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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA		
MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR		
DATE	BUYING	SELLING
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022	LS150.2631 /US\$1.00	LS152.0925 /US\$1.00

These are indicative rates based on results of daily surveys of foreign exchange market in Monrovia and selected cities of Liberia. These rates are collected from the Central bank, commercial banks, parallel market and the license forex bureaux. The rates are not set by the Central Bank of Liberia.
Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL

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Continental News

Soldiers mutiny at military bases in Burkina Faso

Soldiers have mutinied at several barracks in Burkina Faso to demand the sacking of military chiefs, and more resources to fight militant Islamists.

Heavy gunfire rang out for hours from barracks in the capital Ouagadougou, and at a nearby air base.

Hundreds of people came out in support of the troops, and torched the ruling party's headquarters.

The government said the crisis had been contained.

It dismissed rumours of a new coup attempt, just over a week after 11 soldiers were detained for allegedly plotting a coup.

It is the latest sign of growing discontent with President Roch Kaboré's government over its failure to quell the Islamist insurgency that has devastated the West African state since 2015.

The gunshots were heard at military camps in the west and south of the capital, and at an air base near the main airport.

Soldiers convicted of a coup attempt in 2015 are imprisoned at the camp in the west, known as Sangoule Lamizana.

Shooting was also heard at military bases in the northern towns of Kaya and Ouahigouya, the US embassy said.

The mutineers made several demands, including: the dismissal of the army

chief of staff and the head of the intelligence service

the deployment of more troops to the front line to fight the insurgents

better care for wounded soldiers, and the families of those killed in battle.

In a televised address to the nation earlier, Defence Minister Barthélémy Simporé

said there were "localised, limited" incidents "in a few barracks", and none of the "republican institutions" had been targeted.

Gen Simporé urged people to continue with their normal activities, saying the government would release further information in due course.

The location of President Kaboré is unclear, but the defence minister denied rumours circulating on social media that he was under arrest.

Internet monitoring group NetBlocks said that access to the web had been disrupted.

The killing of 53 people by suspected jihadists in November heightened public outrage against the government, and raised fears that the military would take power - just as it had in neighbouring Mali in May.

On Saturday, dozens of people were arrested in Ouagadougou for holding a banned rally to protest against what they described as the government's inability to deal with the militants.

Mr Kaboré, a former banker and prime minister, became president after winning elections in 2015.

The polls were the first since long-serving ruler Blaise Compaoré went into exile a year earlier following a popular uprising against his rule. BBC



The military has been battling to curb a long-running insurgency

Sudan protests: 'Did I just survive a massacre?'

"Did I just survive a massacre?" asked a young Sudanese man when he answered my call not long after security forces had opened fire on protesters in downtown Khartoum.

Known by his Twitter name Bashy, he told how one of seven people had died last Monday afternoon in the capital. "I was filming the protesters and walking when a bullet penetrated his chest;

he died in front of me. That could have been me!"

In his mid-twenties, and usually with a smile on his face, Bashy has been protesting on the streets for the past three months. Like many of his contemporaries, he is furious that the military seized power last October, just over two years into an agreement between the generals and a civilian coalition to share power.

Life had been improving and

the economic crisis easing as civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok brought Sudan in from the cold following sanctions imposed on the country during the long rule of Omar al-Bashir, accused of using the country to sponsor terrorism.

The former president's military allies ousted him in April 2019 in the wake of mass protests, but they then showed their reluctance to share power with those on the streets when they turned their guns on them in a devastating massacre two months later. The outcry that followed forced the generals to agree to the transition - but as many suspected, the military was never happy with the arrangement, and the latest coup, they say, has proved them right. Bashy, who has been on the front lines of the recent demonstrations documenting the rallies and marches on his social media feeds, says those on the neighbourhood committees co-ordinating the fightback on the streets are mainly

Deadly fire sweeps through nightclub in Cameroon



Police have sealed off the nightclub following the fire

At least 16 people have been killed in a fire at a nightclub in Cameroon's capital Yaoundé, the government has said.

The blaze was caused by fireworks that were lit while champagne was being served in the club, it added.

At least eight others were seriously injured in the fire in the early hours of Sunday at Liv's Night Club.

The fire engulfed the main room of the venue in the capital's upmarket Bastos district.

"The tragedy, which was caused by explosions from the fireworks often used in these places, first consumed the

building's ceiling, resulting in two very loud explosions, causing panic and a stampede," the communications ministry said in a statement.

The emergency services were still searching the venue, and the number of dead could rise, it added.

About 100 people gathered outside a hospital morgue for news about their relatives.

"I've lost my little brother. He was a good, kind boy who has been working in this club for about two months," Stephane Hamza, 38, told AFP.

"When I heard about the explosion, I came to the morgue where I was told he was dead." BBC



young. In fact it is estimated that 61% of Sudan's population is under the age of 25 and they are fed up with what Bashy terms "strong-man rule". It is a generational conflict with the young wanting a more equitable, peaceful, and democratic future.

"We are different to previous generations," says

Bashy. "We want to stop the cycle, this vicious cycle of military coups and authoritarianism. That is why we protest - because we wish to see the end of this cycle." The protesters feel they have legitimacy on their side - and the junta has indeed been dealt a blow by the resignation earlier this month of Mr Hamdok. BBC

EDITORIAL

REALISE should not be a political spin

FOUR YEARS INTO his administration, President George Manneh Weah just announced an ambitious Recovery of Economic Activity for Liberian Informal Sector Employment Project or REALISE for short, over the weekend that he says, will lift Liberians out of poverty and empower local businesses, barely one year to elections.

ONE WOULD HAVE thought that any serious plan that sincerely seeks to recovering economic activity in the country would have rolled out from the very inception of this administration in order to leave enough time to measure successes and challenges other than a quick-fix for re-election.

THE EXECUTIVE MANSION in Monrovia quotes President Weah as saying the REALISE Project will promote economic activities for 19,000 Liberians in the Greater Monrovia area - 4,000 vulnerable Liberians in the informal sector will receive support to either start a new business or improve existing ones, while 15,000 Liberians will also be empowered to engage in labor-intensive community-based public works in urban areas.

We view the so-called REALISE as another political spin to attract voters for the President's re-election bid next year. Nothing else. This is not a well-crafted, sustainable program that impoverished Liberians can bank on to improve their lives but purely a bit to support the re-election of the governing CDC.

PRESIDENT WEAH PROMISED at his inauguration that Liberians will no longer be spectator in their own economy. The President should please tell the nation how many Liberian-owned businesses has he empowered in the past four years of his administration.

WE WONDER HOW does giving unskilled and jobless youths shovels, diggers, brooms, rakes and wheelbarrows empower them for sustainable living. The government in power should be different thru its programs from politicians craving for votes.

ON THE CONTRARY, we think the launch of the REALISE Project sends a very weak signal of the government's professed determination to empower Liberians. It is bent on making mockery of citizens rather than bettering their lots.

WE SAY BECAUSE for the past four years nothing tangible was done in this direction, only for a year to election to come out with something funny.

WORSE STILL, THE government did not say how much money it has budgeted for the REALISE Project to own it but only disclosed the French Government, through its Agency for French Development (AFD), has committed a total of approximately €9,000,000 and a team is already in Liberia from Paris, France to conduct feasibility studies.

We can bet our heart that right after the 2023 elections, if Weah is elected for second term, REALISE will be flushed in the toilet because it was never meant for sustainability in the first place.

WHEN A GOVERNMENT THAT is washed in corruption and cronyism announces that it is now ready to better the lives of its citizens we need to think twice before applauding said intention.

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

COMMENTARY

By Michael Spence

Why Is the IMF Trying to Be an Aid Agency?

CAMBRIDGE - Who is going to clean up the inevitable financial mess in emerging markets if persistent inflation forces the US Federal Reserve to start raising interest rates significantly? The International Monetary Fund, normally tasked with pulling countries back from the brink, seems disenchanted with the job. Rather than embracing its traditional role of helping troubled debtor countries help themselves, the IMF has been attempting to morph into an aid agency.

Of course, it is more fun to be Santa than Scrooge, and rich countries give far too little in foreign aid. I have long advocated establishing a world carbon bank to channel grants and technology. Likewise, the case for funding a restructured World Health Organization to fight pandemics is compelling. But in a world where private capital flows far outweigh official lending, traditional IMF programs still have a critical role to play in mitigating and managing financial crises.

That role has been abandoned during the pandemic, and re-establishing it will be difficult. Handing out funding with few strings attached made sense in the initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis. But because the IMF is still very much structured as a lending agency, it eventually will have to be repaid or go bankrupt itself. To get a sense of what that might look like, consider the tensions with Argentina, which received a massive \$57 billion loan in 2018 with uncharacteristically weak IMF conditions attached and is now balking at repaying.

The lack of conditionality in some recent cases has been appalling. Should the IMF really be furnishing virtually unconditional loans to a government that is restricting food imports to an under-nourished population, thereby exacerbating the problems caused by the government's own exchange-rate controls? It has done so in Nigeria in 2020. In other cases, the Fund has been extraordinarily generous in its normally cautious surveillance assessments, giving its gold seal of approval to countries with exploding debt-to-GDP ratios that stabilize only under very optimistic assumptions.

The 2021 Article IV report for Ghana is a case in point. And the Fund has been even more sanguine about large emerging markets such as Brazil and South Africa, again arguing that dealing with the pandemic is the absolute top priority, despite soaring debt levels, rising inflation, and simmering banking problems.

This lack of conditionality has been by

design. During the pandemic, the Fund massively expanded use of its Rapid Financing Instrument, a lending facility that does not require countries to enter into a "full-fledged" adjustment program (and that in practice requires few conditions or none at all). Even more visibly, it has persuaded its members to approve an emergency issuance of \$650 billion in special drawing rights (SDRs, the Fund's reserve asset), which also have essentially no conditions. SDRs are basically direct aid that goes to every IMF member, including Russia and Iran. And yet, owing to the instrument's arcane structure, developing economies stand to receive only a small fraction of the pot.

There are strong arguments for revamping the financial structure of the IMF and its sister organization, the World Bank, so that the vast bulk of the funding they provide takes the form of outright grants, rather than loans. I have been advocating such a transformation for decades, and recently the idea has started to receive serious attention. Because the IMF is currently structured as a revolving fund, it would quickly run dry if it forgave all its loans, as some NGOs are always asking it to do. The only way this would not happen is if the advanced economies agreed to replenish the well, which they seem loathe to do.

One key condition should be that IMF funds are not used simply to repay private creditors. Researchers have shown clearly that this happened during the 1980s, and again more recently. State-owned Chinese banks that charge private-market interest rates also are now a factor to consider. There should be ways to ensure that IMF loans do not go to pay off Chinese ones.

There are striking parallels between a well-meaning IMF and a well-meaning Fed that now wants to foster greater equality. After long arguing that sharply rising inflation is transitory, the Fed now faces a dilemma. Unless it tightens monetary policy sufficiently over the next year (a much bigger risk than official rhetoric acknowledges), inflation could become embedded. If it tightens too fast, there will be a recession. Stagflation is also a real possibility.

The IMF similarly needs to pivot in its core surveillance functions. The dire plight of emerging markets and developing economies commands great sympathy, but the IMF is not the World Bank, which really is an aid agency. Instead, forceful IMF conditionality is essential to establish financial stability and ensure that its resources do not end up financing capital flight, repayments to foreign creditors, or domestic corruption. The pandemic is not going away; nor should the traditional IMF.

OPINION

By Shashi Tharoor

India's Chauvinist Crusade

For decades, India was seen as a rare democratic success story in the developing world. But, by barring NGOs, including Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity, from receiving foreign funding, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government has once again demonstrated that it has a very different vision of India.

NEW DELHI - The restrictive, illiberal trend that has come to characterize India over the last five years has a new data point. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government decided that Christmas Day was a good time to deny renewal of a license for the Missionaries of Charity to receive foreign funding.

Founded by Mother Teresa, whom the Catholic Church canonized in 2016, this order of Christian nuns has been operating in the country since 1950. But because Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) swear by a "Hindutva" ideology - committing them to a vision of India as a "Hindu Rashtra," or Hindu nation - the government has been conducting a sweeping campaign against organizations that its bigotry will not abide.

Because all NGOs in India need official permission to receive foreign funds for their operations in accordance with the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) of 2010, the government can wield significant power over civil society. And Modi's national security adviser, Ajit Doval, has made clear that the government intends to use that power. In a recent speech that stunned the country, Doval singled out NGOs as "the new frontiers of war," arguing that "it is the civil society that can be subverted, suborned, divided, manipulated to hurt the interests of a nation."

The government has seized on unwanted NGOs' Achilles' heel: many are sustained in large part by international donors, foundations, and charities. Hence, in 2015, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs revoked the foreign-funding license for Greenpeace and, in 2020, froze Amnesty International's accounts, effectively crippling their Indian operations. In June 2021, it did the same to the highly respected Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.

But while these secular groups were targeted for their liberal policy orientations and human-rights work, the government has reserved a special level of hostility for foreign-funded religious NGOs, which it suspects of trying to convert unwitting Hindus. Thus, in September 2021, the home ministry suspended the foreign-funding license for Harvest India, a Christian missionary organization, alleging that it had violated the FCRA.

In the action against Missionaries of Charity, Modi and the BJP have broken sharply from previous Indian governments, all of which hailed Mother Teresa's noble (and Nobel Prize-winning) work ministering to the poor, dying, and destitute. Many Hindus have long treated her with great reverence because of this work. But since the BJP's ascent to power, her achievements have increasingly been disparaged as mere attempts at proselytization.

In response to media queries about the Missionaries of Charity decision, the home ministry has claimed that "some adverse inputs were noticed" while reviewing the charity's renewal application. In December, a police complaint was filed against the organization in Gujarat - which Modi governed for many years - alleging that the Missionaries were forcing Hindu girls to convert. But the group denies the allegations, insisting that it has "not converted anyone or forced anyone to marry into the Christian faith." Formal charges have yet to be filed in court.

While the government has made clear that it will crack down on efforts to use charity as an inducement for conversion, the targeted organizations have made equally clear that they do nothing of the kind. The authorities' Hindutva bias is clear to see. There is a widespread perception that only Christian and Muslim organizations face critical scrutiny, whereas Hindu charities continue to receive foreign funding. For example, Hindu groups have been openly trying to convert India's aboriginal Adivasi people (known collectively as "tribals," most of whom practice animist faiths) in the country's northeast, but none has been targeted by the government crackdown on foreign funding.

The government's efforts have already had a measurable impact. According to Bain & Company, there was a 30% decline in international funding to nonprofits in India between 2016 and 2021. During that period, the home ministry pursued action against 13,000 NGOs and canceled 4,800 licenses, for a variety of reasons.

The focus on conversions is in keeping with the broader Hindutva project. Hindutva votaries see India as a Hindu nation that has been historically beset by invaders and interlopers who want to change its essential character. In their view, converting Hindus to other faiths would dilute Indian-ness itself.

The BJP is thus engaged in a systematic effort to curb entities whose work, ethos, or principles fall afoul of the government's narrow-minded vision of India. After Doval's speech and the home ministry's action against the Missionaries of Charity, civil-society organizations must assume that things will get only worse.

India is at an inflection point. For decades, it was seen as a rare democratic success story in the developing world. It had a reputation for celebrating its diversity, embracing differences, and allowing all groups, faiths, and ideologies to flourish. But with its restrictive, bigoted, and increasingly autocratic approach, Modi's government is signaling to the world that it would not mind if India earned a very different reputation.

That could make for some diplomatic awkwardness in the new year. In October, following a private meeting with Pope Francis at the G20 summit in Rome, Modi invited the pontiff to visit India. Church sources indicate the pope is likely to travel to India later this year. But Frances will scarcely be able to ignore his flock's concerns about a country where groups aligned with the ruling party have been credibly accused of attacking churches and disrupting Christmas celebrations, and where the best-known Christian charity now faces severe restrictions on its ability to continue the work pioneered by one of the Church's own saints. It could make for a fraught visit indeed.

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O-PED

By Carl Bildt

Bosnia's Next Crisis

Nationalist rivalries and rampant corruption continue to hold Bosnia and Herzegovina back. Now that it is in another deep political crisis, the international community must reconsider and clarify its own role, creating the conditions for Bosnian leaders finally to sit down and hash out the compromises needed to make the country work.

STOCKHOLM - The Russian threat to Ukraine is not the only potential crisis in Eastern Europe this year. Bosnia and Herzegovina is heading for a period of deep political turmoil, with a key election scheduled for October.

Bosnia has never been an uncomplicated place. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it generated one crisis after another, eventually contributing to the outbreak of World War I. Then, with the breakup of Yugoslavia in the late twentieth century, it was the site of a brutal war between Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks), Serbs, and Croats.

The Dayton Accords ended the conflict in 1995, after more than 100,000 people had been killed - including in the genocidal Srebrenica massacre that July - and after millions more had been driven from their homes. The next step was to build a functioning state out of the wreckage. But the armies of the three groups were the only functioning structures left, and many local leaders saw peace as little more than the continuation of war by other means. Hopes that a new generation of non-nationalist leaders would rise out of the ashes were soon dashed.

Although international aid has transformed the country, covering up most of the traces of war, its politics remain profoundly dysfunctional, due to the continued political dominance of nationalist parties. As a result, the prospect of Bosnia joining the European Union looks increasingly distant.

In its 2021 annual assessment of Bosnia, the European Commission notes that "political leaders continued to engage in divisive rhetoric and unconstructive political disputes." There has been virtually no progress in meeting the 14 benchmarks for starting EU accession talks, and "during the pandemic, the negative effects of widespread corruption and signs of political capture continued to manifest strongly." Neither judicial officeholders nor political leaders have managed to tackle these problems.

Moreover, owing to the "generalized phenomenon of corruption" and an "inefficient and oversized" public sector, Bosnia's per capita GDP remains just one-third of the EU average. An estimated half-million people have left the country over the last few years, draining it of precious young talent.

Instead, another deep crisis looms. The Bosnian Serb leader, Milorad Dodik, is beating the nationalist drum and pushing for Republika Srpska (one of the country's two mostly autonomous regions) to assert even greater independence vis-à-vis the central government. The rhetoric is intensifying on all sides, leading to calls by Christian Schmidt, the EU High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, for another international intervention.

But this is the wrong medicine for what ails Bosnia. One factor in the current political crisis is a controversial new law banning genocide denial, imposed last summer by the outgoing international high representative just days before he left office. Bosnian Serbs immediately responded by pulling out of common state functions, and Dodik has since issued strident ultimatums.

Dodik occasionally calls for Republika Srpska to break away from Bosnia entirely. This rhetoric gets him headlines, but it should not be taken seriously. After all, both Serbia and Russia have clearly called for Bosnia's territorial integrity to be respected.

But the crisis both has deepened nationalist divisions in Bosnia and highlighted the confusion at the heart of the international community's presumed role in the country. Is Bosnia supposed to be a protectorate, where the international community can devise, impose, and implement decisions at will? Or is it a truly sovereign country that should sort out its own problems?

In a sense, the office of the international high representative - a post that I was the first to hold after the war - has gone from being part of the solution to part of the problem. On the Bosniak side, its presence invites constant demands for international action to be taken against reluctant Bosnian Serbs or Bosnian Croats, while for the latter groups, it instills fear that such action will indeed be taken. The result is paralysis and distrust, because neither side feels a need to sit down and hash out the hard compromises needed to make the country work.

A major factor in the current crisis is Bosnia's general election later this year. In the 2020 local elections, opposition parties made impressive gains against the dominant nationalist forces in Sarajevo and in the Bosnian Serb center, Banja Luka. Fearing further losses, nationalist leaders on all sides are eager to create a new crisis to scare and mobilize their bases.

It is critical that the general election be held as planned. But afterwards, the international community should reconsider its approach to Bosnia. If it isn't ready to assume full protectorate powers, it should step back and leave the country's leaders grudgingly to sort things out themselves. That process will be slow and difficult; but it must happen sooner or later if Bosnia is to have any chance of functioning as a sovereign country.

In stepping back, the international community should establish two hard conditions: Bosnia's territorial integrity must be maintained; and the small EU military mission in the country should remain, because it has the capacity to call in rapid NATO reinforcements if necessary.

This year will undoubtedly be politically tumultuous for Bosnia. Bosnian Serb nationalists will want more power devolved to them, and Dodik - despite new US sanctions against him - might well engage in more brinkmanship to rally his supporters. At the same time, Bosniak nationalists will demand that more power be centralized in Sarajevo, and they will seek the international community's help in imposing this. Bosnian Croat nationalists, for their part, will remain profoundly unhappy (not unreasonably) with an election law that effectively denies them representation in the country's highest decision-making body.

This political crisis certainly is not Bosnia's first, and it won't be its last. Calls for another massive international intervention are not surprising, but they are ill-advised. Bosnia should no longer be treated as a protectorate. While the EU and the United States remain ready and willing to help, Bosnians ultimately must take responsibility for Bosnia.

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MANO RIVER UNION
UNION DU FLEUVE MANO



MANO RIVER UNION MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA

The Mano River Union is deeply saddened and shocked over the news of a stampede that occurred on Wednesday, 19th January 2022, following a crusade in New Kru town which reportedly resulted in the death of at least 30 people and left many more in critical conditions. This sad event has plunged the government and people of the Republic of Liberia into national grief and mourning.

The Mano River Union secretariat expressed profound condolences, solidarity and sympathy to the Government and people of the Republic of Liberia at this time of national disaster and pain, and wish the affected families the necessary courage and fortitude in this difficult time of adversity.

The MRU further expresses sincere sympathies to the bereaved families and sees this, above all, as a serious national crisis that calls for solidarity especially to those families that are in distress.

The MRU commends the response efforts of all stakeholders including the health workers as well as the Liberia National Red Cross for their prompt and coordinated support provided to the Government of the Republic of Liberia.

The MRU commends the President of the Republic of Liberia, H.E. George M. Weah for declaring three days of national mourning with the national ensign being ordered flown at half-mast as a sign of deep respect to the deceased persons.

The Mano River Union Secretariat would like to encourage all Liberians to continue to pray for God's intervention and patience as the government carry on with its investigation on the cause of the stampede, and modalities to put in place to avert future occurrence of such disaster.

END///

Cummings urges GOL

Cont'd from BACK PAGE

notes.

The release continues that these harmful drugs are destroying the minds of Liberian children, rendering communities unsafe, and risking the country's future, adding that it is time to act in securing the future of Liberia.

Meanwhile, the ANC is recommending that to stop trafficking of drugs to Liberia and the country being used as transit center for drugs, will require stronger and more resourceful enforcement agencies, including tighter inspections and controls at ports of entries, while shutting down the drug rings and ghettos in communities.

"If those who are supposed to protect our schools and communities from harmful drugs are the ones actually helping to bring the harmful drugs into the country, we will not be able to stop it. We will not be able to stop it, because the people who should be protecting our children are the ones protecting those selling the harmful drugs to our children. This is not just wrong, it is wicked."

It says the strength of a chain is measured by its weakest link, something the release says is true because the real value of the society is not measured by how Liberians treat their best, but by how they treat those considered to be the worst in the society.

The ANC Political Leader says a government that truly cares about its people will not buy a (US\$80,000.00) Eighty Thousand United States Dollars

car for one official, when there is no effective rehabilitation program for its addicted citizens, adding "It cannot be right that we will prioritize the size of convoys when the police need training and resources to fight crimes, and when hospitals have no beds or medicines."

He says the tragedy in New Kru Town is an urgent call to action for government, noting that to answer the call; we must reset the national priorities and reexamine our values.

Cummings notes that a good place to start will be to provide allocation in the national budget currently under consideration by the Legislature to support organizations and agencies in the frontline of the fight against crimes and drugs even though it will not restore lives lost at the crusade ground.

Meanwhile, Mr. Cummings in his statement, asked for the prayers of all Liberians of every faith and denomination for the comfort of the grieving families and healing for the wounded.

"No family deserves to have their children or parents die while they worship. Nor should our streets, homes and communities continue to be increasingly unsafe and insecure.

Even in this dark period of our nation, we must never forget that many, if not all of those who attended the Crusade, including those unfortunately who died in the rush, and those alleged to have caused it, are victims of long, repeated and systemic injustices in our country. In a country blessed with so much wealth, too many Liberians continue to be too poor", he laments.

LISCR return to winning spree

By Naneka Hoffman

LISCR FC have returned to their winning path with a 3-2 victory against Ganta Almighty at the SKD Practice Pitch in Paynesville, outside Monrovia.

Each of the three goals came from the legs of Players Obediah Railey, Theophilus Nyumah and Samuel Koffa that were enough for the club to receive three points.

Tony FC maintained second-place spot on the league log after winning Nimba FC 3-2 at the Technical Centre in Careyburg, Montserrado County.

The Harbel-based club beat Nimba FC to increase their points to 23, one point behind league leader Jubilee FC with 24 points.

Nimba FC have 15 points from 11 games.

Jubilee FC over the weekend extended their

lead on the Orange second division league table to 24 points when they defeated Cece United 3-1 at the SKD Practice Pitch in Paynesville.

Ernest Gongar's splendid performance coupled with Nicholas Slewion's goal were enough to give the Church boys all three points.

Gardnersville FC survived to grab their three points against Ganta Almighty in the Orange second division league.

Gardnersville FC now have 13 points from 11 games, while Ganta Almighty

stand at 13 points from 11 games as well.

Muscat FC stand at the top three positions in the Orange second league.

They maintain their supremacy over Junior Professional FC after sealing a 3-1 win.

Mark Yallah'd great performance was enough to help Muscat FC extend their points to 23 from 11 matches, while Junior Professional FC bag 9 points.

Mighty Blue Angels FC were biggest winners over Small Town FC in Matchday 11 of the orange second league.

Mighty Blue Angels won Small Town 8-1 at the Nancy B. Doe Stadium in Kakata, Margibi County.

The win, which was the club's third of the session, put the Angels at 16 points, while Small Town FC trade

with 5 points.

NPA Anchors defeated Bong County-based club Bong Rangers FC 1-0 at home.

A goalless first half, NPA Anchor hit a one goal from Septimus Nagbe in the 67th minute at the David Kuyon Sports Stadium in Gbarnga.

Nagbe's one goal was enough to snatch a 1-0 win for Anchors.

NPA Anchors have 14 points, while Bong Rangers stand at 17 points.



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Boakai has failed

—Says Costa

By Lincoln G. Peters

2023 presidential aspirant and chair of the opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) Amb. Joseph NyumahBoakai has been accused by one of his staunch political supporters, talk show host Henry Pedro Costa of allegedly failing to provide leadership direction.

Costa alleged that on 28 December 2021, the former Unity Party (UP) of which Mr. Boakai is the standard-

at Mr. Boakai, saying he is deeply disappointed, discouraged and confused over Boakai's reported failure to provide leadership direction for those supporting his presidential bid.

Costa claimed that ahead of the 2023 presidential election, Boakai has failed to update his supporters as to whether he will remain or withdraw from the CPP.

The CPP has been rocked by internal crisis for several months, leaving many to doubt that the four parties - Unity Party (UP) of Mr. Boakai, Alternative

are going. Moreover, we can't tell anyone because Joseph Boakai is the leader and the political leader of Unity Party. Therefore, he has to give us leadership and direction as to where [we are] going," said Mr. Costa.

Costa urged Boakai to understand that his supporters are confused and want to know if the UP will remain in the CPP.

"I am disappointed, discouraged and confused over Boakai's action. As a lead campaigner of Boakai, what do I tell the people who are asking me as to where [we are] going?" said Costa.

"Which message should I give them? They are asking me and I can't tell them anything because I know nothing about our direction and they are troubling," Costa stressed.

He further indicated that time is not in their favor because elections are happening next year across the country.

Costa noted that if they are forming a new collaboration for the election, Amb. Boakai should tell them now so that they can have direction instead of being left in the dark.

"If Boakai will stay in the CPP to work with Alexander B. Cummings, let him tell us so we can decide if we will still support him or not," Costa continued. "For me, I don't support any arrangement with Cummings because I don't trust him. Boakai should [make] a decision that will provide ... direction which will be pronounced to [those] who are his supporters about their next move."



bearer, took a decision through a vote to pull out of the CPP. But he said Boakai has failed to provide direction one month after the party voted to pull out of CPP.

Mr. Costa, founder and chairman of the Council of Patriots (COP) which staged the biggest protest against President George MannehWeah's government, used his Costa Show online over the weekend to take aim

National Congress (ANC) of Mr. Alexander B. Cummings, All Liberian Party (ALP) of Mr. Benoni Urey and Liberty Party (LP) of Senator NyonbleeKarnga - Lawrence - can hold together to present a single presidential ticket. Mr. Boakai and Mr. Cummings are the two CPP leaders seeking the party's presidential ticket.

"We are not having direction as supporters of Amb. Joseph NyumahBoakai as to where we

Mr. Cummings sympathizes families of stampede victims in new Kru Town



ANC Cummings sympathizes with stampede victims

The Standard Bearer of the Alternative National Congress (ANC), Mr. Alexander B. Cummings has paid visits to wounded victims and families of those who died from the New Kru Town Stampede. On Friday, Mr. Cummings visited the Redemption Hospital and homes of families of those killed in the New Kru Town Tragedy following an open-air church service. On last Thursday morning, 30 persons were killed and several wounded at a church crusade on the D. Twe Field in new Kru Town. Disheartened by such a tragedy and based on his passion for the people, Mr. Cummings was the first opposition political leader to visit the Borough of New Kru Town since the unforeseen occurrence. He firstly visited the Redemption Hospital and interacted with several wounded victims of the unfortunate incident; consoling and comforting

them to be hopeful of their recovery. The down to earth and people-centered presidential hopeful then made visitations or stops at the homes of families who lost their loved ones to the tragedy to identify with them. Mr. Cummings condemned the situation and extended deepest sympathies to the families of the bereaved. "I have come to identify with you and console you during these sad periods of your families. I promised to be with you during these periods of your bereavement. This is a national calamity. I will come back to identify with you."

In response, the affected families and wounded victims at the Redemption Hospital appreciated the visit of Mr. Cummings. They said despite their distressing conditions, they were relieved and happy that Mr. Cummings could reach out to them at the hospital and their various homes to sympathize and identify with them. -Press release

Crusade tragedy should be an emergency

—US - based Liberian urges

By Lewis S. The



Days after at least 29 persons were confirmed dead following a stampede at a

crusade in New Kru Town, a Liberian Humanitarian based in the U.S. Mr. Jonah G. Barcon has expressed serious regret

over the tragedy, describing the incident as an irreplaceable loss to the country.

"Enough is Enough! Liberia is under serious domestic ... attack, and this should be an emergency to the CDC - led government. They must do all [they] can to protect the lives of our people," Mr. Barcon told reporters via mobile phone over the weekend.

Authorities here have confirmed the deaths of at least 29 persons following a stampede that occurred at an overcrowded crusade when Christian worshipers were reportedly invaded by drug abusers or street gangs armed with deadly instruments intended to incite fear, wage terror and steal from people.

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The three - day night - time crusade was organized at the D. Twe Memorial High School soccer pitch in New Kru Town on Bushrod Island by the Word of Life Outreach Ministry senior pastor Apostle Abraham Kromah, popularly known as "More Grace."

The incident is reported to have occurred during an open-air church service in the area Wednesday night, 19 January 2022.

Hundreds of Christian worshipers converged at the soccer - pitch for the three - day crusade in Montserrado County District number 16.

Mr. Barcon has expressed sadness over the situation and urged the Liberian government to immediately declare it a national emergency and also

declare the zogoos a national security threat.

Zogoos invaded the Church gathering and caused a stampede that led to the deaths of 29 persons including 11 children and one pregnant woman.

Barcon also extended his condolences to the bereaved families, counseling them to take solace in the Lord.

"We are using this medium to call on our International Partners, especially the American Government to help provide support for our security sector," Barcon said.

He named recruitment, training and logistics, among others, as support needed for the Liberian security sector.

The Liberian humanitarian

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

PIH inducts 135 community health promoters

By Patrick N. Mensah,
Maryland County

The Maryland County Health Team in collaboration with Partners In Health Liberia (PIH) has inducted 135 Community Health Promoters (CHPs) to serve in 19 urban communities in Maryland as part of an ongoing pilot program.

The ceremony was held in Kpafloville community, Harper district on Thursday, January 20, 2022, bringing together local authorities of the county, including county health officer Dr. Methodist George.

Speaking to reporters during the ceremony, the director of community health programs Lassana Jabateh said, globally there are several challenges in the health system and to address some of them, they have thought it wish to implement programs that would help community dwellers get access to health care.

He said despite the need for qualified workforce in the sector specifically college graduates, it would take time, so in order to meet urgent health needs of patients, they have decided to train some community dwellers that will in return help their communities to have access to health services.

He disclosed that the Community Health Promoters (CHPs) will serve communities within 5 kilometers of the nearest health facility where approximately 71 percent of Liberians reside.

He said nominees from

Philadelphia, Tubman University Community, Kpafloville, Bishop Hill, New Harper, Burger Hill, Easy Town, Airfield, Lake Shepherd, Lama Cox, Stadium Road, Middle Cess, Central Harper, Old Kru Town/Up Cape, Waa Hodo Town, Big Town, Nenkangbo, Marsh Street and Bassa Communities respectively have been trained to serve as agents of Social Change and Social Connection with funding from the Samuel Family Foundation from 2018 to 2021.

He recalled that in 2018, the

Health serving as early adopters, they have already piloted the Ministry's new integrated community health framework in order to provide services to citizens across the county, who work 5kms to come to hospital.

He said per statistics, Liberia has 20 percent of her population living out of 5km and 71 percent within 5km and so since 2016, the country has been serving community dwellers that live out of the 5km.

Director Jabateh said in order to buttress



Ministry of Health's Community Health Services Division (CHSD) designed an integrated community health framework that serves residents within and beyond 5 kilometers to accelerate progress towards universal health coverage (UHC) and narrow the health equity gap for Liberia's most vulnerable populations.

With the Maryland County Health Team and Partners In

government's efforts, PIH has started to collaborate with government to reduce health cases in the county.

However, he disclosed that the 135 Community Health Promoters are not to treat patients but rather to educate them on the need to seek health care at the nearby hospital.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Liberia Cocoa Corporation rejects LACC, Senate Committee's claim of corruption



Agriculture Minister Madam Cooper

The Liberia Cocoa Corporation has debunked claims of corruption allegedly levied by the Liberia Anti - Corruption Commission (LACC) and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry, saying it is prepared and ready to disprove their allegations.

Through a release dated 21 January 2022, the Cocoa Corporation's Management noted that it is deeply troubled that the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry and the Liberia Anti-Corruption

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Tweah urges AMEU students to chart the path of transformation



Tweah with MFDP officials at AMEU

Finance and Development Planning Minister, Samuel D. Tweah Jr, has urged elected officials of the African Methodist Episcopal University 22nd Students Governing Council to chart the path of transformation and new kind of social activism in the country. Tweah said that changing the face of social activism requires young people having independent thoughts, instead of allowing themselves to be brainwashed by selfish politicians, who are ignoring the current developmental success of the country. He made the disclosure at the induction ceremony of the student governing council of the African Methodist Episcopal University held on Friday January 21, 2022.

According to him, student leaders should be objective in their thinking, and the essence of such is by looking at the goals and objectives of the society and the dynamics of social, and political activism.

"You have a new responsibility to change the face of politics and social activism in Liberia. I am challenging you today to think independently and the first mark that defines a man or

woman is independently thought" he explained.

He noted that students should put on their own thinking and judgment rather than thinking from the political class of the government, adding that they should redefine themselves as educated individuals, and be objective and to analyze freely.

"Do not be "micro-managed" by any political class, ruling or opposition, free your mind and see beyond what they cannot see" he added.

As students of activism, you have the greatest responsibility to contribute to the transformation of social discourse. "The way you talk in your community, the way you speak and talk at AMEU will have to change" he stressed.

"I am demanding that kind of activism now because you have a huge responsibility to change the dynamics. Be less acceptable to manipulation. Don't be the "pond" of the government or opposition, so let your activism bend an energy to a new Liberia. He called on the students to use their activism to elevate African Methodist Episcopal University to a new level. "Engage with other students across the world and use your energy to help this great president like the board of trustee who are trying to elevate AMEU to a new level"-Press release

Graduates urged to pursue

Cont'd from page 11

supervision of schools to ensure instructors are providing the relevant education to students.

For his part, the Head of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) Dale Gbotoe, urged the school to maintain its standard in the WASSCE,

disclosing that 30 of the graduates obtained Division I in the 2021 examination.

Mr. Gbotoe added that the passes of the graduates have promoted the school's image in the education sector. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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Français

Liberia : 29 morts dans un mouvement de foule à un rassemblement religieux

Au moins 29 personnes sont mortes dans la nuit de mercredi à jeudi à Monrovia, la capitale du Liberia, lors d'un mouvement de foule au cours d'un rassemblement religieux chrétien sur un terrain de football, a indiqué la police.

"Des enfants qui prenaient part à cette croisade", le nom donné à ce genre de rassemblement, font partie des victimes, a déclaré à l'AFP

le porte-parole de la police Moses Carter.

Il a ajouté que le bilan du drame risquait de s'alourdir. "Le nombre (de morts) pourrait augmenter parce que d'autres personnes sont dans un état critique", a-t-il dit.

Les raisons du drame sont inconnues. Les informations confirmées sur les circonstances sont sommaires.

Des médias locaux ont rapporté que les fidèles avaient été attaqués par des bandits, ce

qui aurait causé la panique.

Les faits sont survenus lors d'un rassemblement de deux jours dans le quartier pauvre de New Kru, dans les faubourgs est de la capitale. Le rassemblement consacré aux prières autour d'un prédicateur populaire, le pasteur Abraham Kromah, a attiré des foules importantes, selon des images diffusées par les médias et sur les réseaux sociaux.

► CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Burkina Faso : des tirs dans la capitale, « aucune institution de la République inquiétée » (Défense)

Des tirs à l'arme automatique et l'arme lourde aux camps militaires du général Baba Sy et de Sangoulé Lamizana à Ouagadougou ont été entendus ce dimanche matin et des incidents signalés à Kaya et Ouahigouya dans le nord du pays. Le ministre de la Défense, le général Barthélémy Simporé, a assuré que « pour le moment », aucune institution de la République « n'a été inquiétée ».

A Ouagadougou, le calme -

certes précaire - est revenu, rapporte en début d'après-midi notre correspondant, Yaya Boudani.

Les tirs ont cessé dans les deux camps de la capitale concernés par ce qui semble être une mutinerie, un « mouvement d'humeur » selon l'expression récurrente ce dimanche. Selon les officiers interrogés par RFI, il n'y a pas eu de revendication pour expliquer ces incidents.

Plus tôt à la mi-journée, de jeunes soldats cagoulés avaient bouclé tout le périmètre autour du camp de Sangoulé Lamizana à

Ouagadougou. Armes en mains, ils contrôlaient les accès de l'avenue devant le camp, sous le regard interrogatif de nombreux curieux. Même topo sur la base aérienne, voisine de l'aéroport international de Ouagadougou où des tirs étaient entendus ce matin.

Mouvement d'humeur de soldats ou bien tentative de coup d'Etat, dans un communiqué publié en milieu de matinée, le gouvernement confirmé ces tirs mais démenti les rumeurs d'un coup d'Etat.

« Des informations véhiculées dans des réseaux sociaux tendent à faire croire à une prise de pouvoir par l'armée en ce jour. Le gouvernement, tout en reconnaissant l'effectivité de tirs dans certaines casernes, dément ces informations et appelle les populations à rester sereines », a indiqué, Alkassoum Maiga, porte-parole du gouvernement.

Le ministre de la Défense, le général Barthélémy Simporé, a affirmé que « pour le moment », aucune institution de la République « n'a été inquiétée ».

► CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Le projet REALISER n'est rien d'autre qu'une tactique politique pour la réélection de Weahen 2023

Après avoir passé quatre ans au pouvoir et alors que nous sommes à un an des élections, le président George Manneh Weah vient d'annoncer un ambitieux projet intitulé Recovery of Economic Activity for Liberian Informal Sector Employment (reprise de l'activité économique pour l'emploi dans le secteur informel libérien), REALISE en abrégé.

L'annonce a été faite le week-end dernier. Ce projet, selon lui, sortira les Libériens de la pauvreté et autonomisera les entreprises locales.

On aurait cru que tout plan sérieux cherchant à s'engager sincèrement à relancer l'activité économique dans le pays devrait être déployé dès la prise du pouvoir de cette administration afin de se donner le temps pour mesurer les succès et les défis et non dans la précipitation à quelques jours des élections.

Selon un communiqué de la présidence, le projet REALISE permettra à plus de 19 000 Libériens vivant dans la région de Monrovia de relancer leurs activités économiques et à plus de 4 000 Libériens vulnérables évoluant du secteur informel de recevoir un soutien pour démarrer de nouvelles activités ou améliorer celles qui existent déjà, tandis que 15 000 Libériens seront également habilités à s'engager dans des travaux publics communautaires dans les zones urbaines.

Nous considérons le soi-disant projet REALISE comme une autre tactique politique pour attirer les électeurs pour la réélection du président l'année prochaine. Rien d'autre. Ce n'est pas un programme bien conçu et durable sur lequel les Libériens pauvres peuvent compter pour améliorer leur vie, mais simplement un peu pour soutenir la réélection du parti au pouvoir.

Le président Weah a promis lors de son investiture que les Libériens ne seraient plus spectateurs de leur propre économie. Que le président dise alors à la nation combien d'entreprises appartenant à des Libériens il a permis de relancer au cours des quatre dernières années de son administration.

Nous nous demandons comment le fait de donner à des jeunes non qualifiés et sans emploi des pelles, des pelleuses, des balais, des râteliers et des brouettes leur permettra de vivre durablement. Le gouvernement devrait être différent par ses programmes des politiciens avides de votes.

Au contraire, nous pensons que le lancement du projet REALISE envoie un signal très faible de la détermination déclarée du gouvernement à autonomiser les Libériens. Il est déterminé à se moquer des citoyens plutôt qu'à améliorer leur sort.

Nous disons que depuis quatre ans rien de tangible n'a été fait dans ce sens car ce n'est pas à un an des élections que quelque chose peut être fait.

Pire encore, le gouvernement n'a pas précisé le budget qu'il avait prévu pour le projet REALISE, mais il a seulement révélé que le gouvernement français, par le biais de son Agence française de développement (AFD), a engagé un total d'environ 9 000 000 € et qu'une équipe est attendue ici de Paris, France pour mener des études de faisabilité.

Nous pouvons parier notre cœur que juste après les élections de 2023, si Weah est élu pour un second mandat, REALISE sera jeté aux toilettes car il n'a jamais été conçu pour la durabilité en premier lieu.

Lorsque le gouvernement qui est lavé dans la corruption et le copinage annonce qu'il est maintenant prêt à améliorer la vie de ses citoyens, nous devons réfléchir deux fois avant d'applaudir cette initiative.

Français

Liberia : 29 morts dans

De telles manifestations, caractérisées par leur ferveur, sont communes dans ce pays très religieux et majoritairement chrétien, l'un des plus pauvres de la planète, durement éprouvé dans son histoire récente.

A la fin du rassemblement, les fidèles ont été priés de faire une offrande avant de partir, a rapporté un témoin.

Nombreuses victimes à terre

"Alors que ceux qui avaient fait leur offrande quittaient les lieux, on a entendu un bruit très fort venant de l'entrée", a relaté ce témoin, Emmanuel Gray, 26 ans, à l'AFP. "Quand nous sommes arrivés là-bas, nous sommes tombés sur de nombreuses personnes allongées, mortes,

et d'autres se battant pour leur survie", a-t-il dit.

Le Liberia, pays d'environ 5 millions d'habitants au bord de l'Atlantique, peine à se remettre de deux guerres civiles qui ont fait quelque 250.000 morts et des centaines de milliers de déplacés entre 1989 et 2003.

Les deux guerres civiles ont provoqué l'effondrement de l'Etat, dévastant l'économie et les infrastructures industrielles.

Le Liberia a été ensuite l'un des trois pays les plus affectés par la maladie à virus Ebola qui s'est déclarée en Afrique de l'Ouest en décembre 2013, et a duré plus de deux ans, causant plus de 11.300 morts, dont plus de 4.800 au Liberia.

Plus récemment, la pandémie de Covid-19 a encore entravé l'effort de redressement.

Burkina Faso : des tirs dans la capitale,

Les incidents ont commencé tôt ce dimanche matin

Des tirs sporadiques puis plus soutenus d'armes automatiques et d'armes lourdes, rapportait ce matin notre correspondant dans la capitale burkinabè, Yaya Boudani.

A Kaya, des tirs ont été entendus également au régiment d'artillerie lourde mais le calme serait revenu suite à des discussions avec la hiérarchie militaire ; à Ouahigouya, autre ville de province, les habitants ont fait également état de tirs dans un camp. Samedi, au moins deux soldats ont été tués et plusieurs blessés dans l'explosion d'un engin artisanal, sur l'axe entre Ouahigouya et Titao (Nord), au passage de leur véhicule qui escortait des commerçants, selon des sources sécuritaires et locales, rapporte l'AFP.

Signalons aussi que le camp de Sangoulé Lamizana à Ouagadougou abrite la Maca, Maison d'arrêt et de correction, où sont détenus des prisonniers militaires et notamment le général

Diendéré, ancien chef d'état major de Blaise Compaoré condamné pour une tentative de coup d'Etat en 2015 et également poursuivi dans le cadre de l'assassinat de l'ex-président Thomas Sankara.

Des incidents qui surviennent dans un contexte de tension

Depuis l'attaque d'Inata en novembre dernier, et le décès d'une cinquantaine de gendarmes, l'atmosphère est devenue très tendue au Burkina. Malgré les changements intervenus à la tête des forces armées, les populations demandent des résultats sur le plan sécuritaire.

Plus d'un million et demi de personnes ont fui leur domicile à la suite de ces attaques. Certaines organisations de la société civile demandent même la démission du président Roch Marc Christian Kaboré.

Hier samedi, les gens ont tenté de marcher à Ouagadougou mais les manifestations ont été dispersées. Et depuis quelques jours, l'accès aux réseaux sociaux, notamment Facebook, est restreint ce qui contribue à tendre l'atmosphère et à nourrir la colère au sein de la population.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Kenneth Rogoff

Le FMI doit maintenir la conditionnalité de ses prêts

CAMBRIDGE - Qui va résoudre le problème du chaos financier qui va survenir dans les pays émergents si une inflation persistante conduit la Fed (Réserve fédérale américaine) à augmenter sensiblement les taux d'intérêt ? Le FMI auquel revient normalement la responsabilité d'intervenir en cas d'urgence ne montre guère d'empressement pour se confronter à cette tâche. Plutôt que de s'en tenir à sa mission habituelle, donner un coup de pouce aux pays endettés pour qu'ils s'en sortent par eux-mêmes, il essaye de se transformer en organisation humanitaire.

Il est certes plus agréable de tenir le rôle du Père Noël que celui du Méchant, d'autant que le budget que les pays riches consacrent à l'aide est très insuffisant. Depuis longtemps je défends l'idée d'une banque mondiale du carbone pour canaliser les subventions et la technologie voulue vers les pays à faible revenu. Par ailleurs, les arguments en faveur du financement d'une restructuration de l'OMS pour combattre la pandémie sont convaincants. Pourtant, dans un monde où le flux des capitaux privés dépasse largement en volume celui des prêts publics, les programmes traditionnels du FMI ont encore un rôle essentiel à jouer pour gérer et amortir les crises financières.

Or ces programmes ont été largement délaissés pendant la pandémie, et il sera difficile de les rétablir. Accorder des financements sans trop de conditions avait du sens lors du début de la crise du COVID-19. Mais le FMI étant essentiellement structuré comme un organisme de crédit, il devra un jour être remboursé, si ce n'est à faire faillite lui-même. Pour se faire une idée de ce qui pourrait arriver, il suffit de considérer les tensions avec l'Argentine. Ce pays rechigne aujourd'hui à rembourser, alors qu'il a reçu en 2018 un prêt massif de 57 milliards de dollars de la part du FMI, assorti de conditions inhabituellement faibles.

L'absence de conditionnalité dans certains cas récents est consternante. Le FMI doit-il accorder des prêts pratiquement inconditionnels à un gouvernement qui restreint les importations de denrées alimentaires destinés à une population sous-alimentée (exacerbant ainsi les problèmes causés par le contrôle du taux de change exercé par ce gouvernement même) ? C'est ce que le FMI a fait au Nigeria en 2020. Dans d'autres cas, il a fait preuve d'un certain laxisme dans sa surveillance généralement rigoureuse, donnant sa caution à des pays dont le ratio dette/PIB explose et qui ne parviendront à se stabiliser que dans de cadre d'hypothèses très optimistes.

Le rapport de la consultation menée par le FMI en 2021 au titre de son article IV pour le Ghana en est un bon exemple. Le Fonds s'est montré encore plus optimiste à l'égard de grands pays émergents comme le Brésil et l'Afrique du Sud, répétant que la lutte contre la pandémie est la priorité absolue - malgré l'explosion du surendettement, la hausse de l'inflation et les problèmes bancaires naissants.

Cette absence de conditionnalité est délibérée. Pendant la pandémie, le Fonds a massivement étendu l'utilisation de son Instrument de

financement rapide, un mécanisme de prêt qui n'oblige pas que le pays concerné à s'engager dans un "programme à part entière" (et qui ne requiert pratiquement que peu de conditions, voire aucune). De manière encore plus visible, le FMI a persuadé ses membres d'approuver une émission d'urgence de 650 milliards de dollars en droits de tirage spéciaux (DTS, l'actif de réserve du Fonds), qui ne sont eux aussi assortis de pratiquement aucune condition. Les DTS sont en fait une aide directe qui va à tous les membres du FMI, y compris la Russie et l'Iran. Pourtant, en raison de la structure obscure de cet instrument, les pays en développement ne reçoivent qu'une petite partie de la somme.

Il existe de solides arguments en faveur d'une refonte de la structure financière du FMI et de son organisation sœur, la Banque mondiale, afin que la majeure partie des fonds qu'ils fournissent prenne la forme de subventions plutôt que de prêts. Depuis des décennies je plaide en faveur de cette transformation, et depuis peu l'idée commence à retenir l'attention. Le FMI étant actuellement structuré comme un fonds renouvelable, il serait rapidement à sec s'il renonçait à être remboursé - ce que certaines ONG n'ont cessé de le lui demander. La seule façon d'éviter cette issue serait que les pays avancés augmentent leur participation budgétaire à l'institution, ce qu'ils semblent répugner à faire.

Élément essentiel, les fonds du FMI ne devraient pas être utilisés simplement pour rembourser des créanciers privés. Or des études montrent que c'est ce qui s'est passé dans les années 1980 et à nouveau plus récemment. Il faut aussi prendre en compte les banques publiques chinoises qui appliquent les mêmes taux d'intérêt que les institutions privées. Il devrait y avoir un moyen de veiller à ce que les prêts du FMI ne servent pas à rembourser les prêts chinois.

Il y a un parallèle frappant entre un FMI bien intentionné et une Fed elle aussi bien intentionnée, cette dernière voulant maintenant agir en faveur d'une plus grande égalité. Après avoir longuement soutenu l'idée que la poussée inflationniste est transitoire, la Fed est maintenant confrontée à un dilemme. A moins qu'elle ne resserre suffisamment sa politique monétaire au cours de l'année (un risque bien plus grand que ce qu'en disent les discours officiels), l'inflation pourrait s'installer durablement. Par contre, si elle abandonne trop rapidement sa politique de relâchement monétaire, cela entraînera une récession. Et on ne peut écarter le risque d'une stagflation.

En ce qui concerne le FMI, la situation désespérée des pays émergents et des pays en développement appelle certes à la plus grande compassion, mais le Fonds n'est pas la Banque mondiale dont la mission est d'apporter une aide. La conditionnalité des prêts du FMI est un élément essentiel pour éviter que ses ressources ne servent à financer la corruption intérieure, la fuite des capitaux et le remboursement des créanciers étrangers. Il ne doit pas oublier sa fonction essentielle de surveillance économique.

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ArcelorMittal deal (Pt. 2)

The United States Ambassador to Liberia and the European Union Parliament have expressed concerns over the ArcelorMittal new Mineral Development Agreement (MDA) as the country stand to lose a whopping sum of US\$2.68 Billion in revenue from potential rail user fees alone if the MDA is ratify in its current form.

The Government of Liberia and ArcelorMittal reached an agreement to amend the Mineral Development Agreement (MDA) in September 2021, paving the way for an expansion of the company’s operations in the country and extending the iron ore mining concession for 25 years.

However, the proposed MDA appears to be embellishedwith clauses that give ArcelorMittal exclusive rights, while preventing other potential regional mining companies from using the rail for a period of 10 years during the expansion project.

On page 6 of the MDA-User Access and Future Expansion of the Railroad, Article 3 e.1 states: “The Concessionaire shall have the exclusive right to complete the ongoing expansion of railroad capacity as part of its expansion of the mine, the concentrator and the Buchanan Iron Ore Port to reach 15

MWMTPA of finished products (the ongoing railroad capacity expansion).”

Experts say this makes the deal bad because according to them, there will be no new users during the expansion period resulting into loss of rail use revenue to the Government of Liberia and create delays in other mining projects signing up.

That means companies like SOLWAY-Liberia, projected user fees of US\$300,000,000, ZOGOTA-Guinea US\$1,500,000,000, SMFG-Guinea 675,000,000 and WAE-Guinea US\$180,000,000 will all be loss revenue to the Liberian government due to ArcelorMittal’s rail monopoly.

The deal has already generated several controversies both locally and internationally. Among those expressing concerns over the ArcelorMittal proposed third amended MDA are European Union Members of Parliament and the United States Ambassador to Liberia Michael McCarthy.

The latter praises the proposed newdeal but is worried overclauses within the document that grants the steel giant monopoly over the railroad use.

The US Diplomat hopes that the Liberian Senate could do its own job to review the MDA in the interest of the Liberian people and notmortgage the railroad to ArcelorMittal.

Amb. McCarthy “This agreement was under

negotiation for quite some time, and the senate must now do their own review, but the progress so far sends a signal to investors that deals can get done in Liberia.”

“We also hope that the agreement, if approved by the Senate, will open the door for Liberians to become a future regional exporter of ore from Guinea,” Amb. McCarthy.

Amb. McCarthy does not shared this concern alone. EU High Representative JosepBorrellwas questioned about the agreement in last month.

The EU Parliamentarians concerns followed reports suggesting that the new ArcelorMittal MDA is shrouded in secrecy.

Thus, the EU has raised questions over the possibilities of corruption, the potential creation of rail monopoly and the involvement of the population.

The EU also wonders if the new deal MDA compatible with its objectives of promoting good governance and sustainable development in Liberia.

The Union questions its Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) of any awareness of the controversies surrounding the ArcelorMittal MDA been raised with the Liberian authorities. To be continued.

IV. Total Loss To GOL (Rail Use Fees) from the Exclusion of Regional Mining Companies is Over US\$2.6 Billion (This analysis excludes Potential Buchanan Port Revenues)

IV. Government of Liberia (GOL) Regional FINANCIAL LOSSES from AML Exclusive Use of the Rail

FINANCIAL LOSSES to Government of Liberia from AML 3rd Amendment - EXCLUSIVE Use of the Rail

Regional Rail Use REVENUE from Mining Companies using Nimba-Buchanan Railroad				
	Liberia	Guinea		
	SOLWAY - Liberia	ZOGOTA - Guinea	SMFG - Guinea	WAE - Guinea
Ore Volume (MT)	200,000,000	1,000,000,000	450,000,000	120,000,000
Rail Use Fee @ \$1.5/tn	\$300,000,000	\$1,500,000,000	\$675,000,000	\$180,000,000
Total	\$300,000,000	\$1,500,000,000	\$675,000,000	\$180,000,000

Total Cumulative	\$2,655,000,000
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Relevant Notes and Assumptions			
SOLWAY - Liberia	MDA in process; Significant Community engagement and contribution		
ZOGOTA - Guinea	Has MOU with Government of Liberia and Government of Guinea; right to export through Liberia granted		
SMFG - Guinea	Has MOU with Government of Liberia and Government of Guinea; right to export through Liberia granted		
WAE - Guinea	Exploration rights granted; right to export through Liberia granted		
Duration of Exploitation	20-25 years	Total volume evacuated through Nimba-Buchanan Rail	
Rail Use fee per tonne	\$1.5/ton		

Weah delivers 4th Annual Message today

President George Manneh Weah delivers his 4th Annual Message to the National Legislature today, Monday, January 24, 2022, reporting the state of the nation for the year ended, and outlining his legislative agenda for the coming 12 months.

The Constitution of Liberia requires the President to perform this duty at the beginning of each year.

Article 58 of the Constitution of Liberia mandates: "The President shall, on the fourth working Monday in January of each year, present the administration's legislative program for the ensuing session, and shall once a year report to the Legislature on the state of the Republic. In presenting the economic condition of the Republic the report shall cover expenditure as well as income."

The New Dawn provides a panoramic view of what Liberians should expect in the President's address before the Legislature, ranging from the economy, security, health, infrastructure development, peace and reconciliation, bilateral relations, among others.

Liberians are anxious to hear President Weah's prescriptions for the economy, which is key as they go to elections next year. The economy has not been so very healthy since the administration came to office four years ago.

Two years in office, the

country was plagued by the global COVID-19 pandemic that has rattled economies around the world, taken away lives and paralyzed businesses.

President George Weah is expected to report expenditure and income of his government in the last 12 months and lay out his Legislative Agenda for 2022.

The government is printing new Liberian bank notes in the total amount of over LRD48 Billion that it believes will

also expected to at democratic tenets, including the right to assemble and protest peacefully, free speech and freedom of the press.

Security is another issue expected to be high in today's speech, as the past 12 months were not very encouraging with several suspicious deaths reported, involving senior members of the society, including sons of two former



restore economic health and boost business activities.

The economy is still in the wood despite the printing of new money as global donor fatigue has set in due to the health pandemic.

President Weah is expected to highlight challenges inherited and those brought by the COVID-19 and steps being taken to mitigate some of those hurdles, including attempts to lower inflation and increase the national budget in the last year.

Going into election year, he is

presidents.

At the same time President will boast of deliverables in infrastructure projects such as roads, sports stadiums namely, the Invincible Recreation Center and the PHP Sports ground, among others. President Weah has very little, if any, to say about Agriculture, a key sector of the economy that is engulfed by massive corruption. **Story by Jonathan Browne**

Graduates urged to pursue higher education

The Chairman and Founder of the Bility Development Foundation has challenged graduates of the Seku Ibrahim Sheriff High School

(SISHS) to pursue university education after completion of high school.

Speaking on Sunday, January 23, 2022 at the graduation ceremony of 55 students of the

school who successfully passed the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) Mr. Musa H. Bility also called on parents to encourage their girls children to pursue higher education, rather than introducing them to early marriage.

He stressed that empowering girls through education is critical towards the socio-economic development of Liberia.

He wants the empowerment of girls prioritized; noting that women play significant role in the transformation of any society and Liberia should not be an exception.

Bility added that participation of every Liberian within the political process is essential to ensuring the country is governed democratically.

He specifically noted that lack active participation of



Crusade tragedy should be

Start from PAGE 6

noted that the lives of Liberians are currently at risk due to the growing population of zogoes in the country.

Meanwhile, Barcon has also appealed to U.S Ambassador to Liberia Ambassador Michael McCarthy to do all in his powers to ensure that under his watch,

President George Manneh Weah visits the White House before his first term ends.

"Our Country is seriously engulfed with challenges so we want Ambassador McCarthy to use his [lobbying] power for President Weah to tell the Liberian story," Barcon pleaded.

Liberia Cocoa Corporation

Start from page 7

Commission would publish reports that contain not only gross misrepresentations of facts but outright lies against Liberia Cocoa Corporation and its CEO, Momolu Tolbert.

The Liberia Cocoa Corporation said it is prepared to disprove each brazen lie presented by both the Senate Committee and the LACC with documentary and photographic evidence.

It however challenged the LACC to make available to the management of the Corporation or to publish for the public the "alleged contract" for US\$1.4 million that was "allegedly" and "unilaterally" awarded to Mr.

Momolu Tolbert by Madam Jeanine M. Cooper, Minister of Agriculture.

Furthermore, the management Cocoa Corporation said it wants the Senate Committee to make available or publish for the public documents and or reports that support the Senate Committee's claim that Mr. Tolbert brought into the country "all dead cocoa seeds that were not F1 Hybrid Cocoa Seeds."

The Cocoa Corporation said it is confident that it will be fully vindicated from the shameless and politically motivated lies that the Senate Committee and the LACC has falsely presented to the public as "truth."

PIH inducts 135 community

Start from page 7

He stressed that the training wasn't about curative services but to prevent and promote health services through community awareness.

For his part, County Health Officer Dr. Methodius George noted that the Community Health Promoters will serve as a boost to the community, noting that health awareness starts from the community level.

He said they will help to identify common illnesses in communities and made urgent referral to health facility which will increase patients' attendance at health facilities.

Dr. George noted that prior to the training, many community dwellers weren't aware or never took advantage of services at various health facilities in the county, but with the CHP program, information will reach out to the people in their various homes.

He further noted that despite trained doctors and nurses in the health facilities, many patients are still sitting home, receiving home treatment.

He pointed out that it has been a major challenge for the health facility, but is optimistic with the recruitment of community health promoters, issue of home-based treatment will minimize.

He added that the 135 health promoters were trained for three months to help identify cases such as HIV and AIDS, TB, EPI and promote community health services.

Meanwhile, the inductees have lauded the Ministry of Health in collaboration with Partner In Health for the knowledge provided them, pledging to use their skills to help community dwellers take advantage of health facilities at their disposal. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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members of the Muslim community is undermining their growth and development.

Meanwhile, the Principal of the Seku Ibrahim Sheriff High School Varmunyah S. Sheriff said, supervision of the education system is critical to strengthening

Liberia's human resource development.

Mr. Sheriff noted the lack of qualified instructors is hampering the learning potential of more Liberian students across the nation.

He stressed a need for the Ministry of Education to enforce

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

Cummings urges GOL to fight illicit drugs



The Political Leader of the Alternative National Congress (ANC) Mr. Alexander B. Cummings urges the Government of Liberia to take a hard look at itself and get serious about stopping harmful drug business in the country and prioritize youth rehabilitation and mentorship programs to mitigate the uncontrollable flow of disadvantaged youth

across Liberia.

In a press release issued Sunday, January 23, 2022, Mr. Cummings wondered how many more citizens have to die before the government can grasp the urgency of acting seriously to secure streets and communities here from hardcore criminals propelled by illicit drugs.

The release quotes the ANC Stander Bearer as lamenting, "How many of our children need to be addicted to harmful drugs

before we prioritize the construction of rehabilitation centers across the country and clean up our communities of the harmful drugs and ghettos?"

His comments are in response to last week Wednesday, 19 January's stampede in New Kru Town which led to the death of 29 Christian worshipers, who were attacked by criminals while returning from a crusade at the D. Twe Memorial High School soccer pitch. "Today, Liberia is referred to as a transshipment point for Southeast and Southwest Asian heroin and South American cocaine for the European and US markets. This means people are using our country to sell harmful drugs to other countries. The harmful drugs are not just passing through our country but they are selling it to our children, including in our schools", Mr. Cummings

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 5



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Vacancy Announcement

A reputable newspaper with a printing press is seeking application from a qualified Liberian for the position of a layout and graphic designer for immediate employment.

The applicant should have a

minimum of two years experience in graphic designing and laying out of newspaper.

Should be able to work under pressure, innovative and has the ability to conceptualize ideas.

Interested applicants should address their applications to The Management Searchlight Communications Inc., UN Drive, Monrovia Liberia via email: info@thenewdawnliberia.com



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