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# School expels kid for 'witchcraft'

# NEC's vendors issue ultimatum



NEC Boss, Davidetta Browne Lansanah

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# Continental News

## Primary school teachers abducted in Nigeria

Gunmen have seized three teachers from a primary school in northern Nigeria's Kaduna state, an official has said. Contrary to earlier reports, no students had been abducted during the early morning raid on the school in Rama village, Samuel Arwan added.

This is the first time a primary school has been raided by gangs suspected to be carrying out abductions for ransom. Since December about 800 secondary school students have been abducted in northern Nigeria.

All of them were later released, but 39 mostly female students are still in captivity following their abduction from a college in Kaduna on Thursday. In the latest attack, gunmen on motorcycles stormed the school in Rama village in Birnin Gwari local government area as children were arriving for classes in the morning, eyewitnesses told the BBC.

Kaduna state commissioner for internal

security Samuel Arwan said that two children who had been missing had been found.

The government could confirm that three teachers had been abducted, he was quoted by AFP news agency as saying. The kidnappings have raised concerns about the growing insecurity in northern Nigeria, and the failure to protect schools. The

government says it is stepping up security, with police and soldiers foiling an attempt in the early hours of Sunday to capture students from a secondary school on the outskirts of Kaduna's Ikara town. Officials said that 180 students and staff abducted from a college in the state on Thursday were rescued by the army, but 39 students were

still missing. Video clips emerged on Saturday on social media, showing some of the students being held at gunpoint and whipped.

The abductors put the clips on the social media accounts of some of the students.

The authorities have not yet commented on the video. Students and teachers are usually released after negotiations with the kidnappers. Many Nigerians believe that ransom payments are made, and this is fuelling

the problem, reports the BBC's Ishaq Khalid from the capital Abuja. A recent report released by Kaduna state authorities said nearly 3,000 people in the state were killed or abducted by criminal gangs last year.

Last week, neighbouring Niger state announced it was shutting all secondary schools for a fortnight for "risk assessments".

Three other northern states - Kano, Yobe and Katsina - have also shut some secondary schools. BBC



Fears about insecurity are growing in Nigeria

## Arrests in Tanzania over missing president rumours

Police in Tanzania have arrested four people on suspicion of spreading rumours on social media that President John Magufuli is ill.

The 61-year-old leader has not been seen in public for more than two weeks.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said last week that Mr Magufuli was "healthy and

working hard".

But opposition politicians have said he's in a serious condition after contracting Covid-19 and had been flown abroad for treatment.

"To spread rumours that he's sick smacks of hate," Mr Majaliwa said on Friday, adding that he had spoken to him on the phone and that he had sent his greetings to the public.

On Monday, Vice-President Samia Suluhu Hassan told Tanzanians not to listen to rumours and urged them to remain united. "It's quite normal for anybody to be afflicted by illness, to contract flu or a fever... this is the time for Tanzanians to be united through prayer," she said, without elaborating who she was talking about. The four arrests were made in different parts of the country, with the first on Friday, says the BBC's Munira Hussein in Dar es Salaam.

Speculation about the president's health grows as each day passes, correspondents say.

Opposition leader Tundu Lissu told the BBC last week that his sources had told him Mr Magufuli was being treated in hospital for coronavirus in Kenya.

He said the president had suffered a cardiac arrest and was in a critical condition. But this claim has been denied by several Tanzanian officials.

Another Tanzanian politician told Associated Press, on condition of

## Ethiopian hospitals 'vandalised and looted'

Nearly 70% of health facilities in Ethiopia's conflict-hit northern region of Tigray have been vandalised and equipment looted, a report by medical charity MSF has found.

The facilities were "deliberately" attacked to make them "non-functional", Médecins Sans Frontières said.

The situation was having a "devastating" impact on the population, the organisation said in a statement.

situation in Tigray "remains extremely concerning" and the conflict continues to displace people, the UN's humanitarian affairs agency (OCHA) said last week.

It added that although aid workers had now been able to access some parts of the region, "many people remain in hard-to-reach areas due to insecurity, logistical and administrative hurdles". Hundreds of civilians have been killed and tens of thousands displaced in the last



MSF teams found hospital equipment vandalised and medical records strewn on the floor

The Ethiopian authorities say most health services have been restored.

Conflict erupted in Tigray on 4 November 2020 when Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed ordered an offensive to oust the region's former ruling party, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), after its fighters had captured federal military bases in the region.

Fighting continues despite Mr Abiy declaring victory at the end of November. The

five months, a situation that has sparked condemnation around the world. Last month Amnesty International accused troops from neighbouring Eritrea of killing hundreds of people in the ancient city of Aksum on 28 and 29 November, saying the mass killings may amount to a crime against humanity. Only 13% of 106 facilities that teams from MSF visited between December and early March were operating normally. BBC



Mr Magufuli has not been seen in public for more than two weeks

anonymity for fear of a backlash, that he had spoken to people close to the president who said he was seriously ill and in hospital.

Mr Magufuli has been

accused of playing down the threat posed by the coronavirus

# EDITORIAL

## Too disappointing of the Speaker's office

**IT IS SAD** and disappointing that the Office of Speaker Bhofal Chambers would want to narrow-mindedly defend what is glaringly indefensible by blaming a recent motor accident that led to miscarriage by a pregnant woman and serious injuries of another person to a Police security detail vehicle assigned to the Speaker rather than Speaker Chambers taking responsibility.

**HE ARGUED THAT** so far, no death has occurred as insinuated by some media outlets, and that no official vehicle/s in the makeup of the Speaker's convoy was involved in the accident.

**BUT HOW CAN** the Office of the Speaker distinguish between a Liberia National Police detail vehicle officially assigned to Speaker Chambers from his convoy as though cars in the convoy are privately-acquired and owned.

**WHAT IS MORE** disgusting is that Walkins shamelessly denied there was death as a result of the accident even in the face of confirmation by doctors at the J.F.K. Hospital that the pregnant woman in question suffered miscarriage, while her mother sustained broken legs.

**ADDITIONALLY, AN OFFICIAL** press release issued Thursday, March 11, 2021 by the Press Bureau of the House of Representatives described the accident as "unfortunate", and explained the unexpected situation 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 O'clock.

**"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.

**WHAT THE SPEAKER'** office should have said is that the convoy was not in service at the time of the accident, but an officially assigned vehicle. The truth is Speaker Bhofal Chambers is held accountable for all vehicles officially assigned to his office, including wherever they go, purpose for the mission and whatever happens there.

**IS THE OFFICE** of the Speaker saying a miscarriage is not a lost of live? When does life begin? Is it at the time of birth or at the meeting of sperms of a man and a female's egg inside the wound after sexual intercourse?

**TO BASELESSLY ARGUE** that no death occurred from the accident presupposes that the pregnant victim was not carrying a baby, and that doctors at the JFK hospital lied. At least that's what George Walkins wants the public to believe.

**A CORE VALUE** of Public Relations is truth-telling aimed at winning or attracting favorable public attention. It does not require lying or covering up what is already known. Threading on such path is counter-productive and it could boomerang with disastrous consequences.

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

# COMMENTARY

By Erik Berglöf

## The Vaccination Opportunity for Global Health

**B**EIJING - Evolutionary pressures accompanying the spread of the coronavirus have driven the COVID-19 pandemic into a phase in which new variants are starting to pop up everywhere. In response, governments around the world are racing to vaccinate enough people to achieve herd immunity before the virus acquires a mutation that nullifies existing vaccines' effectiveness. Sadly, in many emerging and developing economies, this race is being lost, leaving everyone vulnerable to new strains. But it doesn't have to be this way.

The global deployment of COVID-19 vaccines has so far been an ugly free-for-all, with rich and large countries winning out. At this point, many emerging and developing economies probably will not achieve meaningful levels of vaccination until the end of this year, at the earliest. And many of these countries may never get vaccines that have already been pre-purchased, because manufacturers have massively overpromised what they can deliver. Worse, there is now a distinct possibility that the vaccines, even if they do arrive, will no longer be effective, owing to the proliferation of new variants.

But these delays and global-governance failures could yet be made into an opportunity. Because the situation calls for mass-vaccination drives on a global scale, such efforts could serve as a platform for ambitious international initiatives to improve health-system resilience, prepare for future pandemics, and work toward universal health coverage. The recent start of deliveries under the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) mechanism for vaccine finance and deployment is very encouraging.

The stars are aligned for precisely such a global strategy. For once, health is atop the global agenda, with world leaders and finance ministers eager to listen. US President Joe Biden's administration has brought hope of global leadership and proper funding for efforts to reach poorer countries. Biden's reversal of Donald Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from the World Health Organization will provide much-needed authority and resources to that indispensable body. We must not squander this opportunity.

Vaccine deployment, with an emphasis on primary care for delivery, requires mobilizing a broad range of capacities, including transportation, storage, and logistics infrastructure. Moreover, most immunization systems are currently focused on delivering childhood vaccines and will need to be adapted to reach adult populations.

Governments are already drawing up national plans to deal with difficult questions such as which vaccine recipients to prioritize. Health officials are updating information and monitoring systems, identifying vaccination sites, targeting hard-to-reach populations, and preparing communication tools to address vaccine hesitancy and other challenges.

As a first step in establishing a more robust framework, the COVID-19 vaccination infrastructure should be retained to deliver vaccines against other diseases. Many vaccination programs and health interventions

have been postponed or put on hold as a result of the pandemic. We should now be looking for opportunities to reactivate them. At a minimum, it is critical that health workers around the world be vaccinated against other illnesses such as hepatitis B and influenza.

Administering COVID-19 vaccines calls for upgrades to, or the creation of, delivery infrastructure, particularly for the vaccines that require cold storage chains. But to retain this infrastructure after the pandemic, it will have to be made sustainable. Introducing solar power into vaccine logistics chains and basic health units in remote areas could provide huge long-term benefits in poor countries with unstable power supplies or unreliable electricity grids.

Expanding immunization to adult populations also will require extra training. Here, we should be considering how digital platforms and artificial intelligence might be used to train health workers, volunteers, and non-medical personnel around the world. The same technologies could also be used to disseminate critical public health messaging against non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, or to expand smoking-cessation programs.

In the months ahead, governments and health-care providers will need to collect an extraordinary amount of information about who was vaccinated with what vaccine at what time. Vaccine registries will have to be upgraded or built from scratch, and modern digital infrastructure will need to be developed and expanded widely. Fortunately, these data banks can be enriched or synced with additional health information - possibly using blockchain technology to protect privacy - and then used to improve delivery of care, or to enhance disease surveillance and other preventive measures.

Finally, and perhaps most crucially, the COVID-19 vaccination effort could lead to more pharmaceutical production and even research in the emerging and developing world. India is already an important drug and vaccine producer, but the world will need even more regional production and logistics hubs, particularly if the COVID-19 virus becomes endemic, as many epidemiologists fear. Existing governance structures to prevent counterfeits and black-market activity will need to be reinforced. Though this implies some up-front costs, it will yield long-term benefits for health infrastructure in these countries.

Making the most of the COVID-19 vaccination effort will require leadership at the highest level. As the current occupant of the G20's rotating presidency, Italy - now with Prime Minister Mario Draghi's experienced hand on the tiller - could work with the United Kingdom, the current G7 chair, and the newly empowered WHO to seize the opportunities on offer. Now is the time to leverage the skills and financing capacities of multilateral development banks, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

The unprecedented speed with which COVID-19 vaccines were developed represents a signal achievement for humanity. With just a little foresight, we can leverage that success into equally impressive improvement in global health, longevity, and life satisfaction.

# OPINION

By Abdoulaye Ndiaye

## Fear and Loathing in Senegal

**N**EW YORK - Large-scale protests have swept Senegal since the beginning of March, reflecting widespread anger at corruption, high unemployment, and what many regard as a politically motivated rape charge against opposition leader Ousmane Sonko (he denies the accusation). President Macky Sall's government has cracked down violently on the demonstrations - the West African country's largest in a decade. At least eight people have died, and restrictions on freedom of speech have been imposed.

Sall's government should step back and reconsider its approach. Rather than threatening the country's hard-won democratic gains, it should de-escalate tensions and promote economic recovery.

Senegal's long march toward democracy began seven decades ago, with demands for independence from French colonial rule. The country achieved that goal following a 1960 power-transfer agreement with France, and the poet Léopold Sédar Senghor became its first president.

The fight for democracy began anew in 1988, when opposition parties alleged fraud in the presidential election won by the incumbent, Abdou Diouf. In response, Diouf's government imposed a long-lasting state of emergency, including a cumbersome curfew. But when Diouf lost the 2000 presidential election, he handed over power peacefully to his opponent, Abdoulaye Wade, in a move that solidified Senegal's reputation as a regional bastion of political stability.

In 2012, the "June 23 Movement," a civil-society grouping led by young people and artists, fought to preserve Senegal's constitution and prevent Wade from winning what would have been a highly controversial third term as president. (A constitutional provision limiting presidents to two consecutive terms in office took effect in 2001, a year after Wade became president.) In the event, Wade lost a second-round runoff to Sall, who was re-elected in 2019.

But although Senegal now maintains the formal features of democracy, the country needs more than an institutional façade. In fact, Senegal has fallen short of being a true democracy in several worrying respects in recent years.

For starters, Sall's administration has been accused of embezzlement and corruption in the gas and natural resources sector. The government has also sought to sideline several political opponents through selective accusations of corruption and sexual harassment - including the rape allegation against Sonko that helped to trigger the recent nationwide protests. And the authorities' heavy-handed efforts to quash these demonstrations - with credible sources reporting that a 17-year-old boy was killed by gunfire in the protests - have further undermined its democratic credentials.

To prevent Senegalese democracy from being further imperiled, the government must defuse a volatile situation. If the government is to restore its reputation, it must give victims and their families justice, and assure the public that the security forces will not use such violence against peaceful protesters again. There also needs to be an investigation into the independently reported shutdowns of the internet, some media outlets, and messaging apps during the protests on March 4. In Senegal, legal matters must never be settled with force and violence, and political disagreements must never be managed by silencing opponents and curtailing freedom of speech.

As in 2012, Senegalese youth are prepared to protest peacefully in order to protect the country's constitution and the legitimacy of the next presidential election, which is scheduled to take place in 2024. Time and again, Senegalese governments have tried to twist the constitution for political gain, transforming the state into what Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson call a "Paper Leviathan" that manages to be both oppressive and ineffective. Unless Sall's government changes its ways, we may well see a replay of the protests that roiled the country a decade ago.

In any case, the current administration has too much to do to be focusing on the 2024 election already. In particular, it should continue to implement its Priority Action Plan, a series of bold reforms - including an industrial policy, special economic zones, industrial parks, and regional mining facilities - that could make Senegal a model for industrialization in Africa. The government should also be striving to deliver relief from COVID-19 by using its modest financial resources to secure vaccines.

Policymakers can promote a strong post-pandemic recovery through structural changes aimed at ensuring a more dynamic, inclusive economy. But this will happen only if they make industrialization a priority again and invest in Senegal's human capital.

International institutions strongly support the government's development plans. Their successful implementation would most likely ensure another peaceful transfer of power in 2024 to a new, legitimately elected president. Such an outcome would bolster Senegal's political stability - and thus its economic prospects - considerably.

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# O-PED

By Elizabeth Drew

## Can Biden Govern?

**W**ASHINGTON, DC - The most significant thing that President Joe Biden said in his first prime-time address, on Thursday, March 11, was that in recent years, "We lost faith in whether our government and our democracy can deliver on really hard things for the American people." It was now up to the slim, seemingly unassuming Biden, after decades of seeking the Oval Office, to show that America is governable.

Biden not only has to restore faith in federal programs, but rescue the country from the deadly virus that has killed more than a half-million Americans in a year. A few hours before his speech, Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, one of the most ambitious domestic-policy legislation ever passed.

The new law is a collection of programs to not only accelerate the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on society and the economy, but also begin restoring equity to who gets helped by federal legislation, for a long time tilted toward the wealthy. The new law passed the evenly divided Senate by one vote, with Republicans unanimously opposed. The House passed it by a narrow margin with Republicans unanimously opposed. (The Democrats, having lost House seats in the 2020 elections, dominate the "lower chamber" by only eight votes.)

The sprawling bill granted direct payments of up to \$1,400 to most households; raised benefits for the unemployed; and expanded aid for children, for state and local governments, for schools so that children could return to classrooms and their parents to work, and for small businesses (particularly restaurants) hurt by the pandemic. The bill also contains a major expansion of the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, once the source of a dependable political ruckus. The bill also included substantial increases in aid for the poor and money for hospitals and health-care workers. This rich stew had enough ingredients to please progressives while, despite its estimated \$1.9 trillion price tag, it wasn't too enormous for moderate Democrats to swallow.

A provision to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour was dropped because of a parliamentary ruling. In the Senate the final vote was held up for over ten hours while the Democratic leadership worked to overcome an objection by Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia, a poor state that Donald Trump easily carried twice.

Manchin, a bear of a man, is clearly enjoying the season in the sun which the evenly divided Senate affords him. A Democratic Senate aide says, "He's smart in taking advantage of his position but he's not as smart as he thinks he is."

The big question after Congress passed the Rescue Plan Act on March 10 was what this augured for the future. A number of observers prematurely declared the end of Reaganism, the view, swept into fashion in 1980, that government programs can do no good.

But it will require more than one bill to establish that such a dramatic change has occurred, and thoughtful Democrats know that the pandemic-inspired rescue plan may well turn out to have been the easiest piece of major legislation for them to pass in the two years before the 2022 midterm elections, when the president's party often loses votes and the opposition party gains control of one or both chambers.

Virtually all of the other issues on Biden's, and most Democrats' list - building up America's decrepit infrastructure, getting serious about climate change, immigration, and overcoming state-level Republican efforts to make it harder for minorities to vote - contain issues that could incite internal party controversy at a time when they can't afford to lose any votes. (If a Senate roll call ends in a tie, Vice President Kamala Harris can vote to break it.)

Moreover, the special "reconciliation" rule, under which the Rescue Act was passed, requires just a majority (51 votes) - as opposed to the 60 required for most legislation because a filibuster is routinely threatened - and can only be utilized for bills involving budgetary matters. This is why many Democrats think that the filibuster must be repealed, made more difficult to use, or narrowed in the times it can be used.

A practice that was first employed by southern senators to block civil-rights legislation, the filibuster gradually came into widespread use, to the point whereby most legislation needs 60 votes to succeed. Thus, a bill that has majority support can be sunk by 41 senators.

Before the 2020 election, when Republicans controlled the Senate, then-majority leader Mitch McConnell frequently used the threat of a filibuster to bury legislation that came from the Democratic-controlled House. The prospect that McConnell can still block most Democrat proposals is why so many of the president's party - delighted at the prospect, which they are aware could be short-lived, of writing long-sought legislation and of fulfilling Biden's campaign promises - want to change the filibuster or get rid of it altogether.

Biden is not so naive as to believe that McConnell will change his political spots, but his calls for bipartisanship may set the Republicans up for blame for opposing them. Biden is aware that the Republicans aren't interested in helping the administration win on big issues, and from experience he knows that there is no point in getting dragged into long negotiations that go nowhere. The current effort by Biden, Harris, and their spouses to sell the Rescue Act to the public, though it has already been passed, is a way to try to make passage of other administration bills more likely by making the concept of government programs more acceptable.

Since changing Senate rules requires 67 votes, doing anything serious about the filibuster presents a daunting challenge. Democrats talk of building pressure on Republicans to change the filibuster rule by emphasizing their opposition to popular administration bills. But this may turn out to be just a theory: the Rescue Act is wildly popular with the public, receiving as much as 75% support, yet no Republican supported it. Republicans meanwhile are trying to lower it in the public's esteem by attacking its details.

Thus, before a transformation of American politics can be proclaimed, or to convince more people that US government works, a battle still must be fought over a bill that has only just gone on the books.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

**Who Am I?**

I was born in one country, but I found my life in another. Nigeria, however, molded my foundation, America shaped it, the world fine-tuned and polished it. Hence, I am very grateful for the opportunities, which puts me in a unique position to analyze Africa's issues intensely critically.

Colonialization was a highly planned undemocratic system imposed on the colonized. Unfortunately, Africa provided untold riches to the West to her detriment. Thus, the poverty of Africa is the gloat of some other civilizations.

Regrettably, Africa is still insufficiently cognizance of the effects and the destruction of colonialism, mis-education, and materialism that corrupted and disrupted her psyche. Forlornly, colonialization arrested Africa's conscience of culture, education, history, language, mental, religion, self and space. Colonizers did not only colonized people, but they also colonized the interpretation of history itself and rewritten to favor them at the disadvantage of other people. Sadly, Africa lost her wisdom of self by accepting the colonizer's myths as facts while rejecting Africa's facts as myths due to colonial indoctrination. A dichotomy of wisdom.

Africa itinerated away from her pearls of wisdom by chasing others and vanished into the semi-darkness of religious salvation, surrendering her tomorrow to no one particular true religion, persistently drifting with a confused state of mind. Africa ignored the social issues that changed the dynamics of Africa's affairs. Fortunately, the mind holds the key to every lock; therefore, Africa must abdicate the ghost of colonialism from her mentality, repent, and return to her original Gods for redemption on the world space.

We are the new echoes of conscience and change. Consequently, it is our collective and intellectual responsibility to correct the errors, and accidents of history, along with the sins of omission by laying down the knowledge-based

foundation to bridge the gap of knowledge for the succeeding generation to shape. While the following generation perfects the refined knowledge for possibilities. And, eventually, the subsequent generations enjoy the bridged-knowledge to emancipate Africa from the enclosure of the mind syndrome.

And, History is always on the side of positive social change; therefore, we must take the leadership role to restore Africa's dignity to change the course of her destiny for the 21st century and beyond; in view of her current state of self-suppressing, self-defeating, and perpetual denial.

That is why I am a veteran advocate for Africa's unity and development, both in Africa and in the diaspora, not because I was born in Africa, but because Africa runs in my veins, moreover, Africa is the heart-beat of the world.

Therefore, Africa should have the will and audacity to critically focus on "how to do" rather than "whatto do"; to keep Africa at the top of the world stage in every aspect. Africans are no longer respected by non-Africans, both at home and diaspora, and their identities are not internationally valued. Until Africans feel at home anywhere, Africa will continue hearing the wailing of her many children everywhere and anywhere.

It is no longer acceptable for Africa to be the comic of history, the football of anthropology, a vulnerable and abused continent that has taken on the unfortunate image due to her Godliness, welcoming, generosity, and accommodating nature. Now necessitates a variety of voices speaking on her behalf in-terms of corruption, economy, education, governance, health, human rights, justice, and a host of other challenges.

In spite of these negativities, Africa's first contribution to human progress was the evolution of man himself and shaping an age that was crucial to the shaping of humanity. A continent of extraordinary beauty and endless fascinations, a gift to the world that keeps giving, the motherland of humanity.



Nevertheless, it is time for Africa to stop depending on the East or West for basic things such as food when Africa has a diversity of land, climate, and sixty-five percent of the world's arable space to feed the world and beyond. It is a new dawn; Africa must repackage herself and strive to take her pride of place among the comity of Nations.

Africa must rise and stand up for Africa, develop its human capital and abundant natural resources, roughly thirty percent of the earth's remaining mineral resources. All past and current self-advanced Africa's elected officials, along with their enablers that corrupted the continent's developments' should be held accountable and charged with crimes against humanity. Similarly, all those that watched and stood by in silence without intervention are equally guilty. Additionally, Africa should stop celebrating official's criminalities and malfeasance.

Likewise, Africa must desist from foreign religions' perceived efficacy of praise the Lord (it issolved-mentality) and fasting to rectify these enormous social challenges rather than embarking on empirical and practical home-grown solutions to correct these horrendous calamities. Until then, Africa will not be peaceful or prosperous and will once again be left behind due to self-inflicted paralysis gripping the continent. And, Africa must raise its expectations to meet the new challenges of the 21st century.

Africa must inner-direct and re-examine herself, a thorough examination, re-defining, re-engineering; in short, Africa necessitates a COMPREHENSIVE TOTAL CHECKUP, a complete physical and mental self-reflection. Despondently, Africa is broken, in a state of emergency that needs urgent care.

This task must continue until Africa wakes up to the new realities and challenges facing all Africans, both in Africa and the diaspora. However, Africa is a gift to the world that keeps giving; she must be cherished honorably by the comity of nations in spite of the devastating effects of colonization and imperialism (neo-colonialism).

Is Africa as earnest as she vaunts for change, and with the requirements for the desired change?

God Bless Africa! and God Bless America!! America, the possibilities!!!

*From the desk of Bamidele Adeoye, DBA.  
Research Consultant & Adjunct Prof.  
Email: info@mabici.com*



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## ECOWAS to hold 2nd forum for national trade facilitation committees in Abidjan

The ECOWAS Commission says it will hold the 2nd Forum for National Trade Facilitation Committees from March 16th to 18th, 2021 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The 3-days meeting is

aimed at strengthening the National Trade Facilitation Committees as a central platform for institutional coordination and implementation of trade facilitation initiatives resulting from regional and international

obligations including the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

ECOWAS notes that the forum will specifically update participants on the implementation of the WTO TFA in the ECOWAS region, identify assistance for the implementation of Category C provisions of the TFA, exchange and identify Capacity Building for the implementation of provisions related to transparency obligation, exchange and update on the implementation of ECOWAS COVID-19 Guidelines by NTFCs and consideration of Trade Facilitation Committees in various agreements, among others.

Participants are expected from Ministries responsible for Trade in Member States, representatives from Customs Administrations and from the Organized Private Sector.



## Grand Kru students honor Deputy Speaker Koffa

A group of students dubbed; "Conscious students of Grand Kru County" from various colleges and universities in Monrovia honored Deputy Speaker of the 54th House of Representatives, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa for his contributions to citizens of the county in Montserrado county as well as achievements for the first time.

The students group listed the construction of three elementary schools in Grand Kru County namely, Chengbetee, a communication tower in Buah-Parluken and the rehabilitation roads by the district #2 Rep. Lawmaker including the payments of school fees both textary and high School among other things, propelled decision to recognize him.

The group also named the donation of a 19 KVA generator to Rally town Hospital --- the only referral hospital in Grand Kru as contributing factor as well.

Timothy Grandoe, on behalf students, mentioned the L\$1m Women Loan and other relentless financial and materials supports of the Deputy Speaker to the students' community.

"This historic occasion comes in recognition of your mammoth and magnanimous of our county, your unnumbered personal contributions you have made and continue to make to citizens and non-citizens of hailing from Grand Kru County, and your rise

In recognition of the achievements, the students "gowned" the Deputy Speaker and presented an 'artistic portrait' of him.

This is the first honor from colleges and universities students of Grand Kru County



Deputy Speaker, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa

to the Deputy Speakership of the House of Representatives, thus placing you among great and sons and daughters whom have lifted Grand Kru County," said Timothy, the Secretary General of the Conscious Students of Grand Kru County.

to Rep; Koffa since 2008 and also first of its kind for any organization or student community to present double honoring items under three years.

The President of the Conscious Students of Grand

## Liberia, EU end 9th Political Dialogue

The Liberian Government and the European Union (EU) on Friday March 12 met for the Ninth (9th) edition of the EU-Liberia Political Dialogue at which time both parties discussed a wide range of issues of mutual interest.

This meeting was held under Article 8 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States, which enables the establishment of a platform for regular and comprehensive political dialogue.

The 9th EU-Liberia Political Dialogue was co-chaired by the Foreign Minister Deemaxwell Saahkemayah Sr., and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Liberia, Ambassador Laurent Delahousse.

Discussion at the meeting also included the state of the economy and public finance and the implementation of the PAPP; creating the conditions for broad-based economic growth and job creation through business and investment climate measures; governance, accountability, transparency and anti-corruption measures.

The EU and the Liberian Government also discussed issues on human rights, including the conclusions of the latest session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Liberia and the fight against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV); elections, including lessons learned from the 2020 mid-term Senatorial elections and Constitutional referendum, as well as electoral reform; public health issues, including Liberia's response to COVID-19 and preparedness to Ebola virus disease (EVD); the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC); food security; education, including technical and vocational education and training (TVET); and the programming of the EU-Liberia partnership in the period 2021-2027 (following the period 2014-2020, during which the European Union's support to

Liberia under the European Development Fund amounted to around 330 Million US dollars).

At the end of the dialogue, both parties reaffirmed their commitment to continuing to hold regular political dialogues on issues of common interest and following-up on the conclusions and agreements reached in the course of these dialogues. The parties also reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the EU-Liberia partnership, and expressed their desire that the tenth (10th) edition of the EU-Liberia Political Dialogue takes place in the second half of 2021.

Members of the Liberian delegation included, Kemayah, Sr., Finance and Development Planning Minister amuelTweah. Commerce and Industry Minister Mawine Diggs, Gender, Children and Social Protection Minister Williametta Peso Tarr-Saydee, Justice Minister Frank Musah Dean, Agriculture Minister Jeanine Milley Cooper, Education Minister AnsuSonii (Prof.), Health Minister Wilhelmina Jallah (MD), and Liberia's Ambassador to Belgium and EU Isaac W. Nyenabo, II.

Others were Molewuleh B. Gray, Chairman of the National Investment Commission, Elizabeth Dorkin, Acting Chairperson of Governance Commission, KanioBaiGbala, Acting Chairman of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, Madam Yusador Gaye, Chairperson of the General Auditing Commission, Cllr. BoakaiDukuly, Commissioner of the National Elections Commission, Mrs. Emma MatiehGlassco, among others.

Representing the European Union, besides the Head of the Delegation of the European Union Ambassador Laurent Delahousse, were the Ambassador of Germany Hubert J. Jäger, Ambassador of Sweden Ingrid Wetterqvist, Ambassador of Ireland Lesley Ni Bhriain, Ambassador of France Michaël Roux, Chargé d'Affaires of Ireland Kate O'Donnell, Deputy Head of Mission of Germany JoernSemmler, Deputy Head of Mission of France Hugues Nagy, Head of the Political, Press and

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Kru, J. Ricky Sloh added that the merited flowers also stemmed from the impact of the Deputy Speaker into the live hood of ordinary citizens cut across regional lines.

In response to the recognition by the Conscious Students of Grand Kru, Deputy

Speaker Koffa said he was honored by the move of the students to appreciate his numerous contributions to his district (Grand Kru County District #2), the county and Liberia in many different ways adding, "I am humbled for the honor," he said.

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**Liberia to power its Economy through improved energy access and job creation**

Liberia's efforts to transform the lives of poor people have received a huge boost with financing approved on Friday, March 12, by the World Bank.

Two new operations will increase access to sustainable, reliable and affordable energy, and boost

helping to build resilience for vulnerable households that are greatly at risk of falling into poverty due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty remains widespread in Liberia and is now on the rise. An estimated 44% of Liberians were living with less than \$2 a day in 2016 and is now projected to

economic growth while support to the informal sector will help the most vulnerable Liberians to recover from the loss in incomes," said KhwimaNthara, World Bank Country Manager in Liberia.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on Liberia's economy and people's livelihoods and poses a major threat going forward. When the global pandemic emerged in early 2020, Liberia was already facing a challenging domestic and external environment. Weak consumption and declining output had caused the Liberian economy to contract by an estimated 2.3 percent in 2019 and a further 2.9 percent in 2020. According to the High-Frequency Phone Survey of Households conducted by the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services, more than 70 percent of households reported experiencing food shortage and increased food prices. This call for a comprehensive response focusing both on the need to protect the poor and vulnerable in the short term, as well as support economic recovery in the medium term.

"This is a demonstration of the Bank's strong commitment to Liberia. The approved package of support will be a big boost to our

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economic recovery by providing employment opportunities and business skills training to vulnerable Liberians.

Funded by the International Development Association (IDA), the projects aims at improving Liberia's economy and

reach 52% in 2021. Access to healthcare, education, and basic utilities like energy, are also particularly low compared to the rest of the region.

"Given the devastating impact of Covid-19 on the economy and people's livelihoods, improved energy access will stimulate inclusive

**"Duplication of inspections is troubling" -Businessman laments**

By Emmanuel Mondaye

A Liberian businessman and owner of Maaci Water Enterprise, a mineral water producing company situated in Ford Town, Johnsonville Township, Mr. Mohammed C. D. Bar says that he is seriously worried about the duplication of inspections by several government agencies.

The businessman notes that he is worried because he has observed that some government entities continue to visit his company for the purpose of inspections, wondering as to which agency has oversight over mineral water production businesses in Liberia.

According to him, inspectors from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ministry of Health (MOH) and National Standard Lab, among others,

visit his business to conduct inspections.

He says from all indications, he believes that these government institutions are doing the same work, noting

that it confuses him as a businessman.

He adds that while he has no problem paying government taxes, he equally thinks there should be a

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**Liberia Concludes APRM Technical Country Support Mission**

A Technical Country Support Mission of the African Peer Review Mechanism Continental Secretariat has been concluded in the country.

The APRM Technical Country Support Mission was held in Liberia from March 10-13, 2021 ahead of the 30th APR Forum of Heads of State and Government in South Africa where Liberia is expected to be peer reviewed. The Technical Support Mission which was led by Professor Eddy Maloka, Chief Executive Officer of the APRM Continental Secretariat based in Midrand, South Africa.

While in the country, the APRM Technical Delegation held a two-day technical working meeting with over 12 technicians at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in the context of

review report and National Programme of Action at the upcoming APRM Forum.

Liberia and the APRM

In 2010, at the 12th Summit of the APR Forum held in Addis Ababa, 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 acceded 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 Mechanism (APRM) which was established in 2003 is an African



updating Liberia's Country Review Report. Professor Maloka and the APRM Technical Country Support Mission later held briefing meeting with the MFDP Minister and APRM National Focal Point Mr. Samuel D. Tweah, Jr.

Prof Maloka briefed the MFDP Minister on the process for updating the Liberia Country Review Report Key Highlights of the as well as the protocols and processes at the up-coming Virtual Summit of the APR Forum scheduled for March 25, 2021. The Mission also met with the Chairman of National Governing Council, as well as the APRM National Secretariat in Liberia.

The aim of the technical Country Support Mission is to also gauge Liberia's preparedness for Peer Review of its first-generation country

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

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

# Français

## L'épouse de Dalein voulait rendre Conakry propre : le régime d'Alpha Condé l'en avait empêché

Alpha Condé s'est r é c e m m e n t demandé "pourquoi Conakry ne peut pas être aussi propre que Kigali". Pour un militant de l'Opposition, "en juillet 2015, rappelez-vous, Hadja Halimatou Dalein Diallo, avait commencé à libérer notre capitale des montagnes de déchets qui l'encombrent. Mais les conseillers d'Alpha Condé y ont vu une campagne électorale déguisée et lui ont suggéré de l'empêcher à poursuivre cette œuvre d'utilité publique".

Avant d'être invitée à mettre fin à ses opérations hebdomadaires de ramassage des ordures à travers la capitale, chaque fin de semaine, la femme de Cellou Dalein Diallo, avait habitué les populations à son activité de mobilisation du monde pour débarrasser la grande agglomération guinéenne de ses déchets.

Plutôt que de mettre une structure pouvant faire autant, sinon mieux que la femme du Chef de file de l'Opposition avant de mettre fin à cette opération de ramassage d'ordures et de

déchets, le gouvernement déploiera ses forces de police et de gendarmerie pour bloquer ces bénévoles.

Pourtant, dit-on, "le gouvernement a toujours dégagé des budgets affectés au ramassage des ordures. Sont-ils bloqués au niveau de Gouvernorat de Conakry ou mal gérés au niveau des Communes. Nul ne vous le dira car, chacun de ces responsables met l'argent dans ses poches et

l'argent disparaît ainsi".

Dans son gouverner autrement, Alpha Condé voudrait changer l'image de Conakry. Il a ainsi lancé un appel aux leaders politiques à donner l'exemple pour rendre Conakry, une ville propre à l'image de la Namibie ou du Rwanda.

Acet effet, il a informé que "quand vous allez en Namibie et au Rwanda, les rues sont

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Accident tragique : La Chambre des représentants donne sa version des faits

Le bureau du président de la Chambre des Représentants et le bureau de presse du même organe ont donné une autre version des faits concernant le tragique accident de circulation qui impliquait le convoi du chef du parlement libérien, c'était le mardi 9 mars 2021.

Dans un communiqué officiel publié le jeudi 11 mars, le bureau de presse de la Chambre, qualifiant l'accident de « malheureux »,

a indiqué que l'évènement s'est produit vers 6 heures du matin alors que la garde rapprochée du Président de la chambre basse du parlement libérien se rendait au travail.

« Les victimes de l'incident sont hospitalisées à l'hôpital John F. Kennedy aux frais du président de la Chambre des représentants, le Dr Bhofal Chambers, qui s'est rendu à l'hôpital pour s'assurer que les victimes bénéficient d'un traitement adéquat », lit-on

dans le communiqué.

Selon le communiqué, le président Chambers a invité la famille des victimes au calme et à la prière pour un prompt rétablissement de leurs proches, tout en les rassurant de son engagement à tout faire en vue d'un dénouement heureux.

Pour sa part, le Bureau du Président Chambers a affirmé que ni le véhicule officiel ni le convoi du Président n'a été impliqué dans aucun accident.

Dans un courriel adressé à ce journaliste jeudi, le porte-parole officiel du Président, George Watkins, a déclaré qu'aucun décès n'était survenu à la suite de l'accident, contrairement aux informations publiées dans les médias.

Donnant sa propre version des faits, Watkins a dit qu'un véhicule utilisé par le service de sécurité de la police nationale du Libéria affecté auprès du président de la chambre basse, conduit par M. Lawrence Williams, un agent de police, est entré en

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## 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 de 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

## Accident tragique :

collision avec une Chevrolet Seden bleue blessant ainsi la victime, une femme enceinte et sa mère le mardi 9 mars 2021 sur la 20e rue à Sinkor Monrovia, tôt le matin. Le véhicule était allé chercher le personnel de la sécurité.

Selon lui, le Président Chambers a rendu visite aux victimes à l'hôpital JFK et a assuré leur famille de son désir de leur offrir les meilleurs soins médicaux.

Pourtant, selon nos informations, la femme de 40 ans et sa mère se seraient fait renverser par un des véhicules du convoi du président de la chambre des représentants ce mardi vers 6 heures du matin. La dame serait dans un état critique, elle aurait perdu sa grossesse de cinq mois et eu la colonne vertébrale cassée, tandis que sa mère aurait subi des fractures aux deux jambes. 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 elles se sont fait renverser par les hommes de M. Boahfal Chambers, président de la chambre basse du parlement libérien, à en croire nos

sources.

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 », avait-il expliqué. Il avait 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 s'étaient avérés vains, le Président n'ayant 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'avaient pas non plus voulu parler aux journalistes.

## L'épouse de Dalein voulait rendre Conakry propre :

aussi propres qu'ici au Palais. J'ai été dans la région portuaire et visité des sites touristiques. Vous ne verrez même pas une feuille dehors. Pourquoi Conakry ne peut pas être aussi propre que Kigali ?".

Chez des proches de la femme de Dalein, certains disent que "Alpha Condé aurait dû nous laisser faire notre bénévolat pour débarrasser la capitale de ses déchets. Il a préféré donné à ses amis de Turquie un contrat de plusieurs milliards de nos francs pour rendre Conakry propre. Vous voyez les résultats. Il n'avait qu'à installer les Conseils régionaux et de quartiers. L'Ufdg étant majoritaire, vous verrez une Ville de Conakry propre, belle et accueillante".

Installer les Conseils de région et de quartiers

Pour ces militants de l'Ufdg, "Alpha Condé dit que

cela chacun d'entre nous prendre conscience, que le guinéen n'aime la loi que quand elle s'applique sur les autres, pas sur lui-même. Cet homme a perdu les pédales. Après dix années de gestion du pays, c'est comme s'il n'a fait qu'une semaine aux commandes du pays. Pas d'initiatives. Tout pour lui c'est la force, des élections trichées, des détournements de deniers publics, l'ethnocentrisme, etc. qu'il installe les Conseils de Ville de Conakry et des quartiers. Il verra une ville propre les semaines qui vont suivre. Il a tout essayé, même avec son armée. Qu'il nous laisse faire"...Lire la suite de l'article sur Guinafnews.info en cliquant ici.

Top of Form

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Bottom of Form

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Erik Berglöf

## Les perspectives de la vaccination pour la santé mondiale

**B**EIJING - Les pressions évolutives accompagnant la propagation du coronavirus ont amené la pandémie de la COVID-19 à un stade où de nouveaux variants surgissent de partout. En réaction, partout dans le monde, les autorités gouvernementales sont engagées dans une course contre la montre afin de vacciner assez de personnes pour atteindre l'immunité collective avant que le virus acquière une mutation qui annulerait l'efficacité des vaccins actuels. Hélas, la plupart des économies émergentes et en développement sont sur le point de perdre cette course, exposant la population mondiale aux nouvelles souches. Mais il n'est pas nécessaire qu'il en soit ainsi.

Le déploiement mondial des vaccins contre la COVID-19 ressemble jusqu'ici à une mêlée générale peu reluisante, avec les grands pays riches qui remportent la mise. À l'heure actuelle, un grand nombre d'économies émergentes et en développement n'atteindront probablement pas un niveau appréciable de vaccination au plus tôt avant la fin de l'année. Et bon nombre de ces pays pourraient ne jamais recevoir des vaccins qui ont déjà été réquisitionnés, car les producteurs ont fait des promesses exagérées de ce qu'ils pouvaient livrer. Pire encore, il y a désormais une possibilité bien réelle que les vaccins, même s'ils arrivent, ne soient plus efficaces, en raison de la prolifération de nouveaux variants.

Mais ces retards et ratés de la gouvernance internationale pourraient devenir un atout. Parce que la situation nécessite des campagnes de vaccination de masse sur une échelle mondiale, ce genre d'efforts pourraient servir de base pour des initiatives d'envergure internationale visant à renforcer la capacité d'adaptation des réseaux de santé, à se préparer pour les prochaines pandémies et à travailler à la réalisation d'une couverture d'assurance maladie universelle. Le lancement récent des livraisons dans le cadre du mécanisme de financement et de déploiement pour un accès mondial au vaccin contre la COVID-19 (COVAX) s'avère très encourageant.

Les astres sont justement alignés pour une telle stratégie mondiale. Pour une fois, la santé est au sommet des priorités du projet mondial, les dirigeants du monde entier et les ministres des finances sont tout ouïe. L'administration du président des États-Unis Joe Biden a renoué les espoirs d'un encadrement mondial et d'un financement adéquat pour que ces initiatives couvrent également les pays les plus démunis. L'annulation par Biden de la décision de Donald Trump voulant que les États-Unis se retirent de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé réaffirme le mandat et les ressources dont cet organisme indispensable a tant besoin. Il est essentiel de ne pas rater cette occasion.

Le déploiement des vaccins, reposant principalement sur les soins de base pour l'administration du vaccin, nécessite la mobilisation d'un vaste éventail de capacités, dont des infrastructures de transport, de conservation et de logistique. Qui plus est, la plupart des réseaux d'immunisation se consacrent en priorité sur l'administration de vaccins aux enfants et devront être adaptés aux populations adultes.

Les instances nationales sont déjà en train d'élaborer des plans pour traiter de questions difficiles?; p. ex, quels sujets doivent être vaccinés en priorité. Les instances sanitaires mettent à jour les systèmes de données et de suivi, déterminant les sites de vaccination, ciblant les populations éloignées et préparant les outils de communication pour convaincre les gens de se faire vacciner et contourner d'autres difficultés.

Comme première mesure pour établir un encadrement consolidé, les infrastructures de vaccination contre la COVID-19 doivent être maintenues pour administrer des vaccins contre

d'autres maladies. La plupart des programmes de vaccination et d'intervention sanitaire ont été reportés ou suspendus en raison de la pandémie. Il faudrait maintenant étudier la possibilité de les reprendre. Au minimum, dans le monde entier, les effectifs de santé essentiels devraient être vaccinés contre d'autres maladies comme l'hépatite B et la grippe.

L'administration des vaccins contre la COVID-19 nécessite la modernisation ou la création d'infrastructures de distribution, en particulier pour les vaccins exigeant des chaînes d'entreposage frigorifique. Or, pour conserver ces infrastructures après la pandémie, elles devront être pérennisées. L'intégration de panneaux solaires dans les chaînes logistiques des vaccins des dispensaires de base en région éloignée pourrait apporter d'énormes avantages à long terme dans les pays pauvres où les réseaux électriques sont instables ou peu fiables.

L'immunisation élargie des populations adultes nécessitera également des formations supplémentaires. Il est ainsi nécessaire d'étudier comment les plateformes numériques et l'intelligence artificielle pourraient être utilisées pour former les effectifs sanitaires, les bénévoles et le personnel de soutien dans le monde entier. Les mêmes technologies pourraient également servir à diffuser des messages de santé publique pour contrer la prévalence de maladies non contagieuses comme le diabète ou pour étendre les programmes de lutte contre le tabagisme.

Dans les mois à venir, les autorités sanitaires et les prestataires de soins de santé devront recueillir des masses de données sur les sujets vaccinés, avec quel vaccin et à quelle date. Les registres vaccinaux devront être mis à niveau ou créés de toute pièce, tout comme des infrastructures numériques modernes devront être développées et déployées à grande échelle. Heureusement, ces banques de données peuvent être enrichies par des renseignements de santé ou appariées aux dossiers médicaux – possiblement à l'aide de technologies de chaînes de blocs pour protéger la confidentialité – et utilisées ensuite pour améliorer la prestation des soins ou pour rehausser la surveillance des maladies ou intensifier les autres mesures préventives.

Finalement, et peut-être plus important encore, la campagne de vaccination contre la COVID-19 pourrait entraîner plus de production de pharmaceutiques et même d'activités de recherche dans le monde émergent et en développement. L'Inde est déjà un producteur important de médicaments et de vaccins, mais le monde aura besoin d'encre plus de production régionale et de pôles logistiques, surtout si le virus COVID-19 devient endémique, comme le craignent la plupart des épidémiologistes. Il faudra renforcer les structures actuelles de supervision des marchés pour empêcher les activités de contrefaçon et de marché noir. Même si cela implique des mises de fonds initiales, les infrastructures de santé dans ces pays en profiteront à long terme.

Pour tirer le maximum de la campagne de vaccination contre la COVID-19, il faudra faire preuve de leadership aux plus hauts échelons. Le premier ministre de l'Italie Mario Draghi dans l'exercice de la présidence tournante du G20 – pourrait collaborer avec le Royaume-Uni, le pays qui préside le G7 et avec l'OMS doté de nouveaux pouvoirs pour saisir les occasions offertes. Le moment est venu d'exploiter les compétences et les capacités de financement des banques multilatérales de développement, les organismes non gouvernementaux et le secteur privé.

La vitesse sans précédent du développement des vaccins contre la COVID-19 représente une réalisation remarquable pour l'humanité. Avec un peu de planification, il est possible de transformer ce succès en une amélioration tout aussi impressionnante sur le plan de la santé mondiale, de la longévité et de la satisfaction de vie.

# Advertise with us!

# NEC's vendors issue ultimatum

Local Vendors here have issued an ultimatum to the National Elections Commission (NEC), to pay debts owed them for the 8 December 2020 Special Senatorial Elections.

The Vendors indicated they were "out of patience" with the Commission for the delay in honoring contractual arrangements between them

Finance and Development Planning Ministry and were told by some Senior Staffers that the Ministry had paid all funding to the Commission for the conduct of the Special Senatorial Elections, (SSE), Constitutional Referendum and the two Representative By-elections in district number nine in Montserrado County and district number two in Sinoe County. The vendors indicated that the

two By-elections and US\$763,012 for the reprint of Referendum ballots following the Supreme Court ruling, were requested, thus bringing the total amount to US\$14,752,811.87.

The NEC so far has received US\$9,893,928.56 and continues to peruse the balance of US\$ 4,858,883.31 from the Finance and Development Planning Ministry.

Reacting to comments reportedly that the Ministry of Finance was responsible only to provide US\$10 million dollars for the SSE process and that donors would provide the balance funding, the NEC Chairperson, who was privileged to be in most, if not all of the meetings with donors on the NEC Special Senatorial Elections, indicated that she was unaware of any commitment by donors to fund the balance of the initial proposed US\$13.599 million for the SSE.

The NEC Boss indicated that NEC is not an income generating institution, and that it was the responsibility of the government of Liberia to fund elections in Liberia.

Not with-understanding, the NEC Chairperson assured, the Commission would follow-up with the Ministry of Finance to impress upon it to urgently release funds to the commission for onward payment of debts owed to local and international Vendors.

Ministry had said it "did not know what the Commission did with the money and were surprised to know that the Commission had not paid all of its Debts".

Responding, NEC Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah indicated that from a proposed budget of US\$13.599, 585.87 million dollars, for the SSE and Referendum, additional amounts of US\$390, 214 for the



NEC Boss addresses protesting poll workers via megaphone

and the Commission.

In a meeting with the Chairperson of NEC, Davidetta Browne Lansanah, on Thursday, 11 March 2021, the Vendors sounded a warning, threatening to besiege the Commission by Tuesday, 16 March 2021 should the Commission fail to pay them their money.

The vendors indicated that they had visited the

# Supreme Court backs recounts in Rivercess

The National Elections Commission, (NEC), says it has received the mandate from the Supreme Court of Liberia to conduct a recount in the remaining 104 polling places across Rivercess County. The mandate was read Friday, 12 March 2021 by the Clerk of the Administrative Court of the Commission, Fofee Sheriff.

Following the reading of the Supreme Court's mandate, the Chairperson of NEC, Davidetta Browne Lansanah immediately ordered the Planning Committee for the Rivercess County Recount to work all necessary modalities for the conduct of the recount and to properly notify the contesting parties of the date and time of the recount.

The mandate of the Supreme Court signed by its

Clerk Attorney Sam Momolu instructs the NEC to resume jurisdiction into the action of elections irregularities case involving Senator Elect

Wellington Geevon Smith of Rivercess County versus Independent Candidate Steve Tuquah.



# Liberia to power

Cont'd from page 7

Covid-19 recovery efforts and our vision to transform the economy through infrastructure development," said Samuel D. Tweah Jr, Liberia's Minister of Finance and Development Planning.

The support program includes the following:

The Liberia Electricity Sector Strengthening and Access Project (LESSAP) is the first project of a multi-phase programmatic approach (MPA) with a goal to provide sustainable, reliable, and affordable electricity to 632,500 Liberians. The project will rehabilitate and expand electricity infrastructure and provide sustainable solutions for electricity access. The LESSAP will target mainly two key areas - grid electrification in the greater Monrovia area and provide for a sustainable business model for scaling up renewable energy based mini-grids and stand-alone solar systems in remote areas. It will also deliver off-grid solar electrification to about 200 health facilities in particular to help build resilience against COVID-19. The total financing envelope for the MPA is \$180 million in IDA support with the first phase commitment of \$44 million in IDA credit and IDA grant of \$15 million. The project also includes grant support of \$2.5 million from the Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP) and \$2.7 million from Japan Policy and Human Resources Development Fund (PHRD), both of which will be administered by the World Bank.

The Recovery of Economic Activity for Liberian Informal Sector Employment Project (REALISE) will increase access

to employment opportunities for some of the most vulnerable households in the informal sector who are at risk of falling deeper into poverty. The project will provide grants and business skills training to 4,000 vulnerable households to revive or start small businesses, as well as temporary employment and wages to 15,000 poor individuals, half of whom will be women. It will target low-income communities and poor families in Greater Monrovia. REALISE project will be implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment, utilizing implementation capacities developed under the ongoing Liberia Youth Opportunities Project. The project will be financed through IDA concessional terms of \$5 million credit and \$5 million grant.

Background

\*The International Development Association (IDA) is the World Bank's fund for the poorest. Established in 1960, it provides grants and low to zero-interest loans for projects and programs that boost economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve poor people's lives. IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world's 76 poorest countries, 39 of which are in Africa. IDA resources help effect positive change in the lives of the 1.6 billion people living in the countries that are eligible for its assistance. Since its inception, IDA has supported development work in 113 countries. Annual commitments are constantly on the rise and have averaged \$21 billion over the past three years, with about 61% going to Africa.-Press release

# Liberia Concludes APRM

Cont'd from page 7

Socio-economic Development. The APRM is a commonly approved framework voluntarily consented to by member states. Since its establishment in 2003, 40 countries more than half of Africa's countries with three-quarter of its population have acceded to the APRM framework.

Thus far, 40 Member States out of the 55 members belonging to the African Union

have voluntarily acceded to the APRM to date. 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 Liberia Country Program. The APRM Continental Secretariat will also field a support to Liberia to work with the Office of Focal Point, the National Governing Council and the APRM National Secretariat.

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# School expels 6-year old student for 'witchcraft'

A newly established primary school has accused and expelled a six year old student for reportedly being a 'witchcraft' or for engaging into witchcraft activities.

The school, TYNECEPLOH Education Foundation is located in the Rehab community along the Roberts International highways few minutes' walk from the President George MannehWeah's residence.

The school handed expelled Little Catherine Karma after she reported for classes last week.

She was handed the expulsion letter on grounds that she's a witch and her presence at the school would be dangerous for other kids sharing class with her.

Little Catherine Karma is in kindergarten (K-1). She was among the first batch of students who started

friends going to school, I can be crying, I want go back to school, I missed my friends and my teacher.

"My friends in my yard can't play with me again, they are afraid of me, only my small brother and me can play" little Catherine explained.

Little Catherine commonly known as Nan is being bullied and referred to as witchcraft, some sources hinted that few parents in the neighborhood had stopped their children from associating with her.

Catherine's grandma who sells boiled cassava and coconut to pay her school fees could not hold back her tears as she explains, how can a six year old child kill her teacher, principal and soak her classmates blood.? They caused my granddaughter serious problem to the extent that they expelled her.

I took care of this child from baby because her father is not

school again, the next day my auntie and I went on the campus to appeal for Catherine to end the school year but they told me that the decision is final" Ms. Christiana Williams mother of the six years old kid explained.

In response, the proprietor of TYNECEPLOH Education Foundation, Napoleon Chattah confirmed that the child was expelled from the school for a reason but could not give details of the expulsion.

According to him, the principal who has gone out to run some errands for the school was the best person to provide answers to all the inquiries.

However, after at least three hours of waiting, the principal returned and in a short conversation said that the child was not expelled but



attending the TYNECEPLOH Education Foundation School when it was established during the last school year.

Though, the administration of the school has not shown any proof or direct involvement of little Catherine performing witchcraft activities, it was firmed and decisive on its decision to expel her from the school campus.

The administration argued that little Catherine has the power of the 'dark world' and the ability to initiate other students and that to protect other kids from being initiated expulsion was the only option.

"My friends lied on me to my teacher. So they says I should not go to school again," Little Catherine explains in her innocent voice.

"Every day when I see my

working I have never seen anything relating to witchcraft about my grandchild. They did this to us because we are poor and we don't have anybody to talk for us," she said.

Adding mournful voice to the interview, the mother of little Catherine said, "I was on my way to the school on Tuesday morning, I received a letter from my daughter's teacher only known as Ruth that I should go on the campus they want see me. So after my school, I passed on my daughter's campus to find out what happened shockingly to me I was told to take my daughter home. When I got on the campus, I met my daughter's class sponsor, the principal and the proprietor who told me that my daughter's classmates told their teacher that Catherine said she will kill the teacher, the principal and suck the children blood for this reason she will not attend the

rather send home to be returned base on a requirement which she refused to disclose.

But undisclosed source from the school hinted that the administration of TYNECEPLOH Education Foundation told little Catherine parents to take her to pastors for what they termed as deliverance prayers after which the parents will provide a note from the church or pastor confirming that the child is free from witchcraft practices before being accepted back in school.

The parents of six year old Catherine are however calling on Ministry of Education, Ministry of Internal Affairs, children rights advocate groups and the civil society groups to probe into the situation.

# Fire destroys

Cont'd from page 7

private security guard assigned at the market explains that while he and other colleagues were sitting at the main entrance of the market, they saw heavy smoke at the back of the market and rushed to the scene quickly to know what was going on.

Massaquoi explains that to their surprise, they saw stores in flames.

According to Massaquoi, they immediately called the Liberia national Fire Service (LNFS), but states that its intervention did not make any impact.

Mariama Bah, one of the business persons whose stores were affected, explains that while at home, she received a call from one of her sisters who resides in central Monrovia, and got informed that her store along with several others, had burnt down to ashes.

Mariama explains that she thought her sister was joking, but when she appeared at her business center, she saw dozens of business houses completely destroyed without a penny taken from inside.

The business woman discloses that she had been selling imported used clothes and shoes for the past twelve

years, lamenting that she doesn't know where to start from in the midst of the difficult economic constraints in the country.

Fire Service personnel at the scene declined to speak to the press after failing to extinguish speedily to minimize the damage

Goods worth hundreds of thousands United States dollars, along with infrastructure, were left to destroy completely.

Anyone visiting the scene of the fire may think that the incident could have been attributed to arson due to the minor and condition in which the business houses were destroyed.

Several businesses operating in the area had in the past been destroyed by fire, but findings into investigations remained undisclosed by authorities of the Liberia National Fire Service.

The affected business owners are calling on central government through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFD) to quickly come to their aid by providing microloans to help the victims get back on their feet.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

# "Duplication of inspections

Cont'd from page 7

coordinated and well organized scope of operations by these government agencies that have the same objectives.

He suggests that the government needs to have a coordinated approach toward businesses involved in the production of mineral water so as to have a clearer understanding as to which agency they are supposed to pay taxes to for health and standard certificates.

Mr. Bar laments that the too many inspections by government agencies is something that should claim authorities' attention.

He calls on government to have a one-stop shop for water producing companies to reduce the number of government entities that go after businesses for a single inspection purpose.

Authorities at the National Water, Sanitation and Health Commission (NWASHC) have

disclosed that they will accelerate and sustain regulation and compliance towards improvement in public health.

According to the commission, it intends to promote and regulate the development and management of water, sanitation and hygiene services.

Implementation will be concentrated in six of Liberia's 15 counties including Montserrado, Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa, Margibi and Maryland.

There are several groups engaged in water and sanitation activities such as the WASH Compliance Certificate, WASAN Certificate, Water Supply and Sanitation License, National Water Sanitation and Hygiene Commission, and Liberia water and Sewer Corporation, among others.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

# Liberia, EU end

Cont'd from page 6

Information Section of the Delegation of the European Union Juan Antonio FrutosGoldaratz, Head of Cooperation of the Delegation of the European Union Theodoruskaspers, Head of the Governance Operational

Section of the Delegation of the European Union JyrkiTorni, First Secretary of Sweden Artolmmonen, Second Secretary of Ireland Rachel Fitzpatrick, and Representative of the French Development Agency MathildeRichelet.

# Fire destroys Vai Town Market



**Emmanuel Mondaye**

At least 15 stores operating within the A. Vamuyan Conneh General Market complex in Vai Town, Bushrod Island burnt down to ashes early Monday Morning, 15 March, in a troubling fire disaster that many onlookers say has left a 'big economic' setback for affected business owners.

Up to press time, the cause of the fire remained unknown.

There was weeping as store owners and other

affected petty traders who stored their goods in affected buildings in the market area had trooped to the scene and saw the damage.

Business houses were completely destroyed without anything being taken out, according to eyewitnesses.

Many victims of the fire incident who spoke to this paper could not disclose what may have caused the fire outbreak because according to them, it happened as a surprise to them.

At least 15 stores got completely burnt without

anyone retrieving penny from the stores.

The NewDawn newspaper gathers from some eyewitnesses that the fire may have resulted from electrical shocks; but others at the scene have suggested that it may have been caused by a flammable material probably left in one of the stores. None of these suggestions could be verified immediately.

Patrick Massaquoi, a

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11**

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# Messi sets another La Liga record with stunner against Huesca

Lionel Messi set yet another La Liga record on Monday as the Barcelona star continued his assault on Spanish football's goalscoring record books.

Messi scored Barcelona's first goal in Monday's clash with Huesca, a match that also marked yet another record for the Argentine.

With his appearance, Messi made his 767th appearance for the Catalans, equalling his legendary team-mate Xavi for the most appearances in a

Barcelona shirt.

With his goal on Monday, Messi notched his 20th finish of the 2020-21 La Liga campaign.

And, in the process, he reached that 20-goal total for the 13th consecutive season, becoming the only player to do so in the competition's history.

Messi has scored 659 total goals for Barcelona, putting him 427 clear of second-placed Cesar Rodriguez in the club's goalscoring record book.

Additionally, Messi has a grand total of 34 trophies to his name during his time starring



for the Catalan club.

While Barcelona's Champions League run ended prematurely at the hands of Paris Saint-Germain last week, they do remain in La Liga's title race.

Entering Monday's game, Barca had gone 16 games without losing in La Liga, the longest active streak in Europe's top five leagues.

That run has them sitting third in La Liga entering the match, one point behind Real Madrid and seven behind league-leaders Atletico Madrid.

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