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MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2022	L\$150.2086 /US\$1.00	L\$151.9074/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

'I survived a kidnapping but part of me died that day'

After a surge in the number of abductions in recent years, South Africa has one of the highest rates of kidnapping in the world, as Mpho Lakaje reports from Johannesburg.

Lesego Tau did not panic at first when a stranger opened the back door of her grey Mercedes C-Class and climbed in.

She had parked outside a shopping mall in Johannesburg and was focused on texting a friend before going in to grab a few items for a get-together that evening.

"In my rear view mirror, I was looking and still thinking: 'This person is going to be so embarrassed when they realise they are in the wrong car'," she told the BBC, recounting the events of last June.

But this was not an innocent mistake. "Our gazes locked and I realised what was happening." This was a kidnapping.

Six months earlier, businessman Yasin Bhiku was grabbed in the driveway of his home, near Johannesburg, just after returning from the mosque.

CCTV footage that was widely seen on social media shows Mr Bhiku dressed in a blue T-shirt and black trousers calmly chatting to a friend.

Two men can be seen getting out of the car parked opposite. At first they stroll towards him, but then rush at him after Mr Bhiku realises what is going on and tries to flee. He was overpowered and forced into the vehicle at gunpoint. The businessman was later found unharmed and rescued by the police.

Ms Tau, who runs her own cleaning company in Pretoria, also tried to flee once she had

figured out that she was about to be abducted.

She said she tried opening the door of her car, but another man, dressed as a parking attendant in a hi-vis jacket, blocked the door. The man in the back seat showed that he had a gun and ordered Ms Tau to drive out of the shopping complex. Along the way, she was told to stop and someone else jumped into her car. Once in the countryside, about 15km (nine miles) into the terrifying journey, the kidnappers ordered Ms Tau to stop.

A red car then arrived at

the scene and someone got out, took her bank cards and forced her to reveal her security codes. "The other people from the car... started going through all my different cards. They were withdrawing [money]."

At the same time, her captors were repeatedly hitting her on the head with the gun, ordering her to increase her withdrawal limit.

The ordeal went on for over four hours.

At one point she heard someone on the other end of a phone call say: "Just finish her off. We are done."

"I made peace that they were going to kill me, but I thought, I need to fight. I

have to fight. If they are going to kill me, I might as well fight," Ms Tau said.

She fought her way out of the car, but the kidnappers grabbed her and started hitting and scratching her. She got away and ran across the road into the oncoming traffic. This story and that of Mr Bhiku are not isolated.

In February, Police Minister Bheki Cele revealed that 2,605 kidnapping cases had been reported to the authorities in the last three months of 2021.

In the decade from 2010, kidnapping more than doubled in South Africa and there are now 10 kidnappings per 100,000 people, according to the South African think-tank the Institute for Security Studies. This is one of the highest rates in the world.

In 2018, Mr Cele promised to make dealing with kidnapping a priority. BBC



Former Kenyan Meta employee files lawsuit



Meta says it requires partners to provide good salaries and benefits

In Kenya a former employee of Facebook's parent company, Meta, has filed a lawsuit alleging that poor working conditions violate the country's constitution.

Daniel Motaung's petition says locally outsourced workers, who moderate Facebook posts, suffer irregular pay and receive inadequate mental health support after viewing disturbing content.

Mr Motuang says this moderating work has given him Post-Traumatic Stress

Disorder (PTSD).

He was sacked after trying to get dozens of colleagues to form a union.

The lawsuit seeks financial compensation and an independent human rights audit of Mr Motaung's office. It also wants the court to order that unionisation rights be protected.

A spokesperson for Meta said it required its partners to provide industry-leading pay, benefits and support.

The outsourcing company, Sama, has previously rejected claims of mistreating its employees. BBC

Ethiopia university denies aiding grave destruction

Ethiopia's Gondar University has denied reports that some of its experts helped Amhara militia destroy evidence of mass graves containing bodies of Tigrayans.

Witnesses told the BBC

that they had seen the experts advise militia members.

In a letter to the BBC, the university described this as an "unsubstantiated accusation".

It also denied that there was any evidence that the bodies of Tigrayans had been found in mass graves.

If anything like that had been discovered then the "research team... would have been the first to acknowledge and provide the evidence", the university said.

"The university is one of the most respected research-based educational institutions in Ethiopia which is devoted to solving some of society's most pressing issues," it added. As part of its research, Gondar University's experts have found mass grave sites in the area, but it has discovered that these were the result of the killing of thousands of ethnic Amharas carried out by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) since the mid-1990s.

The TPLF was once the dominant political party in Ethiopia, but that changed when Abiy Ahmed became prime minister in 2018.

In November 2020, the political tension between the federal government and the



All sides in the 19-month civil war have been accused of war crimes

TPLF, which controls most of the northern Tigray region, led to the outbreak of civil war.

All sides in the on-going conflict have been accused of carrying out mass killings.

Witnesses had described to the BBC how, in western

Tigray, an area under the control of forces from the neighbouring Amhara region, the bodies of ethnic Tigrayans in freshly dug mass graves had been exhumed and destroyed. This came ahead of a possible visit by UN investigators looking into war crimes. BBC

EDITORIAL

Abuse of Liberian Diplomatic Passport

THE HANDLING OF official Liberian Diplomatic Passports under the Weah administration is found wanting in all respects, as what supposed to be a sacred document is being treated as toilet tissue in the hands of hard-core criminals and fraudsters, bringing reproach to the Republic.

THE LATEST CASE reportedly involves arrest of a well-known Liberian businessman in America for alleged wire fraud totaling more than US\$7 million. Suspect Sheik Bassirou Kante is said to have close ties with Liberia's Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor.

PERHAPS WHAT IS most disgraceful of the situation is that Sheik Kante, who does not work for the Liberian government carries a Liberian Diplomatic Passport in his alleged criminal activities, presenting himself as a diplomat from Liberia.

THIS RAISES MORE questions than answers: How did he obtain Liberian Diplomatic Passport? Who issued it to him? Is VP Taylor aware and how long has he been dubiously carrying this diplomatic passport, plying his trade of crime? These could be some questions the public may seek answers to.

BUT THEN THE issue of Liberian Diplomatic Passports getting in the hands of deviants is not new. In September 2020, former United States Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo under the Trump administration barred former Liberian passport director Andrew Wonplo and his immediate family from traveling to the America "due to his involvement in significant corruption" related to passport fraud that undermined the rule of law, reduced the Liberian public's faith in the current government's management of identification and travel documents, and compromised the integrity and security of immigration processes.

INVESTIGATORS' PROBE into the scandal at the time resulted to charges brought against Wonplo and a Nigerian defendant Adedoyin Emmanuel Atiro who purported as a Liberian Ministry of Foreign Affairs authority and awarded travel opportunities and received money from his victims.

IN THIS LATEST case according to FrontPageAfrica, Sheik Kante, commonly known in Liberia as Royal Gold, was picked up at his home in the United States on April 20 and subsequently charged with money laundering conspiracy few hours before his scheduled departure from Dulles International Airport in Washington to the United Arab Emirates.

WHAT IS EVEN more disgusting is that those illegally carrying Liberian Diplomatic Passports usually have links with senior Liberian government officials such as in this case, with VP Taylor, which leaves room for suspicions. While Suspect Kante is under U.S. custody, facing interrogation, the Vice President of Liberia must do everything immediately to exonerate herself or to say how much she knows about the Diplomatic Passport in the hands of an ordinary Liberian businessman that she allegedly has ties with.

THIS IS IMPORTANT not only for the personal integrity of the Vice President, who Liberians hold in very high esteem, but the image of this administration and the entire country.

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COMMENTARY

By Jayati Ghosh

Next Steps for a People's Vaccine

NEW DELHI - The Biden administration's decision to stop opposing a proposed COVID-19 waiver of certain intellectual-property rights under World Trade Organization rules is a welcome move. The US Trade Representative acknowledges that "the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic call for extraordinary measures." While affirming that it "believes strongly in intellectual property protections," the Biden administration, "in service of ending this pandemic, supports the waiver of those protections for COVID-19 vaccines." Already, the US decision may be persuading other rich-country holdouts in Europe and elsewhere to follow suit.

While the rapid development of COVID-19 vaccines was a truly impressive achievement, it has been tarnished by constraints on global vaccine supply and the related inequities in distribution. As of May 4, less than 8% of the world's population had received even one dose of any COVID-19 vaccine, while just ten rich countries accounted for 80% of all vaccinations. The reason is not just that rich countries have been buying up all available doses; it is also that there simply have not been enough doses to go around.

But this scarcity itself is largely artificial. Vaccine production has been limited by pharmaceutical companies' refusal to share knowledge and technology. Though the companies producing the approved vaccines have benefited from public subsidies and publicly funded research, they nonetheless have taken advantage of patent protections to maintain a monopoly, limiting production to their own factories and a select few other companies to whom they have granted licenses.

These patents are enshrined and enforced internationally through the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which allows for action to be taken against countries that provide compulsory licenses allowing "someone else to produce a patented product or process without the consent of the patent owner." It is this threat of legal action that led a majority of WTO members to propose a temporary waiver for COVID-19 drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other technologies needed to fight the pandemic. And yet, even this minor step has been blocked in the WTO TRIPS Council, because (mostly) rich countries have been prioritizing big pharmaceutical companies' interests over global health.

A waiver has become all the more urgent with the coronavirus on the rampage across South America and India, where a near-complete breakdown of overstretched health services is resulting in a catastrophic loss of life. Worse, the rapid spread of the virus has already given rise to dangerous new variants. We absolutely must vaccinate as many people as possible before vaccine-resistant variants emerge.

Temporarily waiving IP rights is essential, but it is only the first step. A waiver agreement would address the previously insurmountable legal side of the problem. But much more will need to be done to make a "People's Vaccine" universally available as soon as possible.

The next step is to push for concrete measures

to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology. From Canada to Bangladesh, many potential vaccine producers with the required facilities have so far been denied the licenses and technical know-how to proceed. Not a single pharmaceutical company has joined the World Health Organization's voluntary facility for sharing technology, the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP).

Governments in the United States, Europe, and elsewhere, having given large subsidies to develop the approved vaccines, can and should pressure the companies to share the knowledge that public money helped provide. We know this can be done, because the Biden administration has already persuaded Johnson & Johnson to share its technology with Merck to boost domestic production of its single-dose vaccine. Surely the other companies that have benefited from public support could be pressured to do the same with producers around the world.

In the meantime, the TRIPS waiver could increase vaccine production in other ways as well. Moderna, which relied almost completely on US government funding, has already declared that it will not enforce its patent. But its mRNA vaccine uses some knowledge that it has licensed (and paid for) from other companies, which could in turn sue any other producer using the same technology.

The TRIPS waiver would eliminate this possibility, allowing production to be scaled up rapidly. With Moderna now indicating that it will produce three billion doses in 2022 alone, the mRNA vaccines are apparently quite amenable to expanded production. They are also said to be easily adapted to account for new variants.

The case for public production of such vaccines is clear. "For less than the US government spends on the COVID-19 response daily," notes the health advocacy organization PrEP4All, "it can build a facility to produce enough mRNA vaccine manufacturing capacity to vaccinate the entire world in one year, with each dose costing only \$2."

The case for public production becomes even stronger when one considers that private vaccine producers have little financial incentive to meet current global needs. Once the pandemic is contained, the demand for vaccines is likely to revert to much lower "normal" levels. To win the race against the virus, we must build and deploy public manufacturing capacities in the US and other countries. And when COVID-19 is brought to heel, these facilities should be maintained for future pandemics.

The world desperately needs the TRIPS waiver and stronger measures to ensure the transfer of knowledge and technology to produce COVID-19 vaccines. But we also need to start preparing for equally exceptional circumstances in the future. The knowledge on which our health and prosperity depend must be both publicly funded and publicly disseminated.

Jayati Ghosh, Executive Secretary of International Development Economics Associates, is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.

O-PED

By Eric Posner

Long Live the Imperial Presidency?

CHICAGO - One of the striking contrasts between the Trump and Biden administrations is the debate about whether the presidency has achieved more power than is inconsistent with the public good. Donald Trump's term in office was accompanied by a drumbeat of commentaries arguing that the presidency had become too powerful, enabling a madman or despot to destroy Americans' liberties. The critics urged Congress and the courts to reassert themselves before the country slid into authoritarianism.

Since Joe Biden took office, however, Democrats have done nothing to rein in the presidency - even though they know that a Trump-like figure, or Trump himself, may succeed Biden. Instead, they have shifted their institutional focus to voting rights.

Why are Democrats squandering the opportunity to reform the presidency? One explanation is that Democrats do not want to risk hobbling their president, especially because control of Congress might slip from their grasp in the 2022 midterm elections. If Democrats lose control of the House or the Senate, achieving their policy agenda will require them to embrace the strong presidential power that they decried a year ago.

Another possibility is that the left's attacks on Trump's abuses of power were never sincere. His critics might have believed that cries of "dictatorship" would be more effective than complaints about tax cuts when it came to rousing opposition. Or perhaps the presidency's current powers are so deeply entrenched in law and custom that any effort to reform the office is bound to fail.

But beyond all this, there is a deeper reason why presidents keep accumulating power even as the trend incites alarm: the public - including experienced political observers - wants a powerful president, not so much as a matter of theory or ideology, but as a matter of practicality. Only a strong presidency seems capable of addressing the country's many challenges.

This has been the lesson of the past two decades, when the United States was slammed with three major crises: the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the 2008-09 financial crisis, and now the COVID-19 pandemic and economic collapse of 2020-21.

A crisis calls for decisive governance. People seek a leader who offers reassurance and resolve. Even at the best of times, Congress is prone to squabbling and pettiness, and to the kind of rational but self-destructive haggling that produces delays rather than action.

Crises such as the Great Depression and World War II gave rise to the modern "imperial" presidency. Congress willingly transferred power to the presidency through a series of statutes empowering the executive branch to respond to, and forestall, any new crisis. In the subsequent era of Cold War and regulatory growth, resources and authority encrusted an office that America's founders would no longer recognize.

The size of the national government has increased without serious interruption since WWII, with virtually all of the gains in personnel, money, and infrastructure occurring in the executive branch. Democrats want a powerful president to regulate the economy, while Republicans want a powerful president to protect the country from foreign threats, illegal immigration, and - increasingly - economic insecurity. Anti-government political impulses of the 1980s and 1990s all but vanished on 9/11. The president claimed, and Congress and the courts ratified, new surveillance and security powers in the name of protecting Americans from terrorist attacks and other foreign hobgoblins.

The financial crisis seven years later provoked the largest-ever state intervention in the US economy, with executive branch officials again leading the response. Congress pitched in by supplementing the executive branch's limitless resources with an extra few hundred billion dollars, and then by extending the president's already massive power to regulate the financial system after the crisis had ended. Widespread personal insecurity born of economic calamity helped propel extensive government intervention in health-care markets during the Obama years.

This pattern repeated itself in the last year. The pandemic and economic crisis led to even greater state intervention, accompanied by the most broad-based and extensive constraints on personal liberties in American history (though mainly at the command of local leaders rather than the shambolic Trump administration).

The only puzzle in this story of ever-expanding executive power was Trump's refusal to use it in the midst of the worst of these three crises. Liberal politicians who had long claimed to believe that Trump was looking for an excuse to inaugurate a dictatorship joined Republicans in showering him with cash to use as he saw fit. They demanded that he impose lockdowns and invoke the Defense Production Act to marshal private economic resources for the pandemic response. Trump mostly resisted these calls, though he did ratify spending more than a trillion dollars in congressionally appropriated rescue funds (and made sure his name appeared on the stimulus checks).

Trump acted weakly rather than decisively because he feared that a strong federal response would further damage the economy and undermine his prospects for re-election. While Trump deserves credit for the vaccine pre-purchase program, Operation Warp Speed, he gave the impression of following Congress rather than leading - and he paid the price at the polls. Given that Trump presented himself as a strong leader to the right and was feared as an authoritarian by the left, the irony is rich.

Clearly, Biden has resolved not to make the same mistake. Calculating that presidential aggrandizement will serve him best, Biden has launched the most ambitious political program in decades: not only a slew of executive actions and far-reaching legislative proposals, but even a show of consideration of reforming the Supreme Court, the Republicans' last redoubt in the federal government. The absence of debate about presidential power - just months after a mob attacked the US Capitol at the behest of a president accused of authoritarian ambitions - suggests that the imperial presidency is here to stay.

Eric Posner, a professor at the University of Chicago Law School, is the author, most recently, of *The Demagogue's Playbook: The Battle for American Democracy from the Founders to Trump* (All Points Books, 2020).

OPINION

By Diane Coyle

Leveling Up Is Hard to Do

CAMBRIDGE - One of the economic challenges facing all Western governments in these uniquely testing times is how to redress geographic inequalities that have emerged over several decades. Tackling this problem will require policymakers to adjust their perspective and adopt a much more holistic approach to economic development.

In the United Kingdom, regional inequality has given rise to its own vocabulary: the "red wall" of longtime Labour but now Conservative electoral constituencies in England's former industrial heartlands, and the imperative of "leveling up" the country to bring about a more equitable economic balance between the struggling north and the richer south. But many governments face the same challenge of restoring prosperity to rural communities and small towns that have not shared in the economic boom enjoyed by large urban areas.

The pandemic-induced trend of working from home might temper these underlying economic dynamics, but it is unlikely to reverse them. The most productive businesses in today's services-oriented Western economies are those best able to attract highly skilled employees, and that rely on "tacit" knowledge, or know-how - insights that are impossible to write down in detail.

This type of expertise tends to cluster together, because knowledge workers thrive on the presence of other similar people with whom to share ideas, and they also like environments with abundant cultural amenities. This has produced today's well-known clusters in technology, the creative sector, finance, and professional services. Platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams have kept such know-how businesses going through the pandemic, but they are an imperfect substitute for exchanging ideas in person: nobody schedules a Zoom meeting to share a serendipitous idea that came to mind while they were making coffee.

If this "superstar" clustering resumes as the pandemic fades, the momentum toward ever-increasing geographic inequality could become inexorable. We might then have to learn to live with large differences in economic outcomes and even life expectancy across the space of a few miles.

There is no shortage of policy ideas to halt or reverse this uneven trend. Infrastructure investment tops the list, and is needed anyway after decades of failure to maintain or enhance assets that are essential enablers of productivity and growth. But many infrastructure projects - some involving new bridges or expansion of broadband - have not had the hoped-for impact on the places they were intended to help. Such investments on their own will be insufficient. Economically disadvantaged areas need other kinds of public and private investment, including in skills, new technology adoption by businesses of all kinds, health, education, and other key social infrastructure.

But even this wish list of desirable policies will not be enough to trigger a virtuous cycle of growth in "left-behind" places in the absence of better coordination of government policies, public spending, and private investment decisions. An economy is like an orchestra: it will not perform if some sections - the woodwinds, say, or the strings - are missing. In unproductive areas, policymakers need to fix the economy's entire underlying structure by lining up all its parts.

Policymakers must therefore break with the conventional pattern of clever analysts devising a strategy and handing it over to others to implement. Public-interest technology, sometimes referred to as "govtech," demonstrates the integrated approach that will be needed. As recent books focusing on the United States and the UK make clear, digitizing public services to make them more efficient opens a path to redesigning the processes involved, rather than simply replacing paper with bytes.

The key change in perspective needed to deliver better outcomes more cheaply and efficiently is to design policies from the viewpoint of users and administrators, rather than that of the policy analyst. An abundance of evidence from the US and the UK shows that talking to the people involved reveals vital information. In many cases, the barriers to a government service's uptake or success may lie in a completely different policy domain, whose analysts would otherwise never imagine that their contribution could be useful. For example, the lack of a bus service or after-school childcare may affect an unemployed person's ability to take part in a training program. The powerful logic of designing a digital process uncovers the analog landscape through which people are forced to navigate.

Of course, better bus services are not the solution to the leveling-up challenge (although in some countries they may prove surprisingly important). But recognizing the need for a holistic approach to regional development is essential to address the problem. The real breakthrough will come from making such collaboration happen.

Digitalization has been transforming how businesses operate since the 1990s. It can do the same for government policies, so that they better serve all citizens, no matter where they live.

Diane Coyle, Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, is the author, most recently, of *Markets, State, and People: Economics for Public Policy*.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Elections 2023 Will Be About Weah/CDC Six Years In Power – Love For Country and Hope for Change Failed The People

By: *Racassius Jedekan Weah*

I do not know if comprehension or purposeful collective amnesia is an issue here but let me make this abundantly clear, ELECTIONS 2023 WILL BE ABOUT PRESIDENT WEAH AND CDC RECORD IN POWER and NOTHING ELSE. Though my compatriots from the CDC, celebrate and enjoy privatizing the benefits of winning an election but struggle daily to pass the buck to the excluded opposition and past governments for current public policy failures, bad personnel choices, and botched governance. Folks, take off your blinders, the opposition was not voted in 2017, it was the CDC, and it is President Weah and his CDC that govern our country. THE PEOPLE KNOW THIS VERY WELL. Sometimes the rubbishes, lies, and deceptions of our ruling party brethren spew daily in different fora in the name of politics and or strategy, are mostly condescending, obnoxious, nonsensical, irritating, nauseating, and insensitive. I do not know who pays these folks to write and speak such infantile gutter stuff in the name of propaganda and strategy. No matter how you dress the goat, a goat is a goat - it bleats!

So let me endeavor to enlighten my willfully blind friends on the CDC/government side since they assume that all of us who disagree with government policy choices hate the President. WE LOVE THE PRESIDENT BUT SIMPLY DISAGREE WITH MANY OF HIS POLICIES! You all can imagine that if Weah was not the president, many of us would have little or no reason to disagree with him so strongly on policy grounds because he would not have life-changing decisions to make concerning millions of his compatriots. I am sure that the waste they feed our presidents daily to mask their dismal performances in their respective roles can sometimes be overwhelming and or overbearing. But what they are not reminding the president of is that when they were in opposition and disagreed with the UP and made careers out of insulting President Sirleaf daily (that's how the Kojees, Morlus, Grays, and others cut their teeth in CDC), they didn't HATE the president (or at least nobody considered their very disrespectful and provocative dissent, hate), they were doing the opposition business. Now it should be different. Twisted logic from feeble minds!!! CDC will account for its stewardship for the 6 years and no amount of attempt at shifting blame will help. These are some of the issues the people are already settled on:

When people die mysteriously and there are no conclusive investigative reports or the perpetrators are not brought to book, while the police make repeated rash statements incident after incident, it is fair to imagine that our government is clueless, careless, and even complicit because our collective security is the responsibility of the government and not any imaginary opposition that wields no coercive state power and has no access to the national coffers. It is beyond imprudent to think that the opposition can be blamed for the government's inaction or incompetence on the matter of unsolved crimes.

Further, no one beyond the cool-aid drinkers and their patrons will hold any opposition responsible for alleged unsolved murders, rapes, armed robbers, carjacking, and broad day thievery in the public sector or against private peaceful citizens. Government must provide a sense of security and redress for victims. The people cannot all be expected to sit supinely when nothing is done about their sorrows. Frustration may boil over, and when it does, the government's solution, as it is now, should not be to flog the people or arrest them. Government should provide answers. So, this rubbish you all spew daily when you blame everyone else but you for your failures in the name of politics is unhelpful to your cause and counterproductive to your benefactors. You all stop

fooling each other and try to solve the problems or at least make an honest attempt. No one expects you to wave a magic wand at the problem, but at the very least, we expect that you will be sincere and give your best efforts. Be honest and accept failures the same way you maximize marginal progress. You are not writing politics or doing politics here when you take responsibility for nothing as governors of the country. And if people are paying you for the incessant junk you write daily, then we should book an appointment for those people with the Psychiatrist ... necessary!

When the dim Chinese street lights you celebrated like you had established an endowment fund to secure the future of coming generations can hardly come on because you refuse to appreciate that power supply was a binding constraint and therefore solar-powered lights were the viable option, the people will not blame the opposition for spending stupid millions simply because, as you claimed, UP only setup the HFO plant on Bushrod Island, and rehabilitated the Mt. Coffee instead of rebuilding a new hydro. The people know the reason your Chinese Christmas lights can barely come or come on so intermittently, is you and the quality of your decision over the five years, or lack thereof. In five years, you have failed to show a better way on many fronts so the question will be WHAT HAVE YOU DONE DIFFERENTLY CDC, besides whining and passing the blame for your lack of innovation and investing the meager resources in critical sectors. Instead of accepting that you have been incompetent



in ways, accepting the error of your policies, and recalibrating, you have remained stubborn and naïvely arrogant in your failure to your detriment. You delude yourselves into thinking the opposition that you have sidelined can be held responsible for your glaring governance failures simply because you say so. Yes, the "sycamore" who feed off your every delusion, and cling to your every fakery, will believe you - I mean, continue to believe you - but the size of your ardent believers and or "worshippers" is dwindling because they are enduring the most pain from your glaring failures ... can't you see?

Don't you think that the people know when they have been disproportionately harmonized to the extent that their irregular salaries can hardly take "papa home," to quote Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Do you think they will hold the opposition responsible for this when they know that recurring expenditure, including the public sector wage bill, increased under your watch while their disposable income decreased? The people are feeling the effect of your ill-advised policy in their pockets.

Don't you know that the people understand that the dim Chinese lights you installed in county capitals and the latter-day scholarships you are offering after 4 years in power to students of some counties are all but a charade and electioneering ploy that addresses no bread-and-butter issues? Can't you tell that unless you dig your head out of the sand and change course on

both the policy and personnel front, and it might already be too late to do this, the going will get tougher and your words will no longer be soothing, but will become an irritant as they may have already?

Don't you know that when the people voted on the fabled abstract notion of LOVE FOR COUNTRY, they gambled and expected that their lot would change and not just the lot of the small inner circle? Beyond overcrowding the public sector with mostly incompetent and ill-prepared party hacks, how many private-sector jobs have you created. How have you helped the informal employment sector when the business climate has not been enhanced to attract FDI so that the benefits of the employment derivative activities generated by such FDI will trickle down to the small businessman?. In five years, which major international investor that was not already here or on the verge of beginning operations here in Liberia, have you attracted to this country you LOVE?

Don't you know that the people will not hold the opposition responsible for news about scandal after scandal and public swindles but your government, which has struggled to explain these allegations or address them to satisfactory ends, whether true or not. Do you not know that the people have not gotten the proper explanation for the \$25M mob up or suck-up, if you will, and the Covid-19 US\$25 Million relief which hardly 10% of the population received? Do you not know that if nothing is done about Bali Island, the coastal highway, and the many promises, the people will see them as broken promises and hold the CDC government responsible and not the opposition? Don't you know that your PAPD will be used as a baseline to query your performance in terms of percentage delivered? Watch!!!

Don't you know that the people will be annoyed when the hospitals are without necessary drugs and supplies, but your government, through the Minister of State, can afford to donate \$100,000 to ULAA and promise an additional \$300,000 in annual budgetary support to a people who sustained this economy via their remittances in the difficult years? Don't you think it will be perfectly rational and appropriate that the people consider your government priorities to be upside down and not the opposition? What informs the kind of thinking that led to this donation and the commitment of future resources by a sitting minister of a government that is struggling to meet revenue targets? I should like to read some budget performance reports if there are any.

Don't you know when the community roads are constructed irregularly to signal favoritism, the people understand that the government is not altruistic, authentic, organized, and methodical in its approach. Check the number of roads that were skipped from SKD Stadium going to wherever the community road work stopped on the RIA highway, and you will understand that neighborhoods are frustrated that the so-called bad road medicine has not cured their bad roads.

Don't you know that the people understand that the Somalia drive road (Japan Highway), ELWA to Redlight, the proposed overpass to the Ministerial Complex, the Ganta to Yekepa roads were all negotiated and funds committed before you took over; and if possible the ELWA to RIA road, which is under construction or just starting, everything else you have dedicated and celebrated is reaping where you have not sowed without giving deserved credits?

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Replacing Weah is not LPP's priority

-Chairman Zaza

By Lewis S. Teh

The newly elected chairman of the Liberian People's Party (LPP) Mr. G. Yanqui Zaza, says replacing or getting President George Weah out of office is not the focus of the LPP, and shouldn't be a priority for any opposition political party in the country.

"We in the LPP, our focus and priority is not about replacing Goerge Weah, but it's about finding lasting solutions to the serious economic hardship that have engulfed our people", Chairman Zaza says.

while there are so many children in the streets selling, instead of being in school.

According to him, when the opposition bloc starts to think in such direction then people will begin to understand the factors responsible for the hardship, adding that it saddens him to see people introducing their school-going kids into money making machines.

The LPP Chair further observes that the youth of Liberia nowadays are no longer competing with their peers but rather, they prefer to sit and drink alcohol all day, something, he laments would cause chaos, if

are bringing forth lot of children and we are not preparing their future; we can't continue to argue who the best candidate is or who has done well than their friends, all we can now do is to start to think about how we can grow more food for us to stop depending on importation of rice".

He stresses that people should now begin to think how the leaders of various communities can benefit from their proceeds, including natural resources of the country like diamond and gold.

He admits that though the LPP is not considered a formidable force in the pending 2023 Presidential and General Elections, the party has a voice and will remain a strong voice for the people of Liberia.

Asked who will the Party support if there were a runoff in 2023, Zaza says it is premature to make such declaration, especially in the case where the LPP does not have any ideas of the workings of the current government and the opposition bloc.

"Before I support any political party, we must know their views and stand on cardinal issues like economic reforms, war crimes, corruption, and plans for change in education, among others, but to sit on this radio and throw support for a special group, that will be premature".

Mr. Zaza was elected unopposed recently as National Chairman of the Liberian People's Party, replacing outgone Chairman Cllr. Joseph Kolako Kpator Jallah, who steered the party for 17 years.

The decision was taken during the party's 5th extraordinary national congress held at the weekend in Montserrado County. It was attended by over 117 accredited delegates from the 15 counties in Liberia, the United States and Europe, respectively. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

nothing is done immediately.

"We need to stand up and do something better for the youth of this country other than that there would be chaos, we don't want war, but if we do not address the fundamental, and economic issues affecting our country, there would be something else", Chairman Zaza cautions.

According to him, his desire to enter politics especially, the LPP is to contribute to the national discourse, following his retirement from the United States where he spent several years going to school and working.

"All I am saying is that we

Leadership crisis engulfs ALCOP

-aggrieved partisans expressed vote of no confidence in Acting Chairman Dulleh



ALCOP Political Leader Lusinee Kamara

The All-Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP) seems to be descending into leadership crisis with 51 partisans of the party declaring a vote of no confidence in Acting National Chairman Ansu V.S Dulleh.

The aggrieved partisans in a letter addressed to the National Elections Commission through its Chairperson Davideatte Browne Lansanah, expressed outrage and extreme disappointment in the leadership of Acting Chairman Dulleh, calling on the NEC to intervene, as the party plans to host national convention ahead of Presidential and General Elections in 2023.

Spokesperson Jerry W. Yarkpah, in a nine-count resolution indicated that since Mr. Ansu V.S. Dulleh assumed office as Acting National Chairman, he has allegedly refused to democratically restructure the party's national leadership as enshrined in Article 112, Section 1.1; 1.2 and 1.4, respectively of ALCOP Constitution of 2005.

Mr. Yarkpah explained that on October 5, 2019 and May 29, 2021, respectively, embattled Chairman Dulleh unilaterally and illegally convened two separate min- conventions in total violation of Article 111 Section 2.1 and 2.2 of the constitution without the expressed consent and approval of two-thirds majority of the executive committee.

According to him, Chairman Dulleh's alleged action was not only intended to legitimize his claim to the national leadership of the party, leaving out rest of the positions at national and county levels vacant with an aim of illegally entrenching himself in power against the will of the people. But, when contacted,

embattled Acting National Chairman Dulleh described the allegation by the aggrieved partisans as funny, adding that the statement lacks merit because those making the allegation, according to him, are not partisans of ALCOP.

Dulleh maintained that he will not waste his precious time and energy to respond to "less busy people."

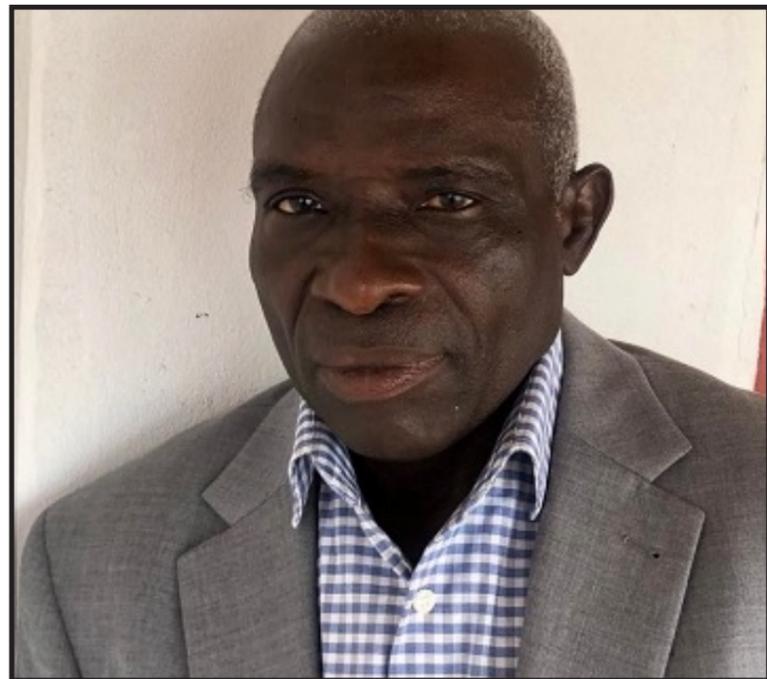
However, when also contacted by phone, the Political leader of ALCOP, Mr. Lusinee Kamara welcomed the decision of the aggrieved partisans to their complaint before the National Elections Commission, saying "I will be awaiting to hear from the NEC anytime and will go there if I am called upon."

ALCOP in the July 19, 1997 election under its late Presidential Candidate Professor Alhaji G.V. Kromah won 4.02 percent of the total votes, including 3 out of 64 seats in the House of Representatives and 2 seats in the Senate, respectively.

While international observers deemed the polls administratively free and transparent, critics noted that it had taken place in an atmosphere of intimidation because most voters believed then that former rebel leader and National Patriotic Party (NPP) Candidate Charles Taylor would had returned to war if he had lost the poll.

Taylor won over 75 percent of the total votes and counting was still ongoing, leaving the special election commission headed by late Chairman Henry G. Andrews to halt counting.

The late Kromah again contested for the presidency in 2005 and received 2.8 percent of the votes, but won a seat in the Senate and two seats in the House of Representatives. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**



In a live interview with Prime FM on Tuesday, May 10, 2022 he said any opposition party that thinks that replacing the CDC-led government would bring development is a misstep and a wrong calculation.

He says the LPP and other opposition political parties should begin to look at root causes of variety of problems that are responsible for the backwardness of Liberia, instead.

He notes that the focus of the opposition bloc should be reforming Liberia and Liberians, changing their mentality at least to understand why the country continues to regress, and

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MARCO CEO cautions Morris Farm

competent court of jurisdiction. Speaking further, Mr. Dennis indicated that the order of eviction from the Careysburg Magisterial Court was only for five residents who are no more in the employ of MARCO but continue to incite peaceful residents of the town against the operation of the company. "The five individuals who were ordered to leave the property of this company for which they refuse, continue to make false claims and incite

people against the company," Mr. Dennis alleged.

The Careysburg Magisterial Court's ruling on 10 March 2022 in the case involving complainant MARCO versus Defendants Life Kolako, Jonathan Yorfee, Richard Kerkula, Joseph Kollie, Nyanpu Kollie, etal, mandated the defendants within 15 working days to leave the facility of the company or face eviction at the expiration of the court's

order. The ruling, signed by Associate Magistrate Yah Domah Quota, granted full ownership of all properties in the operation area of the plantation to MARCO.

Mr. Dennis is however calling on workers and other residents of Morris Farm to remain calm and work within the scope of the law as the company is working with rightful stakeholders in resolving the situation peacefully.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Women protest in Grand Gedeh

-Demand living body of missing NEC Magistrate

By: D Alexson Barpeen

Angry protesters in Grand Gedeh County have barricaded the Presidential Palace in Zwedru city, demanding the county's authorities to produce the living body of Acting Electoral Magistrate Alfred T. Dunner, who allegedly went missing about a week ago.

Tuesday, May 10, 2022 was a scene of peaceful demonstrations in Zwedru as residents, predominately women carrying placards besieged the premises of the

local authorities to establish his whereabouts.

Chanting "No Alfred, no Peace" the protesting women asked Superintendent Kai Farley to give them a timeframe in which Mr Dunner would be found and brought back to reunite with his family.

In response, Supt. Farley called on every citizen of Grand Gedeh County to exercise restraint, as all efforts are being made to ensure Mr Alfred T. Dunner is

worker.

He stressed that every sector of Grand Gedeh, including traditional council is involved with the current saga and that, progress could only be achieved when citizens unite in one accord.

Supt. Farley called on his kinsmen to do away with sectionalism and personal differences in these critical moments of the county, home of slain President Samuel Kanyon Doe.

Mr. Alfred T. Dunner allegedly went missing on Tuesday, May 4, 2022, and his

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May 6, 2022

Re-Survey Notice

This is to inform the general public that **Madam Edwina M. Lewis & Madam Ifreal Mason** have duly authorized **Contours, Limited** to conduct a Detail & Perimeter Re-Survey of **One Point Zero (1.0) Lot** of land within the **Seaview Community, Gbengbar Town, Montserrado County**.

The parcel of land to be Re-Survey is lying and situated within the **Seaview Community, Gbengbar Town, Montserrado County**.

This Re-survey will commence on Thursday, 12th of May 2022 beginning at 10:00AM.

Therefore, all adjoining & adjacent property owners, and interested parties are requested to be present at the site on the day of the survey with their **deed(s), diagram(s), map(s), technical representatives/surveyors and other relevant document to substantiate their claims.**

Please let this survey notice and announcement claim the attention of the following individuals:

1. Mr. Alex Brown
2. Madam Juah Gohn & Family
3. All other interested Parties

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 P.P. & J.F.M
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Signed: *Albert D. Giah Jr*
Albert D. Giah Jr.
 Registered Licensed Surveyor
 Cell #: 0886740519/0770266609

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Presidential Palace, official residence of County Superintendent Kai Garlo Farley. A spokesperson for the aggrieved protesters, Madam Rebecca Quaye, lamented that for too long they have wept and waited on authorities of Grand Gedeh County to produce their son, who mysteriously disappeared, but to no avail.

Madam Quaye explaining in tears, continued that since their son, Alfred T. Dunner went missing, there has been no concerted efforts by the

found.

On Sunday, May 8, the office of Superintendent Farley held a mediation meeting between the people of Konobo District and Naio Clan in Grand Gedeh, rallying both sides to unite and work as a team in discovering the whereabouts of Mr Alfred T. Dunner.

Farley also told the distressed protesters that both sides agreed during the mediation to unite and begin a vigorous search for the missing senior election

whereabouts are still unknown.

Since news of his disappearance surfaced in Grand Gedeh, it is exactly 8 days as of this publication.

Currently, citizens are in tears and panic as the county's authorities probe the situation.

Mr. Dunner is a senior staff of the National Elections Commission Grand Gedeh Chapter. He serves as Logistician and Acting Magistrate, respectively.
Editing by Jonathan Browne

PFL renovates prison facilities

-appeals for more help



Reverend Francis Kollie presents keys to the Director of Prison Reverend Samuel Kwaida

Prison Fellowship Liberia has appealed to the United Nations Development Program, the United States Embassy in Liberia and other international partners for assistance to help improve prison conditions across the country.

Country Director, Reverend Francis Kollie, said there are multiple challenges facing the Liberian prison system. Officially handing over keys of newly renovated library, records room and warehouse to the Ministry of Justice in Monrovia, Rev. Kollie said Prison Fellowship Liberia will continue to buttress efforts by the Liberian government and

international partners to improve prison conditions to meet international standards.

The facilities were refurbished by Prison Fellowship Liberia in partnership with Logos Hope.

The library and record room have been stacked with about 2,000 books and furniture for use by inmates and officers of the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation at the Ministry of Justice, among others.

The program was graced by senior staff of Prison Fellowship Liberia, Colonel Varney Lake, Superintendent of the Monrovia Central Prison, among others.

Over 10,000 United States Dollars was spent by PFL in renovating the library, record room and the warehouse of the Monrovia Central Prison.

The PFL country director noted that there are still multiple challenges such as lack of adequate prison rehabilitation programs, overcrowding of prisons, lack of food storage and adequate medical facilities and supplies as well as insufficient space to accommodate prisoners and detainees in all 16 prisons in the country.

"Most of the detention facilities are not human rights and rehabilitation friendly due to less support to the prison institutions in Liberia," he said, and added, "It is against this backdrop that the PFL continues to seek assistance from friendly partners, including the United Nations agencies, embassies and other humanitarian organizations such as Logos Hope International who partnered with the PFL to carry out renovation of these facilities."

"They provided partial funding about 45 percent while the PFL provided 55 percent of funding and materials to get this job done.

It is our hope and aspiration that our efforts in providing decent prison conditions will add value and improve our

human rights records that have been tainted over the years especially, prisoners' rights as we all are aware of this fact."

Reverend Kollie stressed that reconstruction of Harper Prison in Harper City, Maryland County is vital to restoring prison dignities in Liberia's judicial reforms.

"To the Liberian government, we want to remind the Justice Ministry that we are still waiting on the release of 500 prisoners out of our detention and prison centers as mandated by President George Weah because we think that the delay is creating lots of uncertainties in the minds of prisoners across the country."

He disclosed that in the last two years with support from UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF, OSIWA and others, PFL has provided legal assistance to over 3,000 prisoners, who came in contact and conflict with the law and rehabilitated over 500 prisoners across the country.

Receiving the keys, the Director of Prison at the Ministry of Justice, Reverend Samuel Kwaida, disclosed that the Bureau of Corrections at the Ministry of Justice has begun selection of names of inmates who will qualify for the executive clemency granted by President Weah recently.

According to him, Liberia's prison system has about 800 convicted inmates and the executive clemency cannot be extended to pre-trial detainees.

He cautioned the Superintendent of the Monrovia Central Prison to be appreciative of the gesture from the Prison Fellowship Liberia by maintaining the facilities.

Reverend Kwaida assured the Country Director of PFL that the facilities will be used for their intended purposes.

The Director of Alternative Dispute Resolution Program at the Ministry of Justice, Gobah Anderson, said since the establishment of his department, PFL is the first and only institution that has made donation to the department.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

Français

Alfred T. Dunner est toujours introuvable

M. Alfred T. Dunner n'a pas encore été retrouvé. Il y a quelques jours, le guérisseur chez lequel il était allé pour se faire soigner avant sa disparition mystérieuse à Grand Gedeh a été arrêté.

M. Alfred T. Dunner, membre du bureau logistique de la NEC à Grand Gedeh, dans le sud-est du Libéria, a été porté disparu le mardi 3 mai à Janzon, Nia

Clan, où il était allé se faire traiter.

Il souffrait d'une maladie non diagnostiquée. Il s'était alors rendu à Janzon, Niao chez un guérisseur lorsqu'il a disparu vers 2 heures du matin dans la nuit de mardi et mercredi.

Selon les autorités de la NEC, la police nationale libérienne a lancé une enquête sur les circonstances ayant conduit à la disparition mystérieuse de l'agent.

La disparition de M. Dunner a

provoqué des affrontements à Janzon. Les proches de la victime à Ziah s'étaient rendus sur les lieux à sa recherche, mais ils auraient été attaqués et chassés par un groupe de jeunes de Niao.

Il s'en est suivi des affrontements au cours desquels plusieurs personnes ont été blessées.

Le surintendant Kai Garlo Fairley a annoncé lundi sur une radio locale à la suite d'une réunion avec les deux clans qui se sont affrontés, qu'une trêve a été conclue et que les deux ont décidé de rechercher ensemble la victime.

Niao, la localité en question, se trouve en périphérie de la ville de Zwedru, soit à environ 25 kilomètres de la ville. C'est une plaque tournante majeure de la production alimentaire dans le comté de Grand Gedeh.

M. Dunner est agent de la logistique de la NEC et magistrat électoral pour le comté de Grand Gedeh.

En tant que magistrat électoral par intérim de Grand Gedeh, il a organisé deux élections réussies, dont

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Attaques au Nigeria: «Les forces de sécurité manquent cruellement d'hommes»

Au Nigeria, la recrudescence des groupes armés inquiète. Vendredi 6 mai, trois villages dans le nord-ouest du pays ont été attaqués par une bande criminelle. Le dernier bilan fait état d'une cinquantaine de morts. Un phénomène que les autorités n'arrivent pas à enrayer.

Les villages de Damri, Sabon Garin et Kalahe ont été attaqués quasi simultanément, vendredi après-midi. Le premier a été le plus touché. Les « bandits », comme on les appelle, ont notamment pris d'assaut l'hôpital où ils n'ont pas fait de détails, en exécutant des patients suivant des traitements. Les assaillants ont volé du bétail et des vivres, avant d'être contraints de fuir en laissant leur butin derrière eux lorsque les forces armées nigérianes sont arrivées sur place.

Cette triple attaque n'est que le dernier méfait des bandes armées qui

séviennent, depuis plusieurs années, dans le Nord-Ouest et le Centre du pays. Il y a un mois déjà, une centaine de personnes étaient mortes dans une série d'assauts perpétrés dans le centre du pays. Fin mars, les « bandits » étaient même allés jusqu'à attaquer l'aéroport de Kaduna, l'une des grandes villes du Nord-Ouest. Deux jours plus tard, un groupe s'en prenait à l'arme lourde au

train reliant Kaduna à Abuja, faisant 60 morts.

Les autorités semblent désemparées face au phénomène. En dépit des opérations militaires et des amnisties accordées, les bandits ont tué plus de 2 600 civils en 2021, soit une augmentation de 250 % par rapport à 2020, d'après

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Éditorial

Le passeport diplomatique libérien aux mains des criminels

La manière dont l'on traite les passeports diplomatiques libériens officiels sous l'administration Weah laisse à désirer à tous égards.

Ce document officiel qui est sensé être sacré a maintenant l'air d'un papier hygiénique. Pire, on le trouve entre les mains des criminels et des fraudeurs purs et durs, au point de ternir l'image de notre chère République.

Un homme d'affaires libérien proche de la vice-présidente Taylor aurait été interpellé aux États-Unis pour blanchiment d'argent.

Ce qui est plus honteux, c'est que le suspect, quoi qu'il ne travaille pas pour le gouvernement libérien, dispose d'un passeport diplomatique libérien, ce qui lui permet de se livrer aisément à ses activités criminelles en se faisant passer pour un diplomate.

Cette situation suscite plus de questions sans réponses : Comment a-t-il obtenu le passeport diplomatique libérien ? Qui le lui a délivré ? La vice-présidente Taylor est-elle au courant et depuis combien de temps a-t-il de manière douteuse ce passeport diplomatique, exerçant son métier de criminel ? Voilà des questions auxquelles l'on devra répondre.

De toutes les façons ce n'est pas la première fois que le passeport diplomatique libérien tombe aux mains d'un criminel. En septembre 2020, l'ancien secrétaire d'État américain Michael R. Pompeo sous l'administration Trump a interdit à l'ancien directeur libérien des passeports Andrew Wonplo et à sa famille immédiate de se rendre en Amérique "pour son implication dans une affaire de corruption importante". Cela a réduit la confiance du public libérien dans la gestion des documents d'identité et de voyage par le gouvernement actuel et compromis l'intégrité et la politique d'immigration.

L'enquête sur le scandale à l'époque a abouti à l'inculpation de Wonplo et d'un nigérian nommé Adedoyin Emmanuel Atiro qui s'était fait passer pour une autorité du ministère libérien des Affaires étrangères et offrait des opportunités de voyage moyennant des sommes d'argent importantes.

Dans l'affaire récente, selon FrontPageAfrica, Sheik Kante, communément connu au Libéria sous le nom de Royal Gold, a été arrêté à son domicile aux États-Unis le 20 avril et par la suite accusé de complot de blanchiment d'argent quelques heures avant son départ prévu de l'aéroport international de Dulles à Washington pour les Emirats Arabes Unis.

Ce qui est encore plus dégoûtant, c'est que ceux qui détiennent illégalement des passeports diplomatiques libériens ont généralement des liens avec de hauts responsables du gouvernement libérien, comme dans ce cas, avec la vice-présidente Taylor, ce qui laisse place aux soupçons.

Pendant que le suspect Kante est en garde à vue aux États-Unis, la vice-présidente du Libéria doit tout faire dès maintenant pour se disculper en disant ce qu'elle sait sur le passeport diplomatique que détient un homme d'affaires libérien ordinaire avec lequel elle aurait des liens.

C'est important non seulement pour l'intégrité personnelle de la vice-présidente que les Libériens tiennent en très haute estime, mais aussi pour l'image du régime actuel et du pays tout entier.

Français

Alfred T. Dunner est

l'élection sénatoriale de mi-mandat de 2020 et l'élection législative partielle du 16 novembre 2021 dans le district électoral numéro un.

Sa mystérieuse disparition porte à deux le nombre d'individus disparus

à Grand Gedeh en moins de deux ans. On peut se rappeler qu'un petit enfant que l'on croyait âgé de trois ans a mystérieusement disparu à Gbarzon Pola l'année dernière et dont le corps sans vie a été découvert quelques jours plus tard.

Attaques au Nigeria: «Les forces de sécurité

L'ONG Aclad. Entretien avec Nnamdi Obasi, chercheur sur le Nigeria pour l'International Crisis Group.

RFI : Pourriez-vous nous rappeler comment ces attaques ont commencé ?

Nnamdi Obasi : Le phénomène s'est d'abord concentré dans le Nord-Ouest avant de s'étendre vers le Centre-Nord. Ça a commencé par des conflits entre éleveurs et agriculteurs, avec des accusations d'activités criminelles à l'égard des éleveurs d'ethnie Peul. Les communautés ont alors commencé à former des groupes d'auto-défense pour se protéger ou exercer des représailles contre les Peuls. Mais aujourd'hui, nous avons une explosion de l'activité criminelle, certains groupes ne représentent plus les communautés. Ce sont des groupes qui sont tombés dans la criminalité et n'importe qui peut devenir leur victime.

Est-ce désormais l'appât du gain qui motive ces groupes ?

Oui, le phénomène se caractérise désormais largement par des groupes avides, aux instincts de prédateurs. Avec le temps, ils ont vu qu'ils pouvaient obtenir beaucoup de profits et donc leur nombre n'a cessé de croître. Ils attaquent, pillent les communautés et enlèvent un grand nombre de personnes pour obtenir, en échange, d'importantes rançons.

Sait-on comment ces groupes sont organisés ?

Au début, il y avait des chefs identifiés. Maintenant, il y a beaucoup de groupes dont on ne connaît pas les dirigeants. Ils sont armés de plus en plus lourdement, notamment avec des lance-roquettes. L'an dernier, ils ont même abattu un avion militaire. Au départ, ils étaient surtout basés dans les forêts et c'est toujours en partie le cas, mais certains se sont installés dans des villages. Ils vivent parmi les communautés locales dont ils contrôlent la vie. Ils imposent une taxe et s'engagent en échange à protéger les habitants. Ils s'en prennent à ceux qui refuseraient cette situation.

Ces groupes profitent-ils d'une absence de la puissance étatique dans certaines régions ?

Oui. Dans beaucoup de secteurs, les autorités locales ont été soit écartées, soit supplantées. Elles ne peuvent rien faire contre ces groupes armés. Les forces de sécurité manquent cruellement d'hommes et leurs moyens sont insuffisants pour couvrir un si vaste territoire. Elles sont aussi sous-équipées. Enfin, il y a un manque de stratégie commune par les États régionaux, mais aussi entre les régions et le pouvoir central.

Tout cela entraîne d'énormes manques dans les tentatives de combattre ces groupes. Certaines autorités locales ont négocié avec certains groupes. D'autres ont choisi de les combattre et ça permet parfois à ces mouvements de passer d'une région à une autre, quand ils sont sous pression, parce qu'ils sont très mobiles.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Jayati Ghosh

Les prochaines étapes d'un vaccin pour le peuple

NEW DELHI - La décision de l'administration Biden de cesser de s'opposer à une proposition de levée de certains droits de propriété intellectuelle sur la COVID-19 en vertu des règles de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce est une excellente avancée. La Représentante américaine au Commerce reconnaît que « les circonstances extraordinaires de la pandémie de COVID-19 appellent à prendre des mesures extraordinaires ». Tout en affirmant « croire fermement en la protection de la propriété intellectuelle », l'administration Biden, « dans le but de mettre fin à cette pandémie, soutient la levée de ces protections sur les vaccins contre la COVID-19 ». D'ores et déjà, la décision des États-Unis pourrait persuader d'autres pays riches réticents en Europe et ailleurs de prendre le même type de mesures.

Bien que le développement rapide de vaccins contre la COVID-19 soit un succès véritablement impressionnant, il a été terni par les contraintes qui pèsent sur l'offre mondiale de vaccins et les inégalités qui en découlent en termes de distribution. Le 4 mai, moins de 8 % de la population mondiale avait reçu une seule dose de vaccin contre la COVID-19, alors que seulement dix pays riches représentaient 80 % de toutes les vaccinations. La raison n'est pas seulement que les pays riches ont acheté toutes les doses disponibles, mais surtout qu'il n'y a tout simplement pas assez de doses pour tout le monde.

Mais cette rareté en elle-même est en grande partie artificielle. La production de vaccins est limitée par le refus des sociétés pharmaceutiques de partager leurs connaissances et leurs technologies. Bien que les sociétés qui produisent les vaccins approuvés aient bénéficié de subventions publiques et de recherches financées par l'État, elles ont néanmoins profité des protections des brevets pour maintenir un monopole, en limitant ainsi la production à leurs propres usines et à quelques autres entreprises à qui elles ont accordé des licences.

Ces brevets sont consacrés et appliqués internationalement par l'Accord sur les aspects des droits de propriété intellectuelle qui touchent au commerce (ADPIC) de l'OMC, qui permet de prendre des mesures contre les pays qui fournissent des licences obligatoires permettant à « quelqu'un d'autre de produire un produit ou un processus breveté sans le consentement du titulaire du brevet ». C'est cette menace d'action en justice qui a conduit une majorité de membres de l'OMC à proposer une dérogation temporaire pour les médicaments, vaccins, diagnostics et autres technologies COVID-19 nécessaires dans la lutte contre la pandémie. Pourtant, même cette mesure mineure a été bloquée par le Conseil des ADPIC de l'OMC, parce que (principalement) les pays riches ont donné la priorité aux intérêts des grandes sociétés pharmaceutiques par rapport à la santé mondiale.

Une levée des droits est devenue d'autant plus urgente que le coronavirus fait des ravages en Amérique du Sud et en Inde, où une saturation quasi complète des services de santé surchargés entraîne des pertes catastrophiques de vies humaines. Pire encore, la propagation rapide du virus a déjà donné lieu à de nouveaux variants dangereux. Nous devons absolument vacciner autant de personnes que possible avant que n'apparaissent des variants résistants au vaccin.

Il est essentiel de renoncer temporairement aux droits de propriété intellectuelle, mais ce n'est que la première étape. Un accord de levée du droit de propriété abordera le côté juridique, jadis insurmontable, du problème. Mais il faudra faire beaucoup plus pour rendre un « vaccin pour le peuple » universellement accessible dès que possible.

La prochaine étape consiste à promouvoir des mesures concrètes visant à faciliter le transfert des connaissances et des technologies. Du Canada au Bangladesh, de nombreux producteurs potentiels de vaccins ayant des installations adaptées se sont vu refuser jusqu'à présent les licences et le savoir-faire technique pour aller de l'avant. Aucune société pharmaceutique n'a rejoint le fonds de partage de technologies de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, le COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP).

Les gouvernements des États-Unis, d'Europe et d'ailleurs, qui ont accordé d'importantes subventions au développement de vaccins approuvés, peuvent et doivent faire pression sur les entreprises pour qu'elles partagent les connaissances que les fonds publics ont contribué à fournir. Nous savons que cela est possible, parce que l'administration Biden a déjà persuadé Johnson & Johnson de partager sa technologie avec Merck pour stimuler la production nationale de son vaccin à dose unique. Il est certain que les autres entreprises qui ont bénéficié du soutien public pourraient être contraintes de faire de même avec les producteurs du monde entier.

Entre-temps, la levée de l'Accord sur les ADPIC pourrait également faire augmenter la production de vaccins par d'autres moyens. Moderna, qui a presque entièrement compté sur le financement du gouvernement américain, a déjà déclaré qu'il ne ferait pas appliquer son brevet. Mais son vaccin à ARNm utilise des connaissances qu'il a déposées (et payées) à d'autres sociétés, qui pourraient à leur tour poursuivre en justice tout autre producteur utilisant la même technologie.

La levée à l'Accord sur les ADPIC éliminerait cette possibilité, ce qui permettrait d'augmenter rapidement la production. Alors que Moderna indique à présent qu'il produira trois milliards de doses rien qu'en 2022, les vaccins à ARNm ont apparemment toutes les chances d'augmenter la production. On dit également qu'ils sont faciles à modifier pour tenir compte de nouveaux variants.

Les arguments en faveur de la production publique de vaccins de ce genre sont clairs. « Pour moins que ce que le gouvernement américain dépense quotidiennement pour la réponse à la COVID-19, note l'organisation de défense de la santé PrEP4All, il est capable de bâtir une installation permettant de produire suffisamment de capacités de fabrication de vaccins à ARNm pour vacciner le monde entier en un an, chaque dose ne coûtant que 2 \$ ».

Les arguments en faveur de la production publique acquièrent encore davantage de poids lorsque l'on considère que les producteurs privés de vaccins n'ont que peu d'incitations financières à répondre aux besoins mondiaux actuels. Une fois la pandémie contenue, la demande de vaccins devrait revenir à des niveaux « normaux » beaucoup plus bas. Pour gagner la course contre le virus, nous devons construire et déployer des capacités de production publique aux États-Unis et dans d'autres pays. Et lorsque la COVID-19 sera mise au pas, ces installations devraient être entretenues en prévision des futures pandémies.

Le monde a désespérément besoin de la renonciation à l'Accord sur les ADPIC et de mesures plus fortes pour assurer le transfert des connaissances et de technologie nécessaires à la production des vaccins contre la COVID-19. Mais nous devons également commencer à nous préparer à des circonstances tout aussi exceptionnelles à l'avenir. Les connaissances dont notre santé et notre prospérité dépendent doivent être financées par l'État et diffusées par l'État.

Jayati Ghosh, Secrétaire exécutive de International Development Economics Associates, professeur d'économie à University of Massachusetts Amherst, membre de The Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation - (ICRICT).

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'complete recklessness,

MARCO CEO cautions Morris Farm residents to be law-abiding

leaders has now turned their supporters against each other as political rivals too, with Cummings' trial routinely witnessing drama at the Temple of Justice.

Youthful supporters of both the ANC and UP were seen Tuesday chanting political slogans and raising battle cries on the grounds of the Temple of Justice right at the entrance of the Monrovia City Court where Mr. Cummings' trial is being held.

Mr. Boakai, Liberia's immediate past Vice President and a 2023 presidential hopeful, was subpoenaed by the court through prosecution to testify against Mr. Cummings on Tuesday, 10 May 2022.

In honor of the court's subpoena, Mr. Boakai was seen at the Temple of Justice, but he did not get down from his black vehicle due to the huge crowd that had swarmed the premises and the endless chanting of political slogans.

The chanting of slogans was also marred by some unruly displays by some of the youthful supporters from both parties. While journalists, and the lawyers representing the both political parties were seated in court awaiting Magistrate Jomah Jallah to commence the day's hearing, Solicitor General Cephus rushed into the courtroom and requested for a discussion to be held in the magistrate's chamber along with other lawyers.

Cephus had indicated that from the look of things, the trial would likely not have commenced.

After a while, the both lawyers returned from the magistrate's chamber with serious arguments after Cllr. Cephus' plea with Magistrate Jallah for the postponement of the trial on ground that the atmosphere was not safe for his witness to appear in

court.

The defense team strongly rejected Cllr. Cephus' request, stating in open court that it should be placed on the records of the court for posterity to judge.

Subsequently, Magistrate Jallah went outside to verify the claim made by the prosecution, and upon his return, he granted the plea made behind closed doors.

"This court says that this trial is hereby suspended pending assignment due to administrative issues. There will be no proceeding with this trial until we can get the atmosphere," Magistrate Jallah said.

However, when Cllr. Cephus was leaving the court, some youth believed to be supporters of the ANC, were seen knocking his vehicle and referring to him as a criminal.

They could be heard chanting: "Y'all leave us ooo, la Cummings we want; y'all leave us ooo, la papy we want."

Speaking in an interview with journalists after the court's decision, a lawyer representing Mr. Cummings, only identified as Atty. Gould said the prosecution has again shown that it has no case.

Atty. Gould claimed that the prosecution is carelessly playing with the liberty of another person, referring to his client Mr. Cummings. Gould believes that this is clearly a wrong thing to do in this modern day and time.

"They come here and say the court is too packed and because the court is packed, they are not sure the witness will testify because he is uncomfortable to come into the court for the trial," said Atty. Gould.

"The state came and says they are not prepared to adduce any evidence today and their witness will not

come. This action by the prosecution is [a] violation of the constitutional right of another person," Atty. Gould lamented.

He further indicated that an accused has the right to speedy trial, therefore, the accused cannot be under criminal charges or trial indefinitely.

The defense lawyer argued that the magisterial court has been trying his client beyond the statutory time, citing Rule 9 of the magisterial court which calls for 30 days for a trial.

Atty. Gould said it's clear recklessness on the part of Cllr. Cephus because it's pure gangsterism and they want the world to know that all these are happening because they have no evidence against Mr. Cummings and others who are on trial in the case.

Gould said if the Government of Liberia is serious about prosecuting this case, it would prepare its evidence and go to court.

He said he is sad that every day the prosecution goes to court and there is another delay tactic from the State.

"Today the courtroom looks too charged and packed and therefore, their witness is afraid to come. What sort of thing is that when you control the state security and all other forces?" Gould ponders.

"For you to continue to abuse someone's right is not a good thing for our country. That is how when all of the human rights reports come back and show that Liberia is not doing well, then we wonder why," he continued.

The defense lawyer believes that the rule of law should be respected because you cannot have a case that should be heard for only 30 days but it's ongoing indefinitely, about five months into the trial.



The Chief Executive Office (CEO) of Morris American Rubber Company (MARCO), Francis Dennis, has urged residents of Morris Farm to respect the outcome of a court process because violence is not a solution in a matter.

Speaking to a team of journalists in Monrovia over the weekend, Mr. Dennis stressed that violence in any form any manner is not the right way in resolving any matter of higher interest.

His remark is in the wake of last week's protest by some aggrieved residents of the farm who accused the company of invading some prominent residents of the town.

The residents during the

exercise blocked the main road leading to Kakata, accusing the MARCO boss of manipulating the court process to remove them from their ancestral land.

But the MARCO CEO argued that challenging the outcome of a court ruling through violence will not change the court's decision.

"We have to move from non-compliance to compliance," he said.

According to him, his company is not carrying out witch hunts like it is being perceived in many quarters of the town. He said the company is only adhering and implementing the order of a

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

to the movement's visionary founder, Henri Dunant, adding that the day provides the global community a unique opportunity to recognize the achievements of the millions of volunteers who since Durant's founding of the movement in 1863, have followed in his great footsteps, dedicating themselves to improving lives and bringing reliefs to people around the world.

She said every day and virtually everywhere the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement provides a broad range of services to the most vulnerable people. Whether it is responding to a disaster, a health crisis or a conflict situation, Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and staff are often leading the way, providing life-saving services to people most in need of assistance.

Madam Kanter further notes that in Liberia, the work of the Red Cross speaks for itself, adding that since its founding in 1919 (more than hundred years now) the LNRCS has built a record of achievements that should make all Liberians proud.

She stated that it has been in the vanguard of aiding the needy in times of peace, civil war, the Ebola epidemic, and the Covid-19 pandemic. It has helped provide refuge and protection to people fleeing war and persecution from other countries, including most recently, from Cote d'Ivoire. It has also been a stalwart

supporter of marginalized and stigmatized groups.

Meanwhile, it is gratifying to note that the Liberia Red Cross has already taken some important steps in the direction. Since 2017, the LNRCS has put in place a new leadership structure, as well as a new financial management system and set of policies with the goal of ensuring accountable and transparent use of funds entrusted to it.

The Deputy Director of CDC Liberia Theresa Kanter urged Liberians to continue with these efforts, adding that they should be more simply a plan, but stressed the need to work hard to bring all of them to fruition so that Liberia Red Cross can build on its successes and continue to provide timely humanitarian service to vulnerable communities now and well into the future, and that together, they can realize the power of kindness.

Liberia's Minister of Internal Affairs Varney Sirleaf, thanks the Liberia National Red Cross Society for the program, and says the Liberia National Red Cross Society and the Ministry supposed to work together and they are doing so.

Minister Sirleaf says on behalf of the government through the Ministry of Internal Affairs that the cooperation that exists between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Red Cross shall continue forever, while recalling that they worked together diligently in response to Ebola.

Liberia celebrates World Red Cross & Red Crescent Day

By: Naneka Hoffman

The Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) celebrates World Red Cross and Crescent Day here under the theme: "Believe In the Power Of Kindness."

Speaking on Monday, May 9, 2022 during program marking the official celebration at the William V.S. Tubman High School in Sinkor, Monrovia, Keynote Speaker and Deputy Director for CDC Liberia, Ms Theresa Kanter, said the Red Cross and Red Crescent movements have paid tribute



Taylor sues Hassan Bility, others

Dr. Agnes Reeves - Taylor, the ex-wife of imprisoned former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor, has filed a lawsuit against Global Justice and Research Project (GIRP), represented by Liberian-based institution La Joy and Civitas Maxima (CM), based in Geneva, Switzerland, Mr. Hassan Bility of GIRP, and Alain Werner of Civitas Maxima. She filed the suit before the Civil Law Court in Monrovia for damages for malicious prosecution /

She lamented that when she got arrested in the U.K., she lost her earnings and she was professionally ruined. Among other things, Dr. Reeves - Taylor said she was working as an Academic, a consultant, head of program for the Energy Department, and a Senior Lecturer at Coventry University in London when she was arrested.

She said she was "very humiliated by these outrageous lies" that impacted her ability to continue her association with her professional work.

She told the court in Monrovia that during her incarceration in the United Kingdom, there was an increase in expenses incurred as

have destroyed her family and reputation, thereby ruining her life, knowing and being fully aware that the "trump - up charges of torture and war crimes against her were false, mere fabrications" without a scintilla of truth or probable cause.

Last year, Dr. Reeves Taylor filed a lawsuit demanding over US\$1m in damages for libel against the erstwhile Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) former Commissioner Madam Massa A. Washington, who allegedly published fake information to expose the complainant to public hatred.

Dr. Reeves - Taylor said in that complaint, which was filed before the Civil Law Court that Madam Washington's actual motive and sinister intent [is] to lower her person in the high esteem of her colleagues.

She said the publications were found wanting, contrary to law, and therefore, demanded damages from defendant Washington in the sum of US\$1,500,000.00 for libelous statements uttered by the accused.

She lamented that the publications have substantially injured her hard-earned reputation after the alleged fake information was broadcasted and circulated on the internet and in print media by some local dailies on 13 October 2021.

The Civil Law Court had ordered defendant Washington to appear before it on 20 December 2021.

Dr. Reeves - Taylor complained that she had suffered serious mental anguish and humiliation to the effect that the public looks upon her as one who does not portray or possess the kind of moral rectitude to be an international public servant.

Solway Investment Group reacts to media reports



The Management of Solway Investment Group in Liberia says it has launched a board-led investigation in the conduct of business by its subsidiaries Compania Guatemalteca de Niquel SA (SGN), Compania Procesadora de Niquel de Isabal SA (Pronico), including affiliates, agents, management, and associated persons.

"The decision to commence a board-led investigation of events in Guatemala resonates our dedication to learn lessons and to make any necessary improvements to the Group's processes and governance", the company says.

In an official reaction here, it says the clarification is in response to allegations raised by series of publications initiated by the journalistic consortium Forbidden Stories.

It notes that Swedbank has been subjected to criminal and civil investigations, but Solway

group has never received any questions from either the banks of prosecutors' office during those legal actions.

The company further notes that in March 2020 Clifford Chance released its report of investigation on Swedbank, but that none of the companies related to Solway Investment Group were included in the final Clifford Chance report.

However, global steel giant ArcelorMittal has excepted to the Liberian government granting mining license to SOLWAY, contending that under its Mineral Development Agreement with the government, it enjoys exclusive right and license to conduct exploration, development, production, and marketing of Liberian ores and associated products, including rehabilitation of associated infrastructure in its operational areas in the country.

AML also accused the Government of Liberia of granting two additional graphite mining licenses to Mekinel Holdings Limited and STG Liberia without consultation, as required by the MDA.



Dr. Reeves- Taylor

Mr. Werner

Mr. Bility

wrong, accusing the institutions, along with Bility and Werner of allegedly conniving and inflicting untold suffering and pains against her.

Dr. Reeves Taylor is seeking to use the court process here to hold Bility, Werner and their institutions to account for their alleged false accounts which led the criminal justice system in the United Kingdom to prosecute her for alleged torture charges, though the U.K. court systems later dismissed the charges against her.

family members attempted to stay in contact with her by phone initially and then by visiting which required traveling expenses and taking time off from work.

"My family experienced relationship strain at different points during my incarceration. This further increased my level of stress. This dynamics within the family changed as I was usually the nucleus of the family in the UK," she noted.

The Civil Law Court in Monrovia has directed the defendants in the case filed by Dr. Reeves - Taylor to file their answer to her complaint on or before 20 May 2022.

Dr. Reeves - Taylor lamented in the complaint that the accused

Weah ignores Lawmakers' certificate?

By Brigett Milton

What clearly seems a delay by the Executive in responding to a certificate of reconvening by members of the 54th Liberian Legislature has stalled members of the House of Representatives convening on Capitol Hill.

The Legislature after signing its certificate of reconvening for Thursday May 5, 2022 could not do so on its own without an Executive Proclamation, in line with Article 32b of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia.

Article 32b states that, the President shall, on his own initiative or upon

receipt of a certificate signed by at least one-fourth of the total membership of each House, and

by proclamation, extend a regular session of the Legislature beyond the date for



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adjournment or call a special or extraordinary session of that body to discuss or act upon matters of national emergency and concern. When the extension or call is at the request of the Legislature, the proclamation shall be issued not later than 48 hours after receipt of the certificate by the President.

However, according to a release from the Director of Press of the House of Representatives Robert Haynes, the Legislature being the body charged with the Authority to make laws

cannot and will not violate the laws of the Republic; therefore, the Legislature awaits the Proclamation by the President if and when he deems necessary in the spirit of coordination.

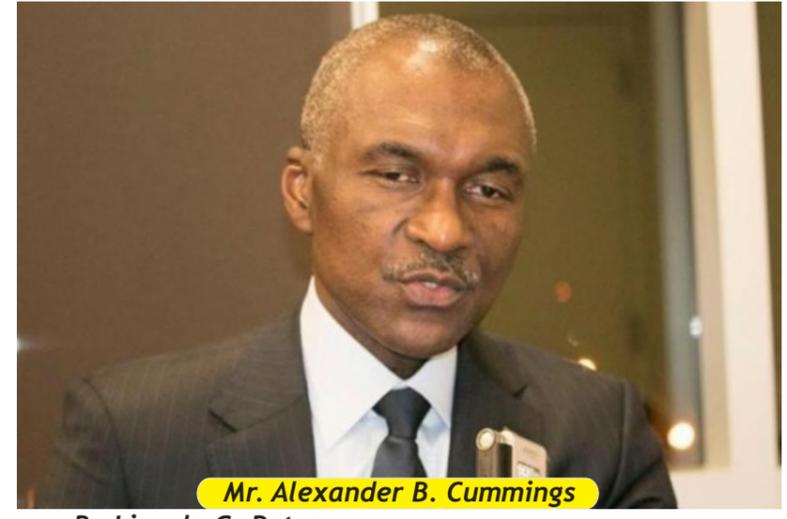
He says the Legislature is fully ready and prepared to reopen for regular session per the stipulated schedule, 2nd Friday in May, in keeping with the new amended law for the Adjournment of the Legislature.

The Legislature says it remains highly committed in working in the best interest of the people and the State.

The Executive Mansion is yet to act accordingly.

'complete recklessness, delay tactics'

-Cummings' lawyer terms postponement of trial



Mr. Alexander B. Cummings

By Lincoln G. Peters

The lawyers representing Alternative National Congress (ANC) political leader Mr. Alexander B. Cummings, have termed as complete recklessness, gangsterism and delay tactics, the postponement of their client's trial.

The defense team alleged that Liberia's Solicitor General Cllr. Syrenius Cephus

and his team of prosecutors lack comprehensive and proper evidence against Mr. Cummings and his co-defendants.

Cummings is currently facing criminal trial after being accused by All Liberian Party (ALP) political leader Benoni Urey of allegedly tampering with the disintegrated Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) framework document and illegally attaching his

(Urey's) signature to a photocopy version. Cummings has always denied any wrongdoing.

The ground of the Temple of Justice on Tuesday, 10 May 2022 was a scene of attraction when several supporters of ANC and the former ruling Unity Party (UP) converged at the court to witness the appearance and testimony of UP political leader Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai in Cummings' criminal trial.

Boakai and Cummings were the uncompromising rivals seeking to head the CPP presidential ticket ahead of the 2023 presidential and legislative elections when an allegation of CPP framework document tampering led to UP and ALP separately pulling out from the once formidable opposition bloc.

At separate times both Cummings and Boakai served the rotational post of chairperson of the CPP when it was still a united opposition bloc. But the conflict among the opposition political

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