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Liberia's chief Zoe predicts 2023 for Weah

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MOU BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA (GOL) AND THE CONSORTIUM OF PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS ORGANIZATION (CONSORTIUM)

April 18, 2021

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE CONSORTIUM

The Government of Liberia is represented by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry of Health (MOH), and the Civil Service Agency (CSA). The Consortium is represented by the Civil Servants Association of Liberia, the National Teachers Association of Liberia, National Health Workers Association of Liberia, the Monrovia Consolidated Schools System Teachers' Association, and the National Parents Teachers Network of Liberia.

BACKGROUND

Since the Government of Liberia launched the wage, payroll, retirement and pension reforms, significant work has been done to ensure an effective payroll and retirement framework. Despite the level of progress made by the Government, serious challenges remain. Among the challenges is the lack of effective communication between the Government and public sector workers of the Consortium on the specifics and direction of ongoing reforms. Policy changes have not always been communicated effectively to workers, causing some problems.

These problems and uncertainties recently led members of the Consortium to engage the Government through a planned April 14 sit-in action. The Consortium issued a press statement discouraging the sit-in while expressing solidarity with the concerns raised by the youth student leaders. At a meeting brokered by Imam Ali Krayee, Chief Imam of the Republic of Liberia, on Tuesday April 13, 2021, the Consortium agreed to enter formal discussion with the Government to understand the full extent of planned and ongoing reforms and how these would impact public sector workers belonging to the Consortium.

The Government and the Consortium met for four hours on April 15, 2021 in the conference room of the CSA and developed 24 problem areas of concern to the Consortium, problems or issues the Government may have already resolved, is in the process of resolving, or is planning to resolve. These 24 problem areas and their resolution form the core of this memorandum between the Government and the Consortium. The Memorandum of Understanding summarizes the clear policy actions the Government has taken relative to the identified problem areas, the actions that are ongoing, and the actions that are planned.

The MOU is also an effective communication tool to convey to public sector workers the full scope of reforms and actions taken and actions to be taken by the Government in all problem areas. The Government and the Consortium, through a Technical Working Group that has been set up, will develop different communication packages deriving from this MOU with the aim of providing more effective information to Consortium workers in their various settings and contexts.

PROBLEM CATEGORIES

The 24 problem areas identified have been reorganized into the following 11 categories for the purposes of this Memorandum of Understanding:

1. PENSION LAW
2. FEBRUARY 2020 AND AUGUST 2020 RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND HANDSHAKE
3. RECENT DISMISSAL OF TEACHERS ON THE BASIS OF TEST RESULTS
4. TRANSITIONING RETIREES TO NASSCORP PENSION PAYROLL FOR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS
5. CHALLENGES WITH SALARY PAYMENT AND DISBURSEMENTS
6. ABSENCE OF BANKS OR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN SOME RURAL AREAS AND DELAYS IN RECEIVING SALARIES AT COMMERCIAL BANKS
7. BUDGETARY ALLOTMENT FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPERATIONS, INCLUDING MCSS
8. FORMER SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHERS
9. COVID-19 HAZARD PAY
10. PUBLIC SECTOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION
11. NTAL CREDIT UNION BACK PAYMENT OF LRD 1.3M

These problem categories are broken down into two main sections: an information section and an action section. Information section may summarize facts, contexts or provide general information on specific problem areas. The information section may describe a misunderstanding and may also describe a reform the Government has already completed. The action section may describe a reform that is ongoing or planned.

Under this MOU, the Government commits to completing or undertaking all such ongoing or planned actions and avails this MOU, which will be signed by relevant Government entities and the Consortium, as evidence of this commitment.

1.0 PENSION LAW

LEGAL AGE OF RETIREMENT

INFORMATION

Many Consortium workers are of the view that the legal age of pension is 65 years. This confusion arises from the fact that an old Civil Service Standing Order has 65 years as the age of retirement. In 2017, the National Legislature passed a new pension law that puts the legal age of retirement at 60. However, the Consortium workers complained that information on this new law is not available to them and their members or it is difficult to access and on that account several workers still refer to the old Standing Order in discussing the legal age of retirement.

The Consortium has indicated that the current retirement exercise of the Government has created disruptions within the public sector and have most especially created teachers and healthcare workers deficits in the classrooms and healthcare facilities. Therefore, they are calling on the Government to temporarily suspend the ongoing retirement process until a clear succession mechanism is put in place to reduce or eliminate the deficits within the public sector.

ACTION

The Government through the Civil Service Agency (CSA) commits to making the 2017 Pension Law publicly available and more accessible. Copies of the law should be provided to all Consortium members. With this, the legal age for retirement is now 60 years of age as been defined in the new 2017 Pension Law of Liberia.

The Government has agreed to revise the implementation of the retirement exercise to address the concerns of the Consortium. Immediate actions by the Government will include:

- Granting special dispensation to MOE and MOH on the selection and retention of the teachers and health workers who are beyond the legal pension age of 60 years.
- Recruiting more teachers and health workers from the current list of voluntary health and education workers to fill the workforce gap created from the retirement exercise, especially within rural areas.
- This exercise will be implemented in consultation with the Civil Service Agency.

2.0 FEBRUARY 2020 AND AUGUST 2020 RETIREMENT AND HANDSHAKE

INFORMATION

The Consortium believes that the February 2020 retirement of consortium workers was generally honorable and free of problems. More than 80 percent of February retirees received their handshake and pension benefits and most in this category are on the social security pension payroll. However, the August 2020 retirement was poorly executed as Consortium workers had no information on the retirement process. The August retirement came as a surprise to many and many August retirees are yet to receive their handshake and pension benefits. Many in this category are not yet on the pension payroll.

The Consortium also complained that the August 2020 retirement exercise affected DEOs who had legally binding employment contract that granted them tenure. The Consortium is requesting the Government through the MOE to reinstate these DEOs for them to complete their tenure consistent with letter of assignment issued to them by the Ministry of Education.

ACTION

The Government has since begun processing the payment of handshake for August retirees. The Government through the MOE has agreed to return more than 85 percent of August teacher retirees back to the classroom through its contract or consultancy payroll. Same applies to healthcare workers who are deemed fit by the MOH. This means that the Government has given special dispensation to teachers and healthcare workers who have reached the legal age of retirement of 60 years considering the special circumstances of these sectors. Those returning to the payroll will be processed for retirement over the next few years while the Government seeks their replacement in a dignified manner.

The Government through the ministries of Education and Health is compiling the list of all teachers and healthcare workers in terms of facility, location, worker qualification, number of workers to provide the Government adequate information for planning on human resource management including retirement in rural areas.

To resolve the concerns of the tenured DEOs who were retired and removed from the payroll in August 2020, the Government

through MOE will reinstate the DEOs on a contract basis to the extent of their tenure and pay them consistent with the salary of DEOs. The effective date of this contract reinstatement will be 30 days from the signing of this MOU.

3.0 RECENT DISMISSAL OF TEACHERS ON THE BASIS OF TEST RESULTS

INFORMATION

The Consortium complained that the MOE recently removed some 386 teachers from the payroll on the basis of a framework developed by the previous administration of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The framework required that teachers be tested. The test, which was administered during the 2016-2017 academic year, showed that about 386 teachers were deemed not fit for the classroom since they earned far below the expected average. About 67 of the teachers that failed the test left the sector; another 28 were requalified and came back. The Consortium is asking the Government to rehire the remaining 291 teachers because they believe the test was not standardized.

ACTION

The Government through the MOE is open to rehiring these teachers as long as they qualify themselves through formal education training. Some 28 teachers in this category have since re-qualified and have been placed back on the payroll. The invitation to requalify has been extended to all similarly affected teachers.

4.0 TRANSITIONING TO NASSCORP AND SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

C1 FORMS, SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS, GOL PAYROLL AND SOCIAL SECURITY DATA INTEGRATION

INFORMATION

The reality is that the social security system for public sector workers has been a historical challenge. Consortium workers along with Government Spending Entities have found the filling of the C1 forms to be a complex and cumbersome process that has contributed to significant delays in the enrollment of retirees on the pension payroll and the processing of benefits. Also, most public sector workers during the active working period do not enroll to have social security numbers and there is limited data integration between the Government and the NASSCORP systems. For example, while NASSCORP has had payroll data for the private sector, NASSCORP has never had payroll data for public sector workers, making the processing of benefits more difficult.

The Consortium is also complaining that retirees are receiving benefits only in LRD whereas they made their contributions in both LRD and USD.

ACTION

The Government has constituted a technical working team comprising NASSCORP, MFDP, and the CSA to implement a roadmap on automation of the pension system through data sharing and integration between NASSCORP and the central government systems. The automation will accelerate enrollment and the migration of public employees' job and earnings history to the NASSCORP pension system, enabling the government to develop and issue regular monthly pay slip that will capture employee social security contributions, date for retirement, and estimated pension benefit after retirement.

The Government Technical Working Team through the Civil Service Agency will also work with spending entities to ensure enrollment of existing government employees on the NASSCORP system, and issue procedures that give up to three months notices to prospective retirees, and conduct adequate pre-retirement counselling. During the three-month notice, HRs of spending entities are required to ensure completion of the C1 forms of prospective retirees to ensure timely transition to the pension payroll after retirement.

The Government through the technical team to ensure retirees receive their benefits in the currency in which social security contributions were made.

5.0 CHALLENGES WITH SALARY PAYMENT AND DISBURSEMENTS

NO OR SLOW UPWARD MOVEMENT TOWARD HARMONIZED PAY AND FLUCTUATION IN SALARY DUE TO EXCHANGE RATE VOLATILITY

INFORMATION

The Consortium observes that since salary harmonization, most of its members are earning far below their harmonized pay scale. The Government explains that taking workers to their harmonized pay is a function of substantial increment in

EDITORIAL

Sen. PYJ is running away from himself

THE PAST IS human history that can never be erased even if it is nasty and unpleasant. But Senator Prince Yormie Johnson of Nimba County, a former rebel leader that committed countless atrocities, doesn't want to be reminded of his notorious role in the Liberian Civil War.

IT IS VERY unfortunate that Sen. PYJ, who commanded the rebels Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia that captured and slain President Samuel Kanyon Doe on September 09, 1990 at the Freeport of Monrovia, among other executions, is running away from his deeds. Men may succeed in destroying physical or material evidence of their past activities, but memories of such actions intangibly live on forever.

CURRENTLY AN EVANGELIST and preacher at his own Christ Chapel Faith Ministry in Paynesville outside Monrovia, PYJ should be aware that even in the Holy Bible, particularly in the New Testament, Saul who prosecuted Christians before he was arrested, converted and put into service by Jesus Christ and became Apostle Paul, was initially rejected by Christians because of his past. Believers at the time refused to sit under his ministry because his hands had been stained with blood.

OUR PAST DEEDS remain with us even after death. It is nothing to run away from. Rather, acceptance, remorse and plead for forgiveness is the way to proceed. If we are sincerely remorseful and ask God for mercy, the Bible says He is faithful and just to forgive us of all our sins.

SENATOR/EVANGELIST PRINCE JOHNSON should preach forgiveness and God's grace instead of attempting to run from his past. He can't escape from himself, because his deeds are always before him. And so telling Liberians not to remind him of the atrocities he committed is a fruitless act of denial.

EVERY HUMAN BEING should learn to accept that the rear view mirror preserves facts and realities that can't be changed no matter how hard we tried. If our national leaders would lead well, they should never attempt to run away from themselves. Instead, we urge them to be men and women enough to accept their past in spite of how ugly they were.

THIS IS WHY we were even more disappointed recently in Grand Gedeh County Representative Dr. George E. S. Boley, leader of the defunct rebels Liberia Peace Council when he vehemently rejected responsibility for heinous atrocities committed by rebel forces under his command during the civil crisis.

EVEN AFTER GLARING fact of his deportation from the United States for arming child soldiers in Liberia, Dr. Boley is running away from himself that he played no role in arbitrary executions from the civil war here despite commanding the rebels LPC that were based in Sinoe County, southeast Liberia.

WE WONDER WHAT lessons our national leaders teach their children at home when they lie so confidently in public and want people to believe them! It is too sad for our country that moral decadence has taken center-stage against truthfulness and rectitude.

THE BIBLE SAYS in the Book of Roman that all has sinned and fallen short of God's glory, for only confession and sincere plead for mercy can bring us back under His grace and give us new life we so desire rather than running away from ourselves.

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COMMENTARY

By Sheldon Whitehouse,
Hank Johnson

The Dark-Money Tipping Point

WASHINGTON, DC - America's courts are under siege from right-wing special interests. They want to rig the federal judiciary to favor large employers over workers, mega-banks over small businesses, and gun manufacturers over gun victims. Again and again, the political agenda pushed through the Federalist Society, a group that has done more than any other to move the federal judiciary far rightward, has become the law of the land at the expense of everyone else. And now, if this operation gets its way in a little-noticed case before the Supreme Court, secretive interests will cement their upper hand in US constitutional law for generations to come.

As the chairs of the Senate and House subcommittees on courts, we have closely observed the alarming encroachment of dark money on the judiciary. The undisclosed interests wielding that influence dictated the last three nominations to the Supreme Court, and then pressured the Senate to ram the nominees through, including by spending millions of dollars on national television and radio ad campaigns (especially for Justice Brett Kavanaugh when his nomination ran into trouble).

Having helped to install sympathetic jurists on the federal bench, a web of financially interconnected legal groups then takes turns setting up cases to land in the Supreme Court, where they file coordinated amicus ("friend of the court") briefs in support of the outcome they are pitching. Resembling a strategically conducted orchestra, the amicus effort is the closing movement of a massive court-capture operation.

The key to this operation is dark money: donations that cannot be traced to a donor. Special interests have built a massive network of dark-money front groups to carry out every function of court capture, from selecting judicial nominees, to picking cases for them to hear, to lobbying through amicus briefs for the outcomes they desire. From 2014 to 2018 alone, this network received \$400 million in dark money, according to recent expert testimony to the Senate.

It's an unfortunate fact that this dark-money campaign is working. Even before Justice Amy Coney Barrett joined the Court in the dying days of Donald Trump's administration, the Republican majority of five had run up an 80-case streak of partisan 5-4 victories for big Republican donor interests. But the real payoff could come in *Americans for Prosperity Foundation v. Rodriguez*, where the Court may decide that a right-wing donor elite has a constitutional right to secrecy when it uses front groups to influence politics and courts.

The parties in the case tell us much about what is at stake. The *Americans for Prosperity Foundation* is part of the constellation of dark-money front groups funded by billionaire energy mogul Charles Koch, and its *Americans for Prosperity* affiliate provides the political muscle for the operation. Still

more telling is the array of "amici" who flocked to the case even before the Supreme Court agreed to hear it. These groups often appear in well-organized armadas before the Court, but the presence of more than 60 dark-money front groups in this case indicates that something big is afoot.

The explanation lies in Congress, where powerful corporate entities deeply involved in dark-money operations have begun openly refusing to answer questions about dark-money funding. In doing so, they are "pleading the First" - claiming a previously unknown First Amendment right to operate covertly in politics through dark money.

Ironically, the requirement that political spending be transparent was established by the Supreme Court's 2010 *Citizens United* ruling, which opened the door wide for big money in politics. But the Court has made no effort to insist on adherence to its transparency requirements, and now that the Court's political balance has lurched rightward, those requirements on paper may be shredded.

Justice Clarence Thomas was alone in opposing the disclosure requirements back in 2010. But three new justices have since been ushered onto the bench by dark-money forces, and Justice Samuel Alito seems likely to flip to the dark side. That makes a plausible majority of five for unlimited dark money. Certainly, whoever is behind those 60 amici thinks so.

Needless to say, the special interests that have built a massive influence machine around the federal judiciary will protect it at all costs. No dark money would mean no machine, and no machine would mean no influence. It is as simple as that. Today's Supreme Court - the Court that dark money built - may be the one to lock in dark money for the long term.

As politicians, we are convinced that *Citizens United* was wrongly decided, and we are deeply disappointed that the Court never enforced its decision's own terms. We have witnessed widespread obstruction and corruption in Congress as a result of these failures, and we believe these problems are factors in the public's dissatisfaction with government.

For the Court to offer constitutional protection to dark-money schemes would make matters much worse. An informed citizenry is one of the few checks on power and influence in government. Deny citizens information about what is going on around them and in their government, and you have struck a deadly blow against democracy.

That would certainly suit the autocratic dark-money forces that worked so hard and spent so much to shape the current Supreme Court. Democracy is what these forces oppose. They want power for billionaire puppet masters operating from behind the dark-money curtain. We cannot let that happen.



Lord, is it the tale of the Toad & Crocodile?

Dear Father,

So wait oo, is it the tale of the Toad and the Crocodile unfolding at the Traditional Council so? Hmmm, just thinking aloud oo.

What do you mean my son?

Oh Father, haven't you heard the tale of the Toad and the Crocodile before? They say when the Toad comes from under the river and tells you that the Crocodile is asleep, you should believe it, because it lives down there with the Crocodile-that heavy gees oo.

Tell me something my son. So what does it has do with the Traditional Council?

Hmmm, haven't you heard how one small boy in the office of one of the Chiefs at the Traditional Council been talking how the Chiefs them collected Uncle Sam money 20,000 each for our Money House to go and print new family money?

You joking my son!

Father, this one that na joke oo. It be serious matter right now as I am writing you na, na. In fact, the particular Chief who is a woman and the big person for four different group but with one agenda fini suspending the boy for one month without pay.

She say the thing the boy talked na bring disgrace to she and her friend them and for that he suspended for one month without pay.

But wait oo my son did she deny it?

Father, me I na hear her say it na true. All I heard was that the thing the boy talked na bring disgrace to she and her friend them so she punishing him.

You joking right?

Aah, Father, da this kina thing I coming joke with? But anyway the other chief them say that lie-hayaka.

But have you heard anything from that big mouth chief who say he went over there to carry light to the place?

No, Father, in fact, it looks like the light bulb is losing energy small, small oo. But you know those chiefs Father, they will never come up to say they received money.

The bad news for them is that the person who talking plenty work with them and know how they can cross some of their deals there.

So like the Toad from the River, when the young man tells you that the Chief them collected 20,000 of Uncle Sam's money each, you should not doubt it, because he lives and work there with them.

But my son, ehn they say, the Paramount Chief asked them to look into the young man story?

Father, leave that thing ya, ehn that jus to save their faces. Me I believe in the Toad and Crocodile story at least to a large extent. Like in this very case, the story hold some water. Some of the people jus came from voting, what do you expect, they need some of their money back na.



LIBERIA POLITICAL HOT-FIRE

With Jones Mallay

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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.

Liberia's chief Zoe predicts 2023 for Weah

By Othello B. Garblah

District #2, Grand Bassa County-Liberia's Grand Zoe, Chief Zanzan Karwor on Thursday handed over to President George M. Weah a gaval saying, it is a symbol of his authority and power to rule after 2023.

But President Weah play down the gabble rhetoric saying it was intended for him to president over the ongoing town hall meeting on Compound #2, District #2, Grand Bassa County as chairman.

The Grand Zoe also handed over to the President a gown during the town hall meeting saying, it carries the spirit of the eight powerful Zoes in the region urging, President Weah on to wear it as he exercise his authority.

is the right person to lead the nation. "We were the doubters, but with time you have proven to be the right person," Chief Gbarmah said speaking through an interpreter.

"Since 1961, I have been carrying loads on my head until you came to power and today, through our Representative Mary Karwor, we now have a car road connecting our district," added another traditional leader, Chief Tardeh Gboyah. "We want to tell you thank you for bringing light to us," he said through an interpreter.

Madam Mary Karwor is the Representative of District #2 and the wife of Liberia's chief Zoe, Zanzan Karwor. Rep. Karwor is credited for constructing the roads linking the district to Waka Town near Buchanan highway and also to Bong County through

her project which now includes building a Compound #2 B from scratch.

She narrated how she once approached former Vice President Joseph N. Baokai concerning the road project in her district and was discouraged by the former Vice President who told her that it was not an easy project to venture on. He quoted US\$3 million as cost for a similar project he was undertaking in his home town.

Her husband Chief Zanzan Karwor also told the town hall meeting as to how he once approached former President Sirleaf about building a road in their district, but was told by President Sirleaf that it was the World Bank building the roads.

He said after being let down by the former President he had to turn to his wife to help his people in the district.

Several speakers after one another showered praises on Rep. Karwor for standing up for her people. Another told a town hall meeting in District #2 B, of how they had been changing their Representatives because they had failed them in the past but that Madam Karwor had made the difference and therefore have no one to easily unseat her.

"2023 is here, we don't have anybody to support us," Rep. Karwor said. She noted that it doesn't matter which party she belongs to, but she will give her support to anyone who help her people.

"Even if I am in John Brown's party and he is not doing anything for me, the one who is doing something for me is the person I will support," Rep. Karwor opined. For his part, President Weah thanked the citizens of District #2 for reposing their confidence in him, saying he will not let them down, while urging them to maintain the peace.

He said it was the citizens who deserve to be thanked and not him because even though people looked down upon him that he could not lead the country, but the still believed in him and gave him 74.4% of their total votes.

Mr. Weah also disclosed that as part of his thank you, every request they have made, his administration will go back to the drawing board to act on them.



Liberians are expected to go to the polls in October 2023 in a general Presidential and Legislative elections, and with just over two years and few months to go, support for the president's reelection bid has greeted his nationwide county tour so far.

At the town hall meeting on Compound #2 on Thursday, traditional leaders and citizens alike were full of praise of the President saying, he is the first ever sitting President of Liberia to visit their area and that his visits has opened up the district because they had been abandoned for years.

The Supreme Grand Zoe of Grand Bassa County, Chief Edward Gbarmah told the town hall meeting that they are convinced that Mr. Weah

her personal developmental initiative. According to Chief Karwor, his wife has so far spent US\$1.8 million working on the road networks in the district earning her all kinds of titles.

Rep. Karwor also addressing the town hall meeting said the money used to construct the roads have come from her earnings as a Representative for the last two terms.

"I used my salary to build this road. This place was a forest.

She said what she would want the government to do now is to augment her effort, by redesigning those wooden bridges into concrete so that they may last longer. She thanked President Weah for signing the County Development Fund, something she is expecting to get funding from to continue

ANC demands speedy trial in Maryland's murder case

Barely two weeks now since 34 persons from Maryland County were arrested and placed behind bar at the Zwedru correction palace in Grand Gedeh County in connection to the ritualistic killing ... in Maryland and that of the vandalization, looting of property as well as the burning of the Speaker's home, on Monday, April 19, 2021.

The opposition Alternative National Congress has called on the Ministry of Justice to formally indict and send to court all 34 suspects arrested after the recent murder of motorcyclist Mordacious Nyemah and subsequent violent protest in Maryland County characterized by arson attacks on public and private property, including home of Speaker Bhofal Chambers.

The ANC says this is necessary to restore the rights of innocent persons among the suspects as guaranteed by the

government.

He recalled that similar situation happened in recent time along Harper-little Wlebo road and Pleebo-Boniken road but investigation has produced no result.

However, he thanks God there are prime suspects and culprits in this latest murder, therefore, the Alternative National Congress and its regional leadership want a timely adjudication to bring the perpetrators to book to bear full weight of the law in order to deter recurrence of such heinous crimes thereby, igniting hope of safety for everyone.

Krah said the party strongly believes all 34 persons arrested in Maryland County, including youth president might not be liable for any wrong doing or violation from the violent demonstrations.

He said in order for justice to be served, the Ministry of Justice should charge and send



Constitution of Liberia.

In a press release issued on Monday, April 19, 2021 the regional chairperson of the party, Augustine Krah said the ANC condemns the murder of motorcyclist Nyemah and regrets the situation that some citizens took in drawing government's attention for redress.

He stressed that the party doesn't believe in or tolerate unlawful acts to correct any wrong, so if there is a situation of such, citizens should always channel their grievances to the government through a timely and peaceful manner.

The ANC regional chairman continued that although the party discourages acts of violence, but this is the third murder case that has sparked tension and demonstration in Maryland County, so it needs serious attention from

to court all those arrested, as provided for by law, so that the innocent are released.

He reminded that forty-eight hours timeframe provided under the law to arrest, charge and send a suspect to court has passed.

On April 8, 2021, the 34 suspects in question were charged and sent to the Pleebo Magisterial Court and later transferred to the Zwedru Correction Palace in Grand Gedeh County, awaiting trial, as a result of destruction of the prison facility in Harper City, Maryland County.

According to the April 8th Police charge sheet, the 34 men were charged with multiple crimes, ranging from robbery, criminal conspiracy, arson, riot, failure to disperse, criminal mischief, obstruction of highways and other public areas, and disorderly conduct.

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Weah breaks grounds and



dedicate projects in Grand Bassa



Français

Tournée nationale : Weah à Grand Bassa

Au lieu de présenter une longue liste de doléances au Président de la république qui est en tournée sur leur territoire, les citoyens du comté de Grand Bassa ont présenté mercredi ce qu'ils ont pu réaliser au cours des trois dernières années avec les fonds de développement social.

Erigé en Comté en 1839, Grand Bassa est situé dans le centre-ouest du Libéria. Il a pour voisins le comté de Margibi au nord-ouest, le comté de Bong au nord, le comté de Nimba à l'est, le comté de Rivercess au sud et à l'océan Atlantique à l'Ouest.

Le comté compte huit districts dont Buchanan est sa capitale provinciale. Sa superficie est de 7 936 kilomètres carrés. Au recensement de 2008, il comptait une population de 224 839 habitants, ce qui en fait le cinquième comté le plus peuplé du Libéria.

Le comté abrite également le deuxième plus grand port du pays et la compagnie Arcelor-Mittal, qui a accepté de fournir 1

million de dollars américains chaque année au comté pour l'exploitation du minerai de fer.

Le président Weah, dont les grands-parents sont de Grand Bassa, a obtenu 74,4% au second tour de l'élection présidentielle de 2017.

Contrairement au reste des 11 comtés visités jusqu'à présent par le président Weah dans le cadre de sa tournée nationale, les citoyens de Grand Bassa, la voix de leur surintendant Janjay Baikpéh,

ont lu une longue liste de projets qui ont été mis en œuvre ou qui sont en cours dans le comté.

M. Baikpéh a cité, entre autres, des cliniques, des écoles, des centres de loisirs et des ponts. Il a même présenté des photographies des projets, indiquant que le comté est sur la voie du développement. Les responsables du comté ont toutefois demandé au

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Nigeria : des étudiants enlevés dans une université à Kaduna

Des hommes armés ont attaqué une université dans l'Etat de Kaduna, dans le nord du Nigeria, kidnappant un nombre encore indéterminé d'étudiants et tuant un employé de l'établissement, ont rapporté mercredi les autorités locales.

"Il y a eu une attaque vers 19h15 GMT mardi", a

expliqué à l'AFP Mohammed Jalige, le porte-parole de la police locale. "Les bandits présumés ont envahi l'école en grand nombre", a-t-il ajouté. "Des étudiants ont été enlevés mais nous ne savons pour l'instant pas combien." Deux responsables de l'université ont déclaré à l'AFP qu'au moins 20 étudiants manquent à l'appel

sans que l'on sache combien d'entre eux ont été enlevés ou réussi à s'échapper. Samuel Aruwan, ministre local de l'Intérieur a confirmé l'attaque dans un point presse qu'il a tenu sur place, ajoutant qu'un "employé de l'université" avait également été tué dans l'attaque.

Depuis plusieurs mois, des gangs armés, communément appelés "bandits" dans cette région du Nigeria, procèdent à des kidnappings de masse dans les établissements scolaires en échange de rançons. Au moins 730 enfants et adolescents ont été enlevés depuis le mois de décembre.

Paiement de rançon
Début mars, à Kaduna déjà, des hommes armés avaient attaqué le pensionnat d'un lycée professionnel enlevant 49 élèves, dont dix ont été libérés. Leurs ravisseurs avaient publié des vidéos insoutenables où l'on voit les victimes être fouettées et demander le paiement d'une rançon à

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Le registre national d'identification devrait redoubler d'efforts

Le gouvernement du Libéria veut que l'ensemble de la population obtienne des cartes d'identité nationales, surtout les fonctionnaires, mais il se peut que le registre national d'identification, l'organisme d'État chargé de délivrer ce papier n'ait manifestement pas de moyen, au point que les citoyens font la queue pendant des semaines ou des mois pour avoir leurs cartes d'identité.

Le plus dégoûtant encore, c'est que le gouvernement a fait de la possession de la carte une condition sine qua non pour chaque fonctionnaire d'avoir accès à son salaire. En plus, les utilisateurs de téléphones portables sont harcelés pour mettre à jour l'enregistrement de leur numéro en se servant de leur carte d'identité nationale. Pourtant, il faut environ deux à trois mois aux demandeurs pour obtenir une carte d'identité, car le système du registre national est défaillant.

Le groupe de travail national chargé du nettoyage de la masse salariale de l'état a publié une circulaire, avertissant qu'à compter du mois d'avril 2021, les fonctionnaires qui ne disposent pas de carte d'identité nationale ne recevront pas de salaire. Mais concernant le dysfonctionnement des prestations de services au niveau du registre national, aucune mesure n'a été prise.

Il est important que le gouvernement prévoie des mesures d'accompagnement pour chaque politique mise en place, sinon les résultats escomptés pourraient être désastreux. En réalité, tout processus aléatoire finit par créer des inconvénients aux personnes qui devraient en bénéficier.

Compte tenu de la ruée actuelle vers les cartes d'identité et de l'incapacité du Registre national à répondre à la demande, l'on assiste à de sérieux compromis qui pourraient entraîner des conséquences imprévues et inattendues que la nation pourrait regretter ultérieurement.

Nous nous félicitons certes de la délivrance d'une pièce d'identité nationale appropriée à chaque Libérien, mais encore faut-il que le processus soit correctement soutenu tant sur le plan financier que technique. À quoi sert l'annonce d'une politique qui manque de planification appropriée. Cela n'a aucun sens.

Nous appelons les autorités du registre national d'identification à redoubler d'efforts pour répondre à la demande. Il ne suffit pas de forcer les gens à se faire délivrer des cartes d'identité. Il faut prévoir un service efficace.

Le Libéria ne dispose pas d'un système biométrique synchronisé qui améliorerait l'accès facile et réduirait les coûts sur les dépenses nationales, selon la Commission de la gouvernance, un groupe de réflexion gouvernemental.

Dans l'état actuel des choses, presque tous les services, y compris les passeports, les banques, les admissions universitaires et les services mobiles, entre autres, sont pré-conditionnés par des cartes d'identité nationales.

Nous semblons mettre la charrue avant les bœufs, en tant que nation qui n'a pas contribué à faire avancer le Libéria. Comme l'a dit le président, il est temps de calibrer pour garantir un pays meilleur.

Français

Tournée nationale :

gouvernement central de soutenir leurs efforts en ce qui concerne la construction d'un pont reliant le Grand Bassa Community College et Buchanan.

En réponse, le président Weah qui a été émerveillé par l'immense accueil qu'il a reçu des habitants de Bassa et par la qualité de leur présentation, a dit que son administration interviendrait immédiatement.

Il a remercié les habitants de Bassa, comme il l'avait fait dans les comtés visités jusqu'à présent, d'avoir mis leur confiance en lui pour diriger le pays.

M. Weah a demandé aux gens de Bassa de jeter un regard sur son bilan, ajoutant qu'il n'ajamais connu d'échec et qu'il n'échouerait jamais.

« Vérifiez mon dossier, chaque travail que vous

m'avez confié, je l'ai bien fait, » a-t-il dit. Appelant son ministre des Travaux publics, le président Weah s'est retourné et a dit : « Vérifiez le pont pour que les enfants puissent avoir accès à l'école. »

Il a promis aux habitants de Bassa qu'à son départ du comté, une équipe se rendra dans la région pour fournir des lampadaires dans la ville dans le cadre des propres initiatives du gouvernement alors que les gens attendent le déploiement des lignes de Ouest Africa Power Pool, qui a une sous-station près de Buchanan.

M. Weah a dit au peuple Bassa de prier pour qu'il n'y ait aucun obstacle à la paix de la nation. Il a déclaré que cela permettra au développement de se propager à travers le pays. « Lorsque nous ne sommes pas en paix, notre travail sera difficile. »

Nigeria : des étudiants

leurs familles et aux autorités.

Lors d'une conférence de presse tenue la semaine dernière, le président de l'association des parents d'élèves avait dénoncé l'inaction des autorités de l'Etat de Kaduna, qui ont interdit toute négociation avec les bandits. « Les enfants ne peuvent pas se laver depuis 36 jours, ils ne mangent pas bien, ils n'ont pas d'eau potable pour boire, ils n'ont pas de vêtements, pas de médicaments », suppliait Friday Sani.

F e r m e t u r e d'établissements scolaires

Plusieurs Etats du nord et centre du Nigeria ont imposé la fermeture de leurs établissements scolaires pour des raisons de sécurité,

La RDC accuse l'Ouganda "d'actes de barbarie" devant la CIJ de La Haye

La République démocratique du Congo (RDC) a accusé, ce mardi, l'Ouganda d'actes de "barbarie" devant la Cour de justice internationale et réclamé des compensations qui pourraient se chiffrer en milliards de dollars pour une guerre meurtrière survenue à la fin des années 1990.

La CIJ a statué en 2005 que l'Ouganda devait payer des réparations à Kinshasa pour avoir envahi la RDC pendant une guerre qui a fait trois millions de morts en 1998-2003. Le dossier est maintenant de nouveau devant la Cour, qui doit fixer le montant des compensations après que ces deux pays voisins d'Afrique centrale ne sont pas

faisant craindre une aggravation de la déscolarisation, particulièrement des filles, dans ces régions pauvres et rurales qui comptent déjà le plus fort taux d'enfants n'allant pas à l'école dans le pays.

« Le nord est déjà une région qui compte le plus grand nombre d'enfants non scolarisés au Nigéria, donc les enlèvements scolaires sont une énorme préoccupation.

Selon l'Unicef, la scolarité et les études de 5 millions d'enfants sont menacées dans cette région. « Avec l'accélération des attaques et des kidnappings visant spécifiquement des élèves, c'est tout le système scolaire qui va s'effondrer si rien n'est fait très rapidement », avait affirmé l'Unicef à l'AFP.

parvenus à s'entendre sur ce point. » Le conflit armé livré par l'Ouganda l'était sur une très large échelle. Une occupation de cinq ans marquée par de très graves atteintes aux droits de l'Homme qui tendaient à la barbarie », a plaidé le représentant de la RDC, Paul-Crispin Kakhozi Bin-Bulongo, devant la Cour qui siège à La Haye. Des responsables congolais avaient affirmé, quand la décision initiale avait été rendue, que leur pays allait réclamer entre six et 10 milliards de dollars à Kampala. Ils avaient espéré que l'Ouganda « assumerait pleinement sa responsabilité pour la blessure infligée et (conviendrait) d'une contribution substantielle », mais cela ne s'est pas produit, a ajouté Paul-Crispin Kakhozi Bin-Bulongo.

COMMENTAIRE

By Sheldon Whitehouse ,
Hank Johnson

Argent de l'ombre : le point de non-retour

WASHINGTON - Les groupes de pression de droite font le siège des tribunaux américains. Leur but : manipuler la magistrature fédérale pour privilégier les grands employeurs sur les salariés, les banques géantes sur les petites entreprises et les armuriers sur les victimes de la violence armée. Encore et encore, le programme politique poursuivi par la Federalist Society fait la loi aux dépens du citoyen. Cette organisation agit, plus qu'aucune autre, pour déplacer le plus possible vers la droite le pouvoir judiciaire fédéral. Si sa persévérance parvient aujourd'hui à ses fins dans un dossier qui a peu fait parler de lui, porté devant la Cour suprême, des intérêts occultes consolideront, pour les générations à venir, leur emprise sur le droit constitutionnel des États-Unis.

En tant que présidents des sous-comités sur les tribunaux du Sénat et de la Chambre, nous avons pu observer de près l'empiètement de l'argent de l'ombre sur le pouvoir judiciaire. Les discrets intérêts qui exercent cette influence ont dicté l'identité des trois derniers juges nommés à la Cour suprême, puis fait pression sur le Sénat pour qu'il confirme leur nomination, en dépensant notamment des millions de dollars pour des campagnes nationales de publicité à la radio et à la télévision (en faveur surtout du juge Brett Kavanaugh lorsque la procédure de confirmation s'est heurtée à des difficultés).

Ayant contribué à pourvoir la magistrature fédérale en juges favorables à leurs objectifs, des groupes de juristes financés par un même réseau, ont tour à tour constitué des dossiers susceptibles d'atterrir devant la Cour suprême, appuyés par toutes sortes d'informations, opinions et mémoires déposés chacun par un amicus curiae, en appui des cas soutenus. Ces mémoires émanant de personnes extérieures à la Cour constituent le dernier mouvement d'une œuvre orchestrale stratégiquement dirigée, en l'occurrence une opération d'envergure visant au contrôle de la jurisprudence.

L'argent de l'ombre est la clé de cette opération : à savoir des sommes dont les donateurs ne peuvent être identifiés. Des intérêts privés ont construit un vaste réseau de groupes de façade collectant l'argent de l'ombre afin de s'assurer des fonctions essentielles au contrôle de la jurisprudence, du choix des juges qui seront nommés jusqu'à celui des cas qui leur seront soumis, à grands renforts d'actions de lobbying exprimées dans les mémoires déposés par les amici curiae (les « amis de la cour [ou du tribunal] »). Pour la seule période courant de 2014 à 2018, ce réseau a reçu, selon la récente déposition d'un expert devant le Sénat, 400 millions de dollars.

Malheureusement, c'est un fait, cette campagne financée par l'argent de l'ombre fonctionne. Avant même que la juge Amy Coney Barrette ne rejoigne la Cour suprême, dans les derniers jours de l'administration de Donald Trump, la majorité républicaine de cinq juges a accumulé une série de 80 victoires sur des affaires ayant donné lieu à des verdicts partisans (5 voix contre 4) en faveur des intérêts d'importants donateurs républicains. Mais la grande récompense pourrait provenir de l'affaire Americans for Prosperity contre Rodriguez, où la Cour serait en mesure d'arrêter qu'une élite donatrice de droite jouit d'un droit constitutionnel au secret lorsqu'elle utilise des groupes de façade pour influencer la vie politique ou le jugement des tribunaux.

Dans cette affaire, l'identité des parties nous dit bien ce qui est en jeu. The American for Prosperity Foundation appartient à la constellation de groupes de façade collectant l'argent de l'ombre fondés par le milliardaire et magnat du secteur énergétique

Charles Koch, et sa société affiliée Americans for Prosperity fournit la force de frappe politique nécessaire à l'opération. Le vaste éventail des amici venus en foule soutenir l'affaire avant que la Cour suprême n'accepte de l'entendre est encore plus instructif. Ces groupes se présentent généralement devant la Cour en flottes de combat bien organisées, mais la présence cette fois de plus de 60 groupes de façade liés à l'argent de l'ombre indique l'importance de ce qui se prépare.

L'explication est à chercher au Congrès, où de puissantes sociétés profondément impliquées dans les opérations de collecte de l'argent de l'ombre commencent ouvertement à refuser de répondre aux questions concernant les financements qui bénéficient de cet argent de l'ombre. Pour ce faire, elles « plaident le Premier [Amendement] », en s'appuyant sur le droit jusqu'alors inconnu, prétendument garanti par le Premier Amendement, d'intervenir secrètement dans la vie politique en usant d'argent de l'ombre.

Ironie du sort, l'obligation de transparence pour les dépenses liées aux partis politiques fut établie par la Cour suprême à la faveur de l'arrêt Citizens United en 2010, qui ouvrait grand la porte aux dons colossaux à des organisations politiques. La Cour cependant n'a guère fait d'efforts pour que soient respectées ses exigences de transparence, et aujourd'hui, alors que sa balance politique penche à droite, de telles exigences de papier pourraient être réduites en lambeaux.

En 2010, le juge Clarence Thomas fut le seul qui rendit un avis opposé à la contrainte de publicité des dons. Mais trois nouveaux juges ont depuis lors été portés à la Cour par les forces de l'argent de l'ombre, et le juge Samuel Alito semble prêt à basculer du côté de ces mêmes forces. Ce qui rend possible un vote emporté par les cinq voix conservatrices en faveur d'une utilisation illimitée de l'argent de l'ombre. C'est du moins ce que doivent penser ceux qui se tiennent derrière les 60 amici.

Il est inutile de préciser que les groupes de pression qui ont bâti cette énorme machine d'influence autour du pouvoir judiciaire la protégeront quel qu'en soit le coût. Supprimer l'argent de l'ombre, ce serait supprimer cette machine, et sans machine, ç'en est fini de l'influence. C'est aussi simple que cela. Aujourd'hui, la Cour suprême - la Cour bâtie par l'argent de l'ombre - peut être l'instrument qui pérenniserait à long terme la puissance de cet argent.

Nous sommes convaincus, en tant qu'élus, que l'arrêt Citizens United fut rendu à tort, et nous sommes profondément déçus que la Cour n'ait jamais fait respecter les propres termes de cet arrêt. L'obstruction et la corruption, largement répandues, dont nous avons été les témoins au Congrès, sont les conséquences de ces échecs, et nous croyons que ces problèmes sont des facteurs de l'insatisfaction de l'opinion envers le gouvernement.

Que la Cour accorde une protection constitutionnelle aux intrigues de l'argent de l'ombre ne ferait qu'empirer la situation. L'information des citoyens constitue l'un des rares moyens de contrôle qui puissent s'exercer sur le pouvoir ou l'influence dans le gouvernement. Refuser aux citoyens cette information sur ce qui se passe autour d'eux et dans leur gouvernement, c'est porter un coup fatal à la démocratie.

Cela conviendrait certainement aux forces autocratiques de l'argent de l'ombre qui ont déployé tant d'efforts et ont tant dépensé pour l'actuelle composition de la Cour suprême. C'est à la démocratie que s'opposent ces forces. Elles veulent le pouvoir pour des marionnettistes milliardaires agissant derrière le rideau créé par l'argent de l'ombre. Nous ne pouvons pas accepter qu'il en soit ainsi.

“Be fearless risk takers”

By Winston W. Parley

India’s immediate past honorary consul general to Liberia Mr. Upjit Singh Sachdeva (Jetty) has told the 30th graduating class of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion University (AMEZU) to be fearless in taking risks in the pursuit of their dreams, saying some great men took risks to get to where they are. “Remember, the people you admire today for their success took risk to get to where they are, so do not be afraid to be fearless Risk takers,” the Indian businessman said Thursday, 22 April during AMEZU’s commencement convocation on the university’s main campus in Po River, Vincent Town, Bomi County. In his commencement address which he built around

opportunity in Liberia, he was set free mentally, and full of courage and zeal to build his life as a successful businessman. “Had I refused to take Risk back then because of fear, I might never have found the determination to succeed in the arena I truly belonged - business,” he continues. He indicates that everyone has goals and fears, but how you handle those fears will determine how quickly you reach your goals. At the same time Mr. Sachdeva cautions that not every risk ends up as a success, saying when it is not successful, learn from the mistakes made and take the necessary remedial actions through your next moves. To acquaint the graduating class of what some great men of thought, leadership, business,

which is Imagination, Mr. Sachdeva suggests that you must take the risk and follow imagination, adding that you cannot take risk just because you want to do so.

“It must be backed by imagination. In my case, I had an imagination of becoming a business tycoon, and I took the Risk to implement such,” he says.

According to him, the graduates’ education gives them unique status and responsibilities, but notes that it is imagination that will set many of them apart.

“Imagination is the greatest gift of mankind, so do not disregard it and behave like many who do not exercise it at all,” says Mr. Sachdeva.

According to him, there are many University graduates like the ones from AMEZU - smart and intelligent - but they are nowhere in the society because they choose to remain comfortably within their bounds, and not troubled about how it would feel to have been born other than they are.

For such people, Mr. Sachdeva says, they strangle their imaginations and close their minds and hearts from exercising it, adding that they do not realize that in imaginations, people carry all the power to change the world and their lives.

Mr. Sachdeva admonishes the graduates that the world they are about to enter can be exciting, sometimes chaotic and always prone to problems, obstacles, difficulties, disappointments and hard luck.

However, he notes that the world is open to anyone ready to carve his or her own path for either success or failure, noting that the graduates have to keep their heads up high and face the greater challenges to reach their academic peak.

“Use your skills, your knowledge, and everything you have learned, to make real and meaningful change with them - and become your own problem - solvers,” he says.

According to Mr. Sachdeva, you may not be able to solve or fix all of your problems, but, you can surely fix some because you have been placed in the position through the education received to do so.

innovation, science, technology and industry had to say about the issues of risk and success, Mr. Sachdeva notes that social media platform Facebook Chairman, Chief Executive Officer and Co - founder Mark Zuckerberg says “The biggest risk is not taking any risk.” He adds that Arianna Huffington, Co-founder and Editor - in - Chief of the Huffington Post postulated that: “If you are not in touch with your intuition, you cannot be successful. Data is great. But sometimes even when you have all the data in the world, if you do not follow your gut, you won’t discover the true potential and be able to recognize critical opportunities.”

Regarding the second golden rule



Mr. Upjit Singh Sachdeva

two golden rules - Risk and Imagination, Mr. Sachdeva explains that risk also makes you to emerge wiser and allows you to be truly satisfied since you are following your heart and doing what you love to do.

“By taking Risk, I learned about things I might have not learned. It made me discover my personality - that I had a strong business mind and skill than I had suspected,” he says. Following the commencement address, AMEZU awarded Mr. Sachdeva an honorary Doctor of Humanities.

Mr. Sachdeva reflects that when he let go of his fear and took the risk of quitting college for a business

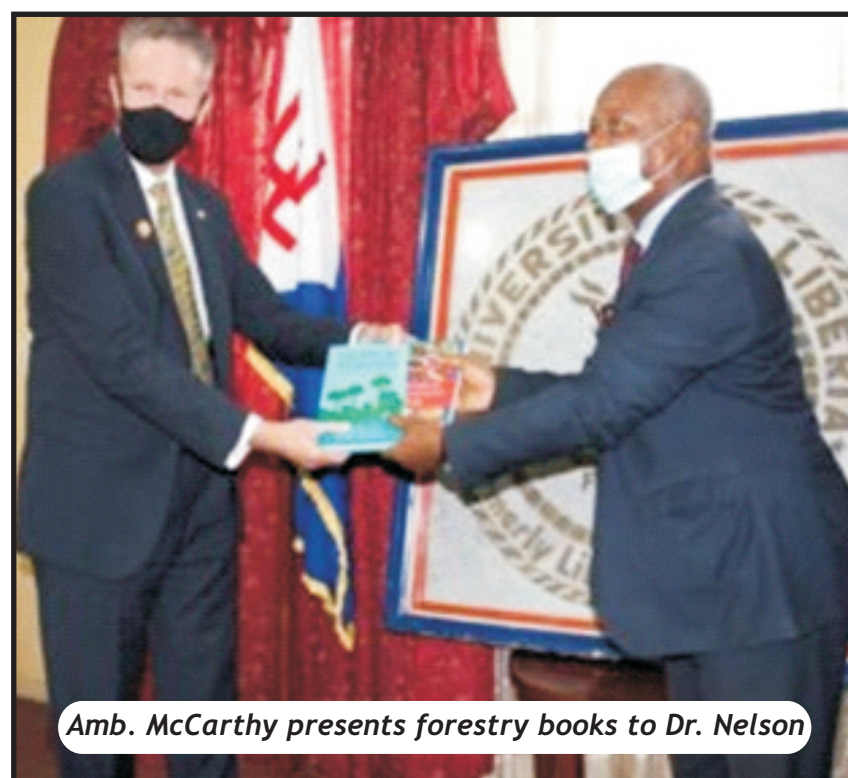
U.S. Ambassador McCarthy presents Forestry books to UL

On Wednesday, April 21, Ambassador Michael McCarthy met with University of Liberia (UL) President Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson, Jr. on the Capitol Hill campus. They discussed the long-standing relationship UL has with the U.S. Embassy as well as UL partnerships with a number of U.S. universities and colleges.

A press release issued here by the embassy says the U.S. Embassy Monrovia regularly facilitates opportunities for young Liberian leaders,

Preservation, the Embassy is supporting a joint project by students from the University of Liberia and the University of Virginia who are together options for the preservation and reuse of Providence Island in Monrovia.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is also a longtime supporter of the University of Liberia. Through partnerships, grants, and expertise-sharing, USAID has supported a plan to establish a Development Studies



Amb. McCarthy presents forestry books to Dr. Nelson

including UL students, to connect with their American counterparts and gain exposure to U.S. higher education.

It says these virtual and in-person exchanges include the Mandela Washington Fellowship, which brings young leaders from sub-Saharan African countries to the United States each year for academic coursework and leadership training. This year, through the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural

program at UL, expanded access to and improved the quality of UL’s engineering curriculum, renovated the Fendell Campus Engineering College, and significantly increased UL’s health science library.

Yale Professor Dr. Chad Oliver with forestry books

During his visit to the UL, Ambassador McCarthy presented a collection of forestry books donated by Yale University professor emeritus Dr. Chad Oliver. With the help of USAID and the U.S. Forest Service, the

April 19, 2021

SURVEY NOTE

Based upon the request of Christ global ministries represented by it pastor Melvin kieh, we the undersigned registered land surveyor and authorized surveyor has been duly authorized to resurvey half lot of land (0.50 lot) in Sinkor Monrovia.

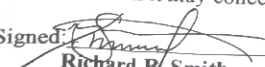
The land to be resurvey is lying situated in Sinkor Monrovia Montserrado County.

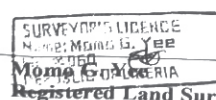
The resurvey will commence on Friday the 23 days of April A.D. 2021 at the hour of 11:00am.

Therefore, all adjacent property owners are ask to be present on the sit with their deeds, diagrams and all other relevant document with their technical representative (surveyor) or verify their claims to avoid future dispute .

This notice should claim the following persons or properties owner:

1. Liberia National Police
2. Community Chairman
3. To whom it may concern

Signed: 
Richard B. Smith
Authorized Surveyor

Approved: 
Registered Land Surveyor

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MOU BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT

Cont'd from page 2

revenue. As it is, the Government does not have or have not generated such amount of revenue to meet the harmonized pay scale of most of the Consortium members who represents more than 85-percent of the central government workforce. However, some levels of upward salary adjustments are in effect through funding from resignations, retirement, promotions, and limited replacements.

The Consortium has also complained that members have seen large deductions due to exchange rate movements and wonder why the Government does not pay on the basis of the fixed exchange rate that is associated with the passage of the National Budget. The Government notes that if the exchange rate appreciates, say from 200 LRD to 1 USD to 150 LRD to 1 USD, the Government cannot pay at the previous rate of 200 LRD to USD since taxpayers also pay revenue on the basis of appreciated rate of LRD 150 to 1 USD. Paying at the previous rate of LRD 200 to 1 USD when the market exchange rate is LRD150 to 1USD will result into expenditure overrun and hence a collapse of the national budget.

The ultimate goal to protect workers salary from this exchange volatility is for the exchange rate to remain stable, which is a macroeconomic policy goal the Government has been pursuing. However, to the extent volatility is to happen, workers would be somewhat protected since their salary is denominated in USD dollar and split into 80% USD and 20%LRD at the time of disbursement even though some workers with only LRD account earn exclusively 100% LRD at the prevailing market exchange rate. Depending on the direction of the volatility, an exchange rate depreciation favors denomination of the salary in USD, while an exchange rate appreciation causes loss in income, especially for employees who are paid 100% LRD since there is always time lag for prices to adjust in the immediate to short-run to the appreciated exchange rate.

ACTION

In the interim, to protect most vulnerable workers of the Consortium, especially the staff with only LRD accounts, the Government has constituted a technical team that will, over the next 60days, generate corresponding USD accounts for employees with only LRD accounts at their respective commercial banks. This will minimize the impact of the loss in the appreciation of the exchange rate which may not adjust to local prices in the short-run.

Additionally, to protect a certain class of workers from exchange rate volatility, the Government may pay these workers on the basis of a predefined exchange rate, even if the market or official exchange rate deviates from this predefined exchange rate, especially in the case of exchange rate appreciation where local prices fail to adjust in the immediate and short-run. Such a policy requires budgetary appropriation by the National Legislature and is currently under consideration. This benefit would only be extended to healthcare and education workers within a limited or narrow salary range.

6.0 ABSENCE OF BANKS OR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN SOME RURAL AREAS AND DELAYS IN RECEIVING SALARIES AT COMMERCIAL BANKS

INFORMATION

The absence of banks in the rural of rural counties like Grand Kru, Rivergee, Gbarpolu, etc. complicates the process of timely receipt of salary. Public sector workers in these areas receive their salary weeks after the Government has paid. This has serious impact on healthcare and education outcomes, for example, forcing the Government to deliver a solution. Also, in counties where there are banks, the Consortium complains that its members are often told there is no money at the various banks or the banking system is down even after the Government has paid.

ACTION

The Government acknowledge the challenges of the rural workers and expressed disappointment in the failure of the free market system of the banking system to timely provide cash to rural employees when they are paid by the Government. To mitigate these challenges, the government of Liberia through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Central Bank of Liberia are exploring the followings:

- The Government, through the CBL and the MFDP, will work with Commercial Banks to ensure the timely availability of physical Liberian Dollars Banknotes that will be dedicated for the payment of rural civil servants, especially teachers and healthcare workers.

- Under the new framework, the CBL will also establish or increase physical presence in rural counties to ensure cash availability and payments to civil servants.

7.0 BUDGETARY ALLOTMENT FOR MCSS AND TIMELY

DISBURSEMENT OF ALLOTTED FUNDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPERATIONS

INFORMATION

The Consortium complained about the timely budgetary allocation and disbursement to public sector institutions, including the Monrovia Consolidated School System (MCSS) for their operations. The recent lack of disbursement to the MCSS is resulting into the use of funds collected for the operation of MCSS schools.

ACTION

To improve the operations of public sector institutions, including public schools, the Government will continue to ensure that the budgetary allocations to public section institutions, youth and student organizations and the disable community will be disbursed in a timely manner during the execution of the transitional budget beginning July 2021.

With this support, the Government and the Consortium agree to the followings about the utilization of the registration fee:

- PTA will get a portion of the registration fee separate from the portion that goes to the schools. PTA will not collect any extra fees going forward.
- For transparency, monitoring and accountability of the flow of registration fees, the NTAL will be added to the mobile money system, which is the payment medium for registration fees.
- Government will continue to allocate funding to MOE for DEOs & CEOs. That means, DEOs and CEOs will no longer receive any portion of the registration fee.
- The MOE, MCSS & PTA will work together collaboratively to review the procedures for the utilization of the registration fee to ensure transparency and effectiveness.
- MOE has already stopped schools from imposing high school fees on students within the public school system. This measure will be thoroughly monitored by stakeholders within the sector to ensure compliance.

8.0 FORMER SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHERS

INFORMATION

The Supplementary Teachers Associations is a group comprising about 3,650 teachers that are currently underpaid at US\$95-per month (but previously paid US\$45 before the National Harmonization Exercise). The leadership of the former supplementary teachers complain about being underpaid even though they have equal qualification like other teachers. The leadership also thank the Government for recent increment in the salary of over 600 supplementary teachers but also request the Government to provide listing of the teachers that have benefited from the recent increment. Additionally, the organization is calling on the Government to continue the process of increasing the salaries of the other teachers within this category.

ACTION

The government recognizes the need to increase the pay of former supplementary teachers and is committed that all teachers in this category are moved to their expected salary level, as demonstrated by the Government's recent action to increase the pay of about 600 former supplementary teachers during the pay period of March 2021.

Within seven days of the signing of this MOU, the Government through the MFDP promises to submit the list of the 600 teachers who recently received salary increment.

9.0 COVID-19 HAZARD PAY

INFORMATION

Representative of the of the National Health Workers Association of Liberia complained about them not receiving the exact hazard amount agreed for healthcare workers. In addition to complaining about delayed payment of the remaining healthcare workers, the leadership of the healthcare workers union also complained about calibrated hazard payments across cadre of healthcare workers against a flat amount that was agreed for every cadre of the healthcare workers.

ACTION

The Government, through the Ministry of Health, provided clarification on the hazard payment process to the healthcare workers, explaining that the payment process is into phases starting with clinical workers within public facilities. The MOH also provided clarification that the healthcare workers are being paid equal hazard payment in both USD and LRD and there is no calibration.

The MOH indicated that to date the Government has paid US\$1.3 million out of US\$2 million promised. The remaining disbursement of US\$700,000.00 will be contingent on the request from the MOH and report from the MOH to the MFDP on the utilization of the first disbursement.

Additionally, the technical team will provide the listing of individuals that have received hazard payment to date.

10.0 PUBLIC SECTOR PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

INFORMATION

The Ministry of Education expresses concerns about the performance of teachers, the quality of their work and the level of absenteeism observed within the school system. These performance issues are adversely affecting the quality of education students are receiving.

The Consortium also observes and frowns on the high level of absenteeism and abandonment of assigned post by DEOs, CEOs, and some public sector workers. They believe that these levels of absenteeism are mainly due to the inadequacy of governmental support and benefits to these employees, especially for employees who are assigned in the rural areas.

The Consortium believes that the lack of housing, public sector workers do not want locate in the rural areas.

ACTION

The Consortium and the Government agree on establishing an effective performance monitoring framework to reduce absenteeism, improve performance, while enhancing learning outcomes for the students.

To incentivize the performance of public sector workers, including teachers and healthcare workers, the Government will consider providing vehicles for County Education Officers (CEOs) and other relevant public sector institutions. The Government will also consider the development of a housing program for civil servants assigned in the rural areas.

11.0 NTAL CREDIT UNION BACK PAYMENT OF LRD1.3M

INFORMATION

The Consortium expressed concerns over the nonpayment of the NTAL Credit Union dues of LRD1.3 million that was collected on behalf of the organization for onward transfer to them by the Government.

ACTION

The Government is in the process of making the payment.

CONCLUSION

As we look forward to collectively addressing these concerns, we remain committed to the peace, security and development of our beloved country as we foster dialogue and cordiality to resolve burning national issues.

To ensure the timely resolution of these issues as described here in this MOU, the Government and the Consortium have agreed to making reasonable efforts to resolving these issues within a period of three (3) months from April 18, 2021 to July 18, 2021. Progress on the resolution will be monitored on a periodic basis during the three months span to address any risk to implementation. The implementation timeline will be reasonably adjusted as needed where necessary.

This MOU is signed on April 18, 2021 by the following institutions.

Signed: _____
Hon. Samuel D. Tweah, Jr.
Minister of Finance and Development Planning

Signed: _____
Hon. Prof. Ansu D. Sonii
Minister of Education

Signed: _____
Hon. Dr. Wilhemina Jallah
Minister of Health

Signed: _____
Hon. James Thompson
Director General, Civil Services Agency

Signed: _____
Hon. Moibah K. Johnson
President, Consortium of Public Sector Workers Organization

Signed: _____
Hon. Mary W. M. Nyumah
President, National Teachers Association of Liberia

Signed: _____
Hon. Joseph S. Tamba
President, National Health Workers Association of Liberia

Signed: _____
Hon. Augustine N. Nyormui
President, Monrovia Consolidated School System Teachers' Association

Signed: _____
Hon. J. Mason Saweler
President, National Parents Teachers Network Liberia

This is not dead – Perez continues defence of breakaway plan



Florentino Perez continued his staunch defence of the European Super League on Wednesday, despite the proposed breakaway competition having crumbled before it started.

Real Madrid president Perez had been appointed as the chairman of the competition, which was announced with 12 founding teams and to widespread criticism on Sunday.

Perez spoke on Monday about a need to change football, with clubs

struggling financially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, while he also cited a lack of interest in the game from younger generations.

Yet his words did little to appease the furore and, on Tuesday, the six English clubs involved in the competition all pulled out amid pressure from the Premier League, Football Association (FA), UEFA and the UK government.

The owners of Liverpool, Manchester United, Arsenal and Manchester City all offered apologies to their fans for their part in the plans.

Atletico Madrid, Inter, Milan and Juventus subsequently pulled out on Wednesday, albeit Perez has claimed the latter two remain committed.

Yet Perez insists he will not let the proposals die, and is adamant that there must be drastic reform to football, maintaining the European Super League was put together as a plan to save the game.

Speaking on the El Laguardo radio show following Madrid's win over Cadiz, Perez said: "We were working last night until late. We have been working many years on this project. We have not explained it very well, perhaps.

"They have not given us a chance either. Some do not want anything to happen. It cannot be that in England, the six lose money, and 14 make money. In Spain the top three lose money, and the others make money. It cannot continue - at the moment the rich are those who are losing money.

Ibrahimovic signs new Milan deal

Zlatan Ibrahimovic has signed a new one-year contract with Serie A giants Milan.

The 39-year-old striker rejoined the Rossoneri on a free transfer in December 2019 until the end of the season, with the option of extending his stay.

Ibrahimovic put pen to paper to remain at San Siro for the current campaign and the evergreen frontman has now agreed terms for another 12 months.



The Sweden striker has scored 17 goals in all competitions in an injury-hit season, finding the back of the net 15 times in 17 Serie A matches.

Ibrahimovic had made no secret of his desire to stay at Milan and the club confirmed a deal has been agreed on Thursday.

Ex-Manchester United, Paris Saint-Germain and Barcelona forward Ibrahimovic, who has scored 84 goals in 130 appearances

for Milan, posted on social media "the saga continues".

He revealed it was an easy decision to commit to Stefano Pioli's side, who are second in Serie A - trailing leaders and city rivals Inter, another of Ibrahimovic's former teams, by 10 points.

"I am very happy, this is my home," said Ibrahimovic. "I have been waiting for this day for a year, I am very happy.

"I have always said that I feel at home here: the people who work for Milan, my team-mates,

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