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TRULY INDEPENDENT
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Gray explains resignation



Rep. Acarous Moses Gray

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Continental News

Malawi's leader calls for unity

Malawi's newly elected President Lazarus Chakwera vowed Sunday to maintain unity in the southern African country after quashing the incumbent's bid for a second term in the re-run of a hotly contested election.

It was a dramatic twist of fortune for outgoing president Peter Mutharika, whose victory in a May 2019 ballot was overturned by the Constitutional Court over fraud allegations.

Chakwera, a former evangelist preacher, was declared the winner of the election replay with almost 59 percent of the vote, according to results announced late Saturday.

Malawi is only the second sub-Saharan African country to have presidential poll results overturned in court, after Kenya in 2017.

It is also the first time in the region that a vote re-run has led to the defeat of an incumbent leader.

The election was hailed by leaders across the continent as a peaceful transition of power.

"It is an honour forged in the furnace of your desire and your demand for change,"

Chakwera said after taking his oath of office.

Addressing thousands of supporters in Lilongwe's Freedom Square, the 65-year-old vowed to restore "faith in the possibility of having a government that serves" and "fights for you".

He appealed to those who did not vote for him, saying: "Malawi is home to you too... so long as I am its president, you too will prosper."

- 'Impossible feat' -

Chakwera leads Malawi's oldest party, the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), which previously ruled from 1964 to 1994 under Hastings Banda's one-party rule.

Some 6.8 million Malawians returned to the polls on Tuesday after the country's top court found the first election had been marred by "grave" and "widespread irregularities" -- including the use of correction fluid to tamper with result sheets.

Chakwera was pronounced the winner with 2.6 million votes against 1.75 million for Mutharika. Turnout was just under 65 percent.

In power since 2014, Mutharika won 38 percent of the discredited vote last year, ahead of Chakwera's 35 percent.

"Today is unbelievable because this feat seemed impossible just a month ago," said Christina Nkosi, a supporter of the opposition United Transformation Movement whose leader Saulos Chilima was sworn in as vice president.

"We have waited too long for this dawn," echoed 70-year-old Mary Kaponda, a

retired nurse sporting MCP garb.

IT expert Daud Suleman, a key witness in the election court case, told AFP: "We have made history and demonstrated how much we can achieve as a people."

"Now the challenge will be to challenge this energy into moving the country forward."

Around half of landlocked Malawi's 18 million people live below the poverty line. Many rely on subsistence farming.

The country is also grappling with a coronavirus outbreak that has infected over 1,000 people and killed at least 13 -- although numbers are widely thought to be underestimated due to lack of testing. AFP



Malawi's new president Chakwera is sworn

Guinea-Bissau leader sacks five key ministers

Guinea-Bissau's President Umaro Sissoco Embaló sacked the ministers for defence, interior, economy, agriculture and energy in a

decree on Sunday.

No explanation was given. Their dismissal comes ahead of a parliamentary session on the formation of a new government.

The country has been

gripped by political turmoil for many years, with Guinea-Bissau nine coups or attempted coups since 1980.

President Embaló was announced as the winner of December's election. However the long-time ruling party PAIGC said the elections were rigged, and its leader Domingos Simoes Pereira contested the result at the supreme court.

The sacked ministers are all members of President Embaló's Madem-15 party or parties loyal to the president, according to Reuters news agency.

"It is a strategy for Umaro Sissoco Embaló to gain the majority at the parliament," the agency quotes a website Ditadura de Consenso as saying.

Mr Embaló, a former army general, has said he wants to resolve tensions and modernise Guinea-Bissau - one of the world's poorest nations. BBC



President Umaro Sissoco Embaló's election win has been contested by his rivals

Auction of 'looted' artefacts 'should be scrapped'

A prominent art historian has called on the renowned auction house, Christie's, to cancel the sale of two Nigerian sculptures to be put up for auction shortly.

Prof Chika Okeke-Agulu told the BBC the two objects were "looted" from shrines in south-eastern Nigeria during the civil war in the late 1960s.

Christie's rejects this, saying the sale is perfectly legal.

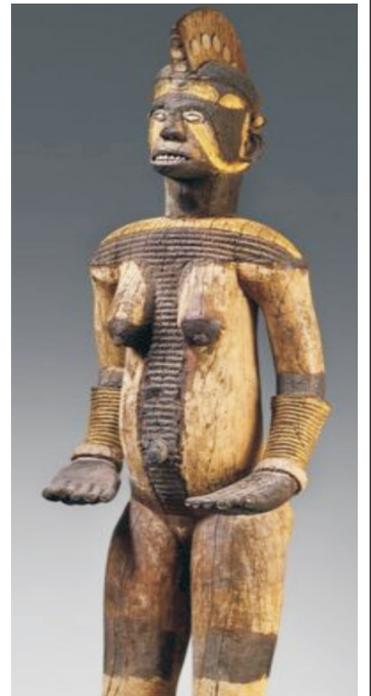
The items are expected to sell for \$280,000-\$390,000 (£230,000-£320,000). The wooden objects about 1.5 metres high, one male and one female, represent deities from the Igbo community, their hands face upwards waiting to receive sacrifices and gifts.

Prof Chika Okeke-Agulu from Princeton University says the objects were looted from communal shrines in his native Anambra state, with the help of local conspirators.

He said they could not have been acquired legally because they were removed during the Biafra civil war, when the Igbo community attempted to secede from Nigeria.

The historian believes the loss of these sculptures has meant that a key part of Igbo cultural identity has been lost for future generations. Christie's has defended the auction expected to take place at 13:00 GMT.

In a statement, it said that at no stage "has there been any suggestion that these statues were subject to improper export". According to the



auction house, the sculptures were acquired by Jacques Kerchache, a French art collector and a close adviser to former French President Jacques Chirac.

"There is no evidence these statues were removed from their original location by someone who was not local to the area," Christie's said.

It also said that there was no evidence the items were taken from an area that was part of the conflict at the time.

Calls for the repatriation of African artefacts have grown in recent years, with the #BlackLivesMatter protests reigniting those demands.

An online petition with over 2,000 signatories calls for the sale to be cancelled. BBC

EDITORIAL

Confrontation is unhealthy for business

THE NATIONAL SECURITY Agency (NSA) an investigative arm of the state, is reportedly probing the Chief Executive Officer of Orange Liberia, Mamadou Coulibaly, for alleged involvement with protesters who recently erected roadblocks with burning tires in Monrovia, demanding cancelation of surcharge imposed on GSM companies by the Government of Liberia.

THE SUSPICION BY the government stems from earlier Writ of Prohibition filed before the Supreme Court of Liberia by Orange Liberia against the surcharge. The High Court however, denied the petition.

AND SO WHEN an erratic pressure group here, Council of Patriots, mobilized youth into the street last week, burning tires and erecting roadblocks in demand of cancelation of the surcharge, government suspects that CEO Coulibaly, who had earlier gone to court against the levy, may be behind all this hence; Police called him for questioning and subsequently turned Coulibaly over to the NSA for further interrogation.

IT IS NOT only disappointing, but highly counterproductive for a business entity to be in confrontation with the government under which it operates. This is bad business practice. Rather than going to court on the matter, we think CEO Coulibaly should have sat with the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) the regulatory body, to discuss all outstanding issues.

IN 2018, THE LTA issued Order# 0016-02-25-19, imposing floor prices and surcharges on one-net voice calls and data. Before issuing the Order, the LTA got all stakeholders involved and their inputs were considered.

IF THE GSM companies in this case, Orange Liberia, had reservations it should choose dialogue with the relevant government entities to reach common grounds for peaceful business environment.

LEST WE BE misconstrued here; the New Dawn holds no suspicion against CEO Coulibaly, neither does it support or defend ongoing interrogation by the government.

BUT WE URGE both sides to quickly realize that a confrontational business environment poses threat to the economy, something that neither parties wants to see in Liberia, particularly Orange Liberia, as a foreign partner.

WE CAN BUT only hope that the questioning would be concluded soon and suspicions cleared so that CEO Coulibaly would return to his business and carry on normal operations without having to constantly be on the watch for plain-clothe security coming to take him for interrogation.

THE LAST THING that this country wants is a business environment that is clouded with mistrust and strain, because such atmosphere drives away the dollars the economy needs to thrive.

COMMENTARY

By Michael J. Boskin

America's Uncertain Recovery

Predicting the speed and strength of the United States' recovery from the current recession is extremely difficult. But what is clear is that policymakers must boost incentives to work in normal times when jobs are plentiful, while strengthening the safety net for when they are not and for those who are unable to work.

STANFORD - Like most of the world, the United States is attempting to overcome both the COVID-19 pandemic and a deep recession caused by the resulting government-ordered shutdown. At annual rates, the US economy shrank by 5% in the first quarter of 2020, and in the second quarter just ending, it could contract by 40% - the steepest decline since the Great Depression.

Moreover, tens of millions of workers have lost their jobs, causing the unemployment rate to soar to a post-Great Depression high of 14.7% in April. And although 70% of those laid off say they expect to be recalled to their jobs, not all will be, because many firms will fold, relocate, or reorganize.

True, the initial reopening of the economy has led to a sharp rebound that is projected to continue in the third quarter. Employment rose by 2.5 million in May, while high-frequency data from credit cards and mobility tracking for May and June show sizable bounce backs from April lows, with activity in a few sectors approaching or even exceeding year-earlier levels.

But the rebound varies by sector and region. Although Big Tech, home-improvement suppliers, and retail sales of alcoholic beverages have flourished, travel and leisure have collapsed and will take much longer to recover. And restaurants with drive-through service have fared much better than those able to serve only indoors.

Most forecasters therefore predict that the early "V-shaped" recovery will slow over the next few quarters, and instead come to resemble the Nike swoosh. But this plausible baseline forecast is subject to greater than normal uncertainty.

For starters, the shutdown of non-essential businesses in response to the pandemic led to a demand-side shock as well. So far, trillions of dollars in business grants and loans, cash payments to households, and unemployment insurance with federal bonus payments (enabling two-thirds of eligible workers to receive benefits that exceed their lost earnings) have provided a cushion to help the economy recover. The US Federal Reserve has pledged to keep its target interest rate until the economy returns to full employment, and it continues to expand the scope of its asset purchases. And a fourth fiscal package expected next month should focus on reopening the economy, including by limiting firms' legal liability and redirecting bonus payments to encourage employees to return to work.

How quickly the US recovers from its public-health and economic crises will also depend on how well other countries handle them, and vice versa. The World Bank expects 93% of countries to slide into recession in 2020, the highest share ever.

Although the recent spikes in new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the US appear manageable for now, given adequate provision of hospital beds and equipment, a significant worsening could trigger new shutdowns or stall further reopening. That would slow the recovery, resulting in economic despair and related health and social problems for many Americans.

Moreover, America's twin crises have revealed longer-term problems, starting with the country's inadequate stockpiles of medical supplies. California, for example, never maintained the

supplies then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger built up to combat the 2002-03 SARS epidemic, and had to repair hundreds of defective ventilators. And state governments' antiquated computer systems for processing unemployment claims and dispensing benefits buckled under the pandemic-induced strain.

In addition, the COVID-19 shock has shown that too many individuals and firms lack the financial margin to weather even a few months of lost income or revenue. It has also both highlighted and worsened racial disparities in health, income, and vulnerability to economic and health shocks.

These crises elicited massive, rapid, and unprecedented interventionist responses. But government responses enacted under exigent circumstances must control costs better and restore private incentives in the longer term, because history shows that, once launched, public programs and interventions seldom end.

The economic and health recoveries also heavily depend on the actions of businesses, citizens, and schools, including whether they adhere to recommended precautions such as social distancing, frequent hand washing, and wearing face masks. It remains to be seen whether firms can survive with restrictions on employees and customers, and whether the accelerated digital transformation will be a net plus. The other danger, of course, is a large second wave of the virus that overwhelms hospitals and scares away employees, students, and customers.

One bright spot has been the rapid pace of adaptive innovation. Most US schools quickly continued teaching online following the shutdown, while telemedicine has boomed, helped by the relaxation of government pay restrictions and rules prohibiting inter-state medical consultations. And medical researchers quickly refocused on COVID-19 testing, therapeutics, and vaccines: human trials have started for several promising vaccines, and new tests may be deployed before winter. For the first time, vaccine production capacity will be ramped up simultaneously with testing, so that any safe and effective vaccine that emerges will become available far more quickly.

But the longer-term problems revealed by the pandemic and the recession will not disappear when these crises end. True, before COVID-19 struck, things finally had started looking up for lower-income workers. Minority unemployment was at an all-time low, and wages were rising most rapidly at the bottom of the pay scale. But while strong economic growth will be needed to ensure that these trends resume, there are pockets of people who have been left behind.

To address this requires reinvigorating policies to broaden school choice, bring private jobs and capital to depressed areas, and ensure better job training (including more apprenticeships and job matching), as well as taking a new approach to overlapping means-tested anti-poverty programs. US welfare recipients face extremely high implicit marginal tax rates in terms of the benefits they lose if they work, with many standing to earn less if they worked than if they remained on the several overlapping programs.

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ARTICLE

ARTICLE

For Ethiopia, Covid-19 Opens Door for Harvesting Aid Packages

By KesterKennKlomegah

Ethiopia, by all standards, is a reputable country in East Africa. It gains popularity from different angles. In terms of politics, Ethiopia has been touted as a country with an excellent model of democracy in Africa. For his efforts in ending the 20-year-long war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, President Abiy Ahmed was awarded with the Nobel prize for peace in 2019.

More crucially, research studies and several reports have documented additional reputation and worth of Ethiopia. It bears the flag of Africa, as its capital Addis Ababa represents the center for most of the regional and foreign organizations down the years.

The African Union [AU] is headquartered in Addis Ababa. The primary task of this super continental organization is mobilizing and coordinating available natural and human resources for solving existing and emerging multifaceted problems inside Africa. Some experts argue that the AU has within its mandate and further within the slogan "African solutions for African Problems" to showcase the continent's practical ultimate independence.

Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed social and economic conditions in many African countries, and disparity between the West, Europe and Asia, all on one side and on the other Africa. In fact, the time also present challenges and opportunities. For many Africa countries and for the African Union, it is an opportunity for harnessing external assistance, not exhausting the opportunities at home. Definitely, it is a bitter joke, but it reflects the reality.

More than half a century since it was declared politically independent from "colonialism" or whatever, Africa has been presented as a region engulfed with abject poverty, even in the past has benefited grossly from development aid and received substantial assistance from various external sources. Ethiopia, and many African countries, has to rethink carefully about "humanitarian aid" in its bilateral relations [its contemporary diplomacy] with foreign countries. Instead, it should focus more on how diplomacy could support sustainable development efforts, such areas as health, agriculture, industry and other employment generation sectors.

"The world is in a new and dangerous phase," Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a virtual briefing recently from the World Health Organization [WHO] headquarters in Geneva. "The virus is still spreading fast, it is still deadly, and most people are still susceptible." Tedros Ghebreyesus, who comes from Ethiopia in East Africa, has urged countries to maintain extreme vigilance, mobilize and direct resources toward the fight against the global pandemic.

In mid-June, Ethiopian Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Alemayehu Tegenu Aargau said in his interview with a local Russian news agency that Moscow had promised to assist Addis Ababa in its fight against the pandemic, and Ethiopia expects promptly deliveries from Russia.

Tegenu Aargau further said that Ethiopia "still requires some support from friendly countries. The leaders of the two countries [Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed] had a telephone conversation and one of the issues [was] cooperation to combat the pandemic. The Russian side promised to assist Ethiopia in its fight against the pandemic. I believe that we expect material equipment from Russia. We are waiting for it."



Ethiopian Amb. Alemayehu Tegenu Aargau

The Ethiopian ambassador further compared Russia to other foreign countries, when he said Ethiopia had received deliveries from China and other friendly powers that enabled it to, significantly boost its testing volumes of the large population. "Test indicators, ventilators, and other support are welcome," the diplomat noted.

By his statement, it implies exerting pressure for a promised gift. After all, the Soviets helped Africa in attaining political independence, that was during the cold war days. The Soviet Union, and now Russia has consistently helped many African countries thereafter. Thus, pressurizing for food assistance and COVID packages seemed "undiplomatic and odd" and worse, reminding through the media. Significantly, Ethiopia, among a number of African countries, has had a lot from Russia. It still looks for enormous harvest of external humanitarian aid and relief funds.

It was a fact that, in separate early April discussions with South African and Ethiopian leaders, President Vladimir Putin pledged Russia's support in collaborating with Africa fight coronavirus that is currently spreading among the population across the continent. The phone discussions was not limited to "give and take" humanitarian aid, but rather outlining comprehensive innovative efforts at sustaining the hard-won development and economic gains. Beyond that, looking at possible collective plans to prevent such large scale of the pandemic in future.

Data released by the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Africa CDC] on June 20, showed the top-five highest recorded coronavirus cases, generally, on the continent. In total, Africa reported 286,141 confirmed cases of COVID-19 as at June 20. Still far below the figures obtained in the United States, Brazil and Russia, and many countries in Europe. The entire African continent has about 1/7th of the cases in the United States. According to the Africa CDC figures, South Africa, in the first position, has recorded 83,890 cases, followed by Egypt and Nigeria with 50,437 and 18,480 cases respectively. Ghana with 12,929 cases, took the fourth position. Ethiopia, so far, has 3,954 infections among a population of about 115 million.

After all, Russia has already pledged to increase its corporate investment portfolio, and to strengthen existing economic cooperation that includes military technical agreements under a renewed strategic plan in Ethiopia. Russia has also written-off debts owed by Ethiopia. This debt relief allows Ethiopia, [among other African countries] to recover from the economic shock of the pandemic.

On June 11, during the media briefing by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Maria Zakharova, revealed that Russia had received official requests from 29 African states and the African Union [AU] to assist in countering the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

She further explained that, this year, Russia has made an additional annual contribution of \$10 million to the UN World

Food Program [to be distributed equally between Burundi, Djibouti, Somalia, Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic]. Russia has allocated \$10 million to the Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] fund for fighting a massive locust onslaught in East Africa [to be distributed between Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia - \$3 million each and South Sudan - \$1 million].

According to analytical reports and reviews, the pandemic could trigger a lot more socio-economic problems, fuel violence and domestic conflict, while the economies of many African states may sustain heavy damage. It certainly poses new challenges, on one hand.

On the other hand, African leaders and official representatives have to leave behind their "begging bowls" at home, talk and negotiate more on investment cooperation. Humanitarian aid is only a short-term solution, even that said, Africa could look at its domestic resource mobilization as exemplified by many foreign countries in the West and in Europe.

It is worth recognizing the fact that Ethiopia holds the flag of Africa. It is time to deal with long-term solutions rather than look for shortcuts for coronavirus pandemic. After all, Ethiopia has only a small fraction of infected numbers among its population, as compared to Russia that is dealing with more than half a million of coronavirus cases during the months of May and June.

Indeed, Russia declares it fight by mobilizing its own resources. It has a structured plan, and that includes President Vladimir Putin weekly meetings with regional governors and related ministry officials. Under these time-testing conditions, Russia takes the initiative with little external assistance, rolled out a long-term concrete roadmap for the future.

Ethiopia should rather lead the African diplomatic community [a pan-African approach and strategy] in Moscow into evolving elaborate discussions on cooperating on Russia's vaccine, its health initiatives and learning lessons from how Russia is currently handling its pandemic. The priority now, most probably, has to be directed on Russia-African cooperation in health sector in this era of COVID-19. Russia is at the forefront of producing a vaccine for the virus, this scientific success must, at least and necessarily, awaken heads of Ethiopia and Africa.

Arguably, in a widely circulated letter, various co-signatories in April, including 100 leading academics and writers, have called on African leaders to govern with compassion and see the current global health crisis as a chance for a radical change of direction in the continent. For it is in the most trying moments that new/innovative orientations must be explored and lasting solutions adopted. Nevertheless, Africa has to make a complete departure from their endless requests for humanitarian aid and relief funds. More than ever, it is important for leaders to ponder over the necessity to adopt a concerted approach to the economic sectors related to public health system, strengthen fundamental research in all health disciplines and close the pitfalls in its public policy.

The time has come to make progressive changes. Despite the boast of abundant natural resources, Africa remains the world's poorest and least-developed continent, the result of a variety of causes that may include corrupt governments and policies fraught with dubious methods. Africa is the world's second largest and second-most populous continent after Asia. With an estimated 1.3 billion people as of 2019, accounts for about 16% of the world's population.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Orange confirms CEO's questioning by NSA

The GSM Company, Orange Liberia has confirmed that its Chief Executive Officer of Orange Liberia Mr. Mamadou Coulibaly was invited by the

net and data.

Protesters believed to be members of the Council of Patriots erected roadblocks and set tires alight last week to demand that government drop

yielded no result. Early this month, Orange Liberia filed a Petition for a Writ of Prohibition before Supreme Court Justice Jamesetta Howard Wollokolle challenging an order issued by the regulatory authority of the telecommunication sector here for surcharges fees.

It can be recalled that in 2018 the Liberia Telecommunication Authority (LTA) issued Order 0016-02-25-19 imposing floor prices and surcharges on one-net voice calls and data. Before issuing the Order, the LTA got all stakeholders involved and their inputs were considered.

However, in a press statement issued Monday June 29, Orange Liberian indicated that it stands by its policy of non-involvement in politics as it is the main rule of conduct within the Group worldwide.

It noted that under no circumstances does Orange support politics nor has the company or any of its executives been involved in political actions directly or indirectly.

It said regarding the issue of the imposition of Surcharges to current tariffs, and as Orange Liberia's shareholder, Orange



Orange CEO, Mr. Mamadou Coulibaly

National Security Agency (NSA) of Liberia for questioning in relation to protests held in Monrovia on June 25, 2020 against the imposition of new Surcharges on mobile voice on-

surcharges being impose on GSM companies here.

The protest came weeks after another attempt by Orange Liberia to subvert the imposition of regulatory surcharge fee

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Senate Secretary files US\$312,500 bond

By Winston W. Parley

Senate Secretary Nanborlor F. Singbeh has filed a US\$312,500.00 criminal appearance bond, weeks after court officers failed to arrest him in connection to an economic sabotage case for allegedly dubbing two Czech Republican brothers Pavel and Martin Miloschewsky of US\$5,062,419.10.

The two Czech brothers who have a British national Hans Armstrong as their Attorney-In-Fact here, allege that Mr. Singbeh dubbed them under the pretense of establishing a rock crushing company MHM Eko - Liberia in which they retained the largest share of 70 percent.

Singbeh's bond was received by the court on 29 June and his surety is Sky International Insurance

Karr, Prince A. Saysay and others to obtain faked and fraudulent "Investment Incentives" for duty free privileges.

The defendants allegedly obtained the faked "investment Incentives" for duty free privileges in spite of the fact that MHM Eko - Liberia was due to engage in crushed rocks and related businesses with US\$7,616,152 capital investment.

According to the indictment, defendant Singbeh opened two bogus accounts in the name of MHM Eko-Liberia, conspired with KarelSochor, Ales Sramek, Peter Pesek, Jan Holaseh and Gloria Caine by convincing the Czech nationals to transfer US\$2,495,109 and US\$102,000,000 to pay custom duties on equipment imported, employees' salaries and other



Corporation.

Previous attempts to arrest him failed since an order was issued on 12 June, as court officers reported that his wife told them that Mr. Singbeh was under self - quarantine because he was not well.

There have been several persons ordered to be arrested for their alleged roles in this case, including defendants Othello Z.B. Karr, KarelSocher, Ales Sranmek, Sherman Longan, Jan Holask, Barry F. Tequah and OusmanFofana.

Others include Gloria Cain, Sylvester Selvkpoh, Patrick SaahSiaphia, MulbahKenneh and Patrick Siaphe. Prosecution claims that defendant Singbeh used his official position to conspire and connive with Gloria Caine, George Wisner, Othello Z.B.

running cost.

The indictment notes that the total value of properties including cash and equipment stolen directly from the Czech nationals by the defendants is estimated at about US\$5,062,419.10.

The defendants face charges of economic sabotage, theft of property, forgery and criminal conspiracy. The indictment accuses the defendants, along with former National Investment Commission (NIC) Executive Director George Wisner of allegedly conspiring to commit economic sabotage in violation of the Penal Law.

Prosecution claims that defendant Singbeh used his official position to conspire and connive with Gloria Caine,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Oxfam donates to Zwedru Health Team

Oxfam in Liberia through its county office donated several assorted items to the Zwedru County Health team, a press release issued in Monrovia says.

The materials include 200 pieces of face shield; 360 pieces of breathing mask; 12 thermometers with 20 pieces of batteries; 10 sets of medical apron; 12 pieces of mattress; 50 hand washing buckets and one box of surgical gloves.

The press release says there were also 44 pieces of hand sanitizers; 24 pieces of rexoguard disinfectant; 5 cartoons of detergent powder soap; 72 gallons of detergent powder soap; 48 pieces of paper towels; 144 pieces of tissue/toilet paper; 96 pieces of hand washing liquid soap; 50 pieces of safety boots/rain boots and 48 pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE) suits.

Zwannah Kimber, Oxfam Education Officer says the donation is based on a request from the county health team to partners, noting that Oxfam initially responded but the items were not enough.

He says despite many efforts in reducing the spread of the virus, there is a need for more support, adding that all citizens must abide by health protocols.

The budget request from the

county team was US\$3500, but Kimber says the materials cost US\$3,752.

According to him, the mattresses were not included, but Oxfam saw the need because surveillance officers were stranded.

County Health Officer Dr. Augustine Fannieh, receiving the items says the donation is timely, foremost and essential materials in ensuring and enforcing safety for citizens in reducing the risk of covid-19.

He indicates that the materials will be used for the 15 border

crossing points and health offices. Dr. Fannieh furthers that the though state regulations have been relaxed, there is still a need to abide by health protocols because of the increase of cases.

He assures Oxfam that the materials would be used for the intended purpose and would contribute immensely in enforcing the curbing of the virus in the county.

Currently Zwedru has no Covid-19 cases, according to the National Public Health Institute report.--Press release



MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Simeon Freeman suggests more testing -against continuous lockdown

By Lewis S. Teh & Ethel A. Tweh

Opposition politician and leader of the Movement for Progressive Change (MPC) Simeon Freeman urges government to reduce lockdown of the country and instead, conduct more testing of the population for the

Covid-19 pandemic. "We can't continue to shift blame by declaring Coronavirus to be a global health threat; Liberia as a country doesn't necessarily need a vaccine to silent coronavirus, but what we need is a new approach to silent this virus", he says. Speaking at the Edward Wilmot Blyden Forum organized

by the Press Union of Liberia alongside Deputy Finance Minister for Fiscal Affairs, Samora P. Z. Wolokolie at the YMCA in Monrovia under the topic: "Best approaches in the fight against COVID-19, a look at the Social, Political, and Economic impact on Liberia", Mr. Freeman says government should do more to restart the economy than just emphasizing that the pandemic is a global health threat.

He notes that other countries have succeeded in silencing the virus without experiencing it for sixty to ninety days.

"If you ask me I think continued locking down of the country is not necessary; what needs to be done is to at least facilitate every drug store, health facility, clinic and hospital to do testing of people that will go there for services."

He further suggests that government should lockdown at two districts at a time and test all inhabitants and then move on to other districts by which he says the virus would be silenced.

But Deputy Finance

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Mr. Simeon Freeman

GoL to re-deploy EDMS

The Government of Liberia on Monday said it is set to enhance and re-deploy its Electronic Document Management System (EDMS).

The EDMS was first introduced in 2016 under the previous regime. In 2016, the Integrated Public Financial Management Reform Project (IPFMRP) hired the services of a local consulting firm, MWETANA Consulting & Technology Group to develop and install the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) to develop it in five of the largest Ministries and Agencies, namely: Health, Education, Foreign Affairs, Public Works, Finance and Development Planning, and the Ministry of States and Presidential Affairs to improve record management and storage.

The System was necessitated by the persistent issuance of Disclaimer Opinions on the Government's Consolidated Financial Statements owing to among other things the lack of sufficient documentations to support the financial statements assertions.

These Disclaimer Opinions

in effect undermined the integrity and credibility of the Government's financial statements and challenged the PFM reform efforts.

The adaptation of the EDMS was also geared towards

Planning Minister, Hon. Samuel D. Tweah, Jr., in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the system, the need arose to reenter a contractual agreement with MWETANA Consulting &



transitioning from paper (mutual) to paperless (digital) thus avoiding the continuous disclaimers in GoL Audit process.

In the wisdom and vision of Finance and Development

Technology Group. As part of the agreement, the entity will be responsible to provide technical support as well as knowledge transfer.

The newly designed,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

Flood overwhelms several communities

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Residents of several communities in Monrovia and its suburbs have been made homeless as a result of heavy downpour.

A tour by the New Dawn to several flooded communities, including Water Street, St. Paul Bridge, Doe Community and Chocolate City, respectively, among others discovered that homes, business centers, including garages are being flooded.

Affected residents lament that drainages in their

along with several others lost personal belongings as a direct result of the flood.

Several victims were also seen tooting personal effects such as mattresses, cooking utensils, electrical appliances and bags of rice on the main St. Paul Bridge Road which remains a safer place for their properties.

He indicates that those who have vehicles are being forced to park them outside of the community due to the situation.

Liberians usually



communities have been filled with dirt, leaving water to enter their homes.

Mr. William Tucker Harmon, a victim of the flood notes that since the past four years, residents of his community have not been able to clean the drainage to provide passage for the water.

He says the situation has constrained them to seek shelter at nearby neighbors' houses because the flooding has overwhelmed their communities.

Tucker explains that he

experience flood in mostly slum communities due to the continue dumping of dirt into drainages by residents thereby, making it difficult if not impossible for water to pass thru those drainages.

In other parts of Monrovia, heavy rain storm has left several homes destroyed with some residents sustaining injuries and deaths.

Victims are calling on the Ministry of Public Works to intervene by re-opening clogged drainages that are contributing to the situation.

Zogoes feast

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products in the country do the right thing.

She wonders whether the Monrovia City Corporation does police its waste management sites across the city to arrest those dumping dangerous substances there, endangering public lives.

Meanwhile, several residents on Center Street are calling on the government to intervene in the situation that

has a propensity of increasing the number of zogoes in the country.

They want concrete steps from the Ministry of Health and the Monrovia City Corporation to adequately provide waste management securities and monitors to prevent further dumping of dangerous drugs in public that could expose more youth to drugs abuse and other harmful practices.

Français

L'Ivoirien Mamadou Coulibaly visé par une enquête de la NSA

Le directeur général d'Orange Libéria, M. Mamadou Coulibaly, est actuellement interrogé par l'Agence de sécurité nationale (NSA) dans le cadre des dernières manifestations, à en croire les autorités policières libériennes.

Le ressortissant ivoirien M. Coulibaly fait l'objet d'une enquête pour sa relation

présumée avec des manifestants qui ont érigé des barrages et incendié des pneus la semaine dernière sur une des principales routes de la ville de Monrovia pour exiger du gouvernement la suppression des surtaxes imposées aux entreprises GSM.

La protestation est survenue quelques semaines après que Orange Liberia a tenté en vain

de faire annuler l'imposition des frais supplémentaires réglementaires. Au début du mois, Orange Liberia avait déposé une requête devant la juge Jamesetta Howard Wollokolliede la Cour suprême pour contester un arrêté de l'autorité de régulation du secteur des télécommunications qui porte imposition des frais supplémentaires.

L'arrêté 0016-02-25-19 a été publié en 2019 par l'Autorité des Télécommunications Liberia (LTA), qui portait imposition des taxes supplémentaires sur les appels téléphoniques et les données internet. Avant l'arrêté, la LTA avait consulté toutes les parties prenantes et leurs contributions avaient été prises en considération. Mais Orange semble s'y opposer.

S'adressant à des journalistes vendredi au sujet de la situation entourant la violente manifestation de jeudi, le porte-parole de la police, Moses Carter, a refusé

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Orange CEO, Mr. Mamadou Coulibaly

Un policier abat par balle l'une des amies de sa fiancée

La commune de Paynesville est pour une fois le théâtre d'une autre tragédie qui est survenue dans la nuit du vendredi et samedi. Un agent de la Police nationale du Libéria (LNP), James Duma, a tué par balle l'une des amies de sa fiancée pendant que ces dernières revenaient d'une soirée dansante.

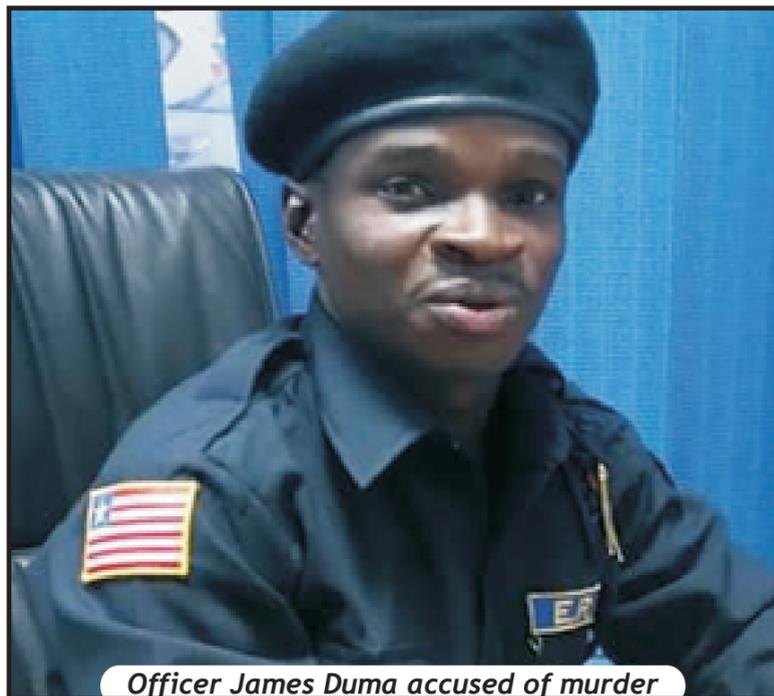
Cet énième acte est survenu à un poste de contrôle après 72nd Junction à Paynesville. Il fait partie d'une série de tragédies survenues dans cette partie du comté de Montserrado. Un commandant de police avait été condamné à 25 ans de prison ferme pour avoir abattu un motocycliste.

Les informations recueillies par ce journal auprès de témoins sur les lieux du meurtre indiquent que la fiancée de l'agent, Mme Sallematu Kaba, aurait accompagné la victime Mildred à une soirée vendredi nuit. Au retour, les deux dames auraient trouvé l'agent de police, le fiancé

de Mme Sallematu, au poste de contrôle de 72nd où il était en poste, et pour des raisons non élucidées une dispute a éclaté entre l'agent sa fiancée. L'agent, à en croire notre source, aurait appuyé sur la gâchette de son arme et bousillé le crane de Mildred Thomas, l'amie de sa fiancée, qui tentait de calmer la situation.

Contacté le dimanche 28 juin, le porte-parole de la police, Moses Carter, a fait savoir qu'une autre version des faits fait état d'une interaction de l'agent avec des bandits qui l'auraient attaqué et que la pauvre dame aurait été atteinte par une balle perdue après que l'agent a ouvert le feu.

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Officer James Duma accused of murder

« La politique n'est pas du football », le Sénateur Wesseh

« La politique n'est pas un match de football qui nécessite que les acteurs soient physiquement en forme et avoir de l'énergie supplémentaires pour y participer », a dit le sénateur Conmany B. Wesseh du comté de River Gee.

M. Wesseh répondait à ses détracteurs qui veulent que lui et le leader politique du Parti de l'unité, l'ancien vice-président Joseph Nyumah Boakai, prennent maintenant leur retraite politique parce qu'ils sont vieux.

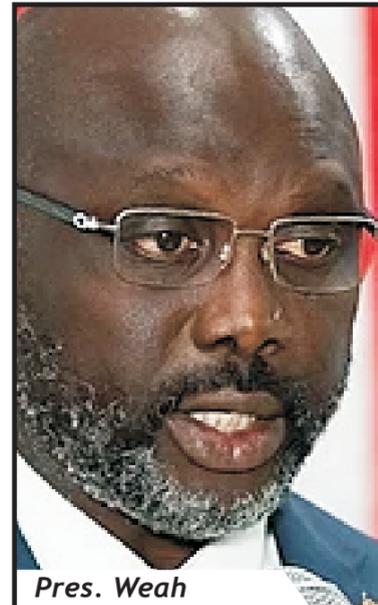
« Détrompez-vous ! La politique n'est pas un match de football. On n'a pas besoin d'énergie supplémentaires pour participer à la politique. Le Libéria a plus que jamais besoin d'expérience, des personnes matures et des hommes intelligents pour sortir ce pays du tremplin dans

décisions, ce qui n'est pas le cas chez les jeunes.

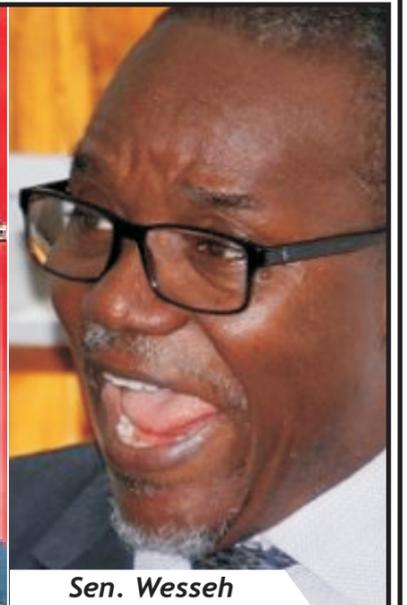
Selon lui, « le poste de président du parti de l'Unité n'est pas pour les fraudeurs, qui veulent se servir de leur position pour basculer ou vendre le parti à la mouvance présidentielle en échange des miettes ».

Il a promis de mettre l'accent sur la restructuration, la réconciliation, la reconstruction et la restauration de l'image du parti s'il on lui donne l'opportunité de diriger le parti.

Selon lui, certaines personnes le considèrent comme quelqu'un d'hostile à l'administration Weah. Mais il a expliqué que l'intérêt de l'État est plus important que le désir personnel et qu'il critique le gouvernement de manière constructive afin de redresser le tort et faire



Pres. Weah



Sen. Wesseh

lequel il est plongé. L'argument soulevé par mes critiques concernant mon âge et celui du leader politique n'a rien de fondé. La politique n'est pas un jeu d'enfants », a dit insisté le sénateur Wesseh. Dans un entretien téléphonique avec ce quotidien, le sénateur Wesseh a déclaré que le Parti de l'unité fait partie de la plateforme de l'opposition qui sera une force à craindre lors des prochaines élections nationales, ajoutant que l'ancien Parti au pouvoir a toujours besoin de lui.

Le sénateur Wesseh, qui est en lice pour la présidence nationale de l'ancien parti au pouvoir, a indiqué que lorsque trop de jeunes sont réunis pour diriger au niveau national, le pays connaît parfois des temps difficiles. Par contre, les personnes âgées réfléchissent deux fois avant de prendre des

avancer le pays en douceur. Wesseh semble partir favori parmi les candidats qui visent la direction du parti. Il est le plus âgé parmi les quatre candidats en lice. Son expertise politique est incontestable, mais sa loyauté envers l'ancien vice-président Boakai pourrait amener certains responsables du parti à se méfier de lui.

Certains militants de l'UP le voient comme une figure de division, comme celui qui alimente la confusion, tandis que d'autres disent qu'il n'a pas pleinement soutenu le parti lors des élections de 2017.

Pourtant, d'autres pensent qu'il est assez vieux et qu'il est maintenant temps pour la nouvelle génération de jeunes de prendre la direction de l'ancien parti au pouvoir.

Français

L'Ivoirien Mamadou Coulibaly

de parler du problème concernant l'enquête qui vise M. Coulibaly, affirmant que la NSA s'est saisie du dossier.

Le PDG d'Orange Liberia a été appelé par la NSA pour interrogatoire suite à l'arrestation de six personnes lors d'une violente manifestation qui a eu lieu jeudi tôt le matin près de l'Ambassade du Nigéria à Congo Town.

La manifestation aurait été organisée par des membres du Conseil des patriotes (CoP), qui a à son actif deux autres manifestations successives contre le gouvernement dirigé par Weah.

On ne sait pas encore comment le patron de la société GSM est impliqué dans la manifestation de jeudi 25 juin, mais à en croire la police, elle dispose des informations selon lesquelles la société aurait parrainé la plupart des manifestations violentes ici.

Le chef du CoP, Henry Costa, a récemment déclaré aux journalistes lors d'une visioconférence que son groupe est sur le point d'organiser une série de

manifestations contre le gouvernement pour dénoncer l'impôt supplémentaire imposé aux entreprises GSM.

S'exprimant devant ce journal via un téléphone mobile jeudi soir, le porte-parole de la Police nationale du Libéria (LNP), M. Moses Carter, a déclaré que le directeur d'Orange Liberia était interrogé pour s'enquérir de la véracité ou non des informations selon lesquelles la famille Orange avait eu des contacts avec les manifestants.

Selon M. Carter, il est ici question de savoir la version des faits de l'entreprise quant à son implication présumée dans la dernière manifestation violente, ajoutant que la police est prête à interpeler quiconque est lié aux troubles dans le pays.

Il a expliqué que les six personnes arrêtées dans le cadre de la manifestation sont détenues. Carter a indiqué que les manifestants sont descendus dans la rue pour protester contre la décision du gouvernement d'appliquer l'imposition supplémentaire des taxes sur les entreprises GSM concernant les appels et les données internet.

Un policier abat par

Cependant, il a dit que l'agent de police doit assumer la responsabilité de l'incident et devrait être inculpé le lendemain le lundi 29 juin.

Quant à l'amie de la victime Mildred, elle serait en fuite. On ignore pourquoi elle a pris la fuite après que son fiancé a abattu son amie

qui est morte sur le champ.

Pendant ce temps, la dépouille mortelle de la victime a été déposée au centre médical John F. Kennedy à Sinkor, dans l'attente d'une enquête policière. Les proches de la victime se sont refusés à tout commentaire

Mali : le mandat de la Minusma prorogé pour un an à l'ONU

Le Conseil de sécurité a décidé, à l'unanimité, de proroger, pour un an, le mandat de la Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation au Mali (Minusma), soit jusqu'au 30 juin 2020.

Ce vote, qui se réalise dans un contexte où les diplomates sont plus cléments avec l'épidémie de Covid-19, est aussi un certificat de confiance. Si, à Bamako, des manifestations ont réclamé - ce mois-ci - la destitution du président Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta (IBK), le Conseil de sécurité tient, lui, à souligner les progrès du rétablissement de la souveraineté de l'État, exigé dans l'Accord pour la paix et la réconciliation

(APR).

Ainsi, la mission est renouvelée jusqu'en juin 2021 avec le même nombre d'effectifs, et un budget en légère croissance ; avec son 1,2 milliard de dollars, la Minusma reste la troisième opération de paix la plus coûteuse. La résolution devrait redéfinir de nouveaux indicateurs de progrès sur l'APR ; pour la section désarmement, démobilisation, réinsertion et de réintégration, pour la réforme constitutionnelle et pour la mise en place de la zone de développement du nord.

Elle fixera aussi pour la première fois des référentiels sur le Centre, où la situation n'a cessé de se dégrader, et où 580 personnes ont été tuées depuis janvier 2020.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Michael J. Boskin

L'incertitude de la reprise américaine

STANFORD - Comme la majeure partie du monde, les États-Unis s'efforcent aujourd'hui de surmonter à la fois la pandémie de COVID-19 et la récession profonde qu'engendrent les fermetures imposées par le gouvernement. Sur une base annuelle, l'économie américaine a connu une contraction de 5 % au premier trimestre 2020, et pourrait à l'approche de la fin du deuxième trimestre se contracter de 40 % - soit son déclin le plus catastrophique depuis la Grande Dépression.

Par ailleurs, plusieurs dizaines de millions de travailleurs ont perdu leur emploi, ce qui a conduit le taux de chômage à exploser jusqu'à un sommet post-Grande Dépression de 14,7 % au mois d'avril. Et bien que 70 % de ces chômeurs puissent s'attendre à retrouver leur poste, tous n'auront pas cette chance, dans la mesure où de nombreuses entreprises fermeront, se relocaliseront, ou se réorganiseront.

La réouverture initiale de l'économie a certes permis un net rebond, qui devrait se poursuivre au troisième trimestre. L'emploi a augmenté de 2,5 millions au mois de mai, de même que les données de haute fréquence issues du suivi des cartes de crédit et de la mobilité en mai et juin révèlent un rétablissement significatif par rapport aux faibles niveaux d'avril, l'activité dans une poignée de secteurs approchant même, voire dépassant, les niveaux de l'année précédente.

Le rebond varie néanmoins en fonction des secteurs et des régions. Si les sociétés du Big Tech, les fournisseurs d'aménagement intérieur, et les points de vente d'alcool sont en plein boom, les acteurs du tourisme et des loisirs mettront beaucoup plus de temps à se rétablir. Quant aux restaurants, ceux qui proposent un service de vente à emporter s'en sortent beaucoup mieux que ceux qui ne servent qu'en intérieur.

La plupart des prévisionnistes s'attendent par conséquent à ce que la reprise en forme de V ralentisse au cours des prochains trimestres, pour finalement ressembler davantage à la virgule Nike. Cette plausible prévision de base est toutefois sujette à une plus grande incertitude qu'en temps normal.

Pour commencer, la fermeture des entreprises non essentielles face à la pandémie a également conduit à un choc de la demande. Jusqu'à présent, plusieurs milliers de milliards de dollars de subventions et de prêts aux entreprises, de versements de liquidités aux ménages, et d'assurance chômage via les paiements de primes fédérales (qui permettent à deux tiers des travailleurs éligibles de percevoir des prestations qui excèdent les revenus perdus), ont apporté un matelas en appui de la reprise économique. La Réserve fédérale américaine s'est engagée à maintenir son taux d'intérêt cible jusqu'à ce que l'économie retrouve le plein emploi, et continue d'étendre la portée de ses achats d'actifs. Un quatrième plan budgétaire devrait également le mois prochain se concentrer sur la réouverture de l'économie, notamment à travers la limitation de la responsabilité légale des entreprises, et le paiement de primes visant à encourager le retour au travail des employés.

Le rythme auquel les États-Unis se relèveront de cette crise sanitaire et économique dépendra également de l'efficacité des autres pays dans la gestion de la crise, et inversement. La Banque mondiale s'attend à ce que 93 % des pays plongent dans la récession en 2020, un pourcentage absolument inédit.

Bien que les récentes augmentations de nouveaux cas de COVID-19 et d'hospitalisations aux États-Unis

semblent pour l'heure gérables, grâce à un nombre suffisant de lits et d'équipements hospitaliers, un retour significatif du virus pourrait entraîner de nouvelles fermetures, ou retarder les réouvertures, ce qui ralentirait la reprise, avec pour conséquences chez de nombreux Américains un désespoir économique ainsi que les problèmes sanitaires et sociaux qui l'accompagneraient.

Par ailleurs, les deux crises connexes qui frappent l'Amérique exposent des problématiques de plus long terme, à commencer par le manque de stock et d'approvisionnements médicaux. La Californie, par exemple, n'a jamais maintenu à niveau les stocks constitués par l'ancien gouverneur Arnold Schwarzenegger face à l'épidémie de SRAS en 2002-2003, et s'est retrouvée contrainte de réparer plusieurs centaines de respirateurs défectueux. Les systèmes informatiques obsolètes utilisés par les gouvernements des États pour traiter les demandes de chômage et distribuer les prestations sociales ont par ailleurs souffert sous la pression de la pandémie.

Le choc du COVID-19 a également révélé que de trop nombreux citoyens et entreprises ne disposaient pas de la marge financière leur permettant de faire face même à quelques mois de pertes de revenus. La pandémie a également mis en lumière et accentué les inégalités raciales en termes de santé, de revenus, et de vulnérabilité face aux chocs sanitaire et économique.

Ces crises ont entraîné des réponses interventionnistes massives, rapides et sans précédent. Il est toutefois nécessaire que les réponses publiques mises en œuvre dans des circonstances exigeantes procèdent à un meilleur contrôle des coûts, et qu'elles rétablissent des incitatifs privés à plus long terme car, comme le démontre l'histoire, une fois lancés, les interventions et programmes publics prennent rarement fin.

Les reprises économique et sanitaire dépendront également en grande partie de l'action des entreprises, des citoyens et des établissements scolaires, notamment quant à leur adhésion aux précautions recommandées, telles que la distanciation sociale, le lavage fréquent des mains, et le port du masque. Il reste encore à observer si les entreprises pourront survivre en présence de restrictions sur leurs employés ainsi que leurs clients, et si l'accélération de la transition numérique entraînera un effet net positif. L'autre danger réside bien entendu dans une deuxième vague majeure de virus qui submergerait les hôpitaux, et qui effrayerait employés, élèves et clients.

Pour répondre au défi, il s'agira de renforcer les politiques d'élargissement des choix scolaires, de faire revenir les emplois privés et les capitaux dans les régions en dépression, d'assurer une meilleure formation professionnelle (notamment à travers davantage d'apprentissage et d'adéquation professionnelle), ainsi que d'adopter une nouvelle approche dans les programmes de lutte contre la pauvreté basés sur l'examen des ressources, qui aujourd'hui se chevauchent. Les bénéficiaires de l'aide sociale aux États-Unis sont confrontés à des taux d'imposition marginaux implicites extrêmement élevés si l'on considère les prestations qu'ils perdent lorsqu'ils travaillent, ce qui en conduit beaucoup à gagner moins en travaillant qu'en percevant les aides de plusieurs programmes redondants.

Il est extrêmement difficile de prévoir avec la moindre certitude quelles seront la vitesse et la solidité de la reprise économique américaine. Ce qui est en revanche certain, c'est que nous devons renforcer à la fois les incitations au travail en période normale d'abondance des emplois, et le filet de sécurité pour ceux qui ne peuvent plus travailler lorsque les temps deviennent anormaux.

Excess LD\$2bn

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to account four defendants in the case including Mr. Weeks who has been in all of the previous indictments for this case, and the new batch of indictees in persons of David Fahart, Elsie DossenBardio and KollieTamba.

The fifth defendant Melisa A. Emeh is said to be out of the bailiwick of Liberia and has not been brought to court, therefore the court has granted prosecution's request to grant her a separate trial so as to enable the four other defendants that are available to get speedy trial.

All the defendants on trial have pleaded not guilty for charges of theft of property; economic sabotage; fraud on the internal revenue of

that the printing of the banknotes far exceeded the [plus or minus] as required in standard printing procedure, indicating that there is no further justification provided [by] co-defendant Weeks in particular for the [excess] printed of the bank notes.

This third indictment in the case did not include former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's son Charles E. Sirleaf who served as Deputy CBL Governor for Operations when the financial scandal emerged at the bank, because he was nolleprosequi with prejudice last month.

Besides Mr. Sirleaf, the prosecution here also entered a nolleprosequi (dropped charges) in favor of defendants Richard H. Walker, Dorbor M.

vendor to print the Liberian banknotes.

Defendant Weeks and the Board of Governors including David Farhat, Emeh, Badio and Tamba are accused of deliberately failing to revert to the Legislature in line with a communication that demanded that appropriate details of the amount or quantity and denominations of the replacing banknotes be submitted to the Legislature prior to the printing and minting of coins.

Additionally, the Board is accused of mandating defendant Weeks to enter into a contract on June 12, 2019 with Crane Currency to print L\$10,000,000,000 banknotes at the cost of US\$10,121,689.20 before receiving the July 19, 2017 communication [from the Legislature].

At the time of selecting Crane Currency to print L\$5,000,000,000, the indictment says the quantity of Liberian banknotes in circulation at the time was L\$9.940 billion and that a significant number of the banknotes had worn out and mutilated, prompting the need to replace L\$5,000,000,000 approved as the objective of legislative joint resolution.

The indictment says it is demonstrably inconceivable for the CBL Board of Governors to have requested the printing of L\$10,000,000,000 to replace all legacy notes when they knew that the total amount in circulation that should have been replaced was L\$13.792 billion.

The indictment alleges that the defendants conspired to willfully conceal the actual amount in circulation for the purpose of committing theft, depriving the Government of Liberia of its resources.

Further, the indictment notes that defendants Weeks, Hagba, Walker and Dennis knew or had reasons to know that from packing lists reviewed by the investigation, the total amount printed was L\$13,004,750,000 and not L\$15,506,000,000, but "they maliciously and purposely concealed and understated the actual amount..." because they had criminally connived.

Hagba and Joseph Dennis.

The government here indicted the officials in 2019 for their alleged roles in the misapplication of billions of Liberian Dollars printed and shipped to Liberia to replace old local currency after a series of mass protests led local and international institutions to investigate a claim that the money had gone missing.

The defendants are accused by prosecution of flagrantly violating Chapter 15, Section 15.51 of the New Penal Law of Liberia. According to the indictment, the CBL Board of Governors in exercising their corporate power and authority, passed a resolution dated 28 April 2016 for the purpose of selecting and subsequently selected Crane Currency as the



Liberia; misuse of public money, property or record; theft or illegal disbursement of public money; criminal conspiracy and criminal facilitation.

According to witness Boakai, the total Liberian Dollars printed, shipped and received by CBL authority for the purpose of LD\$10 billion was LD\$13,004,750,000.

"Contrary to this, authority of the CBL informed the investigation that only 10,359,750,000.00 as the total amount that was printed and received by them," he explains, adding that there was a variance of L\$2,645,000,000 as the amount that is unaccounted for by defendant Weeks.

He testifies that the investigation also found from analyses of payment documents that instead of the contract cost of US\$10,121,689.00, the CBL paid the total of US\$10,555,587.00 for the printing of the S\$10 billion plus Liberian Dollars.

According to him, this left a variance of US\$433,898.00 as the amount that was paid in excess of the contract cost.

Witness Boakai continues

Simeon Freeman

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Minister for Fiscal Affairs Wolokollie counters that threats posed by the novel coronavirus can't be overly emphasized, noting that the virus has placed strain on government's operation, which is negatively impacting the economic growth.

However, he says despite the strains imposed by COVID-19, government remains committed to taking the country to higher heights, saying that the construction of the 14th Military Hospital and other treatment units across the country demonstrate the government seriousness to silencing the virus.

Minister Wolokollie continues that the effect of the virus in the country has been devastating and far reaching, saying that every fabric of livelihood has been impacted - from developed countries such as the United States and England to developing nations, including Liberia, lives have been turned upside down, revenues have plummeted, expenditures have been streamlined and growth rates have fallen flat.

"In the context of Liberia", he explains, "The socio-economic impact of COVID-19 cannot be overemphasized. Liberia as part of the global village is not immune from the effects and shocks of this pandemic, as was the case in 2014 during the Ebola outbreak."

He says the Liberian economy is under enormous stress, and as an economy that is mostly import-driven, events around the world can alter the course of activities here in Liberia.

However, Wolokollie notes that while lockdown is an effective mitigating measure to curtail the spread of the virus, it is negatively impacting economic activities and placing substantial burden and challenges on the vulnerable population.

Throwing some highlights on the revenue, he says prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, domestic revenue was projected at 444 million dollars out of a total of 505 million dollars of which 61 million was attributed to external resources, adding that this projection was consistent with the recast budget that was passed into law in January 2020, with major lines informing the domestic resource envelope including taxes on income and profits, international trade, goods and services tax, and administrative fees, among others.

Press Union of Liberia President Charles B. Coffey, extols the panelists for taking up time to provide thoughts on issues of national concern specifically, the global pandemic and its social, political and economic impacts.

Liberia is experiencing daily surge in new cases of the virus, with confirmed cases almost hitting 1,000. President George Manneh recently extended the State of Emergency by 30 days and reversed the 9:00pm lockdown to 6:00pm daily amid plan b the government to distribute one million nose masks as part of measures to contain spread of the virus. -

Editing by Jonathan Browne

GoL to re-deploy

Cont'd from page 7

enhanced and customized system will consider all aspects of GoL's business process and workflow while working directly with the relevant stakeholders.

The Government's renewal of the contractual agreement comes at the time of immense demand for migration to digital as a result of spread of COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

The Government of Liberia through the World Bank Public Financial Management for Institution Strengthening Project (PFMRISP) financed the Enhancement of the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS).

The newly system, will fully digitize all of Government's 107 entities. For example, through the usage of the newly designed EDMS, spending entities will be enabled to scan and upload all financial transactions to the MFDP over

the fiber optic thus eliminating the need for a particular Ministry, Agency or Commission (MAC) to come over to the MFDP to follow-up on the status of any payment as finance officers would remain in their respective entities and track the movement of every transition online up to the preparation of checks.

A two-phase training exercise on the usage of the system is expected to be conducted at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for all participants of the six (6) piloted spending entities.

Phase 1 is intended for functional (end-users) which will bring together all participants of the six (6) piloted spending entities, while Phase 2 of the training exercise is for Information Technology professionals.

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12 graders resume classes

By Ben P. Weese

Senior high school students, specifically those in 12th grade all across the country resumed classes Monday, 29 June in their respective schools to prepare for the upcoming West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) slated for 4 August this year, after coronavirus outbreak forced authorities to shut down schools for several months.

this paper, some students were seen around street concords while others were in classes carrying on their normal learning activities, observing some preventive measures.

The president of the student council government at St. Simon Baptist School System MsHawa J. Manie expresses happiness over the resumption of classes following the three months break due to the coronavirus pandemic.

She however calls on the

challenge for them, taking into account that curfew starts at 6:00 pm.

Student Manie further points out that some students live very far from their school campuses, saying to ask them to leave school by 5pm is not a good idea for their safety.

Another student from the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) High School Ms. Tracy Blamo tells this paper that her being in school is just due to the fact that the government ordered schools to resume classes.

According to her, she and her parents are faced with a lot of challenges in getting her fully prepared for the resumption of school because they are not working due to the pandemic.

She explains that getting transportation to be in school is challenging for her, noting that even payment of her school fees is another issue her parents are fighting to settle.

For his part, the Principal of G. W. Gibson High School Mr. Moses W. Kangar, Jr. says the opening of school is not a bad thing, but notes that there are lots of things that the government needs to put in place in order to give the students a perfect learning environment.

Mr. Kangar continues that before the opening of classes, the government through the Ministry of Education held a one - day workshop for principals here, but since then, items that were promised by government in the workshop toward schools' reopening are yet to be given.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



A 6:00pm curfew imposed by the government still remains in place due to rising coronavirus cases, and transportation could well remain a major constraint for many of the returning senior high school students if they have to stay longer hours on campuses before struggling for transport cars with other commuters.

During tour on high school campuses Monday, 29 June by

government to revisit the time limit for people being allowed to stay out, or make adjustments in the time that students must stay in school.

She continues that upon their return to school, they were told by their administration that the Ministry of Education wants them to be on campus from 8:30am to 5pm daily.

Student Manie complains that this time limit is a serious

Orange confirms CEO's

Cont'd from page 6

Group has analyzed the impact of the Surcharges of the LTA Order 0016- 02-25-19 and concluded that these additional Surcharges imposed to GSM operators are jeopardizing their investments and their business continuity in Liberia.

"Therefore, the Board of Orange Liberia instructed Mr. Mamadou Coulibaly, as CEO of the company, to make a case before the Courts of Liberia. Orange, as a law-abiding corporation, believes that the best recourse is always through the use of dialog with the

authorities and the rule of law," the statement explained.

The company pointed out that it has invested more than USD \$100 million in Liberia since 2016 to provide digital and financial inclusion to the Liberian people and is a key partner in progress for the country's development agenda.

It boasted of being awarded the 2017 and 2018 best tax payer award by the LRA and is proud to contribute to Liberia's development through the payment of taxes, in addition to its CSR activities.

Senate Secretary

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George Wisner, Othello Z.B. Karr, Prince A. Saysay and others to obtain faked and fraudulent "Investment Incentives" for duty free privileges.

The defendants allegedly obtained the faked "investment Incentives" for duty free privileges in spite of the fact that MHM Eko - Liberia was due to engage in crushed rocks and related businesses with US\$7,616,152 capital investment.

According to the indictment, defendant Singbeh opened two bogus accounts in the name of MHM Eko-Liberia, conspired with KarelSochor, Ales Sramek,

Peter Pesek, Jan Holaseh and Gloria Caine by convincing the Czech nationals to transfer US\$2,495,109 and US\$102,000,000 to pay custom duties on equipment imported, employees' salaries and other running cost.

The indictment notes that the total value of properties including cash and equipment stolen directly from the Czech nationals by the defendants is estimated at about US\$5,062,419.10. British national Hans Armstrong has been the Attorney-In-Fact of the two Czech brothers at the rock crushing company that was situated in Margibi County.

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Gray explains resignation

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The ruling Coalition for Democratic Change vice chair for political affairs Acarous Moses Gray says his resignation of the post has nothing to do with contesting for the senate, as being speculated.

Gray, also Montserrado County Electoral District #8 Representative Acarous Moses Gray tendered his letter of resignation on June 26.

But speaking to this paper via mobile phone he explains his decision to quit met approval of the national executive committee of the CDC.

According to him, at no time did he ever express openly his desire to contest in the party primary for Montserrado County senatorial seat, and those running with such thought are living in total falsehood.

Gray further narrates that

with the high possibility of the country and the world reopening after the COVID-19, and as a member of several foreign parliaments coupled with his role as acting chairman on executive, he may not have enough time for the party's functions.

He discloses that he requested Chairman Mulbah Morlu and the team at the CDC to present someone to replace him as vice chair for political affairs thru the consent of the national executive committee but Morlu has been uncomfortable to see him depart.

He recalls that this is not his first time resigning key positions of the party, noting that upon his election as representative, he resigned as secretary general, a move that subsequently brought now Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, Nathaniel McGill to the chief scribe post.

Gray clarifies there is no hard feelings or malice among national executive committee members and would-be contestants, including the party's favorite, Montserrado County Electoral District #5 Representative Thomas Fallah.

"There is no malice at the national executive committee level. I haven't met the President; I haven't spoken with him on this matter but I don't want people creating a situation that there are issues especially, between me and Fallah. Fallah is qualified under the Constitution to contest. Even if you don't want a sitting lawmaker, we can only negotiate with him not to contest," he argues.

He claims his letter of resignation was leaked to the public by an unknown whose intent may be to create unnecessary tension, ahead

of the CDC primary.

When quizzed whether he was concerned about the timeliness of his decision, he responds: "No matter what time I would have left. There was always going to be issues, what matters for me is that my conscience and to do the right thing. I am a blunt person who does things and does it the right way; I don't runaway from things I want."

But it is speculated among highly placed stalwarts of the ruling party that a press conference held by Chairman Mulbah Morlu with support from Rep. Gray on December 10, 2019, flagging alleged shortcomings of President George Manneh Weah had created wide gap between Gray, Morlu and some senior officials of the ruling establishment.

At the time, the CDC noted that it is embarrassing and shameful for socio-economic disparity to continue to widen between the haves and have-nots, while partisans are expected to remain silent.

The party maintained that it will not remain silent if the problems it stood against yesterday are beginning to resurface.

"We cannot forget so soon that the existence of this government is a product of the many years of sacrifice, commitment and selfless resilience of millions of ordinary Liberians who simply desire good governance and a departure from the political excesses of the past. Amidst the plethora of challenges across the country, our people still remain hopeful that we will rise to seize the moment and make the difference for our people and country; let us not let the people down," the party said in a statement.

Gray had argued persistently that the plight of CDCians, especially the young people should factor in the governance process but his plead seemed to have fallen on deaf ears, something that seems to have left her frustrated in calling it a quit. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Excess LD\$2bn printing unjustified

-State witness says in CBL case



By **Winston W. Parley**

Prosecution's first witness **Baba Boakai** says there is no further justification provided [by] former Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) Executive Governor **Milton A. Weeks** for printing excess LD\$2,645,000,000, saying the accused used his authority to get a board resolution to legalize an action he already took.

"The investigation further found that from analyses of documents received, that the CBL and that of Crane Currency [were] also in violation of the very contract that they signed," he testified Monday, 29 June at Criminal Court "C" in Monrovia.

The Liberia Anti - Corruption Commission (LACC's) Program Manager in the Enforcement and Investigations Division accuses defendant **Weeks** of using his authority in dual

capacity in assembling the Board of Governors in September 2017 to come up with a board resolution to legalize and perfect an action he took as far back as June 2017.

He testified further that no authorization was given by the Liberian Legislature for the printing of LD\$10 billion, unlike the case of an initial LD\$5 billion earlier printed following signing of a contract on 6 May 2016, shipped to Liberia, received by CBL "and duly accounted for."

Former Governor **Weeks** and three other former CBL officials are standing trial for multiple charges including theft and economic sabotage of billions of Liberian dollars printed and shipped to Liberia, following a series of mass protests that prompted local and international investigation into claims that the money went missing.

The prosecution is holding

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Zogoes feast on pharmaceutical drugs

By **Emmanuel Mondaye**

A group of wayward and less-fortunate Liberians commonly referred to here as "zogoes" have stormed the Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) garbage deposal site adjacent the Palm Grove Cemetery on Center Street Monrovia to collect pharmaceutical drugs dumped there.

The drugs which include Diazepam and Tramadol were reportedly dumped at the

MCC waste management site by unscrupulous dealers and importers without the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Health.

Some of the zogoes sheltering in an abandoned building opposite the cemetery are overwhelmed with substances because they have sufficient pieces of the dangerous tablets in their possession.

A female among the group who broke the news to this



Group of zogoes near the MCC Waste Management site on Center Street, Monrovia

paper said several cartons of drugs were dumped at the waste management site, adding that she decided to alert the media because many of her colleagues taking in the substances are becoming daisy and helpless.

She attributes the situation to lack of vigorous monitoring system by government to ensure operators of drug stores, pharmacies and importers of pharmaceutical

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