receiving the extra income and others not - to discover the consequences of additional income.

More often than not, history and social life do not permit lab-like conditions that allow the effects of changes in the human condition to be precisely ascertained and measured. Economists resort to imaginative statistical techniques instead.

For example, they might document a statistical association between an exogenous factor such as rainfall and the incidence of civil conflict, allowing them to infer that changes in income levels (due to fluctuations in agricultural output) are a cause of civil wars. Note the key piece of ingenuity here: because civil wars cannot influence weather patterns, the correlation between the two must be due to one-way causality in the other direction.

Well-done research in this style can be a beautiful thing to behold and a significant accomplishment - as reliable a causal assertion as is possible in the social sciences. Yet it might leave a historian or a political scientist cold.

This is because the economists' method does not yield an answer to the question "what causes civil conflict" (the reverse causal inference question). It merely provides evidence on one of the causes (income fluctuations), which may not even be one of the more important factors. Worse, because economists are trained only in the forward-induction approach, they often present their research as if the partial answer is in fact the more comprehensive one, further raising the ire of scholars from other disciplines.

There are other sleights of hand that cause economists problems. In their quest for statistical "identification" of a causal effect, economists often have to resort to techniques that answer either a narrower or a somewhat different version of the question that motivated the research.

Results from randomized social experiments carried out in particular regions of, say, India or Kenya may not apply to other regions or countries. A research design exploiting variation across space may not yield the correct answer to a question that is essentially about changes over time: what happens when a region is hit with a bad harvest. The particular exogenous shock used in the research may not be representative; for example, income shortfalls not caused by water scarcity can have different effects on conflict than rainfall-related shocks.

So, economists' research can rarely substitute for more complete works of synthesis, which consider a multitude of causes, weigh likely effects, and address spatial and temporal variation of causal mechanisms. Work of this kind is more likely to be undertaken by historians and non-quantitatively oriented social scientists.

Judgment necessarily plays a larger role in this kind of research, which in turn leaves greater room for dispute about the validity of the

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Lord, da so, so big they can do in this town here oo

Dear Father:

I say, yor wait oo. So all the big mouth these people can be making in this Monrovia here you want to tell me foko, they na get in their villages?

Da who them there again my son?

Father, da na our big mouth people from the hamlets we get around here-everyday they are making big mouth talking about how they are concern about their village and their people. Not knowing they are just using the people to get power at our Traditional Council.

You don't mean it my son!

Oh, Father, da the truth I talking here so o. Just these few days you know I have been traveling through our village with the Footballer to go and see for myself. And the things I saw sef, make me to loose respect for some of our so-called big people in our village.

In fact, Father, if you were to ask me ehn, I will tell you the thing we gat here na country. Yes, that one big hell of a village we living in here and making all this big mouth in this Monrovia town.

Father the thing is so shameful. And you wonder what our old people them ben doing with the money they have been collecting.

No Father, its too sad. And yet the so-called big people from those hamlets live in Monrovia town like kings and queens. I wonder how do they feel when they go to other neighboring villages and see how their fiefdoms and hamlets look as compare to the ones they get back home and called cities.

My son is it true that some of the big people from some of the villages failed to show up when the Footballer and his delegation went to their hamlets?

But that the one you talking slow so Father? I say out of shame they could not even show face. In fact what do they have there to show for themselves in the first place before I say as a village?

The thing is too shameful mehn. Yet if you listen to them talking you think they love their people-not knowing its all BS.

Father, we are really joking in this highly forested village oo. We are completely backward and very primitive. And the one that can get to me is that we can want to compare ourselves to other people-our neighbors who are doing far better than us.

Imagine, you have to drive hours in thick forests on muddy roads if you don't have a good car just leave your own with the Oldman up there because you will be let by the way side. But let assume you manage to go through the cost of repairing that car is almost the same as buying a new one.

Hmmm, the think you talking my whole heart spoiled.

Yes, oh Father, that serious thing I talking here so oo. We don't have a country oo. What we have here is a big village-and very backward too. Nobody must fool you to say that country here.

Sometimes, I wonder if our forefathers were just comfortable sitting in Monrovia town and forgetting every other place around them. Even the Monrovia town sef is turning to a big slum every day.

Ehn they say your coming be making farms?

I beg you ya Father. No farming thing will succeed in this village if the people don't have roads. In the first place how they will get it to the market?

We are serious jokers in this our village and I feel sorry for our children and our children's children.



LIBERIA POLITICAL HOT-FIRE

With Jones Mallay

fredrickdiamondm@yahoo.com

Should President Weah continue to be apprehensive over CDC's massive senatorial defeat, or simply ignore it completely?

Political Hot-Fire asks: "Should President Weah continue to be apprehensive over CDC's massive senatorial defeat, or simply ignore it completely?"

The writer is aware that CDC's Stewarts would refer to him as being stupid or has no sense of direction. But the fact of the matter is that the senatorial results are self-evident of president Weah's systematic declining football popularity that took him to the majesty-high of the Liberian politics, where he now served as President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia.

However, President Weah's well-deserved football popularity was not the only factor that gave him the Presidency. Two other political parties stood with the CDC to capture the government in the form of a coalition led by Alex Tyler (Liberia People Democratic Party (LPDP)); and the National Patriotic Party under Jewel Howard Taylor. These two parties helped to enforce CDC's overwhelming success through its "Coalition for Democratic Change."

But the political foundation of LPDP and NPP in the coalition is seemingly cracking at a disproportionate level, which should by and large make Pres. Weah apprehensive due to the just-ended CDC massive senatorial defeat which is a political referendum on Pres. Weah's if he chooses to run for 2nd term in 2023.

Pres. Weah should also be apprehensive for three reasons: First, either the coalition base did not support any of his senatorial candidates, or the coalition members simply refused to vote for them either the coalition leadership was simply unhappy over the limited political pie Pres. Weah has to offer them and keep the most lucrative jobs for CDC partisans.

Second, President Weah may have turned his blind eyes on everything they agreed on or he simply doesn't respect the power of the coalition anymore. Third, either President Weah is now overconfident at this time in his presidency after mastering and understanding the Presidency, or he no longer needs any type of political expertise going into the 2023 election.

But the writings are very clear on the wall. The parties that make up the coalition are the same parties that may undermine the CDC in the 2023 elections for three reasons: First, they may feel Pres. Weah used them for his political aggrandizement at their peril. Second, they may also feel that President Weah dumped them and deceived them by denying them lucrative jobs.

Third, the coalition parties would feel that they have nothing to lose, but Pres. Weah has all to lose, because if the CDC is yearning for 2nd term in 2023, with or without any coalition which in my mind is very dangerous tactics, that could possibly be the end of CDC political existence. But the LPDP and the NPP are not sleeping as well. They could be in search of another political opportunity to build a much stronger coalition that may inevitably endanger Pres. Weah chances in 2023.

Other CDC partisans think that Pre. Weah has a very strong political popularity from his football career days which is still active to earn him the 2023 presidential victory whether coalition or no coalition parties. Three reasons account for the President's confidence come 2023. First, Pres. Weah did employ an array of election Commissioners that can easily twist their hands in the direction of President Weah in the 2023 presidential election and make him the winner. Second, Pres. Weah did employ all the election Commissioners who should also return similar favor in kind by making him the winner in the 2023 election. Third, African governments are very notorious when it comes to cheating and nothing can ever happen to them.

Aside from the coalition fallen apart due to Pres. Weah's own political maneuvering capabilities, the ruling CDC has its own bad political odors heading into the 2023 Presidential election could also affect Pres. Weah directly. The first bad political odor is associated with the deplorable economic status of the nation where Pres. Weah has put the economics of the nation in the charge of his friends, who are simply not doing well? Pres. Weah has received calls from oppositions to replace unqualified Liberians with qualified Liberians but he doesn't care. This could cause a problem for Pres. Weah in 2023. Another bad odor has to do with the CDC party itself.

The party membership will need to be revamped to be reflective of a more responsible personality who do not subscribe to militants' ideologies. The CDC should be a respected ruling political party in Liberia, but it is not. There are many level-headed Liberians who are finding it difficult, if not impossible to take up active membership within the CDC political entity due to the type of characters who are currently manning the CDC.

Political-Hot Fire is told that the CDC is run largely by boys who are militants and who make militants' utterances and dress like militants who are ready to kill. Some responsible Liberians at home and abroad argued that the CDC doesn't have a well-structural layer of functionaries, nor does it have well-educated professionals and political technocrats to man its day-to-day political affairs or guide its strategic planning and actionable goals.

Many level headed Liberians in CDC led-government are often ashamed to associate themselves in public with the CDC party officials who are just violence oriented according to one inside source familiar with the CDC inner working. These are some of the rationales while Pres. Weah has to be apprehensive in the 2023 election for 2nd term.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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Liberia receives APRM Country Support Mission

A technical country support mission of the African Peer Review Mechanism Continental Secretariat has arrived in Lieria for a three-day official visit which starts March 10-13, 2021. According to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, the Country

Finance Minister Samuel D. Tweah, Jr, the APRM Focal National Point to give a briefing on the protocols and processes at the APRM Forum, as well as meet technicians at the MFDP, members of the National Governing Council, and the APRM National Secretariat. Professor Maloka is leading a

review report and National Programme of Action at the up-coming APRM Forum.

Over 40 of Africa's 55 countries have voluntarily asceded to the APRM framework. Liberia is expected to be peer-reviewed at the up-coming APRM Forum in South Africa. The Liberian Government has set up a National Secretariat and put together a National Governing Council which is representative of all sectors in the country to drive the APRM process.

Liberia and the APRM In 2010, at the 12th Summit of the APR Forum held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Chair of the Governance Commission and former Interim President of Liberia (1990-1994), Dr. Amos C. Sawyer was appointed to the highest decision-making body, the APR Panel of Eminent Persons.

A year later, Liberia formally joined the APRM by depositing the signed MOU of March 2003 at the NEPAD Secretariat. Liberia asceded to the 14th Forum of Heads of States and Governments of the APRM in January 2011 and has made meaningful contributions in terms of representation and participation.

The African Peer Review

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Support Mission is led by Professor Eddy Maloka, Chief Executive Officer of the APRM Continental Secretariat in South Africa.

While in the country, the APRM Technical Delegation will meet with President George Manneh Weah,

technical support mission to Liberia in the context of updating Liberia's Country Review Report ahead of the up-coming APRM Forum scheduled for March 25, 2021.

The Country Support Mission is to also gauge Liberia's preparedness for its country

A Test for Ivory Coast's Democracy

By Alassane Ouattara

When Europeans or Americans ask about Ivory Coast, we locals may sound a little bit like we are quoting Charles Dickens. We have, after all, lived through the best and the worst of times. This week's parliamentary election will play a major role in determining which we will face in the coming years.

After independence from France in 1960, the best of times came to Ivory Coast. In a difficult regional environment, our country was a beacon of progress, stability, and prosperity, with surging exports fueling steady economic growth. In 1981, Ivory Coast's annual per capita GNP was among the highest in Africa.

But, in the late 1980s, commodity prices collapsed, decimating Ivory Coast's export income and ushering in the worst of times. The ensuing decades were marred by corruption, decay, and two bouts of civil war.

Over the last decade, however, Ivory Coast has been on the road to recovery. Per capita GDP has doubled over the last eight years, and grew by nearly 2% in 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2014, 2015, and 2019, the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business index recognized Ivory Coast as one of the ten countries that had made the most progress on reform.

But this progress is not unassailable. In fact, the upcoming election will amount to a critical test for Ivory Coast's democracy.

The election process has often posed a significant challenge for our country. In the decades after independence, our politics were heavily dominated by one party, and political discussions were severely limited, taking place largely behind closed doors. In that context, elections were viewed more as a ritual than as a true expression of democratic deliberation and popular consent.

Politics began to open up in the 1990s. But Ivory Coast's institutions did not embrace the growing diversity of opinion. Instead, identity politics took root, fueling intolerance, division, and ultimately violence.

We are determined not to let that happen again. That is why my government has worked hard to build and consolidate a vibrant democracy, underpinned by the rule of law. It is also why, following the unexpected death of Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly - my party's presidential candidate - last July, I decided to delay my planned retirement and run for another term.

Public trust in politicians - essential to individual freedom and collective development - depends on free, fair, and transparent elections. So, my government has taken a number of steps to bolster public confidence in the election process.

Heading into the March 6 vote, Ivory Coast boasts a truly independent electoral commission that is not controlled or directed by any authority, including me. Its voting and vote-counting processes are technically secure, and a mechanism for the peaceful resolution of any potential disputes is in place. Dozens of independent organizations will be on the ground to monitor the voting and verify the count.

To support this effort, my government has also pursued security-sector reform, so that Ivorian forces are operating according to the highest international standards. Our security services understand that their purpose is to safeguard the population, protect human rights, uphold the rule of law, and fight against extremists.

As was true during last year's presidential election, the pandemic poses particular logistical and health challenges. But we have worked to mitigate them. In Ivory Coast, COVID-19 infection rates are modest, and the mortality rate, at 0.6%, is among the lowest in Africa. My government has made available all necessary resources to promote the health and safety of voters and polling staff throughout the election process.

But such technical and institutional preparations would mean little without a level playing field on which political parties can compete. And here, too, we have made tremendous progress: for the first time in over a decade, all major political parties are actively participating in the campaign.

Even as Ivory Coast's political parties compete with one another, they share a commitment to a free, fair, and peaceful election that respects the rule of law and due process. They understand that, despite their differences, they must unite around our country's fundamental values. In this spirit, citizens must also remember that extremists and opportunists have no place in a healthy democracy.

Bong residents in fear over closure of clinic

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Residents of Yowee Town and other nearby communities in Bong County are living in fear due to the closure of the only clinic in the area.

Since the opening of the clinic in 2020, nurses assigned at the health facility have over the last five months complained of the lack of drugs and other equipment.

In spite of the many cries for drugs by nurses, the Bong County Health Team is yet to intervene.

However, nurses at the facility lately closed the health center and left the town to an unknown destination.

The situation has placed residents of the town in total fear, as many of them call on the Ministry of Health to quickly intervene.

Yowee Town Chief Francis Tokpah says they might go back to their old days by only depending on herbs to treat illnesses.

According to him, he is mostly concerned about

pregnant women and children.

Our Bong County correspondent says that the Yowee clinic has over the past been the only health center for more than four thousand residents.

Our correspondent adds that traditional midwives have reorganized themselves to start helping pregnant women.

In a related development,

nurses at the Armah Sekou Toure health center have called on the Bong County Health Team to provide drugs for the clinic.

According to the Officer - In - Charge (OIC), Patience Fanga, the health center currently lacks essential drugs and gloves.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

UNDP solar project helps improve health services at Buchanan Government hospital

Great relief has come to the government hospital in Buchanan Grand Bassa County, with the supply of solar energy through UNDP Liberia Solar for Health Project.

Reliable solar supply has

panels has reduced difficulties faced by the hospital in powering critical medical equipment and facilities.

Interacting with UNDP Liberia Resident Representative Stephen Rodriques during a visit to the facility, Mr. Lincoln Wleh

UNDP through its Solar for Health Project in partnership with the Ministry of Health provided solar power to the Buchanan Government Hospital in April 2020.

The 4-kilowatt energy system is comprised of 150 pieces of panels (275 watts each) and 63 pieces of batteries.

Since 2019, UNDP has provided solar power to 12 public health facilities in seven Counties across the country-Bong, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Lofa, Bomi, Grand Bassa and Montserrado.

The aim is to help the government find innovative ways of cutting down on fuel consumption and reducing carbon emissions, as Liberia struggles with climate change issues.

The UNDP Liberia funded solar project prioritizes laboratories, operation theaters and maternal and child health centers within the 12 facilities.

UNDP Liberia through its Resident Representative Stephen Rodriques, notes that, without reliable access to electricity, health facilities are not able to power essential medical devices such as ventilators; systems to pump, filter and heat water

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improved services to patients not just from Buchanan but River Cess&Sinoe Counties. Operational costs have also reduced.

According to the Director of Procurement at the hospital, the supply of solar

explained that the hospital's operating hours are fully functional as seen in the increase of patients.

"Thanks to the reliable solar supply, the hospital currently caters to more than 300 patients daily," says Wleh.

CBL to Prioritize Policy Support for Agriculture Development

The Board of Governors of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), during its 25 February 2021 sitting, unanimously agreed to support policies toward the development of the agricultural subsector with a goal of stabilizing food prices in the medium term, and consequently build the country's foreign reserves.

Despite the downward inflation trend, the CBL Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to maintain the monetary policy rate at 25.0% for the fourth time with the aim of managing Liberian dollar banknotes outside banks, counteracting inflation expectations and stimulating interest rate transmission in the financial sector.

Other decisions of the MPC included implementation of strategies to increase public sensitization for the greater use of digital/electronic

payments, enhance loan recovery to address the structural liquidity problem, and promote the take-up of investment in CBL's financial instruments from the diaspora.

It should be noted that these decisions of the MPC were

informed by developments in the global and domestic economies.

Global Developments The MPC noted the projected contraction of 3.5%

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Senator frowns at teachers' retirement

By Ethel A Tweh

Montserrado County Senator and Chair on the Senate Committee on Executive, Saah H. Joseph, has frowned at dismissal of classroom teachers under a donor program, saying that donors don't control Liberia.

According to him, when donors come to help Liberia in the Education sector, the Minister of Education should tell them to work with Liberia's program than to take teachers out of the classrooms purely based on donors' criteria.

Speaking Tuesday in session of the Liberian Senate, the Congress for Democratic Change Senator said, the Ministry of Education should have told donors that they couldn't drop teachers from the classroom because they didn't meet their (donors')

Senate, the ruling party senator explained the current administration met the IMF program from the past government. He explained that there was a test given to teachers and those that failed were asked to be removed from the Ministry of Education.

However, Senator Joseph said there was a grace period for teachers who failed to equip themselves by going to school and acquiring a degree.

"Some teachers challenged it, they went to school, brought their documents and they were added to the list of qualified teachers."

Deputy Education Minister Latin Dathong said the Ministry is not aware of any retirement process. According to him, the Civil Service Agency is responsible for retirement, noting, they are not happy with



Sen. Saah H. Joseph

criteria but rather use some of the \$50 million dollars to train teachers across the country.

He continued that if donors are not willing to work with national plan, then they should be changed, adding that there are lots of donors around that the government could find to help the educational sector of Liberia.

"This Liberian Senate will not sit and allow those teachers leave the classroom; we have to stand for our teachers; they are citizens of this country. Those teachers who have been serving all of those years, what will become of them when they leave the classroom? How does the Ministry expect them to survive?" Sen. Joseph frowned.

Appearing before the plenary of the Liberian

teachers being retired without replacement.

He stressed that the older teachers are the most experienced ones, and that retiring them could cause harm in the Educational sector.

According to Deputy Minister Latin, they have been pleading with the CSA to have some of the teachers maintain their positions until there are qualified teachers to replace them in the classroom.

Meanwhile, the Senate has cited the Civil Service Agency, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Minister of Education to appear before plenary next Tuesday, March 16, to explain reasons behind the current retirement process without plans of replacement. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

FAO hosts Japanese Ambassador to Liberia

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has hosted Japanese Ambassador to Liberia, Tsutomu Himeno in Monrovia.

The event held at the Ministry of Agriculture in Gardnersville, suburb of Monrovia brought together FAO staff led by Madam

National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority Madam Emma Metieh-Glassco, amongst others.

According to a press release, the event marked the official closing of Japanese funded projects implemented by FAO in Liberia.

The projects include the Integrated Sustainable Rice

in the fisheries sub-sector and Livelihood Empowerment of Women in Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) during and after COVID-19

In opening remarks, Madam Njie stated that “Farmers appreciated the timely agricultural advisory services in addition to improved agro-inputs, and good water management to increase their productivity”. She noted that these technical assistance enabled farmers to cultivate twice a year on average and increase their yield.

At the end of the ceremony, Ambassador Himeno also signed a grant agreement with The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) Country Representative Mr. Kayode Akintola, under Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects (GGHSP) to help communities equip solar powered fridges, solar heat exchange fish coolers, amongst others.

Speaking at the closing of the ceremony, Ambassador Himeno thanked the government ministries and agencies for their continued partnership with the Government of Japan, and also commended FAO for successful implementation and continued partnership with the People of Japan towards sustainable development in agriculture and fisheries for Liberia. -

Press Release



Mariatou Njie, FAO Liberia Country Representative and senior Liberian government officials, including Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Robert Fagans, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cooperation and Economic Integration, Sherdrick Jackson, and the Director General of the

System Development, Support to implementation of the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries for sustainable fisheries and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Also launched was the new Japanese-funded intervention

Judge urges Police to investigate cases thoroughly

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

Maryland County newly assigned Circuit Court Judge, Cllr. Geeplah Tiklo Konton wants law enforcement officers in the county to properly investigate cases before charging and sending suspects to court for trial.

He says when cases are properly investigated, prosecutors stand a better chance with enough evidence to speedily proceed with trial so that if accused persons are found guilty they can be sent to jail.

Judge Konton emphasizes that Police should properly hear and investigate facts surrounding a case before carry on arrest or forwarding suspects to court.

He explains that courts are established by law to settle

conflict among human beings and restore peace and understanding.

He notes that speedy and transparent trial as enshrines in

Article 21 of the Constitution of Liberia, can be perfectly implemented by all justice actors, including the Police in Maryland County and other parts of Liberia if proper

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



PCC asked to demolish unsanitary ‘public toilets’

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The environmental department of the Paynesville City Corporation (PCC) is being urged to vigorously shutdown unhygienic ‘public toilets’ run by individuals in the city.

Highlighting risks posed to women who use the public toilets, Mrs. Caroline Weeks Thomas, President of the organization, explains that most women visiting the commercial district of Paynesville have informed her about the unhealthy conditions of these public toilets and how they are a threat to women.

During a one-day cleaning up campaign held under the theme: “Clean Environment, Healthy Community”, Mrs. Thomas, said after carefully cataloging the women’s situation report, her

environmental information to their colleagues, especially in market areas to be aware and take positive steps to reduce the level of women contracting diseases.

The PCC, she notes, must act now by increasing its surveillance on the operations of public toilets, noting that they should have all the necessary materials to fight any outbreak of disease caused by the unfriendly environments in which they exist.

Also speaking during the exercise, an elderly woman, Kona Harris expressed gratitude to Mrs. Weeks-Thomas and her colleagues for the environmental measures they are taking in several parts of Paynesville, aimed at educating women on the best way of stay save from contracting disease.



organization also visited some of the public toilets and observed that there is an urgent need for the PCC to move in to arrest the situation by shutting them down.

She informs the community women that most of the so-called public toilets that collect money from ordinary Liberians lack the basic things needed to enhance their operations.

She names the lack of clean environment, safe water, sanitary materials for workers, and clean source of water for the facilities and soap for people to wash their hands after using the bathroom.

She stresses the importance of women engagement in sharing

She appeals to health partners to provide some level of assistance to the women environmental organization to strengthen its capacity to effectively implement health educations and measures for women in overcrowded environments.

At least 350 women from various communities in Soul Clinic Community participated in the clean-up campaign which is promised to be a monthly events.

The peanut warehouse, dogs market, cold storage market and the Pipeline Market parking station public toilets were among few identified by the women environmental organization.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

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Français

Le Convoi du président de la chambre des représentants dans un accident tragique

Une femme de 40 ans et sa mère se sont fait renverser par un des véhicules du convoi du président de la chambre des représentants ce mardi vers 6 heures du matin. La dame est dans un état critique, elle aurait perdu sa grossesse de cinq mois et a eu la colonne vertébrale cassée, tandis que sa mère aurait subi des fractures aux deux jambes, selon les informations.

Les deux victimes sont actuellement hospitalisées à l'hôpital John F. Kennedy. La mère identifiée comme Mme Gbayou et sa fille enceinte Doris Gbayou se rendaient à l'hôpital quand elle se sont fait renverser par les hommes de M. Boahfal Chambers, président de la chambre basse du parlement libérien.

Ce quotidien a également appris que le véhicule d'escorte en question est également entré en collision avec une autre voiture. On ignore cependant ce qui est arrivé à la voiture et à ses occupants.

M. Geeba Williams, le mari dévasté de la victime qui a perdu sa grossesse, a dit à ce journal mercredi matin que

les médecins de l'hôpital JFK avaient déclaré qu'ils ne pouvaient effectuer aucune opération sur sa femme mercredi en raison des douleurs atroces qu'elle subissait et que l'enfant qu'elle portait était mort dans son ventre. «Ils ont fait la radiographie mais je n'ai pas vu le résultat», a-t-il expliqué.

Il a également dit au journal New Dawn que le président Chambers s'était rendu à

l'hôpital mardi à la suite de l'accident et avait promis de couvrir tous les frais.

Tous les efforts que nous avons déployés pour contacter le Président mercredi se sont avérés vains. Le Président n'a pas décroché son téléphone. C'est aussi le cas pour le porte-parole de la police Moses Carter et son adjoint Lewis Normal. Ils n'ont pas non plus voulu parler aux journalistes.



« Les femmes libériennes sont touchées de manière disproportionnée », l'Ambassadeur McCarthy

L'ambassadeur des États-Unis au Libéria, Michael McCarthy, estime que les femmes sont touchées de manière disproportionnée par le programme COVID-19. C'est donc pour lui la preuve qu'il est nécessaire de faire plus pour éliminer les obstacles auxquels est confrontée l'autonomisation des femmes, c'est-à-dire les obstacles structurels et manque de parité des sexes

qui rendent les filles si vulnérables aux chocs comme la pandémie.

Il croit qu'il n'y a peut-être pas de plus grand obstacle à la réalisation de l'égalité des sexes que les normes et pratiques culturelles profondément enracinées qui favorisent l'éducation des hommes et des garçons par rapport à l'éducation des filles et des femmes.

«Les faits et les chiffres nous disent ce que nous avons à

gagner en donnant aux femmes et aux filles un accès égal à l'éducation : un enfant né d'une mère alphabétisée a 50% plus de chances d'atteindre son cinquième anniversaire. Les femmes ayant une certaine éducation bénéficient d'une productivité agricole et de revenus accrus que leurs camarades non éduquées, et elles sont moins susceptibles d'être victimes de violence sexuelle et sexiste », a expliqué l'ambassadeur McCarthy.

S'exprimant lors de la célébration de la Journée internationale de la femme le lundi 8 mars à Monrovia, il a déclaré que les femmes libériennes, comme les femmes dans de nombreuses régions du monde, sont affectées de manière disproportionnée par l'impact secondaire du COVID-19, y compris les incertitudes économiques créées par la maladie. Elles, ce sont les petites agricultrices incapables de cultiver ou de vendre leurs produits sur les



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 à atteindre ceux qui sont les plus dans la nécessité pour que cela ait un impact positif.

Français

« Les femmes libériennes

marchés locaux à cause du COVID-19. Ce sont les cuisinières et les restauratrices, gérantes de salons de coiffure et les petites vendeuses du quartier qui ont perdu des clients et des revenus en raison de l'impact économique négatif », a-t-il dit.

Selon lui, contrairement à beaucoup d'hommes, les femmes n'ont pas d'autres sources de revenus. Elles n'ont pas de salaires qui proviennent du gouvernement ou du secteur privé sur lesquels elles pourront se rabattre pour subvenir aux besoins de leur famille.

Il a souligné que les femmes méritent une attention particulière lorsque le monde conçoit et met en œuvre des politiques pour contrer les vastes impacts sociaux et économiques de la pandémie. « Et c'est ce que nous avons essayé de faire en concevant l'aide des États-Unis à la réponse du Libéria au COVID-19 », a-t-il ajouté.

A la cérémonie, étaient présents le président George Manneh Weah et ses hauts fonctionnaires. Il y avait aussi plusieurs associations nationales de femmes.

Le thème national de la célébration de cette année est « Les femmes au commandement : abattre les barrières dans la dispense d'un monde COVID-19 ».

Bien qu'il se vante d'avoir produit la première femme présidente en Afrique, le Libéria a toujours du mal à consacrer l'égalité des sexes entre femmes et hommes, les femmes étant largement sous-représentées dans tous les secteurs de la vie publique, y compris dans la politique.

A l'ambassadeur McCarthy de dire : « Notre programme de transferts monétaires, par exemple, cible spécifiquement les commerçantes, les agricultrices et d'autres groupes vulnérables, tout en leur fournissant des paiements mensuels de 50 USD pendant trois mois - de l'argent qu'ils peuvent utiliser pour investir dans leur petite entreprise, payer les frais de scolarité ou répondre à d'autres besoins. Et puis il y a notre programme d'alimentation scolaire qui garantit que leurs enfants reçoivent des repas chauds lorsqu'ils vont à l'école ».

Le diplomate américain a

qualifié l'éducation d'un puissant changeur de jeu pour les femmes et les filles, soulignant qu'il s'agit d'un outil indispensable pour leur autonomisation sociale, économique et politique, et essentiel pour mettre fin au fléau de la pauvreté intergénérationnelle.

« C'est pourquoi l'aide au développement des États-Unis au Libéria attache une importance particulière à l'éducation des femmes et des filles. Nous mettons actuellement l'accent sur l'amélioration de l'accès à l'éducation pour les enfants non scolarisés et les adolescentes de 8 à 15 ans, en leur offrant des environnements d'apprentissage sûrs où ils peuvent acquérir des compétences de base en lecture et en calcul et, finalement, passer à l'école formelle », a-t-il ajouté.

Il a aussi dit que la célébration annuelle de la Journée internationale de la femme dans le monde a servi à rappeler au monde certaines vérités indéniables comme le respect des droits des femmes qui ne vont pas à l'encontre des droits des hommes, « car chacun, que ça soit les hommes ou les garçons, a un rôle à jouer dans la lutte pour l'égalité des sexes. La réalisation de l'équilibre entre les sexes signifie plus que simplement exprimer des idéaux sur l'égalité de traitement des personnes devant la loi. Enfin, dit-il, il s'agit également de savoir comment les communautés, les sociétés et les pays peuvent prospérer et bénéficier en exploitant pleinement l'énergie, les talents et les capacités de tous leurs peuples - y compris les femmes, les filles, les garçons et les hommes ».

« Alors pendant que nous célébrons la Journée internationale de la femme aujourd'hui, réengageons-nous donc à faire tout ce que nous pouvons pour donner aux femmes et aux filles libériennes un accès égal aux droits et privilèges dont jouissent les hommes et les garçons, leur ouvrir les portes à des opportunités, lesquelles opportunités leur étaient fermées depuis si longtemps. Il faut tirer parti de leurs immenses capacités et ressources pour qu'elles soient des actrices actives pour le Libéria qui songe à atteindre l'autosuffisance », a conclu l'Ambassadeur McCarthy.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Dani Rodrik

Comment économistes et non-économistes peuvent s'entendre

CAMBRIDGE (MASS.) - Les économistes n'hésitent jamais à s'emparer des grandes questions dont les autres disciplines comme l'histoire, la sociologie ou les sciences politiques considèrent qu'elles appartiennent à leur propre domaine. Quelles ont été à long terme les conséquences de l'esclavage sur la société américaine contemporaine ? Pourquoi certaines communautés affichent-elles des niveaux de confiance sociale plus élevés que d'autres ? Qu'est-ce qui explique la montée du populisme d'extrême droite ces dernières années ?

En s'emparant de ces questions et de nombre d'autres étrangères au champ de l'économie, les économistes sont allés bien au-delà de leurs préoccupations habituelles concernant l'offre et la demande. Cette transgression des frontières disciplinaires n'est pas toujours bien accueillie. D'autres scientifiques font remarquer (souvent à juste titre) que les économistes ne se donnent pas la peine de se familiariser avec les travaux existants produits par les disciplines concernées. Ils se plaignent (là encore à juste titre) d'une culture académique peu amène. Fertiles en interruptions et en interrogatoires agressifs, les séminaires d'économie peuvent sembler aux non-initiés plus proches de l'Inquisition que d'un forum où les collègues se communiquent leurs résultats et testent leurs nouvelles idées.

Pourtant, la première source de tension vient peut-être des méthodes que les économistes apportent à leurs recherches. Les économistes s'appuient sur des outils statistiques pour démontrer que tel ou tel facteur sous-jacent a eu un effet « causal » sur le résultat étudié. Souvent mal comprise, cette méthode peut être la source de conflits sans fin et improductifs entre les économistes et les autres chercheurs.

La compréhension des avantages (et des limites) qu'offre la méthode des économistes permet d'envisager la valeur qu'ils peuvent apporter à l'analyse des questions non économiques. Et, ce qui est tout aussi important, elle souligne comment l'approche des économistes peut compléter, mais ne peut jamais remplacer les méthodes différentes, souvent qualitatives, utilisées dans les autres disciplines.

Il n'est pas inutile de commencer par l'idée de causalité elle-même. Pour les sciences, il y a deux façons d'acquérir des connaissances sur les relations de cause à effet. Soit nous partons de la cause et tentons d'identifier ses effets, soit nous partons de l'effet et tentons de déterminer sa (ou ses) cause(s). Andrew Gelman, statisticien à l'université Columbia, a nommé la première méthode forward causal inference (« inférence causale prospective », qui va de la cause vers les effets possibles), et la seconde reverse causal inference (« inférence causale rétrospective », qui va de l'effet aux causes probables).

Les économistes ont fait de la première des deux approches (l'inférence causale prospective) une obsession. La recherche empirique la plus estimée est celle qui démontre qu'une variation exogène de quelque cause profonde X a un effet prévisible et statistiquement significatif sur un résultat considéré Y.

Dans les sciences de la nature, les effets de causalité sont mesurés au moyen d'expériences de laboratoire, qui peuvent isoler les conséquences de variations dans une situation physique sur l'effet considéré. Les économistes imitent parfois cette méthode en recourant à des expériences sociales randomisées. On peut par exemple attribuer de façon aléatoire des allocations à des ménages -

certaines recevant un revenu supplémentaire et d'autres ne le recevant pas - afin de découvrir quelles conséquences peut avoir ce revenu supplémentaire.

La plupart du temps, l'histoire et la vie sociale ne permettent pas de reconstruire les conditions de laboratoire qui permettraient aux effets des changements considérés sur la condition humaine d'être établis et mesurés. Pour pallier cet inconvénient, les économistes recourent à des techniques statistiques originales.

Ainsi peuvent-ils documenter une association statistique entre un facteur exogène comme la pluviométrie et l'incidence d'une guerre civile, ce qui leur permet d'inférer que des changements dans le niveau des revenus (dus aux fluctuations de la production agricole) sont une cause des guerres civiles. Notons le principal trait d'ingéniosité : dès lors que les guerres civiles ne peuvent influencer les modèles météorologiques, la corrélation entre les unes et les autres ne peut être attribuée dans un système causal à sens unique que dans l'autre direction.

Ce genre de recherches, bien faites, peuvent être une belle chose à contempler et mener à des avancées non négligeables - une assertion causale aussi fiable qu'il est possible en sciences sociales. Mais elles peuvent laisser de marbre un historien ou un politologue.

Car la méthode des économistes n'apporte pas de réponse à la question : « Qu'est-ce qui cause une guerre civile ? », soit à la question de l'inférence causale rétrospective. Elle fournit seulement des preuves sur l'une des causes (les fluctuations de revenu), qui peut être ou ne pas être le facteur le plus important. Qui pis est, les économistes n'étant formés qu'à la méthode de l'inférence prospective, ils présentent souvent leur recherche comme si la réponse partielle était en réalité la plus générale, augmentant encore l'ire de leurs collègues des autres disciplines.

D'autres tours de passe-passe valent aux économistes quelques problèmes. Dans leur recherche de l'« identification » statistique d'un effet causal, les économistes recourent souvent à des techniques qui répondent à une version restreinte ou différente de la question ayant motivé la recherche.

Les résultats des expériences sociales randomisées, menées dans telle ou telle région du monde - par exemple en Inde ou au Kenya - peuvent ne pas s'appliquer aux autres régions ou pays. Une architecture de recherche exploitant des variations dans l'espace peut ne pas apporter de réponse correcte à une question qui porte essentiellement sur des évolutions au cours du temps : que se passe-t-il lorsqu'une région est touchée par de mauvaises récoltes ? Le choc exogène spécifique utilisé pour la recherche peut n'être pas représentatif ; par exemple les insuffisances de revenu qui ne sont pas causées par une pénurie d'eau peuvent avoir sur le conflit des effets différents des chocs liés aux précipitations.

Ainsi les recherches des économistes peuvent-elles rarement se substituer à des travaux de synthèse, qui considèrent une multitude de causes, évaluent les effets probables, et prennent en compte la variation spatiale et temporelle des mécanismes de cause à effet. Les travaux de cette sorte seront plus vraisemblablement entrepris par des historiens et par des chercheurs en sciences sociales tournés vers des méthodes non quantitatives.

Le jugement joue nécessairement un rôle important dans ce genre de recherche, laissant lui-même une part plus importante à la controverse sur la validité des conclusions.

Judiciary sidelined in US\$9m budget

By Winston W. Parley

Liberia's Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor, Sr., has instructed Finance Minister Samuel Tweah that President George Manneh Weah should not sign the government's supplementary budget of some US\$9m "until it is revised" and it reflects allotment for the Judiciary branch, after noticing that the judiciary has been sidelined.

"... For you to allow the president to sign the budget as is and then find something in there for the Judiciary, it doesn't work that way," Chief Justice Korkpor said Thursday, 11 March in the Chambers of the Supreme Court during inquiry with Minister Tweah.

Chief Justice Korkpor ordered Minister Tweah to meet with the judiciary, "know what our priorities are, consider them and put them to the president, and [the] president should not sign the budget until it is

specifically for the Executive and Legislative branches in the supplementary budget, but nothing is captured there for the Judiciary.

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chief Justice first instructed the Clerk of the Supreme Court to read to the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Samuel Tweah, the section of the Judicial Autonomy Act, and then asked the Minister if he was aware of the instrument.

Section 21.3 of the Judiciary Law, Title 17, Liberia Code of Laws revised, says, all appropriations of funds to be expanded by the Judicial Branch of the Government for salaries, equipment, supplies, including stationery, and services other than personal, shall be included in that section of the national budget which provides for expenses of the Judicial Branch.

The law says further that the disbursement of such funds to the several courts shall be administered by the Judiciary

the Judiciary is not a revenue generating agency of the government like the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC) or the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and should not be judged on the basis of how much revenues it contributes to government.

He wonders if it is because the Judiciary does not know the sources of funding that it is being left out in the allocation of resources in the supplementary budget.

The Chief Justice says he is surprised that Minister Tweah did that because he is a friend of the bench, pondering if it is because of that "y'all don't take us serious."

"When there's scarcity, we understand," the Chief Justice says, questioning Minister Tweah why the judiciary cannot take part when there's windfall.

He explains that if the importance of the judiciary is not seen, it makes its work difficult, stating that Justices of the Supreme Court have to [borrow] money to go out of town on official duties.

Justice Minister Dean says he takes note of the concerns raised by the Justices, but he asks that Minister Tweah should address them because the subject is a technical one.

Responding to the Justices' inquiry, Finance Minister Samuel Tweah says that the real envelop is some US\$9m, stating that he will brief the president "that we breached the law."

He admits that it is an error that has to be corrected, in reference to the law, adding that going forward, there won't be reoccurrence of the error.

He promises that the law will be followed, informing the Justices that the Judiciary is captured in the supplementary budget under goods and services.

He assures that as fiscal agent of the government, he will develop a regulation and advise the technicians if there is means to revisit.

Associate Justice Jamesetta Howard Wolokolie says this thing about keeping the in the back doesn't help the country.

Also speaking, Associate Justice Sie - A- NyeneYuoh asks if there can be a way forward on how the entire process can be revised, noting that the Judiciary has continuously been strangled.

Justice Yuoh explains that each of the Justices supervises certain courts, and the Supreme Court deems it necessary to rotate judges which requires provision of allowances.

Branch.

Chief Justice Korkpor notes that Act is not being followed by the Ministry of Finance, noting that he understands that the supplementary budget has been sent to the president without consultation with the judiciary on what its priorities are to consider them in the budget.

He reminds Minister Tweah that following the harmonization program here, staff of the Judiciary accused the justices of the Supreme Court of cutting their salaries.

The matter which is being referenced by Chief Justice Korkpor witnessed a series of protests by judicial workers on the grounds of the Temple of Justice and the protest leader, Mr. Archie Ponpon set himself ablaze when he was due to face investigation on the basis of the Chief Justice's complaint.

The Chief Justice reminds Minister Tweah that besides the imposition of fines on lawyers,



revised."

"We insist that you consult with us, we decide what our priorities are. We are not here saying whatever is given to, divide the thing in equal parts, no. It can't be that way," he says.

Chief Justice Korkpor says the Judiciary called Minister Tweah, accompanied by the Minister of Justice, Cllr. Frank Musa Dean, so that he can tell the Justices of the Supreme Court why is it that the Autonomy Act of the Judiciary is not being followed.

He explains that while at some point one branch of government may need more resources than the other, but it doesn't mean that there should be no allocation for the other branch of government.

But Justice Korkpor notes that the Finance Minister allocated amounts

CBL to Prioritize

Cont'd from page 6

in the global economy, which represents a negative 1.4 percentage point improvement more than the previous contraction of 4.9% projected in the October 2020 World Economic Outlook. Accordingly, global economic growth for 2021 is projected at 5.5%, on account of anticipated containment of COVID-19 and other policy measures.

In addition, the MPC observed that global commodity prices improved in the last quarter of 2020. Inflation remained subdued in most advanced economies but rose in emerging markets and developing countries, including sub-Saharan Africa, and expected to decline in emerging and developing economies in 2021.

Monetary policy rates in advanced economies were relatively stable and remained broadly unchanged within most of the countries in the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) in the fourth quarter of 2020.

Domestic Macroeconomic Developments

Liberia's real gross domestic product contracted by 3.0 percent, while contraction in the manufacturing sub-sector improved, in contrast to growth in the agriculture & fisheries, forestry, as well as the mining & panning sub-sectors, howbeit not strong enough to offset the negative 12.7 percent decline in the services sub-sector. Non-performance loans (NPL), as a percentage of total loans, was put at 21.2 percent, representing 11.2 percentage points above the regulatory threshold. In the fourth quarter, the average outstanding issuance of CBL Bills increased by 3.72% in comparison to the previous quarter. Nevertheless, the

new subscriptions for the CBL Bills declined by 24.5% largely on account of increased demand on the commercial banks for cash during the December festive season.

The domestic economy is projected to re-bound in 2021 based on anticipated improvements in the international prices of the country's major export commodities. The moderation in inflation, from 15.5% to 12.5% in the fourth quarter of 2020, is projected to continue to 12.3% in the first quarter of 2021, with a band of +/- 2 percentage points. Similarly, in the fourth quarter of 2020, the deficit in Liberia's trade balance improved from 5.6% to 4.6% of GDP, while inward worker remittances increased to US\$65.4 million.

The MPC also noted that the relative stability in the Liberian dollar was reflective of increased net foreign exchange inflows and weak domestic demand, while emphasizing that the recovery in domestic demand is anticipated to gradually exert pressure on the exchange rate.

Overall, the foregoing economic developments prompted the MPC to opt for retaining the monetary policy rate, while challenging the CBL's Management to embark upon extensive sensitization to engender the take-up of digital financial services and strengthen policies to support lending to the agricultural sub-sector with the hope of improving Liberia's balance of payments.

In concluding, the MPC stressed the need for CBL to work with commercial banks by designing appropriate strategies to reduce non-performing loans with the aim of easing the liquidity demand on the financial sector and the economy at large.

UNDP solar project

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to ensure requisite hygiene practices; or to enable the cold chains that make vaccines and other medications available.

Based on the success of the project thus far, including its contributions to emission reduction, UNDP is currently working on a regional Solar for Health Program proposal with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for the provision of sustainable low-carbon energy services to 464 public health facilities across the country.

The Program aims to support dramatic cost reductions in energy supplies for health facilities, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improve efficiency and

access to good quality health services in the country.

"UNDP is committed to working with its regional and national partners to ensure that this proposal is successful," Rodrigues says.

The visit to the hospital by the UNDP Liberia Resident Representative is in continuation of his site visits across the country, intended to interact directly with local communities and beneficiaries of UNDP funded projects.

The aim is to also get a sense of the impacts of the interventions as well as, identify actions that need to be scaled up, and opportunities for additional support.

Conflicting accounts

By Bridgett Milton

The Office of Speaker Bhofal Chambers and the Press Bureau of the House of Representatives are in clear contradiction here, over Tuesday's (March 9, 2021) tragic motor accident involving the Speaker's escort jeep that knocked down a pregnant woman, leading to miscarriage of her five months' pregnancy.

The mother of the victim also reportedly sustained broken legs.

In an official release issued Thursday, March 11, the Press Bureau of the House described the accident as "unfortunate."

According to the Bureau, the unexpected situation

facilitate their recovery process.

But on the contrary, the Office of Speaker Chambers says the official vehicle nor the convoy of the Speaker was involved in any accident.

In a reaction e-mailed to this reporter Thursday, the Speaker's official spokesperson George Watkins, said no death has occurred from the accident, contrary to reports in the media.

Watkins narrates his own version of what transpired as saying, a vehicle being used by the Liberia National Police security detail assigned to the Speaker, driven by the assigned LNP driver, Mr. Lawrence Williams, whilst in operation to drop and pick up security

daughter Doris Gbayou, now hospitalized at the John F. Kennedy Hospital were on their way for treatment that early morning when one of the Speaker's escort vehicles ran into them.

This paper learned that the said escort vehicle also ran into 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 Wednesday, because of the excruciating pains she's undergoing but only announced to him that the



happened at the time security detail assigned with the Speaker was on its regular operational routine of picking up officers for assignment during that early morning hours of 6: 00 am.

"The Press Bureau asserts that victims of the incident are being hospitalized at the John F. Kennedy hospital at the expense of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Dr. Bhofal Chambers, who ran to the hospital to ensure that the victims are given adequate treatment, upon hearing said unfortunate information", the release reads.

It says Speaker Chambers has called on family of the victims to remain calm and join him in prayers for the speedily recovery of their loved ones as he (Chambers) stands ready to fully

personnel in regard to their working schedules or work shifts, collided with a blue Chevrolet Seden thus, injuring the victim, a pregnant woman and her mother in the early morning hours of Tuesday, March 9, 2021 on 20th Street, Sinkor Monrovia.

However, he said Speaker Chambers has visited the victims at the JFK hospital and assured their family of his desire to afford them the best medical attention, where applicable.

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 Street in Monrovia.

The mother only identified as Mrs. Gbayou and her pregnant

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 Speaker Chambers visited his family at the hospital on Tuesday following the accident and 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 a text message sent to him regarding the accident.

Police Spokesman Moses Carter and his Deputy Lewis Normal also failed to answer phone calls or return text messages to their phones. - **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Judge urges Police

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hearing and investigation of cases are done before arresting and subsequently forwarding accused persons to court.

Cllr. Konton was resident judge for the 3rd Judicial Circuit Court in Greenville, Sinoe County but has been re-assigned as Circuit Judge, at the Fourth Judicial Circuit Court in Harper, Maryland County.

The circuit court judge presided during opening of the February A.D Term of Court in Harper, Maryland County.

He told reporters in an interview that the court is publicly open for speedy and fair dispensation of justice to the people of Maryland and the entire Liberia.

"If proper investigation and more facts are not gathered before sending suspects to court," he says, and then it

becomes more difficult for the counsel for prosecution headed by the county attorney and his assistant to conduct speedy trial.

He says the counsel for prosecution has lost cases many times due to lack of sufficient facts and proper evidence established from the initial investigation conducted by law enforcement officers.

"So the law enforcement officers should properly hear or appropriately handle cases either in acquittal or conviction", he continues.

Meanwhile, Cllr Konton has disclosed the February Term of Court has been opened with several cases on the docket, including ten (10) criminal cases, four (4) murder cases, seventeen (17) civil cases and one (1) case of statutory rape. - **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Liberia receives APRM

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Mechanism (APRM) which was established in 2003 is an African Union initiative for promoting good governance within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), The objectives of the APRM are primarily to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration through experience sharing and reinforcement of successful and best practices, including identifying deficiencies and

assessment of requirements for capacity building.

The foundation of the APRM is built around four thematic pillars: Democracy and Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Corporate Governance and Socio-economic Development. The APRM is a commonly approved framework voluntarily consented to by member states. Since its establishment in 2003, 37 countries more than half of Africa's countries with three-quarter of its population have acceded to the APRM framework. - **Press Release**

Bong residents in fear

Cont'd from page 5

Patience says Paracetamol, Oral Rehydration Salt and B2 have finished, and the need for more of these cannot be downplayed.

The Armah Sekou Toure health center is in Jorwah, which is situated at the Guinea border. The Center caters to patients from Guinea as well.

Named after former Guinean President Sekou Toure, the clinic was constructed during the administration of former Liberian President William R. Tolbert with support from the governments of Liberia and Guinea. - **Edited by Winston W. Parley**



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Juventus told to 'free Ronaldo at the end of the season'



Giovanni Gigli says he would never have lured the five-time Ballon d'Or winner away from Real Madrid as he was always "too expensive"

Juventus should be looking to "free Cristiano Ronaldo at the end of the season", says Giovanni Gigli, with the former Bianconeri president claiming that signing the Portuguese was an "expensive" mistake.

Serie A giants put a stunning deal with Real Madrid in place during the summer of 2018, with a five-

time Ballon d'Or winner lured away from a record-breaking stint at Santiago Bernabeu.

Remarkable standards in front of goal have been maintained by an all-time great in Italy, but a forward that is now 36 years of age has been unable to deliver the Holy Grail of Champions League glory to Turin and questions are being asked of whether he was ever the right addition.

Gigli has told Radio Punto Nuovo when asked if Ronaldo was the wrong choice for Juve: "Absolutely, yes! I said that on his very first day at Juventus. He

is a great champion but is too expensive.

"Now it's up to Juventus. They've been paying him €1m per goal. [Juve president Andrea] Agnelli must be self-critical, but he doesn't have great collaborators.

He added: "The club should free Ronaldo at the end of the season and the same goes for [Fabio] Paratici. Maybe Agnelli had promoted him to remove him from his position afterwards. This could be the scenario."

The Portugal international has taken in 121 appearances for Juve, with 92 goals recorded across those outings.

He has 27 efforts to his name this season, but was unable to help Andrea Pirlo's side past Porto in the last-16 of the Champions League.

Two Serie A title successes have been taken in, but a man with five European crowns on the most distinguished of CVs was acquired to deliver long-awaited continental glory to the Allianz Stadium.

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Koeman hopeful Barca's 'great future' persuades Messi to stay after PSG loss

Barcelona boss Ronald Koeman says Lionel Messi can have no doubts over the "great future" the club has after they bowed out of the Champions League with a spirited performance at Paris St-Germain.

Messi, 33, who has won the competition with Barcelona on four occasions, outlined his frustrations at the Nou Camp last summer and was heavily linked with a move to PSG prior to this last-16 tie.

However, while the result saw Barca fail to reach the

last eight of the competition for the first time in 14 years, Koeman says the manner of their exit could help to persuade the Argentine to continue his long association with the club.

"Leo (Messi) has seen for quite some time that the team is improving thanks to all the changes we've made," said Koeman.

"Particularly, we have young players of great quality. We've got a great future ahead. Leo can't have any doubts about what the future holds for this team.



"We are departing this Champions League in a very different manner from the way we did last season. In this game, we hit our level and that's the road we have to follow."

But a day after watching his old nemesis Cristiano Ronaldo bow out of the competition with Juventus, Messi befell the same fate on what could yet prove to be his final Champions League appearance for Barcelona.

His stunning 25-yard equaliser had given the visitors hope of staging a remarkable comeback, with Kylian Mbappe

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