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# Tarlue wants digital banking system



CBL Executive Governor J. Aloysius Tarlue, Jr.



Health Minister Dr. Wilhemina Jallah

# No second dose of vaccines

## -Dr. Jallah

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# Continental News

## Zuma hands himself in to South African police

South Africa's former President Jacob Zuma has handed himself in to police to begin serving a 15-month jail sentence for contempt of court.

He was admitted to Estcourt Correctional Centre in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal on Wednesday.

Police had warned that they were prepared to arrest him if he did not hand himself in by midnight.

Zuma, 79, was handed the jail term last week after he failed to attend a corruption inquiry. The sentencing sparked an unprecedented legal drama in South Africa, which has never seen a former president jailed before.

Zuma had initially refused to hand himself in, but in a short statement on Wednesday, the Jacob Zuma Foundation said he had "decided to comply". His daughter, Dudu Zuma-Sambudla, later wrote on Twitter that her father was "en route [to the jail] and he is still in high spirits". Zuma was

sentenced on 29 June for defying an instruction to give evidence at an inquiry into corruption during his nine years in power. He has testified only once at the inquiry into what has become known as "state capture" - meaning the siphoning off of state assets.

Businessmen have been accused of conspiring with politicians to influence the

decision-making process while he was in office. But Zuma has repeatedly said that he is the victim of a political conspiracy. In a separate legal matter, Zuma pleaded not guilty last month in a corruption trial involving a \$5bn (£3bn) arms deal from the 1990s. Though he was forced out of office by his own party in 2018, the African

National Congress (ANC), he retains a loyal body of supporters, especially in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal. On Sunday, crowds formed what they called a human shield outside Zuma's palatial home in an effort to prevent his arrest. Similar crowds gathered before he handed himself in on Wednesday. Zuma was once an illustrious political figure, who was jailed for fighting the racist system of apartheid in South Africa. Now, he has been arrested for being contemptuous of South Africa's most senior judges - the guardians of the democracy he fought for - as he tried to evade accountability over the deluge of corruption allegations he faced during his presidency. It is an ignominious end to Zuma's political career, but a proud moment for South

Africa's democracy. It shows that no-one is above the law - not even a former president.

His supporters threatened to block any attempt by police to arrest him, but in the end they did not have to. The 79-year-old surrendered, knowing he could not defeat the might of the state. The BBC's Nomsa Maseko, who was outside Zuma's home on Wednesday, noted that there was a large police presence outside the property that included armed officers and a paramilitary unit.

A delegation of senior officers are believed to have spent several hours inside the residence negotiating with the former president over his arrest.

A convoy of cars, one of which was carrying Zuma, was then seen leaving the house at high-speed shortly before the midnight deadline for his detention. BBC



The former president was sentenced to 15 months in jail last week

## Why Ethiopia can't stop the River Nile dam being filled

The long-running dispute between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia over a massive hydroelectric dam being built on the River Nile shows no sign of being resolved. On Thursday, the UN Security Council is due to discuss it for the first time, as some fear it could lead to conflict.

Egypt and Sudan have both complained that Ethiopia has acted unilaterally for a

second year and begun to fill up the reservoir behind the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (Gerd). Egypt, which relies almost entirely on the Nile for its water supply, sees this as an existential issue. Last year, Sudan's water supply was disrupted by the filling of the dam, while Ethiopia sees it as a way to bring electricity to millions of its citizens. Transparent line

In a statement earlier this

week Egypt and Sudan accused Ethiopia of acting unilaterally over the filling and having "bad intentions" - suggesting the dam was being filled deliberately.

But this gives the false impression that filling up the dam is like filling up a bath - and that Ethiopia can turn a tap on and off at will. No. The reservoir behind the dam will fill naturally during the Blue Nile's rainy season, which has already begun and lasts until September. Given the stage that the construction is at, "engineering-wise, physics-wise there is no way to stop the filling now" until the water level reaches the top of the dam wall, Manchester University's Mohammed Basheer, who has been studying the Gerd for the past decade, told the BBC.

This is because more water is entering the dam site than the volume of water that can physically pass through the two open outlets in the dam wall (60-110 million cubic metres a day). From the start of the process in 2011, the dam has been built around the

## Nigerian president hails separatist leader's arrest



The Nigerian president praised security agencies for their work

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari has hailed security agencies for the arrest of Igbo separatist leader Nnamdi Kanu and the raid on Yoruba activist Sunday Adeyemo's home.

It's the first time the president has spoken about the arrest and extradition of Mr Kanu, the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (Ipub) movement.

He also commended the controversial raid on the residence of the prominent Yoruba activist whom he described as "conducting acts

of terror and disturbing the peace under the guise of protecting fellow kinsmen".

He praised the security agencies for demonstrating "significant deftness, guile and secrecy in carrying out these missions".

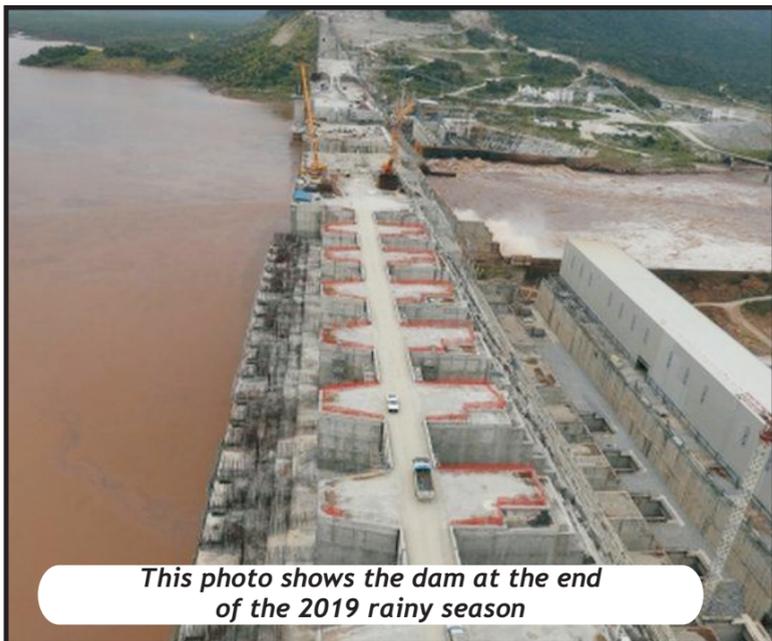
The president remained silent on how Mr Kanu, who also has British nationality, was arrested.

It came as a member of the UK's parliament has asked about the circumstances surrounding the repatriation of Mr Kanu to Nigeria, according to a notice on the parliament's website. BBC

Blue Nile as it continued to flow through the enormous building site.

Builders worked on the vast structures on either side of the river without any problem. In the middle, during the dry season, the river was diverted through culverts, or pipes, to

allow that section to be built up. Much of the middle section is now complete and each year more will be added until about 2024 when it will be at 640m above sea level. The river bed at the dam site is around 509m above sea level. BBC



This photo shows the dam at the end of the 2019 rainy season

# EDITORIAL

## Going from bad to worse

**ALL IS NOT** well in Liberia, as the daily confirmed cases of the corona virus among the population are nearly 200 and death keeps increasing. Funeral homes are overwhelmed by dead bodies, while caskets are in short supply.

**ALREADY, LIBERIA HAS** been placed at Level 4 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States for being a country with very high COVID-19 confirmed cases. The country gradually seems to be at the brink of succumbing to the pandemic, if concerted effort is not taken immediately.

**HEALTH AUTHORITIES IN** the country keep assuring the public that they are up to the task, having announced protocol and preventive measures. However, the reality on the ground with fresh surging cases and deaths point to the contrary. It is a fact that soldiers fighting at the frontline would never give up until the last combatant dies but the people of Liberia don't want to be decapitated or led to the slaughterhouse.

**WE BELIEVE STRONGLY** that rapid testing is the surest way to reverse the current trend than to wait for infected patients to be taken to Star Base for oxygen that is scarcely available. Liberia cannot contain the resurgence of the coronavirus unless massive rapid testing campaign is launched across the entire country.

**IN THIS FIGHT,** we need all hands on deck, including experts that are not presently in government. This is not a fight for the Minister of Health Doctor Wilehmina S. Jallah and her staff at NPHIL or the Incident Management System. All Liberians should join the fight to defeat COVID-19.

**IT IS IN** this light that we welcome the US\$150,000 commitment from the Cummings Africa Foundation towards our health crisis, joining the Government of Liberia to reach out to hospitals and health centers particularly and the citizenry generally.

**AS MR. ALEXANDER B. CUMMINGS,** founder of the Foundation and leader of the opposition Alternative National Congress (ANC) said last week while announcing the gesture, Liberia is under serious threat right now, and unless we join hands to do our very best for one another, all of us will continue to be at risk, even if we hide ourselves in the homes.

**BESIDES, THOSE LEADING** the fight from the government side should move away from lip-service and demonstrate political will. We demand vigilance at the Roberts International Airport, seaports and land borders to curtailing the resurgence.

**BY DOING SO,** we will get ahead of the curve and erect relevant checkpoints that could halt the spread, particularly in the counties. The health system lacks capacity to respond to any overwhelming situation outside Montserrado County, when even the seat of government itself is seriously challenged.

**LET THIS NOT** be misconstrued that we are being pessimistic here. This is an honest attempt to present the grim reality so that all Liberians would wake up from their slumber, state of denial and face the danger ahead of us as a people. We need to wear our masks properly, observe social distance, wash our hands regularly and avoid mass gathering or crowded places, among others, to halt the spread.

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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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

# COMMENTARY

By Djoomart Otorbaev

## If Afghanistan Falls

**B**ISHKEK - On July 2, the US military handed control of the vast Bagram Air Base to the Afghan government. US troops and their NATO allies are now on track to leave Afghanistan by mid-July, well ahead of US President Joe Biden's September 11, 2021, withdrawal deadline.

According to a new analysis by researchers at Brown University, America's two-decade war in Afghanistan cost it nearly \$2.3 trillion. Now, Afghanistan's neighbors - Pakistan, Iran, China, India, and the Central Asian countries - are wondering just how much it will cost them to maintain security after the United States is gone.

In late June, the US intelligence community concluded that the Afghan government could collapse within six months of the US withdrawal - a stark downward revision of its earlier, more optimistic assessment. As the Taliban has swept through northern Afghanistan, capturing dozens of districts and major cities, Afghan security forces have often surrendered without a fight. According to a June report from the United Nations Afghanistan Sanctions Monitoring Team, the Taliban now exercises direct control over more than half of the country's regional administrative centers, and controls up to 70% of the territory outside urban areas.

The tremors from these Taliban victories are already being felt across the region. Fierce fighting has occurred a mere four hours from Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe. On June 20, Taliban militants operating in northern Afghanistan surrounded government forces in Kunduz, the country's sixth-largest city (population 300,000). Then, on June 22, the Taliban captured the Afghan-Tajik border outpost of Sher Khan Bandar without a fight.

Meanwhile, Tajikistan's border service reported that 134 Afghan servicemen had received asylum at the crossing. Another 53 Afghan border troops and local militiamen retreated from a Taliban onslaught in Afghanistan's Shortepa district by crossing into Uzbekistan; and on July 5, more than 1,000 Afghan soldiers reportedly fled across the border from Badakhshan Province into Tajikistan.

A complete Taliban takeover of the Amu Darya and Panj Rivers dividing Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan will likely occur within weeks. Since this outcome would allow the Taliban to control Afghanistan's international borders along this front, the risk of large refugee flows from Afghanistan into Central Asia, and then on to Russia and Europe, has sharply increased.

After clandestinely supporting the Taliban

as a means to undermine the US war effort, Russia now fears broader destabilization in Central Asia and beyond. In response to recent developments in Afghanistan, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu says that, "By the end of this year, the command of the Central Military District will have to re-equip two aviation regiments with modernized Su-34M fighter-bombers and MiG-31BM fighter-interceptors." These reinforcements of Russian airpower in the region "will significantly increase the district's capabilities to engage the enemy with fire and combat cruise missiles in the Central Asian strategic direction."

Similarly, after having made nice with the Taliban, China also now fears the greater regional instability that the US withdrawal may incite. In addition to disrupting Chinese President Xi Jinping's Eurasia-spanning Belt and Road Initiative, a revitalized Taliban could re-energize the Islamist extremist threat in China's western Xinjiang province.

The prospect that Afghanistan will become a source of deepening poverty, mass migration, and instability is quickly becoming everyone's problem. But it is Central Asian governments that will be on the front lines. Still, many regional officials remain surprisingly optimistic. Following a recent visit to the US to discuss Afghanistan and regional security, the Uzbek foreign minister, Abdulaziz Kamilov, gave an extensive interview in which he argued that only Afghans, including the Taliban, can resolve Afghanistan's problems.

"We have some optimism," he explained, "Because the situation has changed. First, the two sides began direct contact for the first time in 40 years. The Taliban also want direct negotiations to reach a peaceful agreement." While stressing that he is no defender of the Taliban, Kamilov pointed to an official publication on the group's website where it claims to want to build an independent, sovereign Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan without any outside interference. In this new country, the rights of women, girls, and minorities would supposedly be guaranteed.

It is hard to believe that a seasoned diplomat like Kamilov would fall for such honeyed words. Yet, in also arguing that Afghanistan should be more deeply integrated into the Central Asian economy, he is on sound strategic footing. Even the Taliban would be attracted to the idea of a renewed "Greater Central Asia" that could recreate some of the economic dynamism of the glory years of the Great Silk Road (1100-1600 AD).

With China determined to deepen its trade, investment, and infrastructure ties across Eurasia, this vision has a chance of becoming reality. But first, peace must prevail, above all within Afghanistan.



## Lord, is it true that a pastor sack a bishop?

Dear Father:

You know, the other day I was just browsing through my social media page and one social media friend of mine raised this issue and I couldn't believe it.

I ran to my computer to do a research to see where on this planet earth a pastor has ever sack a bishop before. But then I later realized that I was in Lib, a village that is known as the pacesetter, where every strange thing can happen.

You mean a pastor really sack a bishop, how possible can that be my son? Hmmm that the one da had me confused because in the religious hierarchy the bishop is greater than the pastor. Nowhere have we heard that a pastor established a church and make someone else bishop over him-not possible.

So who is this pastor and which bishop did he sack?

Oh Father, ehn you know Big Brabee, the number one Country Giant in our village-he is the pastor.

You say whatin, the man that pastor too?

Kpooo, you na know the man that pastor, senior pastor at his church named after his oldma?

And who the bishop?

Oh da one other Brabee who go abandoned his church to go work for the pastor ay. The man say he needed extra income because it looks like the offering that was coming from that place had reduced and he needed to do the balancing thing-you know.

But wait ooh my son, what really happen before the pastor sack him um, I mean disgrace the man like that?

Father that what can happen when you leave your area of calling and go to where the Old Man has not sent you. Da what this boy called when you bypass your respect, you can bother with yor disgrace.

Father, I don't know what the Bishop, whole Bishop was thinking when he accepted to be employed by a pastor?

In the first place the man reversed the entire spiritual order. And only one thing can cause that greed. Greed comes about when you are not satisfied with what you have. The time the man supposed to take to be doing the Old Man's job counselling his sheep, he took it to go sit that somewhere to watch out for the pastor.

Looka, now he did not play his watchman role well and he has brought this big disgrace in the spiritual kingdom.

Where has he ever seen a whole bishop being recruited to work under a pastor?

Father that the same question I have been asking myself ehn. Why would he do such a thing a whole bishop abi leaving his flocks to go a serve a pastor at the pastors will and pleasure too oo.

Now, he has made the Country Giant to set a precedent that every other pastor now will follow. They will just wake up one morning and look into the eyes of their bishop and tell them you are fire for administrative reason.

Yes, because one bishop made set himself up to be used as an example. And this is a warning to all those bishops who are running for their churches to be employed by this pastor-many fighting to be on boards of our village corporation you are abandoning the Old Man's job for your personal benefits-so share your disgrace be like this bishop. Now you know that we have a pastor who can sack bishop-be warned!

# O-P-E-D

By Sławomir Sierakowski

## Donald Tusk Comes Home

**WARSAW** - Former Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk has returned to where he started, reclaiming his position as head of Civic Platform (PO), the party that he led to electoral victories in 2007 and 2011, before going on to serve as president of the European Council. His task now is to return Poland to Europe's good graces.

With an overwhelming victory over Rafal Trzaskowski, the mayor of Warsaw and Poland's most popular politician, Tusk has certainly returned with style and aplomb. But his victory has cast a shadow over a younger liberal politician who has been building his own political movement for some time.

It is hard to believe Trzaskowski's claim that he does not want to break away and compete with PO (where he will continue to serve as deputy chairman). Under its previous chairman, Borys Budka, PO suffered a historic loss of support - falling to 15-20% in opinion polls - and has been overtaken by the journalist and activist Szymon Holownia's Poland 2050 movement (which currently stands at 20-25%).

Budka assumed the chairmanship because Trzaskowski originally did not want the job. But because Trzaskowski leads the "young" generation that took over the party from Grzegorz Schetyna in January 2020, Budka's leadership created an untenable division of labor. A party leader who does not represent the most powerful bloc within his party is doomed to failure.

There are generally two career paths open to Polish politicians. If power is what you want most, you must seek to lead your party, engage in local-level politics, and become prime minister (or become a puppet master like Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the de facto leader of Poland's current government). But if you are more interested in prestige and popularity - and especially if party politics bores you - the presidency is a more suitable aspiration; that office allows one to reign rather than rule.

Tusk (like Kaczynski) is a clear example of the first type, whereas Trzaskowski is more of a "presidential" politician. While Tusk famously sneered that "sitting under the [presidential palace] chandelier does not interest" him, Trzaskowski once admitted that he was never so bored as when he became an opposition MP. When he had the chance to lead the party, he dismissed it. After narrowly losing the presidential election last summer, he promised to organize a "New Solidarity" movement, but then failed to follow through on that project.

Now, the political situation has changed. There is a new movement organized by Trzaskowski, but emerging from the Campus Poland of the Future (a leadership school for 1,000 young people that will be held in Olsztyn this fall). Invitees include well-known intellectuals and the mayors of Prague, Budapest, and other cities.

For his part, Trzaskowski wants to rely more on local government officials to mobilize support, capitalizing on the fact that the opposition still governs Poland's 100 largest cities and half its provinces. But, again, no one will be surprised if this strategy fails to lead to the establishment of a new political party.

Trzaskowski and his entourage claim to be preparing for a confrontation with Tusk, but the reality is that their interests are complementary. Because Tusk is not interested in the presidency, we can anticipate that he will promise to support Trzaskowski in pursuit of that office. Moreover, Trzaskowski surely knows that an open confrontation with Tusk is risky. After all, he still must manage Warsaw on a day-to-day basis, whereas Tusk, whose return dominated Polish media, has plenty of free time to focus on the nuts and bolts of local politicking. The former prime minister has just started a tour of Poland - and has drawn crowds.

For the last year and a half, politics has taken place mainly online, which is why Holownia has managed to gain support in polls despite his lack of party infrastructure. But when normal politics resumes after the pandemic, social media will not be enough. In this context, it will be important to remember that no successful new party has been formed during the 20 years that Kaczynski's Law and Justice (PiS) and PO have been the dominant forces in Polish politics.

Nurturing a new party will be just as difficult now as in the past. Since Holownia has done little to show that he can actually lead, Poles won't know how strong a politician he is until he confronts his first crisis. That may happen soon, as Kaczynski reacts to Tusk's presence like a bull seeing red. Whatever Holownia's talents, he will look boyish and callow compared to Tusk.

Yet Tusk's return is not without risk. Why would a politician who has succeeded in everything now get back into Polish politics to lead a party that has hemorrhaged support? Unlike PO, PiS's position has remained strong, owing to its shameless dishonesty and recourse to populist hand-outs. Poles do not seem to mind this dirty business. And now that even more EU money from the pandemic recovery fund is poised to flow into the country, the PiS government will have additional means at its disposal.

The question, then, is whether Tusk can be a credible people's politician. No other political style can win in a country that has been so deeply infected with populism. If Tusk's seven years serving at the highest levels of EU power have made him into an incorrigible technocrat, he could go the way of former Polish Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek, a symbol of the intelligentsia who could never win more than 10-12% support in party leadership contests.

Tusk does not need to mimic Kaczynski by openly snubbing elites. But he does need to demonstrate a deep, genuine commitment to working-class and rural Poles. And even that may not be enough to break PiS's hold on power.

OP-ED

OP-ED

# Liberia's COVID-19 Trajectory: Experts' Advice on How to Halt the Outbreak

*Fighting the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic: Employing lessons from the Ebola Virus Disease response. This is a summary of a full paper with recommendations that will be presented to the Government of Liberia.*

By: Sara BeysolowNyanti, MPA; Tolbert Nyenswah, LLB, MPH; Dougbeh Chris Nyan, MD; and Mardia Stone, MD, MPH

Since the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) by the World Health Organization (WHO), there are over 183 million COVID-19 confirmed cases, and a staggering 4 million deaths worldwide. To date, this global COVID-19 death toll almost totals the entire population of Liberia.

The Global North (a specific reference to countries in Europe and North America) is making progress in vaccinating its populations, while the Global South (countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania, often referred to as 'least developed' or 'developing') is disproportionately affected. With more fragile health systems, sub-Saharan Africa will very likely become home to the next COVID-19 hotspots.

In Liberia it is presumed that the situation is not as bad as it is in some other countries. Unfortunately, this perception may be misleading. In a little over a year (March 2020 to April 2021), Liberia recorded 2099 confirmed cases, with 85 confirmed deaths. However, in May to June 2021 alone, Liberia recorded 2205 cases and 44 confirmed deaths (NPHIL daily situation reports). The cases and deaths in 2 months are more than what we experienced in over a year.

The identification of COVID-19 cases has primarily been conducted using reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR), commonly referred to as "PCR." Availability of testing has been very minimal across the country. Even where testing has been conducted, the results are alarming. Test positivity rates are now at a record high in Liberia at over 20 to 25% (NPHIL/MOH) from May to June 2021. Moreover, a test positivity rate above 5% to 10%, is deemed as an outbreak that is out of control (WHO).

Voluntary testing has not been a service that Liberians have enjoyed like others around the world. Testing for the most part has been largely for travel at cost. However, voluntary testing for COVID-19 is now being offered to those who are symptomatic and require clinical confirmation. Unfortunately, even when tests are conducted, those who get tested sometimes do not receive their test results, have no follow up, and their contacts are not traced.

Beyond testing, countries that have been successful in managing COVID-19 disseminate socially and culturally appropriate public health awareness messages and ensure engagement with communities. They actively trace those who have been exposed to the virus and follow available scientific data and experiences of other public health emergencies. Cross-border movements of populations are controlled, as well as crowds and gatherings in public spaces (schools included),

Vaccination campaigns are an important strategy implemented during an epidemic. However, vaccination is one of the major challenges with COVID-19. Around 77% of COVID vaccines being produced have already been

bought by only 10 countries in the Global North (WHO). So where does Liberia stand with vaccines? Liberia has only relied on donations of vaccines from COVAX which has allocated 384,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine. Of this allocation, 96,000 doses were received in March 2021. So far, 85,132 people (18,921 health workers and 66,211 others) have received the first dose of the vaccine, according to the Ministry of Health. In addition, 6,439 people have received the second dose of the vaccines. However, this has largely been in Montserrado country. What of the other 14 counties? We do not have sufficient vaccines for the population, and even with what Liberia has received, management of the vaccines has not been optimal. Countries around the world are now procuring vaccines and are not relying on donations. Liberia needs to vaccinate at least 3.5 million people. Donations will never be enough for the entire country. Countries procuring now are expecting vaccines in quarters 1 and 2 of 2022. When will Liberia enter this global procurement cue?

There is no substitute for political leadership and strategic management in any outbreak response. The 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak in Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Nigeria taught that very well. Liberia has



been down this road before and has gained the knowledge and skills to manage epidemics. By establishing the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) and the emergency operation centers in all 15 counties, as well as training field epidemiologists for community-based events surveillance, the government resolved to build a more resilient health system, capable of responding to public health emergencies such as COVID-19. That system plus the over 2,000 personnel trained in various aspects of public health during and after the 2014 Ebola epidemic should be mobilized.

In the recent weeks of the COVID third wave in Liberia, scores of Liberians have died from what has been probably inaccurately diagnosed as malaria, typhoid, kidney failure and stomach ulcers, due to the lack of differential diagnostic capabilities in infectious diseases. Most are dying without ever being tested. Where testing is conducted, results are very rarely available on time. Anecdotal evidence suggests that waiting time for voluntary testing for COVID-19 is over 1-2 weeks in many instances. Some do not get results until after they have recovered. Nationwide testing, timely results and contact tracing are non-negotiables for dealing with COVID-19; and the private sector is needed.

Worst of all, misconception, misinformation, and incorrect information continue to pervade the population. Average Liberians still doubt the existence of COVID-19 or its presence in the country. Unlike Ebola, COVID-19 positive patients can be asymptomatic. This is an unfamiliar perspective in a country with high illiteracy and poverty rates.

With all of the issues raised herein taken into consideration, we advise the following in summary:

1. Demonstrate strong political and technical leadership going forward. A whole-of-government and whole-of-country approach is necessary, down to the household level.
2. The Minister of Health of Liberia officially should declare a "National Public Health Emergency" in keeping with Title 33, Chapter 14 of the Liberia code of Laws Revised, known as: The Public Health Law of Liberia.
3. The President should restructure and ensure a more efficient Incident Management System (IMS) by appointing a non-political and professional Incident Manager who will be directly accountable to him.
4. Mobilize all human and institutional resources and structures used for the Ebola response; as well as allocating the financial resources required - create the fiscal space.
5. Ensure adequate risk communication and community engagement that focuses on the uniqueness of COVID-19, such as asymptomatic presentation, as well as vaccine hesitancy.
6. Liberian leaders should lead by example: implement public health measures/practices, regarding testing, vaccinations, social distancing, mask wearing to boost public confidence and suffer consequences when they do not lead by example.
7. Ensure that health care and other frontline workers are paid well and on time, given appropriate incentives and provided personal protective gears to facilitate their work.
8. Commission experts to develop Liberia's COVID-19 test kits and scientific research for vaccine production.
9. Forge public-private partnerships for a whole-of-country approach including leveraging private clinics and hospitals to scale up testing and care services across the country.
10. Partner with the United Nations System, bilateral as well as multilateral development banks (MDBs) and International Financing Institutions (IFIs), to leverage multilateral financing options for procurement (especially of vaccines, oxygen plants etc.), technical assistance and administrative advice, setting up field hospitals and mobile clinics.
11. Develop a testing plan that involves scaling up rapid testing at private clinics as well as developing a dynamic database for contact-tracing.
12. Establish alternate care sites (ACS) for management of COVID critical cases in all 15 counties, building on the Ebola experience.
13. Establish at least two additional sub-reference laboratories in the Northeastern and Southeastern part of the country to augment the functions of the National Reference Laboratory.
14. Population management - ensure a comprehensive review of population movement and put in place mechanisms to manage spreader occurrences, including an analysis of risks to students, teachers, marketeers, shoppers etc.

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**Gongloe recommits to fight for free speech, rule of law**

The President of the Liberia Bar Association (LNBA) Cllr. Tiawan S. Gongloe says he remains committed to the principles and ideal of free speech and the rule of law in the country.

Cllr. Gongloe, who is one of Liberia's prominent and leading human rights lawyers reflects that the fight for free

violence, he remains resolute in demanding what is good and productive for the upliftment of the Liberian society.

Cllr. Gongloe made the statement recently when he received a CAM Freedom Award from the Grassroots Alternative Movement in Monrovia for his outstanding and sacrificial services to humanity.



LNBA President Cllr. Tiawan S. Gongloe

speech and democracy has caused him enormous havoc, including detention, flogging and death threats from state actors, especially under the regime of jailed Ex-president Charles Ghankay Taylor.

According to him, despite threats posed to his life in a society that is gradually overwhelmed by chaos and

The conferring of the CAM Freedom Award to Cllr. TiawanGongloe comes barley a week after a group under the banner, Team Gongloe, asked him to vie for the presidency in 2023.

Team Gongloe is a conglomeration of political and interest groupings, including the Movement to Ensure Liberia

Transformation (MELT), Volunteers For Change (Voice), and the Liberian People's Party (LPP), among others.

Presenting the award, the chairman for mobilization and recruitment of the Movement, Mr. Anthony S. Kollie, lauded Cllr. Gongloe for his courage, commitment and consistency in the fight for the rule of law and social justice in Liberia over the years.

Kollie however encouraged him never to give up on Liberia and its people, forecasting that better days are ahead.

Cllr. Gongloe chairs the steering committee of the newly established National Consortium to Eliminate Impunity that petitioned the Liberian Legislature recently calling for full implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Final Report.

The Consortium had planned to mobilize 100,000 Liberians into the street to parade to the Capitol, but due to health pandemic, the march was called off.

Members of the Consortium include the Liberia National Bar Association, National Civil Society Council of Liberia, Alliance for Transitional Justice - Liberia, Inter-Religious Council of Liberia, Faith and Justice Network,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

**Tom Kamara book to be launched today**

A book containing selected writings of legendary Liberian journalist Tom Kamara will be launched July 09, 2021, in Monrovia. The launch is expected to take place at the Platform for Dialogue and Peace office, in Sinkor, Old Matadi, Estate.at 2:00 pm.

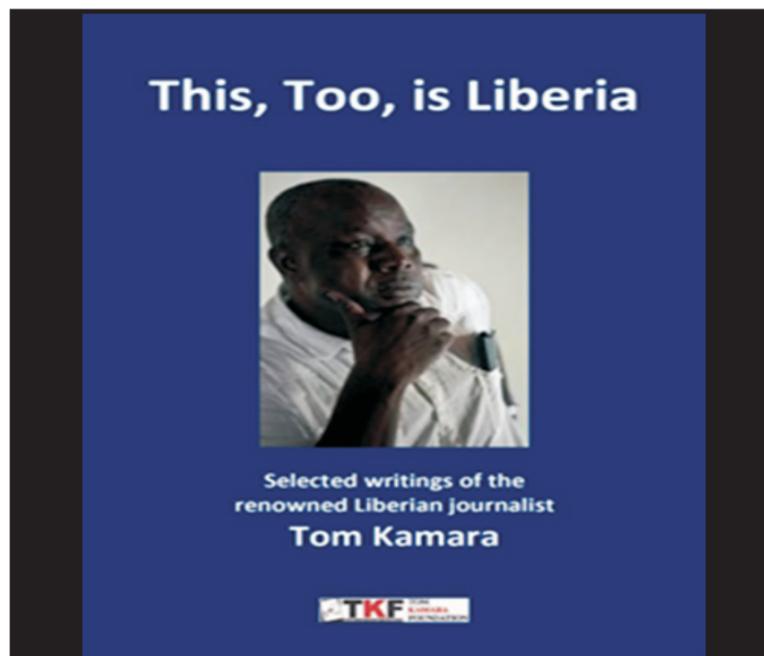
Entitled 'This, Too, Is Liberia', the book contains a selection of articles written by Tom Kamara (1949-2012), one of Liberia's most famous journalists. He was known for his sharp, admired, feared, uncompromising pen. He used his pen as his weapon to fight for human rights, democracy and social development during one of the darkest chapters in Liberia's history. His creative style is a combination of facts, contemplation and irony which make his articles extremely worth reading.

Through the collective

home country. During his years in exile, Tom continued his fight for press freedom and social justice through his writings. In 2003, he returned to Liberia and continued as editor of the New Democrat. He was on his way to the Netherlands for medical treatment when he suddenly died, in 2012.

A team consisting of Tom's widow Rachael Kamara, Jimmy Shilue and Leo Platvoet selected 53 articles which form the core of the publication 'This, Too, Is Liberia', an expression coined by Tom Kamara when referring to specific events in Liberia. The publication of the book is an initiative under the Tom Kamara Foundation, to preserve his writings and memorialize a legendary writer.

In the book, 53 selected articles have been grouped under five sub-headings, referring to the eras of Samuel



**Senate to decide Governor Tarlue's fate**

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The Senate Committee on Banking and Currency and the entire Plenary of the Liberian Senate are poised to decide the reconfirmation of the Executive Governor of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) Aloysius Tarlue, after his appearance to give reasons why he should continue as head of the nation's bank.

Appearing Thursday, July 08, 2021 before the committee at the Capitol, Mr. Tarlue who had occupied the post for little over a year to complete the tenure of his predecessor Nathaniel Patray, spoke technological innovation to move the CBL forward.

Mr. Tarlue was recently reappointed by President George Weah following his completion of former

executive governor Patray's five years tenure.

Speaking before the committee Thursday in the chambers of the Liberian Senate,

he said in light of the dynamic environment of the financial system, increased

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



CBL Executive Governor J. Aloysius Tarlue, Jr.

efforts of family, friends and the Tom Kamara Foundation, fifty-three articles written between 1997 and 2012 are captured in the book, published by 'OdysseeReisgidsen' in the Netherlands. The book provides reliable accounts and understanding of Liberia's troubled history of wars and serves as a guide for good governance, democracy and the rule of law.

Tom Kamara was the founder publisher of the New Democrat, a Liberian newspaper which suffered the wrath of several dictatorships yet still active and contributing to post war Liberia development processes.

During the Liberian civil war(s) the late Tom Kamara was forced into exile; the Netherlands, a country which eventually became his second

Doe (1980-1990), Charles Taylor (1989-2003) and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2006-2018), a fourth category focuses on the love-hate relationship between Liberia and its 'motherland', the United States of America whereas the last category deals with events and issues in other African countries.

The Dutch economist Dr. Fred van der Kraaij who has been following events in Liberia since the late 1970s, wrote the Introduction presenting valuable insights into Tom Kamara's life and work. The book concludes with four contributions detailing Tom Kamara's life, two of which were written by very close Liberian friends, Jimmy Shilue, who shared many of Tom Kamara's Dutch years and his memories, while SiahyonkronNyansor, the US-based editor of The Perspective also provided perspectives on Tom.

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**Court adjusts hearing of Bilities' child custody case**

By Winston Parley

The Civil Law Court in Monrovia has made an adjustment on the day it will hear Mr. Sidike Musa Bility's request for permanent custody of his two minor children from his divorced wife Warti Nancy Robinson - Bility, after the court found that Nancy did not file her return (response)

and security.

His lawyers contended that after divorce was granted the parties, Nancy celebrated on Facebook with her friends and even paraded her pregnant stomach on Facebook to the whole world, adding that it is only proper for the court to award Bility permanent custody of the children.

However the court said at the

wellbeing of innocent children.

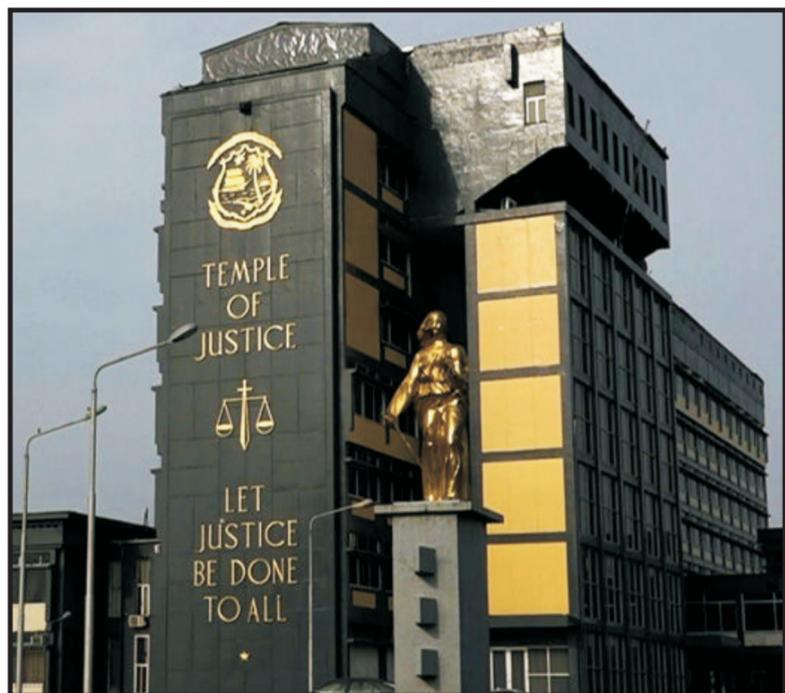
The noted further that it is interested in going to the detail of the case so that its judgment or opinion can be based on an informed information, disclosing that the respondent had just filed her return and it was not yet in the possession of the court.

Bility has complained that the arrangement of sharing custody of the children between him and Nancy is not working in the best interest of the kids.

He said from the commencement of the sharing of custody arrangement up to the time he filed the bill of information, Nancy has constantly taken the children to school very late or she sometimes failed to take them to school every Monday, claiming that this behavior continued in the month of March.

He said growing out of the action of divorce he earlier filed against Nancy, he filed a motion for temporary custody with the court and it was granted him on 20 January this year to temporarily take custody of the children, pending the final determination of the main action of divorce.

But Bility said Nancy turned the kids over on 15 February 2021 when she felt pleased to do so, despite the court's order for them to be turned over immediately.



to Sidike's bill of information.

Mr. Bility's lawyers have asked the court to award him full and permanent custody of his two minor children since their mother Nancy has a relationship that is not favorable for the kids' emotional, psychological, mental and physical health, stability, wellbeing, safety

call of the case for hearing of the bill of information on Thursday, 8 July 2021, it observed that Nancy's counsels had not filed their return to the bill of information.

The court therefore reassigned Thursday's hearing to Monday, 12 July 2021 at 9 a.m. because it said the matter involves the interest and

submitted by the President to the Legislature and published once a year".

He also reminds that Article 36 further states that Senators and Representatives shall receive from the Republic

remuneration for their services to be fixed by law, provided that any increase shall become effective at the beginning of the next fiscal

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11**



**Campaigners asked lawmakers to return money**

By Bridgett Milton

Campaigners for Good Governance Citizen of Liberia, a local group petitions the Liberian Legislature to return US\$ 15,000.00 dished out to each Lawmaker recently for constituency engagement.

Presenting the petition Thursday, July 8, 2021 on the grounds of the Capitol in Monrovia, the head of the group FurbbieHenries said, Article 34(d)(ii) of the Constitution of Liberia states that "No monies shall be drawn from the treasury except in consequence of appropriations made by the legislative enactment and upon the warrant of the President; and no coin shall be minted or national currency issued except by the expressed authority of the Legislature. An annual statement and account of the receipt and expenditure of all public monies shall be

**Public Works embarks on 20 projects**

By Kruah Thompson

Acting Public Works Minister Ruth Coker has disclosed details of 20 ongoing projects embarked upon under President George Mannah Weah's administration, noting that most people do not have the opportunity to travel outside of Monrovia to see some of the things the ministry is doing.

At the Ministry of Information's Thursday, 8 July 2021 press briefing, Minister Coker said the 20 ongoing projects include the Roberts International Airport (RIA) road project; the corridor between Gabriel Tuckers Bridge and St. Paul Bridge; the overpass to be constructed between the SKD Boulevard and the Ministerial Complex and the Somalia Drive road which will be dedicated on July 26 this year.

Legislature and printed into hand bill on January 20, 2020.

She explained that the start date of the project is April 2021, and it has a duration of three years. Minister Coker continued that the current detail of the project is engaging the first 10 kilometer, which will be from RIA to ELWA junction, around the Unification area.

The Acting Public Works Minister said so much has been done on the RIA project, but it has been slowed down due to the rain.

Minister Coker indicated that she wants to show the Liberian people that the Ministry of Public Works is working, saying the country is gradually improving.

Additionally, Minister Coker noted that after a couple of discussions with the Japanese Ambassador upon his visited to



Acting Public Works Minister Ruth Coker

The projects also include the Cocoa Cola Factory road project; Harper road project which is about 66 kilometers completed; Fish Town road project; Ganta to Yekapa road; Sanniquellie to Logatuo road and Gbarnga to Salala road, respectively.

According to her, the RIA road is 45 km long, and has been upgraded to four lanes beginning from the ELWA Junction to the airport in Margibi County.

She disclosed that the RIA road project costs approximately US\$116 million, including design and construction, monitoring and supervision and a cost of compensation for those alone the RIA corridor.

Minister Coker said before the project was embarked upon, an act was approved on January 18, 2020 by the

Liberia, it was agreed that the sum of 20 million will be given to the Government of Liberia for the corridor between Gabriel Tuckers Bridge and St. Paul Bridge.

According to her, the first proposal presented to the Japanese government highlighted the entire length, but because of the Covid - 19, the Japanese government agreed to give 20 million to the Government of Liberia to construct at least two to three kilometers.

Regarding the overpass, Minister Coker revealed that two overpasses will be constructed at the SKD Boulevard and the Ministerial Complex in Congo Town.

She said the government has already signed to lunch this project in October of this year,

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11**

# Français

## La première dose du vaccin AstraZeneca expirera samedi prochain, alors que l'incertitude plane

Les vaccins AstraZeneca introduits dans le pays en avril devraient expirer ce samedi 10 juillet. Les Libériens sont ainsi dans l'incertitude quant à l'arrivée d'un nouveau lot, pendant que les cas de la variante delta augmentent dans le pays chaque jour.

Le Libéria a reçu 96 000 doses de vaccins AstraZeneca en avril, et plus de 90 000 doses ont été déjà administrées, selon le vice-ministre de la Santé, le docteur Francis Kateh, qui s'exprimait sur la radio OK FM récemment.

Les citoyens anxieux qui se présentent quotidiennement au ministère de la Santé pour se faire vacciner sont invités à faire preuve de patience, comme quoi des modalités sont en cours d'élaboration pour faire venir plus de vaccins dans le pays, mais aucune date précise n'est fixée.

La crise sanitaire actuelle au Libéria devient de plus en plus inquiétante, car les

statistiques de l'Institut national de santé publique du Libéria (NPHIL) du mardi 6 juillet 2021 font état de 4994 cas confirmés et 135 décès.

Le comté de Montserrado qui abrite la capitale nationale a enregistré 4 071 cas confirmés. Il est suivi par les comtés de Margibi avec 226 cas, de Nimba avec 108 cas, de Bong, 106 cas, de Grand Bassa avec 91 cas, de de Lofa avec 88 cas et de Bomi avec 63 cas.

Les Libériens affluent au ministère de la Santé et dans les hôpitaux de Monrovia pour se faire vacciner depuis la résurgence du virus, en particulier de la variante Delta, une nouvelle souche plus dangereuse que l'épidémie précédente.

Cependant, le Dr Kateh a fait croire lors d'une émission que le gouvernement travaille

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## PYJ cède à la pression et démissionne de son poste de président du comité sénatorial de la défense

Le sénateur du comté de Nimba, Prince Yormie Johnson, a finalement quitté son poste de président du comité sénatorial de la défense et du renseignement, plus d'un mois après que le gouvernement américain s'est opposé à son élection à la tête du comité.

Le 19 mai, le gouvernement des États-Unis, par l'intermédiaire de son ambassade à Monrovia, a fermement condamné l'élection du chef de

l'ancienne faction rebelle du Front patriotique national indépendant du Libéria à la présidence de la commission sénatoriale de la défense et du renseignement.

« Les violations flagrantes des droits humains du sénateur Johnson pendant les guerres civiles au Libéria sont bien documentées ; ses efforts continus pour se protéger de la responsabilité, enrichir ses propres coffres sont également bien connus », avait indiqué un communiqué publié à Monrovia le 19 mai 2021 par l'ambassade

des États-Unis ici.

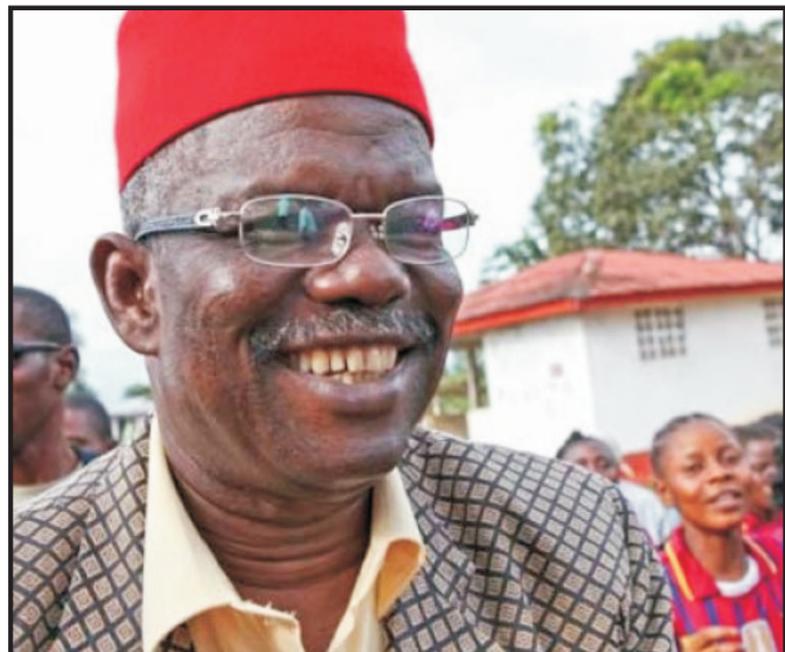
Pour le gouvernement américain, le fait que le Sénat libérien relèverait l'ancien chef rebelle à un rôle de leadership - en particulier dans le domaine dans lequel il a fait le plus de mal au Libéria - crée des doutes quant au sérieux du Sénat par rapport à la défense et la sécurité.

Cependant, le sénateur Johnson, dans une communication adressée au président du Sénat Albert Chie et à la séance plénière, a déclaré que sa démission faisait suite à une série de consultations avec les chefs, les anciens, les groupes de jeunes et les individus permanents.

Selon lui, des personnalités de premier plan l'ont convaincu de se retirer et de se concentrer sur sa propre candidature à sa réélection et sur la réélection du président George Manneh Weah en 2023.

« Je tiens à vous remercier profondément, distingués collègues du fond du cœur pour votre formidable soutien au fil des ans. J'ai eu l'occasion de servir les gens formidables du comté de Nimba. Vous m'avez élu à

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### COVID-19 : nous allons visiblement de mal en pis ?

Tout va mal au Libéria, car chaque jour plus de 200 nouveaux cas sont enregistrés au niveau de la population et les décès ne cessent d'augmenter.

Les morgues privées sont submergées de cadavres, tandis que les cercueils se font rares. Déjà, le Centre américain de contrôle des maladies et de Prévention a revu à la hausse le niveau d'alerte, en le situant à 4, le niveau le plus élevé. Le pays risque de succomber progressivement à la pandémie, si des efforts concertés ne sont pas entrepris immédiatement.

Les autorités sanitaires du pays continuent de faire croire au public qu'elles sont à la hauteur de la tâche, après avoir annoncé des mesures préventives. Cependant, la réalité sur le terrain montre le contraire, vu que de nouveaux cas et les décès se comptent par des centaines. Il est vrai que les combattants n'abandonneront jamais jusqu'à la mort du dernier combattant, mais le peuple libérien ne veut pas être décapité ou conduit à l'abattoir.

Nous croyons fermement que les tests rapides sont le moyen le plus sûr pour inverser la tendance actuelle, ce n'est pas le fait d'attendre que les patients infectés soient emmenés à Star Base pour de l'oxygène qui est à peine disponible. Le Libéria ne peut contenir la résurgence du coronavirus à moins qu'une campagne massive de tests rapides ne soit lancée dans tout le pays.

Dans ce combat, nous avons besoin de toutes les forces, y compris les experts qui ne font pas actuellement partie du gouvernement. Le combat n'appartient pas qu'à la ministre de la Santé, le docteur Wilehmina S. Jallah, et son équipe ou au système de gestion des incidents. Tous les Libériens doivent se joindre au combat pour vaincre le COVID-19.

C'est dans cette optique que nous nous félicitons de l'engagement de 150 000 USD de la Fondation Cummings Africa envers notre crise sanitaire, rejoignant le gouvernement du Libéria pour atteindre les hôpitaux et les centres de santé en particulier et les citoyens en général.

Comme M. Alexander B. Cummings, fondateur de la Fondation et leader politique de l'Alternative National Congress (ANC) l'a déclaré la semaine dernière lors de l'annonce de ce geste, le Libéria est actuellement gravement menacé. Si nous ne nous unissons pas les mains pour faire de notre mieux pour les uns les autres, nous continuerons tous à être en danger, même si nous nous cachons dans les maisons.

En outre, ceux qui mènent le combat du côté du gouvernement devraient faire preuve de volonté politique. Nous exigeons la vigilance à l'aéroport international Roberts, aux ports maritimes et aux frontières terrestres pour limiter la résurgence.

Ce faisant, il faut que nous érigeons des points de contrôle pertinents qui pourraient stopper la propagation, en particulier dans les comtés. Le système de santé n'a pas la capacité de répondre à toute situation accablante en dehors du comté de Montserrado, alors que même le siège du gouvernement lui-même est sérieusement remis en question.

Qu'on ne se méprenne pas sur le fait que nous sommes ici pessimistes. Il s'agit d'une tentative honnête de présenter la sombre réalité afin que tous les Libériens se réveillent de leur sommeil, de leur état de déni et fassent face au danger qui nous attend en tant que peuple. Nous devons porter nos masques correctement, respecter la distance sociale, nous laver les mains régulièrement et éviter les rassemblements de masse ou les endroits surpeuplés, entre autres, pour arrêter la propagation.

# Français

## La première dose du vaccin AstraZeneca

avec des partenaires, dont l'UNICEF et l'OMS, pour disposer de fournitures supplémentaires dans le pays.

Il a ajouté que les vaccins AstraZeneca introduits dans le pays expirent le 10 juillet et que les personnes qui ont pris la première dose auront une immunité de 8 à 12 semaines.

Le gouvernement français a récemment fait don de 56 000 tests antigéniques rapides et de respirateurs de transport 4OSIRIS3 pour la lutte contre le Covid-19.

## PYJ cède à la pression et démissionne de son poste

plusieurs reprises pour représenter cet auguste organe au parlement de la CEDEAO où j'ai eu le privilège d'occuper le poste de vice-président au parlement régional et dans ce Sénat en tant que président de la sécurité nationale, du renseignement, de la sécurité et des anciens combattants sur bulletins blancs. », a écrit Prince Johnson.

Selon lui, au cours des dernières semaines, ses résidences, tant celle d'ici que celle dans le comté de Nimba, ont été prises d'assaut par des chefs, des anciens de Nimba et d'autres parties prenantes qui étaient venus lui rendre visite pour lui demander de se retirer.

« Après avoir longuement réfléchi à la question et en consultation avec ma famille, j'ai décidé d'honorer leur demande. Je démissionne donc de mon poste de président de la commission de la défense nationale, du renseignement, de la sécurité et des anciens combattants du Sénat libérien à compter d'aujourd'hui.

PYJ a rappelé que les partenaires historiques du Libéria dont les États-Unis, ont décidé de ne pas soutenir

« Je tiens à remercier le gouvernement et le peuple de France pour ce magnifique don qui fait suite à ma rencontre avec mon ami et frère le président Macron. Permettez-moi également de souligner que je prends très au sérieux la relation Libéria-France », a déclaré le président Weah.

L'ambassadeur de France au Libéria a officiellement présenté le lot au président Weah le samedi 3 juillet 2021 à son arrivée de Paris, en France, où il a assisté au Forum Génération Égalité avec d'autres dirigeants mondiaux.

le comité tant qu'il en sera le président, ajoutant que le Libéria étant plus grand que n'importe qui, il a décidé de démissionner.

« L'armée qui est mon alma mater a besoin de soutien en ce moment critique du redressement de la nation, et je ne veux pas faire obstacle au soutien de l'armée en particulier et du Libéria en général. Dans le même ordre d'idées, je ne peux pas non plus me permettre de mettre le Sénat libérien en désaccord avec les États-Unis d'Amérique. Nous respectons les États-Unis et ferons tout pour travailler avec [eux] de manière à améliorer les relations et à favoriser le développement national », a expliqué le chef de l'INPFL.

Pendant ce temps, une motion du Sénat du comté de Maryland, J. Gblebo Brown, a été présentée le mardi 6 juillet 2021 pour que la lettre de démission soit acceptée. Ce qui a été fait à une écrasante majorité.

Pendant ce temps, le président du Sénat Pro-Tempore Chie a nommé le sénateur du comté de Lofa, Steve Zargo, qui s'était refusé pour que le PYJ soit élu président de la commission de la défense et du renseignement, pour assurer son intérim, en attendant l'élection d'un nouveau président.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Djoomart Otorbaev

## Après l'effondrement de l'Afghanistan

**B**ICHKEK - Le 2 juillet dernier, l'armée américaine a cédé le contrôle de l'énorme base aérienne de Bagram à l'armée afghane. Les troupes américaines et leurs alliés de l'OTAN sont sur le point de quitter définitivement l'Afghanistan d'ici la mi-juillet, bien plus tôt que la date butoir de retrait fixée au 11 septembre 2021 par le président américain Joe Biden.

Selon une nouvelle analyse de chercheurs de l'université Brown, la guerre qu'ont livrée les États-Unis pendant vingt ans en Afghanistan leur a coûté près de 2300 milliards de dollars. À présent, les pays voisins de l'Afghanistan - le Pakistan, l'Iran, la Chine, l'Inde et les pays d'Asie centrale - se demandent quel sera le prix à payer pour maintenir la sécurité régionale après le retrait des États-Unis.

Fin juin, les services de renseignement américains ont conclu que la chute du gouvernement afghan devrait intervenir dans les six mois suivant le retrait des troupes américaines - une sombre révision à la baisse d'une évaluation antérieure plus optimiste. Alors que les talibans ont lancé une vaste offensive dans le nord de l'Afghanistan, s'emparant de dizaines de districts et de villes importantes, les forces de sécurité afghanes ont souvent capitulé sans opposer de résistance. Selon le rapport publié en juin par l'Équipe de surveillance des sanctions des Nations unies en Afghanistan, les talibans exercent un contrôle direct sur plus de la moitié des centres administratifs de district et contrôlent jusqu'à 70 pour cent du territoire afghan, hors des centres urbains.

Les répercussions de ces victoires des insurgés se font déjà ressentir dans toute la région. D'intenses affrontements armés ont eu lieu à seulement quatre heures de route de Douchanbé, la capitale du Tadjikistan. Le 20 juin, les combattants talibans ont encerclé les forces gouvernementales à Kunduz dans le nord-est de l'Afghanistan, la sixième ville du pays (130.000 habitants). Puis, le 22 juin, les talibans se sont emparés du poste frontière de Shir Khan Bandar à la frontière entre l'Afghanistan et le Tadjikistan, sans même avoir à combattre.

Les garde-frontières tadjiks ont indiqué avoir autorisé 134 soldats afghans à trouver refuge au Tadjikistan, tandis que 53 autres soldats et miliciens afghans stationnés à la frontière ont fui en Ouzbékistan face à une offensive des talibans dans le district de Shortepa dans le nord du pays ; et le 5 juillet, plus d'un millier de soldats afghans se sont mis à l'abri au Tadjikistan en traversant la frontière depuis la province afghane du Badakhshan.

Il est très probable que dans les prochaines semaines, les talibans se rendent entièrement maîtres des régions bordant le fleuve Amou-Daria et la rivière Piandj qui marquent la frontière entre l'Afghanistan d'une part et l'Ouzbékistan et le Tadjikistan de l'autre. Étant donné qu'une telle conjoncture permettrait aux talibans de contrôler les frontières internationales de l'Afghanistan sur ce front, le risque s'est considérablement accru de voir des réfugiés afghans affluer en masse en Asie centrale, et de là en Russie et en Europe.

Après avoir clandestinement soutenu les insurgés

talibans pour saper les forces américaines et de la coalition occidentale, la Russie s'inquiète aujourd'hui d'une plus large déstabilisation en Asie centrale et au-delà. En réponse à l'évolution récente de la situation en Afghanistan, le ministre russe de la Défense Sergueï Shoigu a indiqué que « d'ici la fin de l'année, le commandement du district militaire central devra rééquiper deux régiments d'aviation avec des chasseurs-bombardiers Su-34M et des chasseurs d'interception MiG-31BM modernisés ». Ce renforcement de la force aérienne russe dans la région « augmentera notablement la capacité du district à combattre l'ennemi par des tirs et des missiles de croisière dans la zone stratégique de l'Asie centrale ».

De même, après s'être montrée accommodante envers les talibans, la Chine craint également une plus grande instabilité régionale provoquée par le retrait américain. Outre le fait que le retour en force des insurgés talibans pourrait perturber l'initiative eurasiatique « la Ceinture et la Route » du président chinois Xi Jinping, il est également susceptible d'encourager l'extrémisme islamiste dans la province chinoise du Xinjiang.

La probabilité que l'Afghanistan connaisse un appauvrissement général de la population et soit à l'origine de flux migratoires massifs et d'instabilité est désormais un sujet d'inquiétude pour de nombreux pays, même si ce sont surtout les gouvernements d'Asie centrale qui seront en première ligne. Pourtant, de nombreux responsables régionaux se montrent étonnamment optimistes. À la suite d'une récente visite aux États-Unis pour discuter de l'Afghanistan et de la sécurité régionale, le ministre ouzbek des Affaires étrangères, Abdulaziz Kamilov, a donné une longue interview dans laquelle il a affirmé que seuls les Afghans, talibans y compris, pouvaient résoudre les problèmes de l'Afghanistan.

« Nous sommes modérément optimistes » a-t-il expliqué, « parce que la situation a changé. Les deux parties sont en contact direct, pour la première fois depuis 40 ans. Les talibans souhaitent également que des négociations directes permettent de parvenir à un règlement pacifique ». Tout en soulignant qu'il n'est pas un défenseur des insurgés, Kamilov s'est référé à une publication officielle du site web des talibans disant que leur objectif est de construire un Émirat islamique d'Afghanistan souverain et indépendant, exempt d'ingérence extérieure. Dans ce nouveau pays, les droits des femmes, des filles et des minorités seraient supposément respectés.

Il est difficile de croire que Kamilov, un diplomate chevronné, soit dupe de ces belles paroles. Néanmoins, en affirmant que l'Afghanistan devrait être plus pleinement intégré dans l'économie de l'Asie centrale, il avance des arguments stratégiques solides. Même les talibans peuvent être séduits par l'idée du rétablissement d'une « Grande Asie centrale », susceptible de recréer en partie le dynamisme économique de l'apogée de la Route de la soie (1100-1600 après. J.C.)

Maintenant que la Chine est déterminée à développer ses échanges commerciaux, ses investissements et infrastructures dans toute l'Eurasie, cette vision a une chance de se concrétiser. Mais d'abord, la paix doit prévaloir, avant tout en Afghanistan.

### COVID-19

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# No second dose of vaccines

By Lewis S. Teh

The Minister of Health and head of the Incident Management System, Dr. Wilhemina Jallah, says there is absolutely no second dose of vaccines to be administered to the public, as the nation's initial stock of 96,000 doses of the AstraZeneca jabs dries out.

"From today, there are no more first and second doses; we don't have any vaccines for first and second dose", Dr. Jallah told a weekly briefing at the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism in Monrovia Thursday, July 08, 2021.

However, she assured that government is making numerous efforts to make sure fresh supply of vaccines are in the country by end of July and up to August.

According to the Health Minister, anyone missing second dose of the vaccines for 6-12 weeks is safe, calling on the public to exercise patience, pending arrival of additional consignment.

Expiry date for the current vaccines in country, according to Chief Medical Officer Dr. Frances Kateh, is tomorrow, Saturday, July 10th.

Giving an update of the



status of the third wave of the virus, Minister Jallah narrates that as of July 7, 2021, 32 new cases were recorded, saying, "to me, it's far different from last month; we're not seeing that much in our daily activities."

She put the total number of confirmed case at 5,026; active cases 2,375 with total deaths at 136, for the period March to July, while total recovery is at 2,516, and a total of 1026, 322 samples collected so far.

Dr. Jallah further disclosed 13 of the 15 counties are in respond, and that additional five persons were admitted at the

government treatment unit at Star Base, Bushrod Island, saying out of 58 patients there, 44 are on oxygen.

At the same time she urged citizens departing Liberia to monitor the health protocol before travel to avoid further embarrassment. "You have to be very careful about your departure."

"To our travelers, if you are tested positive and later come back with negative results just after a day or two, we will not give you certificate, you should have to be retested for 7-10 days

after the first test and the test has to be done at the union testing center."

We don't want people saying the system is corrupt, forgetting to know they are supporter of the corrupt act by the fact that they are desperate to leave will make them to bribe people behind closed doors just to have their result out before it's time she noted.

Liberia's Chief Medical Officer and Deputy Minister of Health, Dr. Francis Kateh had earlier disclosed there were no vaccines in storage, and health officials were trying to collect vaccines that were

previously taken to counties where residents were unwilling to be vaccinated to redistribute them and administer a second dose in Montserrado County where the usage has increased.

"So where we are now is the fact that we do not have any vaccine now in our storage," Dr. Karteh said during a live talk show on OK FM Wednesday, 7 July in Monrovia.

"But what we are doing, because we have distributed the vaccines to other counties and so forth, we are going through and trying to check what is left in those counties because we need to collect them and where we have people willing to take the vaccines now to give it to them," he continued. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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### A NOTE OF CONDOLENCE

To The Varmah & McGill Families  
Following the Death of Ma Watta Varmah  
Mother of Honorable Nathaniel F. McGill  
MINISTER OF STATE FOR PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS



JUNE 26, 2021

Today we have received with deep sadness news of the unfortunate passing of Madam Ma Watta Varmah, Mother of the Honorable Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, Nathaniel McGill. Mother Ma Watta Varmah succumbed to the cold hands of death earlier today.

I came to know her personally and we created a special bond.

On behalf of First Lady Mrs. Clar Marie Weah, the entire Weah family and in my own name, I extend my profound sympathy to the bereaved family. The deceased offered invaluable counsel,

especially during the 2017 elections whenever we stopped by her house. She was a loving and wonderful woman.

She was one of the biggest supporters of the Coalition for Democratic Change, and we cannot thank her enough for all her contributions.

Her passing has created a deep void in our hearts.

We pray that the Lord consoles the McGill family and all Liberians afflicted in similar manner.

May her soul and the souls of all faithful departed rest in perfect peace and may light perpetual shines upon them.

H.E. George Manneh Weah  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

## Public Works embarks

Cont'd from page 7

responsibilities of the bank, coupled with technological innovation and competing priorities, the board of governors and management approved a three-year strategic plan (2021-2023) launched in early May to enhance productivity and ensure effective use of scarce resources in achieving mandates of the bank.

Mr. Tarlue spoke of expanding scope of the regulatory functions of the CBL, including licensed financial institutions and digital credits to enhance services.

Talking about loan scheme and policy, the CBL executive boss also mentioned increase of the maximum amount of loan to be granted from US\$7,000 to US\$50,000 or 0.5 percent of the total net worth of microfinance deposit-taking institution and expansion of permissible activities.

He argued that these regulations seek to create the environment for discount houses to develop financial markets for sale of land purchase or financial instruments.

He pointed out that as part of the efforts to rebrand the CBL, as envisaged in the strategic plan, the bank is pushing through a broader

partnership with the media to inform the public its activities, developments in the financial system and the economy in general.

He continued that the first step toward the rebranding process, the bank has signed an MOU with the Liberia Broadcasting System and began rolling out a regular radio program called 'money matters'.

"The bank has drafted a comprehensive communication and stakeholder engagement strategy that is now being reviewed internally. The strategy is part of the bank's vision to remain open and accountable to its stakeholders and the Liberia people. We look forward to a fruitful exchange of ideas during today's hearing, not your questions, but also to hear views," he concluded. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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# Tarlue wants digital banking system

By Ethel A Tweh

Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) Executive Governor J. Aloysius Tarlue, Jr., has told a Senate confirmation hearing that the banking system in the country needs to go digital.

Appearing before the Senate Committee on Banking, Finance and Currency during his confirmation hearing Thursday, 8 July 2021, Tarlue said the printing of money is

that the system has been abused for so long.

Mr. Tarlue explained further that during his first term as CBL Governor, he put a biometric tracking system into place in order to know who goes to work or not, and also an appraisal system into place.

Tarlue further stated that they have a three-year strategic plan to lead the CBL forward, noting that the CBL Act was approved under his leadership while the first four billion Liberian Dollars was printed

the people in the rural areas to get their salaries.

According to him, the digital system will be a great help, noting that "My legacy is [to] change Liberia to a digital country."

Governor Tarlue continued that the CBL is working with Nigeria, Ghana and other African countries, noting that buying rice and other things from Nigeria and Ghana will be cheaper in transportation than to get it from those other far away countries.

For his part, Deputy CBL Governor for Economy Policy Dr. Musa Dukuly said during his confirmation hearing that he has served the position since 2019 and was reappointed by President Weah.

According to him, when he took over in 2019, the exchange rate was high and there was inflation, saying in order to have some of these settled, Liberia joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) program and was asked to cut down staff and carry on salary harmonization.

Dr. Dukuly explained further that CBL cut down 274 staffers because the program was a lifeline for Liberia's economy and they couldn't miss being a part of it.

He said in 2019, he took over with no handover notes, adding that the domestic production was weak and there was about \$23 million dollars outside the bank, though it is now about \$20 million.

Dr. Dukuly concluded that since he took over in 2019, there has been a growth in the micro economic system, saying Liberia has reached the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) target.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



not the solution to the problem here.

Tarlue, who was concluding a tenure as CBL Governor when he was nominated again by President George Manneh Weah, informed the Senate Committee that US\$ 6m has been allocated for the digital banking project, already approved by the World Bank.

According to him, since he became governor of the Central Bank, he has put a prudent financial system in place because he observed

under his watch.

"Thanks again to the Liberian Senate for trusting us to print new bank notes," he said.

The CBL boss suggested that the use of mobile money system helped them greatly during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, where people will not be able to stand in huge cues in baking halls as a way of observing social distancing.

Governor Tarlue explained that there are not many banks in the various counties, lamenting that four counties have a single bank and it is very difficult for

Cont'd from page 7

## Campaigners asked lawmakers

year.

Mr. Henries says in light of the provisions and in line with Article 17 of the Constitution, each lawmaker refunds the amount (US\$15,000.00) received for legislative engagement to the Government of Liberia's General Revenue Account and revert to status quo ante.

Article 17 of the constitution reads that all persons, at all times, in an orderly and peaceable

manner, shall have the right to assemble and consult upon the common good, to instruct their representatives, to petition the government or other functionaries for the redress of grievances, and to associate fully with others or refuse to associate in political parties, trade unions, and other organizations.

He notes that Legislative powers have limitations and must be adhered to at any given point, warning that crossing

those limits sets a dangerous path for the country's democracy.

"We are confident that the Legislature is cognizant of its powers and limitations (as a first branch, we expect members there to do better). For too long, Liberians have branded the Legislative branch as a corrupt body. For once, we expect you all to redeem that image", the petition concludes.

Receiving the petition on behalf of the House of Representatives, Bong County district #7 Representative Joseph Papa Kolleh said, he will present the document to the committee on claim and petition for onward submission to the full plenary. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

# Lonestar Cell MTN

Starts from back page

Reporters Association of Liberia.

Ms. White says Lonestar Cell MTN has gone beyond just a mobile company, saying, "We are more than a mobile company; we are a major implementing partner to the government, and today is another milestone for us to collaborate with you members of the media."

She recalls that on January 27, 2021, the African Union and the MTN group pledged US\$25 million to assist the African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She adds that the African CDC has secured seven million COVID-19 vaccine doses that would be rolled out to healthcare workers in all 55 member States.

Also speaking, the communication lead for the Incident Management System Chester Smith, extols Lonestar Cell MTN for the donation. "We at the Incident

Management System are excited to form part of this presentation", he says.

"We want to applaud our partner Lonestar Cell MTN for this kind gesture, from the angle of the incident management we think helping the media in these critical times will go a long way."

Mr. Smith describes the role of the media in the fight as pivotal, and hopes the items will be used for reporters to prevent themselves.

The president of the Reporters Association of Liberia Madam Cecelia Clarke similarly lauds Lonestar Cell MTN for the gesture, and notes the collaboration with the GSM company will go a long way in moving the country forward.

"We look forward to receiving additional donations from partners and other stakeholders, and we encourage other bigger institutions to do same." *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

## Public Works embarks

Cont'd from page 7

adding that Chinese teams are already in the country and carrying out survey and technical work.

Concerning the Cocoa Cola Factory road project, Minister Coker said the road is 100 kilometers and is funded by the World Bank, adding that the government's concern is to have the marketers removed from the way in order to give access to contractors to carry out their work.

She said last year, a segment of the road was not completed because of the marketers.

The Public Works boss said the ministry is working closely with the Liberian Marketing Association to ask sellers to go back to the market constructed by the president and leave the road.

She added that the market women have agreed to go back to the market, and there will be a lot of activities in the corridor this week.

She said from Sunday, 11 July, the government will be doing clearing to give access to contractors for them to carry out their work.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

## Gongloe recommits

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Transitional Justice Working Group, Movement for Better Liberia, Catholic Bishop Conference of Liberia, Global Justice Research Project, Association of Evangelical, Press Union of Liberia, Liberians United for Justice and Association, Liberia Massacre Victims Association, Federation of Liberian Youth, Liberia National Student Union, Liberia Council of Churches and National Imam Council of Liberia.

In a press release prior to the petition, the group noted

that over Two Hundred Fifty Thousand (250,000) Liberians were killed, tens of thousands injured and millions were displaced internally across the country with others as refugees in neighboring countries as a result of the fourteen years brutal civil war in the country, adding that since the end of the civil war, no one has been held accountable for the massive killings and massacre of Liberians with the alleged perpetrators walking around with impunity. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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## Lonestar Cell MTN donates face masks, hand sanitizers



partner in the ongoing fight. Lonestar Cell MTN on Thursday, July 8, 2021 presented huge quantity of COVID- 19 preventive materials to the Reporters Association of Liberia or RAL, to help the organization and its members prevent contracting the virus.

Lonestar Cell MTN Corporate Communication Manager Ms. Lisa White says, the gesture is the company's way of identifying with the Liberian media in the fight against the deadly pandemic that has taken over 100 lives since the emergence of the Delta variant in the country.

"As you all are aware, the role you play as journalists in the society is pivotal to the growth and development of this country", Ms. White remarked during a brief ceremony held at the headquarters of the Press Union of Liberia in Monrovia.

The company presented 1,000 pieces of face masks and hands sanitizers to the

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11**

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By Lewis S. Teh

As the fight to curtail the third wave of the deadly coronavirus continues here,

Liberia's biggest GSM Company, Lonestar Cell MTN has donated facemasks, hands sanitizers and other detergents to members of the Liberian media, a key

## Man City or PSG signing Messi would be 'financial doping'

LaLiga president Javier Tebas says Manchester City or Paris Saint-Germain would be committing "financial doping" if they signed Lionel Messi on similar terms to his previous Barcelona deal.

Argentina captain Messi is a free agent after his Barca contract expired at the end of June.

The six-time Ballon d'Or winner has been linked with City and PSG previously, though he is expected to remain with the Blaugrana

despite their financial problems. Tebas does not see how any club would be able to offer Messi the sort of terms he had been earning, with his last contract reportedly worth in excess of €500million over four years.

Asked if Messi would have to take a pay cut to extend his stay at Barca, Tebas said: "Exactly. He won't be able to sign on the previous conditions, that's impossible.

"But I don't think any European club would be able to pay that amount."

Tebas added: "City have lost



€270m [during the coronavirus pandemic] so obviously they wouldn't even consider signing Messi [on the terms he was previously on].

"PSG have had losses, too, so they can't even consider signing Messi.

"If they do, it will be financial doping. It would be incredible if it happened. We need to establish limits. Financial doping is damaging football.

"It's not real money because it's not generated by the clubs. Money not from football causes bad inflation and ruins football

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