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VOL.11 NO. 098

THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2021

PRICE LD\$40.00

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Continental News

Ethiopia has changed over the last 50 years

The BBC charts the dramatic changes in Ethiopia and the big challenges facing the country, as the nation prepares to vote in the first election since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power in 2018. The next administration will govern more than 115 million people, making Ethiopia the second-most populous country in Africa after Nigeria and 12th in the world. There are five times more people in Ethiopia now than there were 60 years ago, but the rate of population growth has slowed slightly over the last two decades.

It is predicted that there will be an additional three million Ethiopians every year up to 2050, when the country will be the world's eighth most populous nation. Ethiopia has gone through rapid economic transformation in recent years where population growth has more than been matched by economic expansion.

Things hit a low point in

the drought years of 2002 and 2003, but since then the average income per person has increased by more than 600%.

That change, however, has not been experienced evenly across the country.

In the capital, Addis Ababa, the growth has meant urban expansion and infrastructure improvements like the introduction of the city's light

railway. But in other parts of the country, some have complained that they have not benefitted from the economic growth - an accusation that has fuelled political protests in the past. Changes in Ethiopia have also been reflected in improvements in health. In the past 50 years there has been a dramatic decline in the

number of deaths of children under five. The proportion of women dying in child birth has also fallen. The country is made up of a large number of ethnic groups and relations between them are likely to have a big impact on Ethiopia's future.

Ethiopia's largest ethnic group - the Oromos - had long complained that they had been marginalised both economically and politically.

A wave of protests beginning in 2015 in part led to the rise of Mr Abiy, an Oromo himself, to power.

He has been keen to foster a sense of national unity in the face of ethnic divisions, but also wants to celebrate that diversity. Recent events though have proved a challenge to that vision. Ethiopia has a federal system with 10 ethnically

based states and two chartered cities. Any ethnic group which does not have its own state can call for a referendum to create one.

Sidama was established in 2020 after a vote the year before and an 11th state could be created in the south-west following a referendum to be held in September.

This federal arrangement was laid out in the 1994 constitution in part to correct what was seen as over-centralisation under dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam. He was overthrown in 1991.

But last November, relations between the central government and Tigray in the north broke down with federal troops fighting soldiers loyal to the region's former governing party. This was partly over a row sparked by accusations that Mr Abiy planned to make Ethiopia more centralised again. BBC



Eritrean troops to leave soon - Ethiopia's UN envoy

Eritrean troops who have been fighting in Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray will leave "soon", Ethiopia's ambassador to the UN has said.

Taye Atske Sellasie Made said it was a "matter of sorting out some technical and procedural issues" regarding when they could leave, the Reuters news agency

the 1984 devastating famine if violence does not stop and the Eritrean troops do not withdraw.

Last week, the UN aid chief said there was famine in northern Ethiopia after the release of a UN-backed analysis of the situation. The Ethiopian government has denied that there is a famine in the country.

Tigray has been devastated by a humanitarian crisis since fighting began in November 2020



Tigray has been devastated by a humanitarian crisis since fighting began in 2020

Tigray starvation used as weapon of war - UN aid boss

The UN humanitarian chief says the situation in the Ethiopian region of Tigray is worse than previously thought. Mark Lowcock was speaking to a closed session of the UN Security Council on Tuesday - the BBC has seen a leaked copy of his prepared remarks. He left no room for ambiguity, saying there was now famine in Tigray - again challenging more cautious assessments of the hunger

crisis in northern Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian authorities insist there is no famine in the north of the country.

"Rape is being used systematically to terrorise and brutalise women and girls. Eritrean soldiers are using starvation as a weapon of war. Displaced people are being rounded up, beaten and threatened," he said

"Aid workers have been killed, interrogated, beaten, blocked from taking aid to the

starving and suffering and told not to come back. The Tigray administration have reported deaths from starvation."

Mr Lowcock suggested the recent assessment of food security in Tigray - which spoke of a "catastrophe" - might be underestimating the gravity of the situation.

He described multiple reports of "young men and teenagers... taken, usually at night, and in some cases executed". "It is now clear that Eritrean Defence Forces are responsible for substantial violations of international humanitarian law." Despite some success in delivering aid to the region, Mr Lowcock said, "Millions of people in urgent need of help are simply not getting any." "The response is still not yet coming close to keeping pace with the mounting needs." This comes as Ethiopia prepares for national elections. But not in Tigray - where there are unconfirmed reports of a new surge of fighting as Ethiopian and Eritrean troops seek to crush forces loyal to the region's former government. BBC



Mark Lowcock says aid is being blocked to some areas

EDITORIAL

Tampering with justice undermines peace

SOME OFFICIALS OF the judiciary, including the Liberia National Police that is under the Ministry of Justice last week confirmed the release of murder suspect Sampson F. Pennue on bail in Grand Gedeh County in a crime that is non-bailable under the laws of Liberia. But nobody accepts responsibility.

SUSPECT SAMPSON F. PENNUE, commander of the National Security Agency (NSA) in Grand Gedeh allegedly shot dead Deputy Police Commander Alexander B. Saye in the county on November 27, 2020, but how he was reportedly bailed out and by whom is the 62 million dollar question, particularly so after the Liberia National Police in Grand Gedeh County formally charged Suspect Pennue with Murder for the killing of late DCP Saye.

POLICE SAY THE charge is in keeping with Chapter 14 Sub-chapter A, Section 14.1 of the Revised Penal Code of the Republic of Liberia after the accused “criminally” and “intentionally” shot and caused bodily injury on the person of victim Alexander B. Saye with a 9mm pistol thus, resulting to his death.

COINCIDENTALLY, A BROTHER of the deceased, John B. Saye, alarmed over radio last week Thursday, 10 June 2020 in Monrovia that Suspect Sampson Pennue has been released. Unfortunately, the news came just as judicial officials converged last week for a three-day conference that highlighted excesses by courts and lawyers in dispensing justice.

ALTHOUGH EVERYBODY CLAIMS innocence, including Solicitor General Symah Cyrenius Cephas, Police Inspector General Patrick Sudue and Grand Gedeh County Attorney Cllr. J. Adolphus Karnue, but how could the 7th Judicial Circuit Court in the county where the case is assigned, release a murder suspect against the law?

THE ISSUE UNDER discussion is nothing but a clear attempt by some officials sitting somewhere to temper with the administration of justice for selfish interest. Are those involved saying the life of the late DCP Alexander B. Saye was less important than Suspect Sampson Pennue?

THE LATE ALEXANDER Saye was killed in active service, so it behooves the State to deliver justice not only to the Police that he worked for but to family and friends.

HOWEVER, NEWS THAT the suspect has been bailed out in a murder case is sufficient reason for concern. Justice is crying out in the wilderness. Someone should listen and correct the wrong immediately.

IF OUTCOME OF last week's judicial conference in Monrovia would have any significant impact on the workings of the justice system of Liberia, the murder case involving Suspect Sampson Pennue is a litmus-test for building public confidence in the judiciary.

WHOEVER LET OUT Pennue should return him immediately so that he may have his day in court to exonerate himself of murder, as charged by the Police and to walk out publicly a free man under the law rather than sneaking out under the cover of darkness, as we are hearing.

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc.,
UN Drive, P.O. Box 1266 Opposite National Investment Commission,
Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-886978282 /
+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan

COMMENTARY

By Barry Eichengreen

The Logic of Effective Climate Action

BERKELEY - In his classic book, *The Logic of Collective Action*, the late great Mancur Olson explained that the hardest policies to implement are those with diffuse benefits and concentrated costs. Olson's argument was straightforward: individuals bearing the costs will vigorously oppose the policy, while the beneficiaries will free ride, preferring that someone else take up the cudgels.

Olson's insight applies to the single most pressing policy challenge facing humanity today, namely climate change. The starting point for addressing it, economists agree, is a tax on carbon. The resulting reduction in emissions would deliver benefits to virtually everyone on the planet. But specific segments of society - Olson's concentrated interests - will bear a disproportionate share of the costs and mobilize in opposition.

A case in point are the French *gilets jaunes* ("yellow vests"). Like any mass movement, the *gilets jaunes* had multiple grievances. But their most animating complaint was a fuel-tax increase imposed in the name of combating climate change. Rural residents rely more on their cars, trucks, and tractors than do urban dwellers, who can ride a bicycle or take the subway to work. The tax increase hit them where it hurt, in the pocketbook.

The diffuse interests represented in France's National Assembly had agreed to increase gas taxes in 2014. But after farmers and their sympathizers closed down roads and took their fight to the cities, President Emmanuel Macron's government backed down and rescinded the tax hike in 2018. Olson would not have been surprised.

Other countries can expect similar resistance, and not just from farmers. In the United States, President Joe Biden's administration had to overcome the opposition of fishermen and whale watchers to approve an offshore wind farm near Martha's Vineyard, canceling a more ambitious project off the coast of Cape Cod. We can also expect opposition to a carbon tax to be regionally concentrated. In the US, that means states like Texas, North Dakota, and others producing oil, gas, and coal.

In addition, there is the danger that carbon taxes will worsen political polarization and provoke a populist reaction similar to the response to the China shock. Workers displaced from the energy and transport sectors will blame the tax, even if the root causes lie elsewhere. Parents struggling to feed their kids and fill their gas tanks will dismiss carbon taxation as an elite project championed by pointy-headed intellectuals. The China shock gave us

Donald Trump. A carbon tax, imposed willy-nilly, could result in even worse.

But Olson also suggested how to overcome the problem of concentrated interests, namely by buying them off. In policy-wonk speak, revenues from a carbon tax could be redistributed to those who bear the costs. Besides enabling abatement of climate change, this would limit undesirable political consequences.

We know that carbon taxation imposes higher costs on residents of small municipalities and rural areas than on urbanites. Similarly, poorer households spend a larger share of their income on food and transport, which are carbon intensive, than do wealthier households, which spend more on more environmentally friendly services. One US study estimates that the share of income absorbed by a carbon tax would be three times higher for the lowest income quintile than for the highest.

Thus, a more progressive income tax that compensates the less well-off for the burden of a regressive carbon tax could overcome concentrated opposition. (The scheme would have to include a negative income tax to compensate those who do not earn enough to pay income tax.) But making policy on this basis - determining how much more progressive a future income tax should be - will require more nuanced analysis of carbon taxes in practice. And it will be important to link introduction of carbon taxes explicitly and visibly to the change in income tax, so that the compensation is clear to the public.

Then there is the question of regions specializing in the production of carbon-intensive fuels. A more progressive income tax won't solve Texas's problems, because corporations based there, not to mention the state government, rely on revenues from oil and gas production.

Biden's budget and the European Union's recovery fund both feature measures to discourage production of carbon-based fuels and speed the transition to wind and solar. The opposition sure to come from Texas and its counterparts in other countries suggests that these policies should have a more prominent regional dimension. They need to avoid creating more Appalachias, Appalachia having been decimated by the decline of employment in coal mining.

Unfortunately, experience with "place-based" policies is not good. Just ask Sicily. But this is not a counsel of despair; it is an argument for trying harder. Subsidies for bringing broadband to rural areas at risk of missing out on the rise of service-sector employment would be a start. More generally, regional policies, alongside progressive taxation, will be an indispensable aspect of any politically viable strategy to combat climate change.

OPINION

By Laura Alfors

A Digital Bridge to Social Support

JOHANNESBURG - For all its devastation, the COVID-19 crisis does have a silver lining: it has shone a spotlight on important policy lapses - beginning with the lack of social protection for the world's two billion informal workers. But addressing this failure will require more than social programs; it will also require governments to bridge the digital divide.

During the pandemic, social programs supporting the “missing middle” - informal workers who are excluded from standard employment-linked social security and often do not qualify for social programs that target the very poor - relied heavily on digital technologies. Registration happened on smartphones. Governments verified beneficiaries using digital identification systems. Payments landed in e-wallets.

This welcome use of digital technology streamlined procedures and enabled workers to avoid face-to-face interactions when they applied for or collected benefits. But this approach also implies an obvious risk: exclusion of those on the wrong side of the digital divide.

The experience of informal waste reclaimers here in Johannesburg is instructive. When the South African government introduced the Social Relief of Distress cash grant for adults excluded from other forms of government support during the pandemic, applications were to be submitted by a website form, email, WhatsApp, or an Unstructured Supplementary Data code.

This promised efficiency, but also kept the application out of reach for many waste reclaimers. According to Steven Leeuw, an active member of the African Reclaimers Organization (ARO), “90% of the people we work with don't have a cell phone. If they do, it's usually an old one that doesn't really work, or they don't have money for data, or anywhere to access free WiFi.”

Fortunately, the ARO stepped in to help members apply. That meant not only filling in and submitting applications, but also performing any additional administrative steps if the initial application was rejected. According to Leeuw, “It would have just been easier if [the South African Social Security Agency] had sent officials around to our workplaces to help people sign up for the grant.”

There are similar stories around the world. In Mexico City, the cash grant offered to non-salaried workers was initially accessible only through an online application. “I went three times to the internet cafe to scan documents and send emails,” said one worker. “How are those who don't know how to read and write and who can't pay for the internet cafe going to do it?” After protests by workers' organizations, the government added a manual application option.

Likewise, in Delhi, informal workers struggled with digital applications for the Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (SVANidhi) scheme - a government loan program designed to support street vendors. Not only was the application available only online, it was also not written in colloquial Hindi, and the website crashed frequently.

Moreover, applicants were initially required to have an Aadhar Card (a form of digital identification linked to biometric and demographic data) linked to a mobile phone number, which created a host of other problems. “Not all workers have an Aadhar Card,” according to Shalini Sinha, Delhi Coordinator for Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing. “Or if they are migrant workers, the card might be back in the village, and then they might not have the same mobile phone number, and have to go through the process of linking a new number to the card.”

These are hardly isolated incidents or cherry-picked anecdotes. A 2019 report by the then-United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Philip Alston, found that the digitization of welfare often leads to “deep reductions in the overall welfare budget, a narrowing of the beneficiary pool, [and] the elimination of some services.” In fact, Alston warned, digital welfare systems often “punish the poorer classes.” For example, unrestricted data matching is used to expose and penalize the “slightest irregularities” in the records of welfare beneficiaries, sometimes resulting in denial of critical services.

Technological solutions cannot be used as a means to slash budgets and shift responsibility from the state to grassroots organizations serving the poor. Governments that apply digital technologies to social-welfare programs must also ensure equity in the systems and institutions in which these programs are embedded.

For starters, as governments invest in the digital transition (including by directing large amounts of funds to the private sector), they must also support the work of grassroots organizations providing essential last-mile services to connect people to their entitlements. As it stands, few grassroots organizations in the Global South are able to raise the financial resources needed to sustain their work.

Moreover, governments must create mechanisms for meaningful consultation with these organizations, in order to design programs that meet target groups' needs, monitor and assess progress, and make necessary changes. Frontline bureaucratic workers, such as social workers and registration officials, will also need greater support, including to expand their ranks in some cases.

Of course, closing the digital divide should also be a high priority. That means expanding access to digital technologies, including mobile phones and broadband internet, and ensuring that people have the knowledge to use them. And grassroots organizations have a vital role to play here as well. But, in the meantime, the digital divide must be bridged to enable the most vulnerable to access crucial government support.

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O-PED

By Takatoshi Ito

An Olympic-Size COVID Risk

TOKYO - In 2020, Asia - especially East Asia - was often touted as a model of effective pandemic response. While Western countries endured harsh lockdowns and soaring infection and death rates, Asian countries largely kept the coronavirus under control. But the tables have turned, with East Asia now lagging far behind the United States and Europe on vaccinations. This does not bode well for this summer's Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

As of June 15, Japan had the second worst vaccination record among the 38 OECD countries, with 20.9 doses per 100 people. Contrast that with the United Kingdom's 106.1 doses per 100 people, and the US rate of 93.3 doses per 100.

Why is Japan lagging so far behind the rest of the OECD? For starters, the government was late in securing purchase agreements with vaccine producers, not least because the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare was reluctant to provide rapid emergency approval to the new vaccines.

Japan has a history of controversy over vaccine side effects. For example, the government approved human papillomavirus vaccines in 2009 and listed them for regular administration in 2013. Just two months later, the government withdrew its recommendation to use the vaccine in girls, after a series of alleged adverse post-immunization events stoked public concerns about the vaccine's safety.

During the COVID-19 crisis, the authorities insisted that a clinical trial for vaccines be conducted in Japan before approval, even though large-scale randomized controlled trials, involving more than 40,000 people, had already been undertaken elsewhere. The Japanese clinical trial provided little useful information: it involved only 160 people and researchers checked only for antibodies, not asymptomatic infections. Yet it delayed the immunization drive by three months.

Another obstacle for Japan's vaccination program is the rule that only medical doctors and nurses may administer doses. The US began with a similar rule, but municipalities quickly expanded eligibility to include dentists, veterinarians, emergency medical technicians, and clinical laboratory technicians. In New York, pharmacists, dental hygienists, podiatrists, and other medical workers and medical students are eligible to administer jabs.

So, while New Yorkers return to pre-pandemic life, Japanese are facing a new surge of COVID-19 infections and lockdowns. On April 25, the government declared a state of emergency in Tokyo and the Osaka area - the third since the pandemic began. The state of emergency - which requires, for example, that restaurants close at 8:00 p.m. and prohibits the sale of alcohol - was subsequently expanded, and now encompasses ten prefectures. Eight more are under a softer lockdown.

While the state of emergency is scheduled to be lifted on June 20, this may have to be pushed back, given the painfully slow decline in coronavirus infections. Even if it is lifted as expected, there is no guarantee that another wave will not demand new lockdowns soon. With the Olympic Games scheduled to be held from July 23 to August 8, and the Paralympic Games from August 24-September 5, such a wave could be more like a tsunami.

During the Games, a significant share of Tokyo's medical resources will be diverted away from the COVID-19 response, in order to meet the needs of competitors and their supporting staff. Moreover, a huge number of people from all over the world will travel to Tokyo - potentially bringing dangerous coronavirus variants with them. It should come as no surprise that 83% of Japan's residents now oppose holding the Games as scheduled.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's administration has attempted to assuage people's fears, pledging to bring in additional medical resources and keep all visitors in a “bubble” that covers hotels, event facilities, and transportation between them. But opposition parties accuse the government of failing to produce a convincing safety plan. And, after more than a year of strict rules and sharp reversals, the public is unconvinced. It does not help that, just 38 days before the opening ceremony, the government still has not decided whether to allow spectators into the Olympic Stadium.

The Suga government's best hope for regaining the public's trust is to scale up its vaccination drive rapidly. This will require, among other things, expanding significantly the number of people permitted to administer doses. But even if Japan follows the trajectory of the US, which was in the position Japan is in today four months ago, it will not achieve widespread vaccination until about mid-October - long after the Olympic and Paralympic athletes have gone home.

Without herd immunity (or something close to it) in Japan, hosting the Tokyo Games is a risky bet. Suga could win big: if the Games are a success, and infections do not rise, he is more likely to be re-elected as the leader of his Liberal Democratic Party, at which point he might even call a snap general election. But that doesn't change the fact that he is willing to gamble with people's health, livelihoods, and lives.

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ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Light and Darkness cannot Cohabitate – Ten Contradictions and why Sen. Abe Darius Dillon should return his 15k

By Martin K. N. Kollie
Exiled Liberian Activist

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Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon and pro-ADD apologists are asking, “Why should ADD return his 15k?” It is a form of mockery for ADD to even post on his Facebook page “Return it Vs. Don’t return it”. Since a few of you are asking “Why should ADD return it”, here are reasons:

1) Senator Dillon said he was only going to accept a salary in full sum of only US\$5,000. This was what he said in August 2019, “Any amount over \$5,000 will be deposited in an escrow account and it will go towards social development.” ADD cannot cut down his monthly earnings to \$5k from \$15k and after a few months, he goes running to unjustifiably grab another \$15k for so-called “Legislative Engagement”. This is called Two-Facedness. And this is Contradiction #1.

2) Every Senator, including Senator Darius Dillon, is receiving US\$9,833 for Constituency Visit. So, why did they (Lawmakers) have to distribute 15k among themselves again for so-called “Legislative Engagement”? There is no difference between “Constituency Visit” and “Legislative Engagement”. The overriding intent of both activities is for ADD or any lawmaker to engage his/her constituents. The replication of budget lines in order for lawmakers to insatiably satisfy their parochial interest is called white-collar corruption (economic sabotage). And this is Contradiction #2.

3) The law is crystal clear about who should implement legislative projects or government funded projects. It does not say “Senator” or “Representative”. The so-called “Legislative Engagement” is a budget line which falls under Public Sector Investment Projects (e.g. Government Funded Projects). According to established statutes, there’s an autonomous agency which was established on July 22, 2004. It is called Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE). LACE has a statutory mandate through community-based approach to implement legislative projects in poor communities/constituencies. The money (15k) that Dillon received is for LACE as per law. The action of ADD was ill-advised, illegal, unprocedural, and ill-fated. Such action is called “Usurp of Function”. And this is Contradiction #3. Furthermore, Senator Dillon violated:

- The Community Empowerment Act pursuant to Chapter 50b of Title 12 - Liberia Code of Laws Revised;
- The 2018 Local Government Act;
- PSIP Framework;
- 2005 PPCC Law and 2014 COC Law.

4) In a post by Senator Dillon on August 25, 2013, ADD blasted Hon Acarous Moses Gray and other lawmakers for appropriating “unrealistic benefits and allowances” to themselves while “dedicated and hardworking civil servants” received “Peanuts”. These were his words. In 2021, these very same “dedicated and hardworking servants” have not been paid for several months but Senator Dillon and other Lawmakers are receiving a whopping 15k each amid COVID-19 and extreme hardship. This is called Hypocrisy and it is Contradiction #4. Currently, legislative employees are protesting for 4-month arrears.

5) Before ADD could come to power, he would

often say, “The economy is in the toilet”. This mantra or catchphrase became his political trademark. A few months later, this same economy is still in the toilet but ADD is receiving 15k. In fact, the economy has left the toilet and it is now in the Septic Tank because growth rate is still at negative 3 percent amid zero foreign direct investment and stagflation (high unemployment and high inflation). If the “economy is in the toilet” as claimed by ADD, why did he run to grab 15k when he already has 9.8k for Constituency Visit? Isn’t this inconsistency especially at this critical time when millions of Liberians are catching hell?? Of course, it is. And this is Contradiction #5.

6) ADD is a staunch critic of Pres. GMW. In this very same 2020/2021 Approved National Budget, Pres. GMW has got US\$575k for so-called Presidential Project while ADD has got 15k for so-called “Legislative Project”. What can ADD tell GMW after receiving his share of this cake? He has no moral rectitude to question or criticize GMW or any lawmaker in this case. And if he does not return this 15k, he will have no moral or spine to question “unrealistic appropriations” or “brown envelops” because this 15k is called BRIBERY. And this is



Contradiction #6. Save this post. The budget that Finance Minister Samuel Tweah just submitted will be passed at a 4G speed. The 15k is an inducement.

7) Dillon did not become Senator to directly implement Government Funded Projects as in “Legislative Engagement”. The PSIP framework does not allow this. That is not his work. His functions are: Lawmaking, Representation, and Oversight. So, who performs “Oversight” if Senator Dillon is now implementing public funded projects? LACE should implement while Senator Dillon provides oversight. ADD cannot be the player and the referee at the same time. This is Conflict of Interest. Who then questions ADD if funds for public projects are mismanaged/misapplied? LACE? He, ADD, should be questioning LACE instead. The receipt of huge sum of public taxes for so-called “Legislative Engagement” accounts for Betrayal of Public Trust. And this is Contradiction #7.

8) NUP Political Leader turned Parliamentarian Bobi Wine had similar test from the Ugandan Government. And he passed this test with pride and dignity. Robert Kyagulanyi alias Bobi Wine rejected 20

million Ugandan Shillings for so-called “Legislative Engagement/Project” amid COVID-19. This was what he said, “The allocation of this money is not only shameful but insensitive to the plights of millions of Ugandans. Sharing 10 billion shillings among parliamentarians is a symptom of a bigger crisis. The money should be diverted to building a robust healthcare system. We can’t rob our people like this. My function is to make laws and not to implement public projects.” This should even provoked ADD to return that 15k. ADD needs to learn from Bobi Wine. When a country is in crisis, over US\$1.54 million is not and must not be unremorsefully shared among just 103 greedy lawmakers. That is institutionalized thievery. And this is Contradiction #8.

9) ADD and pro-ADD fanatics are claiming, “We will build public library with our 15k.” I am sorry, 15k cannot build a public library anywhere in this world, not even a mini public library. Library is not just “The Building”. It goes far beyond. 250k would give you a modern public library (mini). So, pro-ADD zealots need to cut this “Public Library” conundrum or horseplay off and return that 15k to LACE. Suggesting to build a “public library” with 15k equates to DECEPTION. And this is Contradiction #9.

10) Senator Dillon promised to be different. He promised not to join state mafias or economic vampires to loot our resources or pillage our national coffers amid extreme poverty. But his latest action is a contrast to this promise. ADD has positioned himself as “The Light” and this title comes with huge responsibilities and sacrifices. Based on those values he once espoused, he was overwhelmingly elected as Senator for Montserrado. A “Light” radiates integrity at all times and not sometimes. A “Light” is not pretentious and two-faced. The regime has entrapped Sen. Dillon once more. I am even stumped and bewildered by his zigzagged justification of “huge appropriations (e.g. \$1.54 million for 103 lawmakers)”. His latest move accounts for Conspiracy with State Mafias against public interest. And this is Contradiction #10.

Now, ADD should not think that because he has 9 years, so he can just do anything. History does not forget. It reminds, rebukes, and reprimands. The masses are keenly watching. Though I supported ADD and even raised money to help fund his campaign, but I will speak out if he does wrong. I love Liberia far more than I love ADD or any politician. I did not vote for ADD to hypocritically deify or defend his wrongdoings. Gullibility and hypocrisy have done more harm to Liberia.

The Emperor is naked but who will tell the Emperor that he’s naked? Since everyone is afraid or not bold enough to tell this Emperor that he’s naked, I will tell him. The right thing must be done at all times. LIGHT and DARKNESS cannot Cohabitate. All Lawmakers, especially Sen. Dillon “The Light” and CPP Lawmakers, MUST return that 15k. That’s white-collar looting. They cannot be enriching themselves while our people are catching hell amid COVID-19.

The system is too rotten. Liberia has a Legislature of Indigenous Vampires. But we will not rest until REAL CHANGE reigns. The PEOPLE deserve far better than this conspiracy to rob them.

Martin K. N. Kollie is an exiled Liberian activist and can be reached at viamartinkerkula1989@yahoo.com

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Fire guts 4-bedroom apartment in Maryland

By Patrick N. Mensah,
Maryland County

Just days after his tricycle collided with a motorcycle, leaving two students of the William V.S. Tubman University dead and another admitted at the J.J. Dossen Referral Hospital in Harper City, Maryland County, the four-room apartment of Prince Baker, a resident of Pleebo, Maryland County Electoral district#2 has been gutted by fire.

The situation occurred

negligent, narrating that it first started on Sunday, June 6, 2021, when the owner of the first room in which the fire began, called an unidentified electrician to electrically recondition her room.

The sources added that the electrification was done but on Saturday, June 12, 2021, while tenants were out with their doors locked, smoke emitted from the room in which they electrical repair was conducted.

It later resulted to a blazing fire that community dwellers tried to off but couldn't until the

proprietor of the damaged apartment hasn't spoken, the situation is worrisome, as he's still underwriting expenses incurred from the tragic motorcycle accident that led to the death of two persons along the Harper-Pleebo highway.

"We thank God although the apartment got burned but nobody died from the incident", they expressed.

Expressing her frustration, a female tenant, Susanne Blanyon, who left her room and went to school that early morning, said it was regrettable to have heard the entire apartment gutted in flames.

She said though all of her belongings burnt, all is well once there is life.

"Let me thank God for everything today, I could've died in this situation, who knows? Although it's painful to lose everything but once there is life there is still hope" Ms Blanyon lamented.

For his part, Alphonso Toe, an electrician of the Liberia Electricity Corporation in the county expressed disappointment.

He disclosed that several LEC customers in the county, sometimes failed to contact the corporation whenever they have electrical problems, rather, preferring to call private individuals that claim to be electricians.

Mr. Toe said the LEC Maryland station does not have capacity to provide homes for the victims, but cautioned residents to learn from such mistake and report any problem to the corporation. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



over the weekend, leaving several tenants displaced and properties damaged.

Speaking to this paper during the incident, several residents around the damaged apartment regretted the situation, which they attributed witch-haunting.

Although the actual cause of the fire is yet to be established, sources said the situation was also due to

entire four-bedroom apartment, including personal effects burnt to ashes.

They said though others may have termed the situation as a witch-haunt the actual cause of the fire could likely be a result of poor wiring.

"For instance, the first time the fire incident occurred on Sunday, an electrician was called but who knows whether the job was done properly?"

They said although the

Conservation Int'l presents map to Pres. Weah

The environmental non profit Conservation International has presented a map, which classifies and depicts Liberia's diverse ecosystem types to President George M. Weah as a gift.

The map was presented to President Weah recently during the formal of a national conference on the environment and climate change held under the auspices of the Government of Liberia through the Environment Protection Agency (EPA).

Peter G. Mulbah, Conservation International Country Director said the state-of-the-art map is the result of a joint initiative between Conservation International and the United States of America. NASA and the Government of Liberia with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) consider it as one of the Natural Capital Accounting Project deliverables.

According to him, it was created to pilot a novel, low-cost, replicable approach to

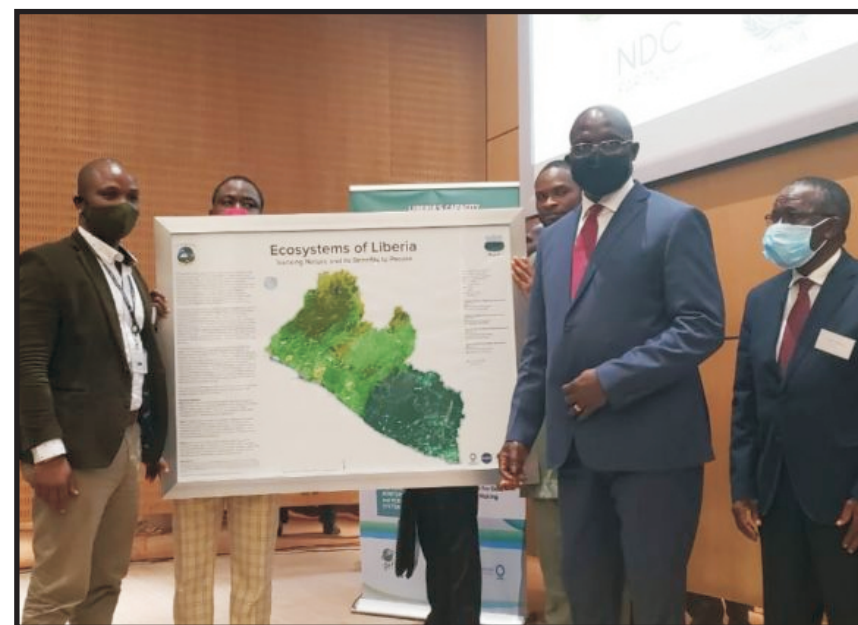
partnership with Conservation International, started the implementation of the GEF-Natural Capital Accounting funded project, titled "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital".

The broader objectives of the five-year project are to mainstream the value of nature and its benefits to citizens, into Liberia's development trajectory and secure Liberia's long-term sustainability by supporting green growth, while alleviating poverty and human wellbeing towards achieving objectives of the Pro-Poor Agenda (PAPD).

It also seeks to build the statistical infrastructure and capacity for the Liberian Government to conduct ecosystem accounting as an integral part of the national statistics efforts.

Natural Capital Accounting informs a wide range of policy and management practices.

"Armed with information such as the status and trends of ecosystems over time; synergies and trade-offs associated with



map ecosystems to accurately and repeatably measure the economic value of its nature.

"This map is a critical step in Liberia's effort to implement a series of ecosystem accounts," Mr. Mulbah said.

He explained that implementing these accounts will primarily improve the conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's natural capital by supporting the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development- the primary strategy to foster sustainable and equitable growth in Liberia.

In February of 2020, Liberia formally began this journey towards developing national ecosystem accounts, he noted. The Government of Liberia, through the EPA and in

potential interventions; and the impact of macro-economic and sectoral policies on natural resource use, livelihoods, and economic development," Mr. Mulbah hopes that the results of the project will provide Liberia with a more complete understanding of nature, people and the economy to facilitate effective decision-making that improves the well-being of Liberian people.

Receiving the gift, President Weah lauded Conservation International for its contribution to the sustainable management and protection of the environment and the country's natural resources.

He thanked the nonprofit environmental group's local team for developing the country's ecosystem map. **- Press Release**

Cont'd from back page

LACE rejects

to which LACE subscribes and would be marked departure from LACE's best practice.

The agency's release came Wednesday as Mr. Dillon continues to face public pressure, including from some of his supporters to return the controversial US\$15,000.

Members of the Liberian Legislature continue to be bombarded by heavy criticism from across the Liberian society barely a week after they all received a whopping sum of USD15, 000 each under the guise of project fund, with calls that the money is returned.

On Tuesday, June 15, the political leader of opposition party Alternative National

Congress (ANC), Mr. Alexander B. Cummings joined the chorus condemning lawmakers for taking the money, while calling on them to return it.

Mr. Cummings' ANC is a constituent party of the opposition Collaborating Political Party (CPP) of which Mr. Dillon is a stalwart.

Cummings said the mere distribution of the money without the possibility of audit and any acceptable means of accountability, the disbursements, and receipts by individual legislators of USD15, 000.00 violate the Public Financial Management Law.

The PFM Law provides that all disbursing and receiving entities, and individuals, must account for public monies

disbursed, received, and or entrusted into their care.

But it appears that this continues not to be practiced. Liberia, one of the world's poorest countries, currently has 28 sitting Senators with 73 Representatives bringing the total to 101 lawmakers. The number of sitting lawmakers - 101 multiplied by US\$15,000 amounts to US\$1,515,000.

Liberia's Legislature actually has 103 lawmakers, but two Senators - elect have not yet been seated since the 2020 December polls either due to election disputes or other legal issues which have yet to be concluded, thus making the number 101.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

12 TVET instructors to depart Liberia for studies next week

Twelve instructors of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) are expected to depart the country on July 24, 2021 to study in South Africa, Kenya and Zambia.

The twelve TVET instructors are part of 74 Liberians jointly recruited by the Ministries of Youth and

first batch of TVET Instructors are headed to South Africa and will be trained in the category of Welding and Fabrication and make follow-up training in the industry in Vienna, Austria to have a practical understanding of modern equipment brought in country.

Those expected to depart the country next week are Dickerson

EU for Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) and the support for civil society.

The agreement sees US\$20M for TVET programs while US\$4 million aims at strengthening the civil society in the country.

The Monrovia Vocational Training Center, the Booker



Sports and Education under the Capacity Building Component of the European Union and Swedish "Youth Rising & Supporting Youth Employment Project.

The cost of the project (targeting the total of 120 TVET teachers) is 32 million dollars; 26 million implemented by UNIDO and 6 million implemented by GIZ in the private sector, affecting Association of Liberian Construction Contractors, Engineering Society of Liberia and Liberian Architect Association. Beneficiary institutions are: MVTC, Tubman High School, Sinoe Multilateral, Zwedru Multilateral, Cape Palmas High School, BWI, Harbel Multilateral, Business Domestic Occupational Training Center (BDOTC), and the Tumutu Agriculture and Vocational Training Center.

A release from the Ministry of Youth and Sports says the

Harmon, Eddie G. Siaway. T. Isaiah Manwehn, TrokonHney, Abraham Cooper, and Emmanuel Y. Karyee.

Others are Charles Davis, Lawrence W. Dolo, Sam, Kermoh, Isaac J. Dukuly, Momo B. Corneh, and Tommy J. Toe, Sr.

Assistant Youth and Sports Minister and Chairman of the project steering committee, Meliaz Z. Sheriff, has lauded the Liberian government and partners for the training opportunity, adding "President George M. Weah's vision to see Liberian Youth get empowered through Technical Vocational Education and

Training (TVET) is well on course". We wish them well as they go out to acquire the relevant skills needed to contribute towards the TVET Sector".

The European Union has been supportive to technical and vocational education in Liberia.

The CDC-led government just assuming leadership in 2018, signed a US\$24 million with the

Washington Institute, the Greenville Multilateral High School and Zwedru Multilateral High School are the four institutions benefiting from this finance agreement.

Also, the Delegation of the European Union to Liberia in April 2021, introduced a weekly nationwide radio discussion program to promote Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The program is known as TVET on Radio.

The weekly 30-minute discussion program is broadcast on the national broadcaster, ELBC 99.9 FM, and live-streamed on the Liberia National Television Facebook page every Thursday at 9:30 am. It is intended to showcase the importance of TVET Education in Liberia and raise public awareness of Liberia's TVET opportunities.

VP Taylor explores investment opportunities for Liberia

-Calls for intra-Africa trade

The Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor has visited Kampala, Uganda from June 14th to 17th, 2021, to explore investment opportunities for Liberia.

In Kampala, Madam Vice President called for economic cooperation between Liberia and Uganda in the areas of trade, industrialization and infrastructural development.

The Vice President also toured the Kampala Industrial and Business Park at Namwe-the largest industrial hub in Uganda, sitting on 26,000 hectares of land.

The industrial park has attracted over 400 investors for development in various sub-sectors to include agro processing, mineral processing, ICT, logistics and tourism among others.

The Liberia Vice President laid emphasis on the need to collaborate with Uganda on the establishment of a Steel Industry considering Liberia's comparative advantage of over 4 billion tons of Iron Ore deposits compared to Uganda's 400 million tons of

destination while emphasized the significance of the Project.

Vice President Howard-Taylor has meanwhile officially dedicated the newly constructed Headquarters of the Consortium of Joada Consults and Development Infrastructure.

He used the occasion to commend the institution for creating jobs and contributing to Uganda and Africa economic development.

At the same time, Vice President Howard-Taylor paid a courtesy call on His Excellency Yuweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda.

The meeting centered on how Liberia can achieve economic independence, leveraging on the wealth of experience from President Museveni.

Playing more of a listening role, Vice President Howard-Taylor recognized President Museveni as one of the Fathers on the African continent and applauded his historical involvements during the liberation struggle.

For his part, President Museveni asserted that Liberia



Iron Ore deposits.

She intimated that Liberia has the ability to supply the entire Africa with Steel based on its deposits of Iron Ore.

VP Howard-Taylor also held discussions with Consortium of Joada Consults and Development Infrastructure to finalize arrangements on the construction of about 5,000 to 10, 000 housing units in Liberia, with the ground-breaking expected in July, 2021.

She commended the investment group for choosing Liberia as an investment

can achieve economic independence and rapid growth if attention is given to five sectors.

He identified sectors as commercial agriculture, industries/ factories, services (education, health, transport, banks, etc.), ICT and public service (decentralization and local government).

The meeting was very educative as President Museveni explained the historical antecedents which occasioned the political and economic independence of African Nations.



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Français

La CEDEAO vient déterminer sa mission d'évaluation post-électorale au Libéria

Le réseau des commissions électorales de la CEDEAO (ECONEC) a terminé dimanche 13 juin sa mission conjointe de suivi post-électorale et d'évaluation des besoins au Libéria.

La mission conjointe de suivi post-électorale, qui a commencé ses travaux le 6 juin, était dirigée par le Dr Amada Aladoua, vice-présidente de la Commission électorale nationale indépendante (CENI) du Niger, et comprenait également des représentants de la Commission électorale du Ghana et de la Division de l'assistance électorale (DAE).

La mission était soutenue par une équipe technique du Secrétariat permanent de l'ECONEC, de l'Institut électoral pour une démocratie durable en Afrique (EISA) et de la Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

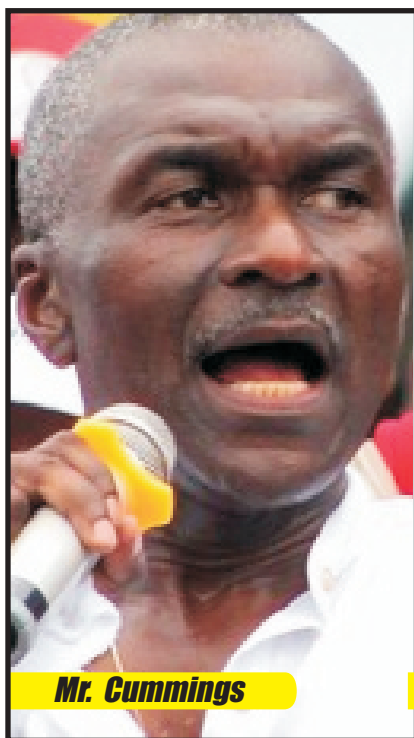
La mission a été déployée avec le soutien financier de la GIZ, à travers son projet

d'architecture et d'opérations de paix et de sécurité de la CEDEAO (EPSAO), cofinancé par l'Union européenne et le ministère fédéral allemand du développement économique et de la coopération (BMZ).

L'objectif de la mission était d'évaluer le niveau de mise en œuvre des recommandations faites aux acteurs du processus électoral par la Mission

d'observation électorale de la CEDEAO lors des élections législatives et présidentielle de 2017 au Libéria ; et évaluer également les besoins de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) et d'autres acteurs électoraux clés à l'approche des élections générales de 2023 au Libéria.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Mr. Cummings



Sen. Dillon

Snowe informe Akufu-Addo du Ghana sur la situation sécuritaire dans la sous-région

Le président du parlement de la CEDEAO chargé des affaires politiques, de la paix, de la sécurité et du mécanisme africain d'évaluation par les pairs, le sénateur Edwin Melvin Snowe Jr., a informé mardi le président ghanéen Nana Addo Dankwa Akufu-Addo, président en exercice de la CEDEAO, de la situation sécuritaire dans la région. L'organisation sous-régionale tient actuellement sa quatre-

vingt-sixième session ordinaire du Conseil des ministres de la CEDEAO à Accra.

Bien que tous les détails de l'exposé n'aient pas été révélés à ce quotidien lors d'une conversation en marge du sommet de la CEDEAO, M. Snowe n'a pas tardé à souligner certains des problèmes de sécurité auxquels est confrontée la région et que l'organisme régional doit prendre en compte.

Il a souligné la situation sécuritaire préoccupante au Mali et les récents affrontements au

Burkina Faso le long de la frontière ghanéenne qui ont contraint certains citoyens à fuir vers le Ghana voisin, entre autres.

Le sénateur Snowe a récemment mis au défi ses collègues du parlement de la CEDEAO de prendre des mesures énergiques pour protéger le régime constitutionnel et démocratique dans la sous-région, en particulier au Mali où l'armée a pris le pouvoir.

S'exprimant à Abuja, au Nigeria, lors d'une session plénière pour discuter de la situation politique au Mali, le sénateur Snowe a exprimé sa grave préoccupation concernant les événements dans ce pays et a appelé l'organisme régional à regarder au-delà de la prise de contrôle militaire car, selon lui, si l'on ne fait pas attention, la vague dans laquelle certains gouvernements subvertissent les constitutions de leurs pays respectifs a la propension à créer plus de chaos dans la sous-région.

«Parfois, l'armée prend le relais par les armes, mais il y a maintenant d'autres

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Ce que le Président Weah pense du tribunal des crimes de guerre pour le Libéria

La réponse du président George Manneh Weah à la préoccupation du représentant du comté de Lofa, Clarence Massaquo, concernant la nécessité d'établir un tribunal des crimes de guerre et crimes économiques pour le Libéria afin d'éradiquer l'impunité indique clairement qu'il n'a aucunement l'intention de poursuivre les personnes qui ont commis des crimes odieux pendant la guerre civile. En tout cas les victimes de la crise ne peuvent plus compter sur l'administration Weah pour que justice leur soit rendue.

Le représentant du comté de Lofa, Clarence Massaquo, s'exprimant ce week-end dans le district de Foya, dans le comté de Lofa, a rappelé au président Weah que les Libériens sont blessés parce qu'ils ont perdu des proches, y compris des parents, donc l'impunité ne devrait pas faire obstacle à la situation des responsabilités et à la justice. Le législateur de Lofa, comme de nombreux Libériens, souhaite que la recommandation de la Commission vérité et réconciliation concernant les poursuites judiciaires soit mise en œuvre.

« Je sais que ce n'est pas courant de dire ça. Mais Monsieur le Président nous avons le rapport de la CVR, quelles que soient les formes qu'elles prennent Monsieur le Président, ceux qui sont dans ces charniers ne sont pas ici aujourd'hui de leur propre gré. Nous demandons justice », a-t-il plaidé.

Mais le président, par la façon dont il a répondu au législateur, considère la question du tribunal des crimes de guerre comme une discussion farfelue sur l'agenda de son gouvernement. Il a ainsi demandé aux Libériens de plutôt continuer à vivre en toute impunité au nom de la paix.

Les Libériens, tant au pays qu'à l'étranger, aspirent à la justice et à juste titre, en particulier étant donné que les chefs de guerre et autres auteurs de crimes ne cessent de montrer publiquement qu'ils n'ont aucun remords au sujet des atrocités qu'ils ont commises pendant la crise qui a décimé des familles et brisé des rêves.

La plupart des acteurs clés de la guerre sont de retour au gouvernement, y compris l'Assemblée législative. Ils bénéficient d'une immunité totale en dépit des recommandations faites par la Commission vérité et réconciliation. Il s'agit par exemple du célèbre chef de guerre, le sénateur Prince Yormie Johnson, chef de l'INPFL, du représentant Dr. George S. Boley, chef du Liberia Peace Council, de Sekou Damate Conneh, chef LURD, et du professeur Alhaji G.V. Kromah, chef de l'ULIMO-K, entre autres.

En fait, le sénateur Johnson, un fidèle allié politique du président Weah, continue de se vanter qu'aucun tribunal des crimes de guerre ne viendra au Libéria et nie publiquement qu'il a commis des atrocités pendant la guerre, c'est aussi le cas pour le Représentant Boley et pour Sekou Damate Conneh.

Ainsi, lorsque le président Weah appelle les Libériens à s'asseoir autour d'une table ronde pour discuter de la façon de faire avancer le pays plutôt que d'appeler à un tribunal pour crimes de guerre qui pourrait renvoyer le Libéria aux jours sombres, vous pouvez comprendre que la justice va nous échapper continuellement, tant que cette administration est au pouvoir.

Cependant, la Sainte Bible dit que la voix du peuple est la voix de Dieu. Les Libériens ne devraient jamais abandonner le combat. Ils devraient continuer à faire pression pour la mise en place d'un tribunal pour les crimes de guerre et économiques malgré le manque apparent de volonté politique de ce gouvernement.

L'histoire a prouvé à maintes reprises que la volonté du peuple finit par l'emporter malgré les tentatives de réprimer leurs opinions et de piétiner leurs souhaits exprimés de justice, qui est le pivot sur lequel reposent la paix dont le président a parlé, le développement et toutes les autres entreprises humaines positives.

Français

La CEDEAO vient de déterminer sa mission

La mission a rencontré le Conseil des commissaires de la NEC, les chefs des services techniques de la Commission, les représentants des partis politiques, les organisations de la société civile (OSC) impliquées dans le suivi du processus électoral et les partenaires techniques et financiers (Délégation de l'UE, Ambassade d'Allemagne, PNUD et USAID) qui soutiennent actuellement les parties prenantes pour approfondir le processus électoral dans le pays.

Les interactions et les discussions ont porté sur les préoccupations concernant la création d'une liste électorale crédible grâce à l'adoption du système d'enregistrement biométrique des électeurs (BVR) pour remplacer le système actuel de reconnaissance optique des marques (OMR) ; des réformes constitutionnelles pour prévenir les différends ; des mesures vers des élections plus inclusives, notamment des mesures positives (quota de 30 % pour

les listes de partis ou sièges réservés aux groupes défavorisés, accès aux personnes handicapées) ; renforcement des capacités du personnel de la NEC ; le déblocage rapide des fonds par le gouvernement ; les besoins d'éducation civique et électorale continue ; recrutement et formation des agents électoraux ; recrutement et formation des représentants des partis/candidats ; Communication institutionnelle de la NEC et le renforcement des relations avec les acteurs électoraux (médias, partis politiques, OSC).

Un rapport complet sera produit pour servir de base aux efforts de plaidoyer, à la conception et à la planification des projets d'assistance électorale, au partage des ressources électorales ainsi qu'au transfert de connaissances entre les membres de l'ECONEC.

L'ECONEC s'engage à apporter le soutien nécessaire à la NEC Liberia et à travailler en synergie avec d'autres partenaires techniques pour aider à consolider la démocratie dans le pays.

Snowe informe Akufo-Addo du Ghana

gouvernements qui arrivent au pouvoir en modifiant la constitution pour se perpétuer au pouvoir", a affirmé Snowe.

« Donc, il faut que nous examinons également cela parce qu'une fois que l'armée arrive au pouvoir par les armes à feu elle organise un référendum pour modifier la constitution afin de se pérenniser au pouvoir. Il faut que nous examinions cela en tant que parlement afin que nous puissions débattre des questions difficiles dans notre région et faire une résolution à ce sujet », a-t-il ajouté.

Il a déclaré que pour mieux comprendre ce qui se passe au Mali, ce qui pourrait également se produire dans n'importe quel État de la région, il faut examiner certaines des causes profondes de telles crises.

Le président de la commission parlementaire de la CEDEAO pour la sécurité s'est également prononcé contre le gouvernement militaire du Mali qui envoie des représentants désignés pour servir au parlement, affirmant que chaque parlementaire servant dans l'organe régional a été élu par son peuple et permettre à la junte militaire du Mali d'en voyer des représentants non élus au

parlement sera un mauvais exemple et une indication effrayante pour l'avenir.

Il a déclaré que la Cour de justice de la CEDEAO avait statué sur la question de la représentation au Parlement de la CEDEAO mais qu'elle a donné au corps législatif le pouvoir d'accepter ou de refuser les représentants du régime militaire en tant que parlementaires. Concernant la situation au Mali, les membres du Comité mixte ont exprimé leur profonde inquiétude face au mépris total du pouvoir législatif du gouvernement.

Parallèlement, dans un communiqué publié le 9 juin, à l'issue de la réunion du Comité mixte parlementaire de la CEDEAO à Abuja, les parlementaires de l'organe sous-régional ont affirmé que seuls les députés qui sont des représentants directement élus du peuple peuvent siéger au Parlement de la CEDEAO.

Ainsi, le Comité conjoint a déclaré qu'il jugeait nécessaire de réitérer sa détermination à ne permettre à aucun individu nommé par un processus militaire de prêter serment pour devenir membre du Parlement de la CEDEAO. Le Comité a réaffirmé les décisions prises par le Parlement de la CEDEAO lors de sa session extraordinaire à Freetown, en mars 2021, de ne pas admettre la délégation malienne nommée par le Conseil national de transition du Mali.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Barry Eichengreen

Logique de l'action climatique efficace

BERKELEY - Dans son ouvrage classique intitulé Logique de l'action collective, le grand et regretté Mancur Olson explique que les mesures politiques les plus difficiles à mettre en œuvre sont celles qui présentent des bienfaits diffus et des coûts concentrés. Le raisonnement d'Olson est simple : les individus voués à en supporter les coûts s'opposeront vigoureusement à une mesure proposée, tandis que les bénéficiaires en profiteront volontiers, préférant voir quelqu'un d'autre la subir.

La vision d'Olson s'applique au défi politique le plus urgent que connaisse l'humanité aujourd'hui : le changement climatique. Les économistes s'accordent pour considérer que le point de départ face à ce défi réside dans une taxe sur le carbone. La réduction des émissions qui en résulterait produirait des bienfaits pour globalement tous les habitants de la planète. Seulement voilà, plusieurs segments spécifiques de la société - les intérêts concentrés qu'évoque Olson - sont voués à supporter une part disproportionnée des coûts, et à se mobiliser pour s'opposer à cette démarche.

Les gilets jaunes de France en sont la parfaite illustration. Comme tous les mouvements de masse, les gilets jaunes ont formulé de nombreuses revendications. La cause première de leur mécontentement résidait toutefois dans la mise en place d'une taxe sur le carburant, destinée à lutter contre le changement climatique. Les habitants des campagnes sont en effet plus dépendants de leur voiture, camionnette et tracteur que les citadins, qui ont la possibilité de se rendre au travail à bicyclette ou en métro. Cette augmentation de taxe frappait les premiers là où cela fait mal, à savoir au portefeuille.

Les intérêts diffus, représentés à l'Assemblée nationale française, avaient convenu en 2014 d'augmenter les taxes sur le carburant. Les agriculteurs et leurs sympathisants ayant néanmoins bloqué les routes, puis mené leur combat au sein des villes, le gouvernement du président Emmanuel Macron a fait marche arrière, et abrogé cette hausse de taxe en 2018. Olson n'aurait pas été surpris.

D'autres pays peuvent s'attendre à une résistance comparable, et pas seulement de la part des agriculteurs. Aux États-Unis, l'administration du président Joe Biden a dû faire face à l'opposition des pêcheurs et organisateurs d'expéditions d'observation des baleines dans le cadre de l'approbation d'un parc éolien offshore à proximité de l'île de Martha's Vineyard, et annuler un projet plus ambitieux au large du littoral de Cape Cod. Il faut également s'attendre à ce que l'opposition à une taxe carbone se concentre régionalement, c'est-à-dire, dans le cas des États-Unis, au Texas, dans le Dakota du Nord, et dans d'autres États producteurs de pétrole, de gaz et de charbon.

Le danger existe par ailleurs de voir les taxes carbone aggraver la polarisation politique, et provoquer une réaction populiste comparable aux conséquences du choc lié à la Chine. Les travailleurs déplacés dans les secteurs de l'énergie et des transports attribueront leur sort à ces taxes, même si la cause réside ailleurs. Les parents en difficulté pour nourrir leurs enfants et faire le plein à la pompe considéreront la taxe carbone comme un projet de l'élite, défendu par des intellectuels obtus. Le choc en provenance de Chine nous a conduits à Donald Trump. Une taxe carbone, imposée bon gré mal gré, pourrait

aboutir à pire encore.

Olson suggère par ailleurs comment surmonter le problème des intérêts concentrés, à savoir en usant de compensations. Pour faire simple politiquement, les recettes d'une taxe carbone pourraient être redistribuées à ceux qui en subissent les coûts. En plus de contribuer à atténuer le changement climatique, cela permettrait de limiter les conséquences politiques malheureuses.

Nous savons que la taxation du carbone représente des coûts plus élevés pour les habitants des petites villes et zone rurales que pour les citadins. De même, les ménages pauvres dépensent une plus grande part de leurs revenus dans l'alimentaire et les transports, synonymes d'empreinte carbone, par rapport aux ménages aisés, qui dépensent davantage dans des services plus écologiques. Une étude américaine estime que la part de revenus absorbée par une taxe carbone serait trois fois supérieure pour le quintile inférieur des revenus que pour le plus élevé.

Ainsi, une imposition plus progressive des revenus, compensant la charge d'une taxe carbone régressive pour les moins aisés, pourrait permettre de remédier à une opposition concentrée (il s'agirait pour le système d'inclure une imposition négative sur le revenu, en compensation pour ceux qui ne gagnent pas suffisamment pour être redevables de l'impôt sur le revenu). La mise en place de mesures politiques sur cette base - en déterminant le degré supérieur de progressivité qui devrait accompagner une future imposition des revenus - exigera toutefois une analyse plus nuancée des taxes carbone dans la pratique. Il sera également important de lier explicitement et visiblement l'introduction de taxes carbone à une modification de l'impôt sur le revenu, afin que cette compensation apparaisse claire pour le public.

Intervient ensuite la question des régions spécialisées dans la production de combustibles à forte empreinte carbone. Un impôt sur le revenu plus progressif ne résoudra pas les problèmes du Texas, dans la mesure où les sociétés qui y sont basées, sans parler du gouvernement étatique, dépendent des recettes de la production pétrolière et gazière.

Le budget Biden et le fonds de relance de l'Union européenne intègrent tous deux des mesures de dissuasion de la production de combustibles fossiles, et d'accélération de la transition vers le solaire et l'éolien. L'opposition vouée à émaner du Texas et de ses équivalents dans d'autres pays suggère la nécessité d'accompagner ces politiques d'une dimension régionale plus importante. Éviter que ces politiques ne donnent naissance à de nouvelles Appalaches, qui ont été décimées par le déclin de l'emploi dans l'extraction de charbon.

Malheureusement, l'expérience relative aux politiques à dimension géographique n'est pas encourageante. Il suffit de demander son avis à la Sicile. Il n'est pas question pour autant de désespérer, mais d'appeler à redoubler d'efforts. La mise en place de subventions visant à déployer le haut débit dans les zones rurales, au risque de manquer l'opportunité d'une croissance de l'emploi dans le secteur des services, constituerait un bon début. Plus généralement, les politiques régionales, en parallèle d'une imposition progressive, seront un aspect indispensable de toute stratégie politiquement viable dans la lutte contre le changement climatique.

SPECIAL

ARTICLE

Trying to fulfil Liberia's Disabilities Law: over 27 people with disabilities gainfully employed

But more efforts needed to achieve 4% right to work

By R. Joyclyn Wea

Achieving 4% right to work by People with Disabilities (PwD) in Liberia is an uphill struggle.

But at least over 27 PwDs have now been employed in different line ministries, agencies and branches of government, as required by the act that established the National Commission on Disability (NCD), officials of the Commission have disclosed.

But this is not a satisfactory number, according to Madam Recadia Dennis, Director of the NCD.

Article 27 of the 2005 Act that established the NCD talked about the rights of persons living with disabilities to work and employment in Liberia.

Part of the law says that for every 100 persons employed in a public institution; 4% of said number 'MUST' be PwDs, an employment that should be based on merit.

The ILO Convention of 1986 also buttressed the Act recognizing the economic benefits and the other huge benefits that comes back to the country when persons with disabilities are trusted with public and private offices.

It is legislated to have them included in the workforce of the country, but the intent of what is known as a "good law" is nearly not gaining the expected results; thus causing authorities at the NCD to formulate positive means to have it achieved.

To do that, the National Commission on Disabilities is working with not only central government, but local and international partners, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to ensure that the law is fulfilled, in order to have the inclusion of qualified PwDs on the job market like any other 'normal' or able body citizen of Liberia.

The NCD Director and others have been pushing for the employment of Persons with Disabilities in keeping with the law--a dream that is yet to come true.

Madam Dennis said since 2008 the number of PwDs employed across the public sector is a little over 27 who are visible across the public sector of the country.

The exact number of PwDs employed throughout government has not been given due to what NCD officials say is due to lack of data.

Liberia is a West African country with a population of about 4.98 million people, according to the 2008 census, but its records on those with disabilities is unclear.

As was said by the NCD director, they lack date of those in that category of Liberians- no exact statistics about them in Liberia and the available records are out of date- a very old record of UNICEF study from 1997.

The UNICEF study has it that 16 percent of the Liberian population has some form of disability.

Out of that 16 percent, 61 percent struggle with free movements, 24 percent are visually impaired, seven percent have speech impairments and eight

percent have an intellectual or psychosocial disability.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) estimated in 2014 that due to the devastating civil war that ended in 2003 and the Ebola outbreak in 2014, the population of people with disabilities in Liberia is likely closer to 20 percent.

"Not that persons with disabilities cannot go to school to be qualified to take on regular jobs, but there are barriers that stand in the way for which they cannot take on jobs and government on whose shoulder the responsibility to award job rest on must work to resolve this," she said.

Madam Dennis mentioned that as per the law, no one should be confined to a particular job or institution because of their disability rather they must be allowed to choose where they want to be employed and what kind of jobs they want to do especially when they are qualified.

In order for the four percent employment of PwDs to come to reality, Dennis calls for a shift in the current situation by doing the needful by going by what the law says.

The advocacy to achieve the 4% right to work is



ongoing. One of such programs meant to press for this was held recently at the Lutheran Compound in Monrovia's Sinkor suburb, when the pro-PwD advocated pointed out the urgent need to make this a reality in Liberia.

Adama Dempster is a Human Rights Advocate in Liberia who has been in the area of advocating for all including persons living with disabilities in this country.

At a recent advocacy gathering in Sinkor, Dempster stressed the need for statistical information on persons with disabilities in Liberia.

He believes that current statistics on PwDs will help in knowing the different sex and people of the population.

He maintained that statistical data on PwDs will help in the area of forecasting different programs and activities that will lead to more persons with disabilities taking on regular jobs like other able body people in Liberia.

Mr. Dempster also stressed the need to look at how PwDs can access justice from different perspectives and how they can as well be employed into top positions in both public and private areas.

The Rights activist further stressed the need for

political will to drive all of these different policies and conventions.

Similarly, Mr. Wilfred Gewon, a visually impaired and lecturer at the Lion Club Computer institution at the African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU) highlighted the advantages of PwDs being employed.

According to Gewon, when persons with disability are employed, they become independent, self-reliance, and contribute immensely to development of any society.

Using himself as a case study, the visually impaired lecturer at the Methodist University said he no longer depends on his father pension benefits to make ends meet for him and family because he is gainfully employed and capacitated to underwrite expenses.

He is no longer seen as a burden, but an asset to his family stressing the need for empowerment of persons with disabilities, which Gewon said has lot of advantages for them.

Naomi Harris, another inspiring woman who has fought her way through life and has gone against all odds leading to her doing very well in Liberia, despite her physical condition.

Madam Harris is the Executive Director of the National Union of Organizations of the Disabled (NUOD), a CSO that advocates for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Liberia.

They are yet to see the 4% of PwDs being employed to a satisfactory level and as CSO, NUOD is trying to see how best more advocacies can be done to have it achieved in every sectors of the country.

"Whether in the public or private sectors, people should see that PwDs are qualified and should be employed and given the opportunities to work," Madam Harris confidently said.

Unlike in the past, PwDs are nowadays qualified to be employed in any entity, according to Madam Harris.

In time past, persons with disabilities were only seen as objects of pity and concern on streets, stretching their hands for handouts (begging) to make ends meet.

But with efforts being made on several fronts, the narration is gradually changing, with many of them now taking advantage of higher education and other vocational skills to get on path to empowering themselves for the job market.

"Every year when you check the different universities and vocational institutions, your will either have two or three PwDs coming out and that is because of the awareness and advocacies we have been carrying out, so you find out that PwDs are making use of opportunities and going to school and graduating," Madam Harris says with smile one her face.

"The problem we have is that if I were a visually impaired person and I graduated from teacher college, I will be sent to the school of the blind to teach because they think when I go to the regular school I will not be able to teach," the head of the disabilities union explained.

Senate replies Cummings

The Liberian Senate sharply reacts to call by the leader of the opposition Alternation National Congress Mr. Alexander Cummings to senators to return US\$15,000 received for personal projects saying, it is taken aback by the display of self-glorification by Mr. Cummings, who is intentionally bringing the Legislature to public disrepute by his recent statement on the Legislative Engagement Fund for his obvious political agenda.

On Tuesday, June 15, the ANC political leader joined a public chorus here, condemning lawmakers for taking the money, while calling on them to return same.

Thousand United States Dollars) distributed among them at the time the country is appealing to friendly nations for budget support in the face of increasing COVID-19 positive cases.

Thus in his condemnation and call for the return of the money, Mr. Cummings, whose party is part of four Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) observed that the action by members of the Legislature was not right at this time particularly when the country's economy is under severe stress, while the government is begging for budgetary support from friendly nations to meet its payroll obligations.

But the Liberian Senate deems Mr. Cummings' criticism of the Senate and the Legislature as a whole as an attempt to put the people of Liberia against

battling for over a year."

The Senate at the same time clarifies that no previous Liberian government had the financial and human capital to reach out and support the needs of every district and county, saying "While our people in these deprived areas continue to suffer untold suffering and hardship, they look up to their Senators and Representatives for the provision of schools, clinics, market, roads, and even direct personal support. Lawmakers have over the years, without hesitation, tried to meet these needs at their own expense."

It further argues that Mr. Cummings who thinks he is a better option for the leadership of Liberia does not have any inner idea on needs of the indigenous people and how those needs can be worked around.

The Senate further clarifies that the US\$15,000 received by each Senator and Representative is from an allotment under Legislative Engagement Line of the 2020/2021 National Budget and does not go into pockets of individual lawmakers, as being perceived.

It says instead, it is geared towards supporting initiatives in their various counties, and with the leadership structure in the respective counties, the money is decided upon and invested as deemed necessary by each Senator and his county leadership.

The Senate maintains the fund could go towards helping in the fight against covid-19 in the county, construction of a bridge, road, library, hospital, school, payment of school fees, building of a modern public latrine or to help with some charitable undertakings, as a way of directly impacting needed developments, however little.

"We find it disingenuous that Mr. Cummings would believe that this fund is intended to support the political interest of any Senator when the Senate comprises members of all political parties. Clearly, this is not intended to give any single Senator an edge because s/he is from the ruling party or the opposition parties."

The Leadership of the Senate believes that Mr. Cummings' quest for power is leading him to sow seeds of discord among the citizenry, calling on well-meaning Liberians not to lend credence his (Cummings') statement on the Legislative Engagement Funds that is coded 0563 in the National Budget. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Taylor's ex-lawyer heads ICC

By Jonathan Browne

The man, who initially defended jailed former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor before the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, Karim Khan, QC, has been inaugurated as the new chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands.

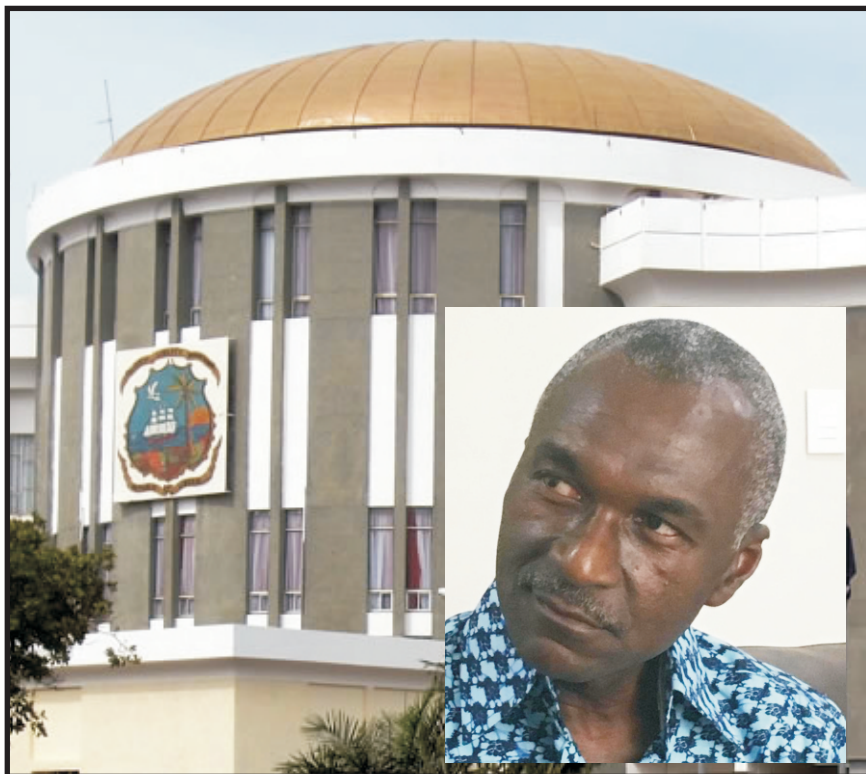
A trained British lawyer, Khan replaces Gambian Judge Fatou Bensouda, whose nine-year tenure as chief prosecutor for the ICC, expired Tuesday, 15 June 2021, The Associated Press reports.

Judge Khan was the court-

Sierra Leone, I choose not to be a fig leaf of legitimacy for this court."

The court dismissed his claim and Khan went on to defend Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto in 2011 at the ICC who was indicted for crimes against humanity during postelection violence in Kenyan in 2007. The ICC subsequently acquitted both Ruto and current President Kenyatta after Khan argued the charges were too weak and inadmissible.

Taylor later chose Jamaican-born British trained Barrister Courtenay Griffiths, QC, who defended the former Liberian president up to his conviction in



He said the mere distribution of US\$15,000 each among 102 lawmakers without the possibility of audit and any acceptable means of accountability violate the Public Financial Management Law.

The PFM Law provides that all disbursing and receiving entities, and individuals, must account for public monies disbursed, received, and or entrusted into their care. This continues to not be the practice.

Liberia, the world's poorest country currently has 29 sitting Senators with 73 Representatives bringing the total to 102 lawmakers and multiplying this by \$15,000 brings to total, the sum of USD1, 530,000 (One Million, Five Hundred and Thirty

their lawmakers for his own political gains.

"This kind of harmful politicking would only continue to leave our country in shambles. It must be condemned by all well-intentioned Liberians", the Senate says.

The release further indicates that Lawmakers come from every district in every county of Liberia hence, they represent every single citizen.

"Over the years, Central Government has been overwhelmed by major developmental projects - focusing more on building of roads, agriculture and other infrastructure while at the same time boosting healthcare which has continued to do a tremendous job in curtailing the spread of the corona-virus - a pandemic that world has been



British lawyer Karim Khan



Ex Pres. Charles G. Taylor

appointed defense lawyer for Mr. Taylor during the former president's war crimes trial in The Hague which began in 2006, but Taylor dismissed him subsequently in 2007, and opted instead, to defend himself.

However, the former presiding judge in the trial, Ugandan Julia Sebutinde, ordered Khan to stay for the duration of the day's hearings. But the lawyer walked out on grounds that it was against his code of conduct to represent a client against his will.

In a letter that was read in court at the time, Taylor wrote: "I cannot participate in a charade that does no justice to the people of Liberia and

2012 for aiding and abetting former RUF rebels in Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor is serving a 50-year sentence in a British jail.

51-year-old Karim Khan is the third chief prosecutor at the ICC after Luis Moreno Ocampo and Fatou Bensouda, entering the office at a time there are global calls for accountability, justice and end to impunity.

"The priority for me, and I believe that's the principle of the Rome Statute, is not to focus so much on where trials take place, but to ensure that the quest for accountability and inroads on impunity are made," he is quoted to have said in reference to the treaty that founded the ICC.

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LACE rejects Dillon's US\$15,000



Sen. Dillon

The Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE) has rejected in advance Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon's plan to turn over a check of US\$15,000 for the construction of his public libraries project in Montserrado County because receipt of individual project monies would be marked departure from LACE's best practice.

"We regret to inform the Senator that LACE is unable to take receipt of his USD15,000.00 (Fifteen Thousand United States Dollars) check," a communication trending on social media from LACE has said.

The agency on Wednesday, 16 June said it had come to its attention that Senator Dillon publicly stated that he would transfer his USD15, 000.00 check to LACE to undertake his proposed Library projects within Montserrado County.

"Media outlets are today reporting through headlines and other forms the Senator's intention to turn the USD15, 000.00 (Fifteen Thousand United States Dollars) check over to LACE," the release said.

However, LACE reminded Senator Dillon and apprised the public that the regulations governing the appropriations of LACE and the statute creating the entity do not allow it to carry out individual projects for legislators outside the structures of a memorandum of understanding signed between the agency and the legislator and in line with budget appropriations or the budget process.

LACE said it would carry out such a project as part of the budget law and once such appropriation is made to LACE through the budget process.

It noted that receipt of individual project monies from legislators would be contrary to governance norms

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Benitez close to becoming Everton manager

Rafa Benitez is close to taking over as Everton manager following positive talks with the club's board.

Benitez has been out of work since leaving Chinese side Dalian Yifang in January.

Sky Sports News has learned the Spaniard was the No 1 choice of the Everton hierarchy last night and he has now been offered the job.

The former Liverpool and Chelsea manager is set to return to the Premier League

two years after he left Newcastle United.

Everton had also been in talks with former Wolves boss Nuno Espirito Santo over becoming Carlo Ancelotti's successor while David Moyes was also understood to be a frontrunner before he signed a new contract with West Ham.

Ancelotti left his role as manager to return to Real Madrid earlier this month after 18 months at Goodison Park. He guided the Toffees to a 10th-placed finish in the Premier



League this season.

Benitez managed Everton's rivals Liverpool from 2004 to 2010 and lifted the Champions League, FA Cup and the UEFA Super Cup during his time at Anfield.

He joined Chelsea on an interim basis in 2012 and went on to win the Europa League and guide the Blues to a third-placed finish in the Premier League that season.

After stints at Real Madrid and Napoli, Bentiez moved to Newcastle in 2016 and oversaw

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