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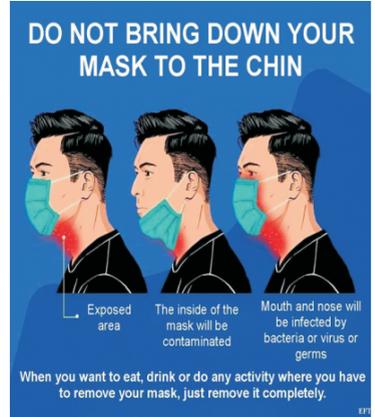
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# The New Dawn

**French Version Inside**

TRULY INDEPENDENT



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# Sen. Saytumah under probe for US\$0.5m



# Back to the barracks

## *-Weah ends State of Emergency*

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# Continental News

## Last man on trial with Nelson Mandela dies aged 95

**A**ndrew Mlangeni, the last surviving anti-apartheid activist convicted with Nelson Mandela at South Africa's infamous Rivonia Trial, has died at 95.

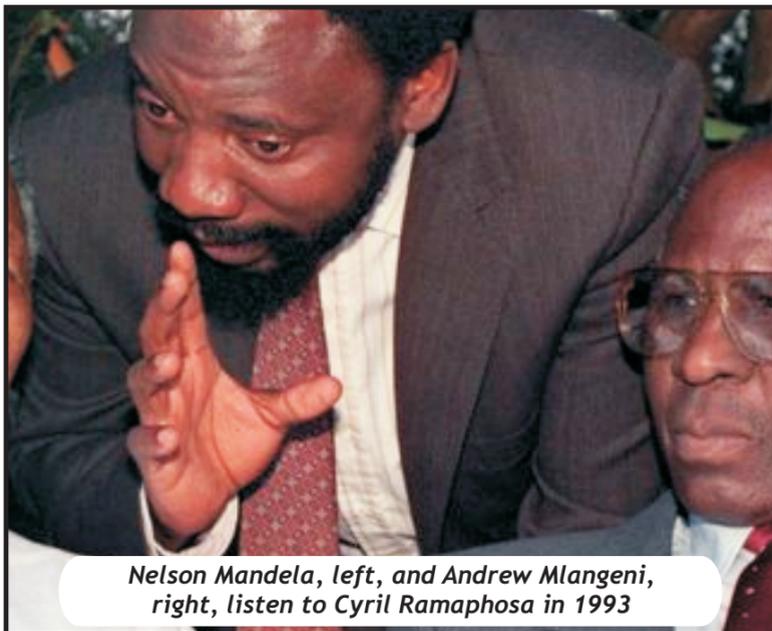
This was the trial considered to have brought Mandela to global attention.

Mr Mlangeni died after being admitted to a military hospital in Pretoria because of an abdominal complaint.

His death "signifies the end of a generational history and places our future squarely in our hands," President Cyril Ramaphosa said.

According to Mr Mlangeni's 2017 biography, *The Backroom Boy*, Mandela selected him to join five other men in the first group of South African anti-apartheid activists to be sent to China for training.

Their training included classes in bomb-making, booby traps and secret communication techniques. He returned to South Africa in 1963 and became a member of the high command of the ANC's armed movement, Umkhonto we Sizwe.



Nelson Mandela, left, and Andrew Mlangeni, right, listen to Cyril Ramaphosa in 1993

He disguised himself as a priest and travelled around South Africa recruiting young people to go abroad for training as fighters, until he was arrested and put on trial in the Rivonia treason trial.

Mr Mlangeni served 26 years in prison, incarcerated for most of the time on Robben Island, alongside Mandela.

After his release in 1989, he served as a member of parliament and lived in Soweto until his death. Mr Mlangeni was

a man of principle - a quiet authority, whose humility won over the hearts of many South Africans.

He described himself as "a backroom boy", never one to want political fame but instead working behind the scenes in helping to carve a new South Africa at the end of white minority rule. He buried every last one of his fellow Rivonia trialists and friends.

His passing marks the end

of an era, the last of a generation of indomitable struggle stalwarts.

Mr Mlangeni believed in the rights of black people, that their lives matter - but believed in unity too. He did not want his jailers to suffer the same fate he did. Like Mandela, he believed that, in order for the majority of South Africans to be free, people like him would need to advocate peace instead of revenge. The Rivonia Trial, lasting from October 1963 to June 1964, is widely considered to have been a pivotal point in the fight against the white minority government in South

Africa and brought Mandela to the world stage.

Mandela's famous speech from the dock, declaring that freedom and equality was "an ideal for which I am prepared to die", became a rallying cry for black people under the apartheid regime. Mandela and Mr Mlangeni were convicted along with six others of sabotage in the trial, named after the suburb of Johannesburg where some of them were arrested.

They served long prison terms with Mr Mandela's being the longest, 27 years, until his release in 1990. Mandela died in 2013 aged 95. BBC

## DR Congo lifts Covid-19 state of emergency

**G**roups of people poured onto the streets of Democratic Republic of Congo's capital, Kinshasa, on Tuesday night after President Félix Tshisekedi announced the end of a four-month state of emergency.

In a televised address, President Tshisekedi announced a timetable for the gradual resumption of

3 August, while places of worship, stadiums, airports and international borders will be reopened from 15 August. The state of emergency was announced on 24 March after a surge in confirmed cases of coronavirus.

The country has seen a drop in newly reported cases over the last two weeks. It



Police blocked inter-province travel during the state of emergency

economic activities, including reopening of banks, shops, restaurants and pubs from Wednesday.

Public transport, social gatherings, meetings and celebrations have also been allowed.

Schools, universities and other educational establishments will reopen on

has so far reported 8,543 coronavirus cases and 196 deaths.

The virus has spread to 14 out of the 26 provinces since 10 March when the first cases were reported. The president said safety measures like social distancing and wearing of face masks in public will continue. BBC

## Nile dam's first-year target reached - Ethiopia

**T**he first-year target for filling the controversial mega dam on the River Nile has been reached, Ethiopia says. This would allow the first set of turbines to be tested.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's announcement came as Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan agreed to resume talks over

the dam, following a virtual summit.

The project has been a source of huge diplomatic tension since its construction began in Ethiopia in 2011.

Ethiopia sees the hydroelectric project as crucial for its economic growth and a vital source of energy.

But Egypt and Sudan, which

are downstream, fear the \$4bn (£3bn) dam will greatly reduce their access to water.

Years of fraught negotiations have failed to reach a consensus on how and when to fill the reservoir, and how much water it should release. When operational, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (Gerd) will generate 6,000 megawatts, making it the largest hydroelectric dam in Africa. It will provide power to some 65 million Ethiopians, who currently lack a regular electricity supply. "It has become evident over the past two weeks in the rainy season that the Gerd first year filling is achieved and the dam under construction is already overtopping," Mr Abiy said.

Ethiopia's Water Minister Seleshi Bekele said this would allow the first set of turbines to be tested.

The statement did not give a figure for how much water was now in the dam reservoir but Ethiopia previously said the first-year target was 4.9 billion cubic meters of water,



The project has been a source of huge diplomatic tension for almost a decade

taking it up to the height of the lowest point on the dam wall.

Ethiopia had always said it would fill the dam in July, while Egypt had warned it to delay while talks continued.

It remains unclear whether Ethiopia has done anything to

speed up the process of filling the dam, or whether the dam is only filling up because of the rain.

Sudan has previously said it has noticed a drop in the flow of water on the Blue Nile in its territory. BBC

# EDITORIAL

## Reviving the Liberian economy

A GROUP OF experienced economists led by former minister of planning and economic affairs and economic professor, Dr. Togba Nah Tipoteh under the banner, Liberian Economy Group or LEG, advanced series of recommendations to the government of President George Manneh Weah recently, aimed at strengthening the Liberian dollar and resuscitating the entire economy.

**THE LEG FIRSTLY** identified endemic corruption in the public sector that had been described by former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as a vampire, sucking national resources and leaving the citizenry in abject poverty, illiteracy and disease. It notes that widespread poverty has become a societal problem with two-thirds of Liberian children out of school.

**IT ALSO BLAMES** the tailoring of national decisions on the basis of American cultural values rather than Liberian values, which has led the population to prefer western products over 'Made in Liberia' goods, and is even exacerbated by export of raw products (rubber, timber, ore, among others) abroad where values are added than manufacturing our raw materials here before export, which could add greater value and earn the country more foreign currency.

**BUT PERHAPS THE** fundamental issue confronting Liberians since independence is the Dollarization of the economy, where taxes are levied and paid in United States Dollars and officials here receive salaries in U.S. currency rather than the Liberian Dollar. This practice has not just weakened the local currency, but sent prices skyrocketing, making life very unbearable for the common man in the street.

**AFTER IDENTIFYING THE** problems, LEG recommends several austerity measures, which we strongly believe, if this administration took into consideration, would stabilize the economy and strengthen the Liberian Dollar.

**THEY INCLUDE, AMONG** others, encouraging both government and ordinary citizens to purchasing more locally-made products rather than importing everything we eat and use; engaging in more savings generation both publicly and privately - down at family, community and Civil Society levels which could generate about US\$100,000,000 (one hundred million United States Dollar) annually and be reinvested. Additionally, it suggests that salaries for top officials, including the President, Vice President, Speaker and Deputy Speaker, President Pro-Tempore, Chief Justice, Associate Justices and the Legislature should be paid in Liberian Dollars, and that official travels of the President or a designate, such as the Vice President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs should include an entourage of seven and two, respectively, while the Minister of Finance and Development Planning and the Executive Governor for the Central Bank of Liberia should make official travels with two entourages each, among others.

**LEG ALSO RECOMMENDS** that the national budget should be drafted in Liberian Dollars, as the Constitution of Liberia requires, and that allowances, vehicles credit cards for officials except those offices named above, be abolished, while donations from Public Corporations and Autonomous Agencies of government should be directed to the national coffer. Finally, it estimates that if faithfully adhere to, these austerity measures could enable government to save about US\$345 million that could be used in various sectors of the economy to bring about development and growth.

**WE WELCOME THESE** ideas and seriously encourage the Weah administration to put aside pride, politics and personal interest and immediately begin to put in action, some of these austerity measures that would not only revive the economy, but emancipate the vast majority of the population from grinding poverty.

**INDEED, IT IS** time for radical changes and to swallow some bitter pills, if the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change and President Weah himself would leave behind a legacy that posterity will benefit from.

# COMMENTARY

By Abiy Ahmed  
& Gordon Brown

## Saving Generation COVID

*During the COVID-19 crisis, lockdowns and other social-distancing rules have forced schools worldwide to shut their doors, locking out a peak of 1.6 billion children. Unless the international community acts now, the consequences for this generation - especially its poorest members - will be severe and long-lasting.*

**A**DDIS ABABA/LONDON - The oft-repeated idea that COVID-19 is "the great equalizer" is a myth. There is no equality of suffering or equality of sacrifice during a pandemic that is disproportionately hurting the poorest and most vulnerable.

And while the health emergency has disproportionately harmed the elderly poor, the unprecedented education crisis caused by the pandemic is now hurting the poorest children hardest and creating a generation that will lose out on learning. Lockdowns and other social-distancing rules have forced schools all over the world to shut their doors, affecting a peak of nearly 1.6 billion children. But while wealthier children have had access to alternatives, such as online learning, the poorest do not. The world's least-advantaged children - for whom education offers the only escape route from poverty - have thus fallen further behind, placing the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all by 2030 even further out of reach.

Even before the pandemic, the world was falling short of this goal. Globally, nearly 260 million children were out of school, and 400 million dropped out after the age of 11. In some regions, such as rural Sub-Saharan Africa, few girls were completing secondary school, not least because of widespread child marriage. Nearly 50 countries have no laws banning child marriage, and many more fail to enforce their bans. As a result, about 12 million school-age girls are forcibly married off each year.

When schools reopen, there is a good chance that many poor children will never return. Poverty is the biggest reason why children don't attend school, and the economic repercussions of the COVID-19 crisis will far outlast lockdowns, especially for the poorest people.

The likely result is that more children will be pushed into the ranks of the 152 million school-age children forced to work, as 14 countries still have not ratified the International Labor Organization's minimum-age convention. And even more girls will be forced into early marriage. When the West African Ebola epidemic that started in 2014 closed schools in Sierra Leone, the number of 15-19-year-old-girls who were pregnant or already mothers nearly doubled, rising from 30% to 65%. Most of these girls never returned to school.

With the right policies in place, economies will start to recover, jobs will slowly be restored, and social-protection policies will ease the poverty of the unemployed. But there is little protection against the effects of a foregone education, which can last a lifetime.

As it stands, more than half the world's children - nearly 900 million boys and girls - are unable to read a simple text by age 10. That is 900 million children who do not receive the knowledge and skills needed to improve their economic lot as adults. If we do nothing to help "Generation COVID" make up for lost time, that figure could easily approach one billion or more. When schools in Kashmir closed for 14 weeks in the aftermath of the devastating 2005 earthquake, the most affected children lost the equivalent of 1.5 years of learning.

As the recently published UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report advises us, children who have fallen behind need the kind of catch-up programs that in Latin America have increased educational attainment by up to 18 months since the 1990s. But the needed support will cost money. Unless we

bridge the gap in education funding, SDG4 will remain out of reach.

UNESCO estimates that before the COVID-19 crisis, 50 countries were failing to spend the recommended minimum of 4% of national income, or 15% of the public budget, on education. Inadequate funding from governments and donors has meant that many of the 30 million refugee and forcibly displaced children age out of education without ever setting foot in a classroom, despite the efforts of Education Cannot Wait and other groups.

Now, the pandemic is set to squeeze education budgets even further. As slower or negative growth undermines tax revenues, less money will be available for public services. When allocating limited funds, urgent lifesaving expenditure on health and social safety nets will take precedence, leaving education underfunded.

Likewise, intensifying fiscal pressure in developed countries will result in reductions in international development aid, including for education, which is already losing out to other priorities in the allocation of bilateral and multilateral aid. The World Bank now estimates that, over the next year, overall education spending in low- and middle-income countries could be \$100-150 billion lower than previously planned.

This funding crisis will not resolve itself. The quickest way to free up resources for education is through debt relief. The 76 poorest countries must pay \$106 billion in debt-service costs over the next two years. Creditors should forgive these payments, with a requirement that the money is reallocated to education, as well as health.

At the same time, multilateral financial institutions and regional development banks must increase their resources. The International Monetary Fund should issue \$1.2 trillion in Special Drawing Rights (its global reserve asset), and channel these resources toward the countries that need them most.

The World Bank, for its part, should unlock more support by replenishing the International Development Association (or borrowing on the strength of it) for low-income countries, and by using guarantees and grants from willing aid donors, such as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, which stand ready to unlock billions in extra finance for education in lower-middle-income countries through the International Finance Facility for Education.

In the next few days, both NGOs and all international education organizations will begin "back to school" campaigns. Save Our Future, a new campaign launching in late July, advocates building back better, rather than restoring the pre-pandemic status quo. That means updating classrooms and transforming curricula, implementing effective technologies, and helping teachers offer personalized instruction. Making schools safer (over 620 million children lack basic sanitation services at their schools, which particularly affects girls) and ensuring school meals (a lifeline for 370 million boys and girls) would also ease the effects of poverty and improve educational outcomes. Save the Children will add to this pressure with its own grassroots campaign focused on debt relief to pay for education.

But investing in schools is only part of the solution. In Sierra Leone, support networks for girls halved the dropout rate during the Ebola crisis. In Latin American, African, and Asian countries, conditional cash transfers have boosted school attendance. The latest Global Education Monitoring Report advocates implementing similar programs today.

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## O-PED

By David Stasavage

## Trump's Ancient Ballot Lie

*Claims by US President Donald Trump and others that mail-in ballots increase the risk of electoral fraud are not new. Since the 1400s, those seeking to limit the franchise have sought to achieve their goals by citing the need to maintain the "integrity" of the electoral system.*

**N**EW YORK - As the United States heads toward its most significant and contentious presidential election in a very long time, there is much talk about voting by mail. Some see this option as necessary to ensure ballot access for all amid the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly blue-collar workers and minority groups, who have disproportionately high infection rates. But others, including President Donald Trump, vociferously oppose mail-in ballots, pointing to a purported risk of fraud.

Their argument is bogus - and not exactly new. For the last six centuries, those seeking to limit the franchise have sought to achieve their goals by citing the need to maintain the "integrity" of the electoral system.

Consider England in the early fifteenth century. At that time, each English county sent two "knights of the shire" as representatives to Parliament. And because there was no formal law governing how these knights (a largely honorific term) would be selected, it fell to each county's sheriff to organize an election.

By custom, all free male inhabitants of a county had the right to participate, while women were excluded. Some of these elections were no doubt rowdy and undisciplined - as democracy often is - but they allowed for much greater (male) participation than would soon be the case.

In 1429, members of the House of Commons petitioned King Henry VI to agree to a new law ostensibly intended to ensure that county elections to Parliament proceeded peacefully. The petition stated that without this new law, "homicides, riots, assaults, and divisions will most probably arise and occur." In other words, the law's backers claimed, the integrity of the electoral process was in danger.

But the parliamentarians' proposed method of addressing the perceived problem betrayed their true motivation. They called for the county election franchise to be restricted to those who owned land with an annual return of at least 40 shillings, a significant sum at the time.

The root cause of the problem, as the law's supporters saw it, was "the too great and excessive numbers of people" who had been participating in elections. The 40-shilling rule became law in England in 1430, and would not be repealed until Parliament passed the Great Reform Act of 1832.

With that act, Parliament had finally come around to the idea that the 40-shilling rule was an anachronism. But then a new twist to the story brought about a feature of voting that we view as sacred today. Some members of Parliament advocated not only expanding the franchise, but also making the ballot for elections to the House of Commons secret. Since time immemorial, voting in county elections had taken place in public, enabling people with means to intimidate or bribe others to vote as instructed.

But it would be another 40 years before Parliament finally adopted the 1872 Ballot Act. One of the main reasons for the delay in introducing secret balloting was that opponents argued - once again - that it would jeopardize the integrity of the electoral process. Some MPs had proposed a secret ballot as early as 1830, but others argued then that such a measure would result in "eternal suspicion and hypocrisy." In 1862, another opponent of secret ballots said much the same thing, claiming that, "instead of being a check on bribery, it would facilitate it by preventing detection in many cases."

Sadly, such arguments are being echoed today in the US, which has entered a new era of voting restrictions that recalls its past disenfranchisement of African-Americans. In recent years, 25 US states have passed laws that make it more difficult to vote, such as by requiring a photo ID or even proof of citizenship. States have also limited turnout by reducing the number of polling stations.

The clear effect of these measures is to tilt the playing field against low-income and minority groups. Much like in England 600 years ago, the stated objective - preserving the integrity of the electoral process - is just a convenient smokescreen.

In the US debate over voting by mail - a measure supported by a large majority of American adults - opponents of broad electoral participation are once again raising the specter of fraud and corruption to pursue narrow partisan goals. Without citing any evidence, they claim that this new voting system is somehow subject to greater irregularities than traditional in-person voting.

But the real fear of Trump and others is that mail-in voting will boost turnout and aid Democratic candidates, even though it is not even certain that such an effect exists in states that already allow it. We can only hope that the advocates of expanded suffrage will eventually resume their winning streak.

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## OPINION

By Javier Solana

## A Better Globalization

*Globalization has given rise to legitimate frustrations and concerns, which can't be assuaged simply by recalling the enormous benefits it has brought. But, rather than trying to roll back globalization, we have no choice but to try to make it work better.*

**M**ADRID - The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted much reflection on the state of globalization, its drawbacks at a time of worldwide disruption, and the supposed benefits of retreating to the national sphere. In this sense, as in many others, the current crisis has accelerated pre-existing tendencies. The global trade-to-GDP ratio - one of the main indicators of globalization - has followed a downward trend since 2012, and anti-globalist political movements have been gaining in popularity for some time.

These movements have good reasons to mistrust globalization, and even more so now. The scarcity of vital materials - from face masks to yeast - highlighted the low resilience of the global supply chains that produce so much of what we use, owing to their excessive concentration in a few countries and the lack of essential stockpiles. Moreover, globalization has created many losers within individual countries, especially in the developed world.

This phenomenon has been particularly marked in the United States, where the average income of the poorest 50% actually fell between 1980 and 2010. The delocalization of production is certainly not the only reason (the effects of automation on inequality are often overlooked), but it is a significant one.

But we must resist the temptation to amend globalized production in its entirety. Adam Smith's axioms about specialization, and David Ricardo's regarding comparative advantage, are as true today as they were 200 years ago. Overall, globalization has clearly been beneficial, lifting billions of people out of poverty, so our focus should be to reform rather than destroy it.

For starters, organizations promoting regional economic integration must strengthen the development of regional value chains for strategically important goods - not only electronic chips, but also basic necessities such as food. Avoiding future shortages of essential goods will require firms to shift from just-in-time production to a "just-in-case" model that prioritizes security of supply over optimal cost efficiency. This will not necessarily lead to autarky, but it will require more diversified global distribution networks.

Likewise, we must continue to fight the enormous inequalities that have emerged within countries. National and local governments must establish adequate protection mechanisms to safeguard workers' fundamental rights and offer them the prospect of a dignified future. These measures include minimum-income systems (which many countries have already implemented), investment in education in the economic sectors of the future, and public employment programs linked to the coming green economic transition.

Policymakers must also urgently tackle weaknesses in the global trade system. The upcoming choice of a new director-general of the World Trade Organization will be crucial. Whoever is chosen will have the difficult task of resuscitating an organization weighed down by the failure of the Doha Round, its member states' current power to declare themselves as developed or developing countries without reference to objective criteria, and the paralysis of its appellate body. This body is the cornerstone of the WTO's dispute-settlement system; without it, the risk of trade wars increases dramatically.

When people speak of globalization today, they are essentially referring to the growth of international trade and the free movement of financial capital. But as the economist Dani Rodrik has pointed out, there is no reason to limit globalization to these processes. In particular, we must look deeper into shared governance of so-called global public goods, so that this can become one of the main vectors of international cooperation.

Serious and overarching threats such as COVID-19 and climate change can be confronted effectively only at the global level. Unilateral measures taken by economic actors and national governments will not be enough: the sum of such initiatives can never substitute for effective multilateralism.

Preventing pandemics and other major public-health risks requires empowering the World Health Organization both politically and economically. Obviously, US President Donald Trump's irresponsible decision to withdraw the United States from the WHO represents a step in the opposite direction, and can be understood only as short-sighted electioneering.

Policymakers must urgently explore reasonable reforms of the WHO, such as strengthening the organization's financing by increasing member states' obligatory contributions. As matters stand, the largest single contributor to the WHO in 2020-21 will be not a state but the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, a philanthropic donor. This unacceptable situation must change, and the WHO should also have sufficient staff and capacity to inspect and impose binding sanctions on member states, thereby ensuring that science prevails over national interests.

As for the environment, we must recognize that stopping climate change is the fight of the century. We need to encourage public-private partnerships to help the transition to sustainable production models, in the knowledge that building a green economy can be profitable now as well as beneficial to future generations. The current context offers us the opportunity to entrench green conditionality in all economic recovery instruments - as proven by the historic recovery fund that European Union leaders just unveiled. Finally, cities and other actors should play a more important role in the public debate on this issue. The C40 initiative, which brings together 96 major cities in the fight against climate change, serves as an inspiring example in this respect.

Investing in an economic recovery that ignores the need to advance toward decarbonization is counterproductive. Trying to monopolize supplies of future COVID-19 vaccines by preventing their equitable distribution cannot end the health and economic threat posed by the pandemic. And choosing protectionism and national retrenchment would mean applying yesterday's formulas to today's problems.

Globalization has given rise to legitimate frustrations and concerns, which can't be assuaged simply by recalling the enormous benefits it has brought. But, rather than trying to roll back globalization, we will be better served by engaging in a level-headed attempt to build a better globalization.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Castrating just four (4) of Min. Samuel D. Tweah's LIES – Is he a wholesaler of falsehood?

By Martin K. N. Kollie

Activist and Columnist, [martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com](mailto:martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com)

We cannot sit here and allow Min. Samuel D. Tweah to distort the narrative, especially ahead of 2020 and 2023 polls. In just 30 months as Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Samuel D. Tweah, Jr. has told many LIES. And most partisans of CDC, including some senior officials of government, have become so comfortable with his usual LIES. Either because of their ignorance or because they just have to praise this “king” even though he is NAKED. It is all about survival (struggle for stomach). But permit me to deal with just 4 of Tweah's numerous lies:

LIE #1: Budget Surplus

LIE #2: No L\$16 billion missing

LIE #3: Pres. George Weah is the 6<sup>th</sup> best Head of State in Africa

LIE #4: Tweah's “US\$500k” annual salary at African Development Bank (AfDB).

Let me perform some quick surgical operations on his lies. Let us get straight into it:

LIE #1: In an effort to justify his US\$16,000 first-class air ticket in September 2018, Min. Samuel D. Tweah lied about earning an annual salary of US\$500,000 while serving as Advisor (Grade PL6 or below) at the African Development Bank (AfDB). This was a BIG LIE. Even the Vice President of AfDB does not earn an annual salary of up to US\$400,000. Then how could have a low-level advisor earned US\$500k per annum?

Here are my facts based on salary structure or grading system at AfDB. Annual salaries are usually paid in UA\*. UA is the official currency of the African Development Bank:

- 1) Vice President - Grade EL2 - 261,558
- 2) Director - Grade EL4 - 207,531
- 3) Manager - Grade PL1 - 159,843
- 4) Chief Officer - Grade PL3 - 128,748
- 5) Principal Officer - Grade PL4 - 114,935
- 6) Senior Officer - Grade PL5 - 100,715
- 7) Officer - Grade PL6 - 88,250

Conversion: 1UA = 1.4USD

Follow this link to get more details on salary structure and grading system at AfDB: [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic/Documents/AfDB\\_Grade\\_and\\_Salary\\_Data\\_-\\_2016.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic/Documents/AfDB_Grade_and_Salary_Data_-_2016.pdf).

LIE #2: Since last week, high-ranking officials of government have been running with another LIE that Samuel Tweah shared with them to spread like wildfire. The LIE is, “President George M. Weah has been ranked the 6th best Head of State in Africa”. It seems like Samuel Tweah paid some good US dollars to manufacture this LIE. But this propaganda is too cheap and slippery.

How can someone's private YouTube Channel rank or rate African Presidents or Heads of States? This is just a common video that anyone can produce and upload. Here is my fact: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UMsuRMikVU&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0D4DDy34Kj1w5zyKGBF031-Tz8Yh5aAjLA3mRsCbi-ylz39KgNGYUp7U>.

The “ranking platform” is not even recognized. It is a SCAM for the owner of this YouTube channel to even rank Pres. George Weah above President Sahle-Work Zewde of Ethiopia and President MackySall of Senegal.

So, what independent standards, indicators, or thresholds were used to rank President Weah as the 6<sup>th</sup>



L-R: Pres. George M. Weah and Min. Samuel D. Tweah, Jr.

best Head of State in Africa? How can this even have any ounce of reliability when Liberia is now the poorest country amid rampant corruption and bad governance? Weah is not even considered among “Champion Presidents” according to the African Union (AU). Follow this link to know the facts: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UMsuRMikVU&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0D4DDy34Kj1w5zyKGBF031-Tz8Yh5aAjLA3mRsCbi-ylz39KgNGYUp7U>.

Additionally and throughout Africa, African Presidents are often rated mainly based on two major indicators or standards, namely: the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) and the Transparency International Corruption Index (TICI). President Weah has not made the list of the Top 10 Current African Heads of States for the past 3 years of his administration. Liberia has even declined on the TICI under his administration. Here are official finalists of the latest rating of African Presidents:

Paul Kagame of Rwanda #1, Danny Faure of Seychelles #2, Mokgweetsi Masisi of Botswana #3, Hage Geingob of Namibia #4, MackySall of Senegal #5, Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa #6, Beji Caid Essebsi of Tunisia #7, Saadeddine Othmani of Morocco #8, Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana #9, Roch Marc Christian Kabore of Burkina Faso #10.

Here is my proof: <https://www.africanvibes.com/top-10-current-african-heads-of-state-2/>.

LIE #3: At a local intellectual center in Iron Factory Community, Min. Samuel D. Tweah said that the government experienced “budget surplus” for 2019/2020 Fiscal Year. This is the wittiest tale that I have ever heard since this year began. Here are my facts to counter this barefaced lie:

A) The US\$525.91m Approved 2019/2020 National Budget could not meet its target in terms of inflow and outflow. Projected Revenue (US\$525.91) could not match up to Projected Expenditure (US\$525.91m). Therefore, a 2019/2020 Recast Budget was proposed and ratified on May 22, 2020. According to 'Senate Resolution \$001/2020', the National Budget for FY2019/2020 through a recast process was adjusted from US\$525.91m to US\$518m with a ceiling of US\$520m for FY2020/2021. This accounted for a US\$6m fall in the approved National Budget.

B) It was impossible to even meet this US\$518m target as at the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2020). So, how did GOL experience “budget surplus”? Except there is a different meaning for “Budget Surplus”. But the simplest meaning is when revenues/receipts/inflows collected are more than expenditures/outflows or when revenue exceeds expenditure. Min. Tweah is yet to answer the question, “when and where did LRA or GOL generate more than US\$525.91m for Fiscal

Year 2019/2020?” To date, Min. Tweah is refusing to even release the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Financial Report even though a new budget year (FY2020/2021) legally started on July 1 2020. Tweah's “invisible surplus” is a BIG LIE and an overloaded SCAM only intended to gain political capital.

C) All through the Fiscal Year, the budget has been underperforming (consistent shortfalls). In the First Quarter FY2019/2020, US\$79.7m was the actual revenue realized out of the quarterly projection of US\$117.3m. This accounted for a fall in revenue of US\$37.6m or 32% (Ref. Appendix 2, Section 10, Page 38 of the GOL Quarterly Financial Report). In the Second Quarter FY2019/2020, US\$99.28m was the actual revenue realized out of the quarterly projection of US\$111.85m. This is a US\$12.57m drop or a 11% fall in revenue (Ref. Page 38). In the 3rd Quarter, US\$139.42m was actually raised out of a projection of US\$150.12m. The budget still underperformed by US\$10.70m or 7% decrease in revenue (Ref. Page 39). In the 4th Quarter which is the last quarter of the fiscal year, shortfall in revenue was projected at 50% (more than US\$32 million could not be raised according to Pres. George Weah's letter to the National Legislature on Stimulus Package).

All through FY2019/2020, there has been consistent fall in revenue. So where is Min. Tweah coming from with his “budget surplus”. Tweah needs to spare the Liberian people this gimmick. But again, he has deceived a lot of CDCians as always. That's why this clarification is very important.

D) The government has been borrowing loans and begging for grant/aid/bond facilities from both domestic and external creditors (e.g. IMF, World Bank, AfDB, AEIB, Commercial Banks in Lib, etc.). How can you have “budget surplus” but you keep begging for loans/grants just to fund a small “Stimulus Package”? For instance, the government borrowed US\$50m (1.7 percent of GDP) from the IMF on June 5, 2020 through IMF Rapid Credit Facility Program (RCF). Tweah is bragging about “Surplus” but failed to even buy rice to begin the implementation of their failed “Stimulus Package”.

E) The Government has been unable to even service its huge debt stock (both domestic and external). Currently, the total debt stock of Liberia under Pres. George M. Weah is around US\$1.47 billion (External debt is US\$861.8m while domestic debt is US\$604.4m). For instance, the Debt stock increased from US\$978.33 million as of July 2019 to US\$1,218.23 billion as at September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019, which showed a net increase of 24.5% or US\$239.89 million. Out of this US\$1.2 billion, GOL was only able to service this debt or pay back a total of US\$10.09m as at September 30, 2019. How can you boast of “surplus” but can only pay more than 0.82% of your total liabilities as of Sept. 2019? The 2019/2020 Budget failed to repay a total debt or liability of US\$61.02 million as was projected on the expenditure side of the budget. Where is the “budget surplus” that Min. Tweah has been talking about? Is it a “utopian surplus”?

TO BE CONT'D

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# VP Howard-Taylor identifies with 14-year old rape survivor

Following a recent appeal for urgent assistance, Liberia's Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor has reached out to a 14-year-old girl in Camp # 3, Grand Cape Mount County

Camp # 3 Grand Cape Mount County, Tewor District. She gave birth to a male child on the 14th of July, 2020 at the Diah Clinic in Tewor District, Grand Cape Mount.

Holding the child in her

county to stand up, fight and take action".

The Vice President, who presented several baby essentials and cash to the 14-year-old rape survivor and family in Madina, town Grand Cape Mount County, encouraged the teenager not to give up but remain focused despite the unfortunate incident in her life.

VP Howard-Taylor according to a release from the office of the Vice President, motivated the girl to value her education in order to make the rightful choices in contributing to society, noting that "you should focus on things you want to do in the future."

She then cautioned inhabitants particularly the elders in rural areas in all counties to desist from the habit of concealing those who are found in the habit of abusing their children, urging males to also commit to protecting their female counterparts.

"We cannot achieve equality without eliminating these acts of violence against women and girls. Their human

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



who was raped and became pregnant as a result.

The 14-year old survivor was last year raped by a classroom teacher of the Pejuhum public school identified as Sense Kaiwu in

hands, VP Howard-Taylor said: "Ending rape and other harmful practices against women and girls, prosecuting these crimes, and providing the required level of support for the survivors requires each of us in this

# Muslims seek legislation for 2 holidays

Muslims in Liberia seek Legislation for two major Islamic festivals to become national holidays.

They want end of the holy month Eid al-Fitr celebrated as a national holiday to be known as Ramadan Day and Eid al-Adha as Abraham Day, nationally.

In a press release Wednesday, the Muslims community here noted they've been making the request since 1995 but it has not been adhere to, so they feel now is the time.

Muslims are calling on all well-meaning Liberians from all faiths, institutions and backgrounds to stand with them as they prepare to converge at the Capitol on Tuesday, August 4, 2020, to petition the 54th Legislature to enact both major festivals as National holidays.

According to them, it is sadden that Liberia, as a secular state with an approximate 12.2 percent Muslims population, would consider Islamic holidays as an abomination; which should not be at all.

"Most interestingly, but highly frustrating, our government (past and current) have perpetually ignored the rights of the Liberian Muslim over the years. The over one million Muslim students and workforce in Liberia have been forced to attend classes or go to work on both Ramadan Day, and Abraham Day, or the students are punished either by failing in their exams, quizzes, presentations or other academic

works; while those from the workforce faced suspension, or a cut insalary for observing their Eid with family members" the release noted.

They said while there are several nationally recognized

and celebrated holidays in Liberia, it is interesting to note that there is not a single holiday dedicated to Muslims though the Constitution declares the nation as a secular state.

The release further points that with a comparative analysis to other West African nations, Muslims in Liberia see it as a clear violation of their fundamental right to enjoy Islamic holidays whereas consistent with the separation of religion, the Republic is non-religion thereby making it secular, but Christmas as well as other religious holidays are purposely observed here.

The Constitution of Liberia Chapter III under Article 14 provides for these separation of religion and state and stipulates that all persons are entitled to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, except as required by law to protect public safety, order, health, morals, or the rights of others. It also provides for equal protection/treatment under the law.

Similarly, Article 17 of the same chapter guarantees that "all persons, at all times, in an orderly and peaceable manner, shall have the right to assemble and consult on their common good, to instruct their representatives, to petition the Government or other functionaries for the redress of grievances and to associate fully with others or refuse to associate in political parties, trade unions and other organizations."

While official holidays are legislated, the process leading to such enactments require strong lobby and majority votes. -Press Release

# Afriland Bank's bond faces challenge

By Winston W. Parley

Prosecutors here are challenging a criminal appearance bond filed by commercial bank Afriland First Bank as a surety in the ongoing trial of several persons and banking institutions for their roles in an economic sabotage case being pursued by two Czech Republican brothers Pavel and Martin Miloschewsky.

The defendants including Senate Secretary Nanborlor F. Singbeh are accused of allegedly dubbing the two Czech Republican brothers Pavel and Martin Miloschewsky of US\$5,062,419.10 under the pretense of establishing a rock crushing company MHM Eko - Liberia in which the victims retained the largest share of 70 percent.

On 19 July the prosecution filed its exception to the criminal appearance bond filed by Afriland First Bank, saying it is grossly inadequate and it did not "double the gain" as required by law [to file a bond that is twice the



amount that appears on the indictment].

Additionally, the prosecution argued that the surety Saar Insurance Company is not qualified to serve as surety because it has no current business certificate qualifying it to do business in the year 2020.

According to the prosecution, the official

receipt annexed to the bond is for a period ending on June 14, 2020, therefore its annexation to the criminal appearance bond filed on behalf of Afriland First Bank on 17 June is not legitimate because it had already expired.

But the defense lawyers insist that Saar Insurance Company could not obtain its

current business registration certificates and other licenses on time since the declaration of the State of Emergency here due to Covid - 19 made many public and private institutions to cease or scale down.

"The Annual Operating Levy issued the surety just expired as recent as June 14, 2020. Had it not been for the current situation as herein stated, it would [have] renewed on time. The CBL [Central Bank of Liberia] has not withdrawn, suspended or cancelled the authority of the surety to operate," the defense argues.

Responding to the prosecution's demand for the defendant to double the gain, the defense team insist that the indictment stated that US\$102,000.00 of US\$5,062,149.10 went into an account opened at Afriland First Bank in the name of MHM Eko Liberia, Inc.

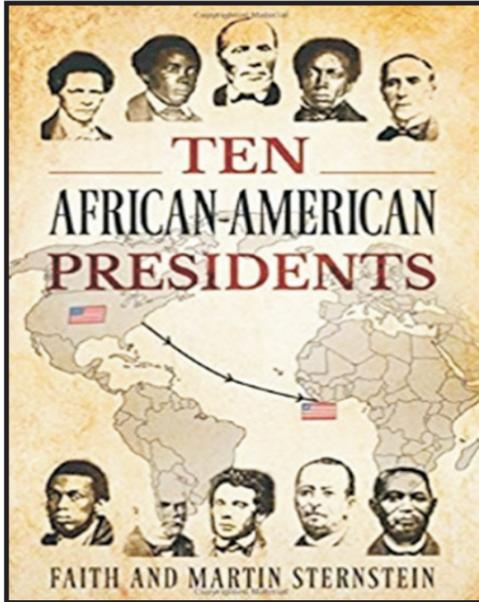
"It is US\$102,000.00 and not the US\$5,062,149.10 that Movant would be ordered to retribute. Hence, the Prosecution is in error to say that the bond calculation

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS** MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Raising the Liberian Flag at Boston City Hall 12:00 Noon July 25, 2020

**B**oston, Massachusetts-After 200 years of officially sanctioned racism, torture, theft, slavery, access to opportunities in the United States, a country built by the sweat, tears, and blood of our ancestors. We demand sight of the American Public. We demand reacquisition of US citizenship stolen by the white supremacists



removal, colonization, banishment, and injustice, Liberians in Boston, Massachusetts, the birthplace of the American Revolution are demanding damages for colonization, massacre in Africa, rape, torture carried out by agents of the United States of America, and the American Colonization Society conveniently out of founding fathers of Liberia and the United States. "99 days for the rogue but one day for the master."

# VP Howard-Taylor

Cont'd from page 6

rights must be protected," Howard-Taylor stressed.

Some of the essentials presented include baby Wrap, Carrier, Lotion, Sleepers and energy food among others.

She also promised to dispatch a team from her office to do further assessment on the plight of the survivor with the objective of continuing support.

Receiving the items, the elder sister to the 14-yearold rape survivor Fatumata Kailon who decried their appalling living condition, thanked the Vice President for the support, noting that her family is highly grateful and appreciative.

At the same time, the Liberian Vice President has launched the distribution of a consignment of face shields, books and copybooks to several public school students in several counties.

The initiative which is in collaboration with the Jewel Starfish Foundation was launched Tuesday, July 22, 2020, in Grand Cape Mount County.

The Initiative is meant to identify with the senior students of those schools during this coronavirus pandemic, as they prepare to sit this year's WestAfrican Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

While in Grand Cape Mount, the citizens thanked the Vice President for the initiative but asked her to convey with urgency, their plights to president George M. Weah.

The citizens among other things want the construction of the road leading from Madina Town to Robert Sport, the improvement of the health and educational sectors and the construction of a vocational training center in the county.

Responding to the citizens' concerns, the Vice President pointed out that the government will shortly launch the construction works of the road in questioned in fulfillment of President Weah's commitment to addressing bad road situations across the country.

# iCampus Online Debate on COVID-19 Response Reaches nearly 130,000 social media users

**O**n July 17, 2020, iCampus hosted an online debate on the theme: "Government Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak in Liberia." The debate featuring two teams from the Center for Exchange and Intellectual Opinions (CEIO) reached nearly 130,000 social media users.

The debate, which was broadcast live on KMTV, was one of four events sponsored by USAID Liberia Accountability Voice Initiative (LAVI) to raise awareness and education about the Corona Virus pandemic.

Since June, iCampus has also organized two comedy shows and an online learning webinar on COVID-19 as part of LAVI's Learning and Methodologies Shared through Strategic Collaboration with Civil Society Actors for Adaptation and Self-Reliance.

The debate teams examined the critical issues and the key interventions instituted by the Liberian government since the first Corona Virus case was reported in March. So far, Liberia has recorded 1,107 cases (490 active), 70 deaths and 547 recoveries.



Filmmaker and media guru Zubin Cooper moderated the debate in which the two sides discussed the pros and cons of the government's intervention.

Randolph Kemokai, who represented the team that supported the government's intervention, said the government took progressive steps to address the pandemic such as instituting a lockdown that included the closing of schools, churches and ban on public gatherings. The government, he said, also opened the 14 Military Hospital

and provided hotels to treat and monitor COVID-19 patients.

"The government has been robust in its response," he said.

RassakKanneh and his team criticized the government for politicizing the COVID-19 pandemic. He cited the decision by Monrovia's Mayor Jefferson Kojee to train 6,000 inexperienced people with no medical background to do contact tracing.

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9**

# Afriland Bank's bond

Cont'd from page 6

should be on the US\$5,062,149.10," the defense says.

Afriland First Bank, Nanborlor Singbeh, Ecobank Liberia, former National Investment Commission (NIC) Executive Director George Wisner, NIC Incentive Officer Othello Z.B. Karr, Karel Socher of MHM Eko Liberia, Ales Sranmek, Sherman Logan and Jan Holask and several others are listed in the indictment issued on 8 June by Criminal Court "C."

The indictment accuses the defendants of allegedly conspiring to commit economic sabotage in violation of the Penal Law. They face charges of economic sabotage, theft of property, forgery and criminal conspiracy.

Other defendants in the case include Barry F. Tequah, Ousman Fofana, Gloria Cain, Sylvester Selvkpoh, Patrick Saah Siaphia, Mulbah Kenneh and Patrick Siaphe.

Prosecution claims that defendant Singbeh used his official position to conspire and connive with Gloria Caine, 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 Karel Sochor, Ales Sramek, Peter Pesek, Jan Hilansk 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.

# Français

## Le représentant Kolubahaux prises avec la police

Le représentant du district n°10 de Montserrado, Yekeh Kolubah, s'est pris à la police mardi matin 21 juillet, s'opposant cette fois à la saisie et la mise en fourrière de son véhicule officiel pour avoir prétendument enfreint le code de la route.

Le véhicule officiel du législateur roulait dans le sens opposé à une heure de pointe mardi matin à Sinkor sur le boulevard Tubman afin d'éviter l'embouteillage. La violation du code de la route est très fréquente parmi les cadres des trois pouvoirs de l'Etat libérien.

Ils conduisent à des vitesses

excessives vers les véhicules qui arrivent sur la voie opposée pendant les heures de pointe sans tenir compte du danger que ces violations représentent pour les véhicules sur la voie opposée.

Ces véhicules officiels sont le plus souvent utilisés par des proches qui profitent également indûment de ce comportement indiscipliné. Le véhicule de Kolubah n'est donc pas une exception mardi.

Ainsi, le drame qui impliquait le représentant Yekeh Kolubah a commencé lorsque la police a tenté de saisir son véhicule pour avoir conduit sur la voie opposée. Lorsque la police a arrêté le véhicule et a remarqué que le législateur n'était pas au volant, l'inspecteur général adjoint de la police chargé des opérations, le colonel Melvin Sackor, a décidé de saisir le véhicule.

Yekeh, vêtu d'un T-shirt marron et d'un jean court bleu, est arrivé sur les lieux et s'est opposé à l'action de la police qui tentait de saisir son véhicule. Il s'est mis à lancer des invectives au président



▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

## Stephane Kipré écrit au président de la république Alassane Ouattara : "Et si tous ensemble, on offrait une véritable chance à la paix ?"

M. le Président de la République,

C'est le citoyen ivoirien que je suis et le leader politique qui se conjuguent en moi ce jour pour vous adresser cette lettre ouverte parce que j'estime que la situation socio-politique de notre pays mérite que nous lui accordions une attention particulière en ces moments de grande inquiétude pour une partie considérable de nos concitoyens.

Ces inquiétudes sont de plusieurs ordres.

Sur le plan sécuritaire, les populations sont régulièrement alertées par des attaques à nos frontières de groupes terroristes. La recrudescence du grand banditisme et la circulation des armes légères continuent d'être une source de frayeur pour nos populations. Les grandes manifestations populaires dans la sous-région en ce qu'elles sont quelques fois la porte ouverte au désordre ne sont pas de nature à nous rassurer.

Sur le plan socio-économique, la crise du coronavirus a contraint plusieurs entreprises à

fermer accentuant ainsi le chômage. Les jeunes entrepreneurs ivoiriens durement éprouvés sont en manque de repères tant les solutions semblent introuvables pour faire face à leur désarroi. Notre système de santé a été durement éprouvé et continue de l'être car la pandémie se généralise. Notre système éducatif déjà en souffrance n'a pas été épargné.

C'est cependant la situation

politique qui donne le plus de sueurs froides au peuple. En sortant, en 2010, de la décennie de crise vécue par notre pays, les populations espéraient que nous trouvions les ressorts nécessaires pour asseoir une véritable stabilité et poser tous ensemble les jalons d'un Etat démocratique et solide économiquement.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### La Relance de l'économie libérienne passe par des mesures d'austérité

Un groupe d'économistes expérimentés dirigé par l'ancien ministre de la planification et des affaires économiques, le professeur d'économie, Dr Togba Nah Tipoteh, a récemment fait une série de recommandations au gouvernement du président George Manneh Weah, en vue de renforcer le dollar libérien et relancer l'économie du pays dans son ensemble.

Le Groupe Économique du Libéria (LEG) a pointé du doigt la corruption endémique dans le secteur public qui avait été décrite par l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf comme un vampire qui aspire les ressources nationales et pousse les populations dans une pauvreté abjecte, l'analphabétisme et la maladie. Le LEG a dit craindre que la pauvreté généralisée ne soit devenue un problème de société avec plus de deux tiers des enfants Libériens en âge d'aller à l'école n'ont pas accès à l'école.

Il pointe également du doigt la prise des décisions sur la base des valeurs culturelles américaines et non libériennes, ce qui a amené la population à préférer les produits occidentaux aux produits "Made in Liberia". L'exportation des produits bruts (caoutchouc, bois, minerais, entre autres) à l'étranger, complique davantage les choses. « Il serait préférable que nous transformions nos matières premières ici afin que nous y ajoutions de la valeur et les vendions plus cher à l'étranger », a dit M. Tipoteh.

Mais peut-être que le problème fondamental auquel les Libériens sont confrontés depuis l'indépendance est la dollarisation de l'économie. Les impôts sont prélevés et payés en dollars américains et les fonctionnaires reçoivent leurs salaires en monnaie américaine plutôt qu'en dollar libérien. Cette pratique n'a pas seulement affaibli la monnaie locale, mais elle a fait monter les prix en flèche, rendant la vie très insupportable pour le citoyen ordinaire.

Après avoir identifié les problèmes, le LEG a recommandé plusieurs mesures d'austérité qui, à notre avis, stabiliseraient l'économie et renforceraient le dollar libérien si cette administration les prenait en considération.

Il s'agit, entre autres, d'encourager à la fois le gouvernement et les citoyens ordinaires à acheter plus de produits fabriqués localement plutôt que d'importer tout ce que nous mangeons et utilisons ; s'engager dans plus d'épargne tant publique que privée - au niveau de la famille, de la communauté et de la société civile, ce qui pourrait générer environ 100 000 000 USD (cent millions de dollars américains) par an. L'argent pourrait être réinvesti. En outre, il a suggéré que les salaires des hauts fonctionnaires, y compris les chefs des trois pouvoirs de l'Etat, soient payés en dollars libériens.

Le LEG a recommandé également que le budget national soit rédigé en dollars libériens, comme l'exige la Constitution du Libéria, et que les allocations, les cartes de bon des véhicules pour les fonctionnaires, à l'exception des chefs des trois pouvoirs de l'Etat, soient supprimées, et que les dons des entreprises publiques et des agences autonomes du gouvernement soient également dirigés vers le trésor public.

Enfin, il estime que si ces mesures d'austérité sont fidèlement respectées, cela pourra permettre au gouvernement d'économiser environ 345 millions de dollars USD, qui pourraient être utilisés dans divers secteurs de l'économie pour relancer le développement et la croissance.

Nous saluons ces idées et encourageons sérieusement l'administration Weah à mettre de côté son orgueil, la politique et l'intérêt personnel afin de commencer immédiatement à mettre en œuvre certaines de ces mesures d'austérité qui non seulement relanceront l'économie, mais sortiront la grande majorité de la population de la pauvreté.

En effet, il est temps de changer radicalement et d'avaler quelques pilules amères, si la Coalition au pouvoir pour le changement démocratique et le président Weah lui-même veulent laisser derrière eux un héritage louable dont la postérité bénéficiera.

# Français

## Le représentant Kolubahaux

George Weah, comme d'habitude. Il s'est mis aussi à insulter l'inspecteur adjoint de police. Yekeh a fait croire qu'il était dans la voiture et allait au travail (vêtu d'un jean court et d'un tee-shirt) et donc personne n'a le droit de l'arrêter.

Le chef adjoint de la police, désirent de procéder parla force, a décidé d'arrêter le représentant Kolubah, qui s'est opposé avec véhémence.

«Ma voiture ne va jamais aller à Central», a-t-il répété en sautant ici et là comme un petit garçon.

L'article 42 de la Constitution libérienne stipule en partie que les membres du parlement peuvent faire l'objet d'une arrestation lorsqu'ils se rendent au travail ou en reviennent, sauf en cas de trahison, crime ou troubles à l'ordre public.

Mais le cas de Kolubah hier soulève des questions quant à savoir s'il était couvert par cet article hier puisqu'il n'était pas dans le véhicule au moment de son arrestation comme le prétend la police.

La police a affirmé que Yekeh n'était pas dans le véhicule, encore moins au volant au moment où le véhicule a été interpellé. La situation était telle que toute la circulation a été bloquée. Cela a créé un embouteillage si énorme que beaucoup ont décidé d'aller à pied.

Il a fallu l'intervention de quelques membres du parlement, dont le

représentant du comté de Bong, J. Marvin Cole, et le représentant du comté de Grand Kru, J. Fonati Koffa, pour calmer la situation.

Les deux législateurs avaient réussi à convaincre le directeur adjoint de la police de se rendre à l'Assemblée législative, mais en s'approchant du Capitole, le colonel Sackor a insisté que le véhicule soit conduit au siège de la police.

Les deux parlementaires qui étaient venus sur les lieux pour calmer la situation ont mal pris le changement soudain d'avis du colonel Sackor. Ils se sont eux aussi mis en colère. Il s'en est suivi des injures.

L'officier a ordonné que Yekeh Kolubah soit arrêté et embarqué dans le véhicule mais aucun des seshommes n'a osé obéir à son ordre.

Pour finir, l'officier de police a été maîtrisé et il a accepté de se rendre au palais de l'Assemblée nationale où l'affaire a été traitée à l'amiable avec l'intervention du président de la Chambre des représentants, Bhofo Chambers.

M. Kolubah et la police continuent d'avoir des rencontres difficiles, et cela remonte à l'époque où il a pris part en tant qu'acteur majeur et membre organisateur à deux des plus grandes manifestations organisées contre le gouvernement de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC).

Le représentant Kolubah est considéré comme l'un des critiques les acerbes du régime de l'ancien footballeur

## Stephane Kipré écrit au président de la république Alassane Ouattara :

Malheureusement, les appels au dialogue n'ont pas été entendus et même quand nous nous engageons à discuter, le pouvoir entendait par des procédés peu recommandables faire plier l'opposition sans entendre ses critiques et observations. Ce déficit de dialogue a eu pour conséquence de contraindre certains de nos concitoyens à saisir des juridictions internationales pour faire entendre leur voix comme ce fut le cas de la controverse sur la Commission Électorale Indépendante (CEI) qui cristallise encore de nombreuses récriminations.

M. le Président de la République,

Les problèmes énumérés ne sont pas exhaustifs, mais

ayant choisi de m'adresser à vous à travers une lettre ouverte, je suis dans l'obligation de faire l'économie de certains d'entre eux. De surcroît, mon objectif d'accroître le sentiment de peur qui s'empare de nos concitoyens mais de montrer qu'il existe une alternative qui augure de meilleurs lendemains pour notre nation.

Il y a quelques semaines, la Côte d'Ivoire a perdu son premier ministre en exercice, feu Amadou Gon Coulibaly. À cette occasion nous avons pu voir toutes les familles politiques se déplacer à son domicile pour honorer sa mémoire et toutes les régions de notre pays faire le voyage jusqu'à Korhogo pour lui rendre hommage. C'est bien la preuve que nous pouvons nous

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Abiy Ahmed & Gordon Brown

## Sauver la génération COVID

**A**DDIS-ABEBA/LONDRES - L'idée rebattue selon laquelle la COVID-19 est un « grand égalisateur » est un mythe. Il n'y a pas d'égalité dans la souffrance ni d'égalité face au sacrifice lors d'une pandémie qui frappe de manière disproportionnée les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables.

Pendant que l'urgence sanitaire frappe les personnes âgées les plus démunies, la crise d'éducation sans précédent causée par la pandémie touche à présent de plein fouet les enfants les plus pauvres et est en train de créer une génération perdante sur le plan de l'éducation. Les confinements ainsi que d'autres règles de distanciation sociale obligent les écoles du monde entier à fermer leurs portes, ce qui concerne un pic de près de 1,6 milliard d'enfants. Mais alors que les enfants les plus riches ont eu accès à d'autres options éducatives, comme l'apprentissage en ligne, cela n'a pas été le cas pour les plus pauvres d'entre eux. Les enfants les plus défavorisés au monde - pour qui l'éducation représente la seule possibilité de sortie de la pauvreté - sont donc d'autant plus laissés pour compte. De ce fait, l'objectif de développement durable 4 (ODD 4) qui consiste à assurer une éducation de qualité inclusive et équitable pour tous d'ici 2030, est encore plus difficile à atteindre.

Même avant la pandémie, le monde n'a pas tenu ses promesses face à cet objectif. Sur le plan mondial, près de 260 millions d'enfants étaient déscolarisés et 400 millions d'entre eux ont abandonné leurs études après l'âge de 11 ans. Dans certaines régions, comme en Afrique subsaharienne rurale, peu de filles terminent leurs études secondaires, notamment en raison du mariage généralisé des enfants. Près de 50 pays n'ont pas de loi interdisant le mariage des enfants et beaucoup d'autres ne parviennent pas à faire respecter leurs interdictions. En conséquence, environ 12 millions de filles en âge d'être scolarisées sont mariées de force chaque année.

À la réouverture éventuelle des écoles, il y a de bonnes chances que de nombreux enfants pauvres n'y retourneront jamais. La pauvreté est la principale raison pour laquelle les enfants ne sont pas scolarisés. Les répercussions économiques de la crise de la COVID-19 vont bien au-delà des confinements, en particulier pour les plus pauvres.

Le résultat probable est que davantage d'enfants vont grossir les rangs des 152 millions d'enfants en âge d'être scolarisés forcés de travailler, puisque 14 pays n'ont toujours pas ratifié la convention de l'Organisation internationale du travail sur l'âge minimum. Et un grand nombre d'autres filles seront contraintes de se marier tôt. Lorsque l'épidémie d'Ebola en Afrique de l'Ouest, qui a débuté en 2014, a fermé des écoles en Sierra Leone, le nombre de jeunes filles de 15 à 19 ans enceintes ou déjà mères a presque doublé, passant de 30 % à 65 %. La plupart de ces filles ne sont jamais retournées à l'école.

Si les bonnes mesures sont mises en place, les économies vont commencer à se remettre en marche, les emplois seront lentement restaurés et les mesures de protection sociale permettront de trouver une solution à la pauvreté des chômeurs. Mais il y a peu de protection contre les effets d'une éducation que l'on abandonne. Et ces effets peuvent se faire sentir une vie durant.

En l'état actuel des choses, plus de la moitié des enfants du monde - près de 900 millions de garçons et de filles - sont incapables de lire un texte simple à l'âge de 10 ans. Cela représente 900 millions d'enfants qui ne reçoivent pas les connaissances et les compétences nécessaires pour améliorer leur sort économique en tant qu'adultes. Si nous ne faisons rien pour aider la « génération COVID » à rattraper le temps perdu, ce chiffre pourrait facilement approcher un milliard ou plus. Lorsque les écoles du Cachemire ont fermé pendant 14 semaines à la suite du tremblement de terre dévastateur de 2005, les enfants les plus touchés ont perdu l'équivalent d'un an et demi d'apprentissage.

Comme nous l'indique le Rapport mondial de suivi sur l'éducation publié dernièrement par l'UNESCO, les enfants qui ont accumulé du retard ont besoin du genre de programmes de rattrapage qui en Amérique latine ont amélioré le niveau de scolarité jusqu'à 18 mois depuis les années 1990. Mais l'aide nécessaire va coûter de l'argent. À moins de combler le déficit de financement de l'éducation, l'ODD 4 restera hors d'atteinte.

L'UNESCO estime qu'avant la crise de la COVID-19, 50 pays n'avaient pas dépensé le minimum recommandé de 4 % du revenu national, soit 15 % du budget public, pour l'éducation. Un financement insuffisant de la part des gouvernements et des donateurs a fait qu'un grand nombre des 30 millions d'enfants réfugiés et déplacés de force dépassent l'âge de la scolarisation sans jamais mettre les pieds dans une salle de classe, malgré les efforts déployés par des organisations comme Education Cannot Wait et par d'autres groupes.

Aujourd'hui, la pandémie est sur le point de réduire encore davantage les budgets de l'éducation. Comme une croissance plus lente ou négative sape les recettes fiscales, moins d'argent sera disponible pour les services publics. Lorsqu'il s'agit d'allouer des fonds limités, les dépenses urgentes de santé ainsi que celles attribuées aux filets de sécurité sociale seront prioritaires, laissant l'éducation aux prises avec ses problèmes de sous-financement.

De même, l'intensification des pressions budgétaires dans les pays développés se traduira par des réductions d'aide internationale au développement, notamment en faveur de l'éducation, qui perd déjà la préséance face à d'autres priorités dans l'allocation de l'aide bilatérale et multilatérale. La Banque mondiale estime à présent qu'au cours de l'année prochaine, les dépenses globales en éducation dans les pays à revenu faible et intermédiaire pourraient être inférieures de 100 à 150 milliards de dollars par rapport aux prévisions précédentes.

Cette crise de financement ne va pas se résoudre d'elle-même. La manière la plus rapide de mobiliser des ressources pour l'éducation passe par un allègement de la dette. Les 76 pays les plus pauvres doivent payer 106 milliards de dollars en frais de service de la dette au cours des deux prochaines années. Les créanciers doivent annuler ces paiements, en exigeant que l'argent soit réaffecté à l'éducation, ainsi qu'à la santé.

Dans le même temps, les institutions financières multilatérales et les banques régionales de développement doivent augmenter leurs ressources. Le Fonds monétaire international devrait émettre 1,2 billions de dollars en droits de tirage spéciaux (son actif de réserve mondiale) et affecter ces ressources aux pays qui en ont le plus besoin.

La Banque mondiale, pour sa part, devrait débloquer davantage d'aide en reconstituant l'Association internationale de développement (ou en s'inspirant de la force de celle-ci) pour les pays à faible revenu, et en utilisant des garanties et des subventions de donateurs volontaires, comme les Pays-Bas et le Royaume-Uni, qui sont prêts à débloquer des milliards de dollars supplémentaires pour l'éducation dans les pays à revenu intermédiaire inférieur par le biais de la Commission internationale pour le financement de possibilités d'éducation dans le monde.

La génération COVID a déjà traversé des souffrances immenses. Il est temps pour la communauté internationale d'offrir aux enfants les opportunités qu'ils méritent. Même confrontés à des défis considérables, nous devons déterminer à faire de notre génération la première de l'histoire au cours de laquelle chaque enfant a accès à l'école et à l'apprentissage. Les gouvernements nationaux et la communauté internationale doivent dès à présent intensifier leurs efforts collectifs pour réaliser cet objectif.

## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# GHEI Supports Children's Healthcare and Basic Education in Ghana

By KesterKennKlomegah

The library also hosts a reading club where children gather at the Humjibre Community Library to read selected titles from the Junior African Writers Series or African Writer Series, answer comprehension questions, and discuss issues based on materials.

## Education

Since 2003, our education programs have helped children achieve their literacy goals, enabled them to think critically and fostered leadership skills. Educational attainment among youth is critical to alleviating poverty. Till now we have helped improve learning outcomes and enhanced career opportunities for 256 children who have graduated from GHEI's education programs.

Our Youth Education Program (YEP) offers 20 hours of supplemental classes every week to junior high school students in Humjibre, helping them to prepare for the critical Basic Education Certification Examination (BECE). Since 2013, more than 50% students from the program have achieved high passing score in BECE, meaning their performance was excellent. YEP is a journey of empowerment and all graduates have gone on to successfully attend senior high school, university and technical training.

GHEI's Early Childhood Literacy Program focusses on nonperforming primary school children by providing them extra attention outside their normal school hours. The classes are extremely critical because as I had mentioned before nonperforming primary school children are often not seen as worthy investments in rural communities. The program creates a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing of children who may have had to drop out of school due to below average performances. Till now, we have also provided 112



academic scholarships to senior high school students and 1 vocational scholarship.

## Health

Since its inception, GHEI has established a range of health programs to benefit Humjibre and the surrounding communities. Our health programs focus on preventing malaria, enhancing sanitation and hygiene standards, improving the health outcomes of first-time mothers and their babies, and promoting early childhood stimulation through a peer-to-peer support system between first-time mothers and mentors in the community.

Through our flagship Mother Mentor for Child Development Program, we have provided good health to more than 40 first time pregnant mothers and their babies. The mentors work with the participating mothers and their families from pregnancy all the way through the first two years of the child's life in order to maximize its

health and development. Providing mothers and families with individualized support, education, and vital resources ensures that their child thrives. We have constructed over 30 toilets in rural households, benefitting more than 500 people. We've also setup hand washing stations in households by providing veronica buckets and soap.

Last year, we provided over 1000 food vouchers to first time pregnant mothers, ensuring that they can include bread and eggs in their daily diet. We regularly organise stimulation activities for young infants and provide guidance and encouragement to parents on how they can spend time with their children. In this way, we improve development of young infants especially under key indicators such as Gross Motor Skills, Social Emotion and Expressive Language.

Our Health Facility Delivery Incentive Program hosts monthly distribution days for pregnant mothers in Ampenkrom village, Ghana. We started this program in 2015 and since then we have supported deliveries for more than 500 women by providing them pre delivery packages that include antiseptic, soap and bleach. These items are necessary and commonly needed to deliver at the community health clinics.

Unfortunately, without these items' women are turned away from health clinics and hence the need for our intervention. Our pre delivery packages have encouraged pregnant women to deliver at health facilities, reducing the risk from complications of delivering at home or other place with proper facilities. In 2019, 89% of participants had reported to us that they delivered at the facility after receiving the package from GHEI. However, our work doesn't stop here. We also provide post-delivery packages that include diapers and blankets for the baby.

Do you get external support? If you get external support, where do these come from WHO, USAID, UN, or just private enterprises?

We receive support and assistance from individual donors and partner organisations such as One Day's Wages, Project Peanut Butter and David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California Los Angeles. It is possible to discuss future initiatives for communities that benefit from GHEI's work. We are keen on partnering with likeminded organisations in Ghana/Africa and work together to defeat poverty. We value collaborative alliances with businesses, health and education agencies. Such partnerships have been key to our success and we are continually looking to collaborate to find innovative solutions to the challenges in our communities.



# Sen. Saytumah under probe for US\$0.5m

By Ethel A Tweh

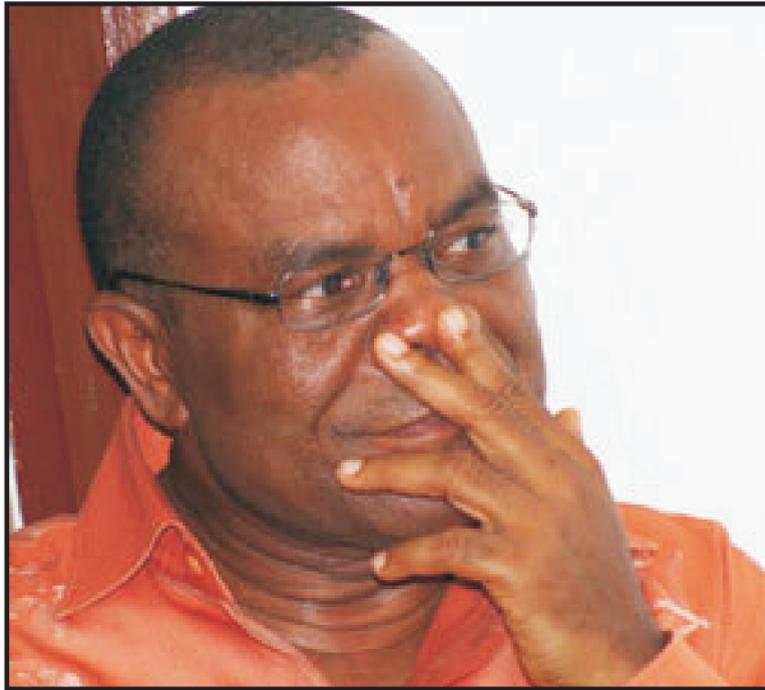
The plenary of the Liberian Senate overwhelmingly voted here Wednesday, July 22, to probe Bomi County Senator Morris Saytumah, for his role in the handling of US\$557,000 or a little over half million United States Dollars allocated for senate staffers.

Staffers have been protesting for nearly two weeks in demand of Liberian Dollar component of their monthly salaries that have not been paid since July, 2019.

Aggrieved staffers of the Liberian Senate on Monday this week locked the Senate Finance office at the Capitol, demanding that their payroll be turned over to the Human Resource department.

Spokesperson Charles S. Brown said, in a meeting last week Thursday, they asked the finance department to turn the payroll over to the HR department, but this has not happened, so they decided to close the office until the payroll is turned over to the HR.

Brown disclosed that in the meeting, they were informed by human resource officer Alvin Yan that he has been



asking for the payroll from the finance department, but the department is not responding, something that is creating dark cloud over their plight.

According to him, the Liberian Senate took the bullet for them because there was a national salary cut in the Liberian dollars component of their monthly salary, so the wage bill was increased by \$557,000 to cover up for the Liberian dollars' component but no staffer has benefited.

But Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor, who heads the

Liberian Senate, clarified that the budgetary allocation for the Liberian Legislature was never harmonized doing the salary harmonization exercise in government, contrary to assertion by the Senate leadership.

Ms. Taylor met with the protesting staffers who had earlier locked entrance to the finance department of the Senate and the House of Representatives under heavy downpour Monday, demanding one year salary arrears.

She expressed shock over claims that staffers' Liberian dollars salary component has been cancelled when in fact, authorities of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning did not at anytime bother with their [staffers'] salaries.

Members of the Liberian Senate debated Wednesday, 15 July during their regular session that if protests by staffers of the Capitol would be aborted, the Committee on Ways, Means and Finance should account for over US\$500,000 allotted for staffers' salaries.

Maryland County Senator James Gble-bo Brown said when the Senate committee realized that the government had cancelled the Liberian dollars salary component of staffers at the Capitol as a result of the salary harmonization policy, the leadership went in the Senate's internal budget and allotted over US\$500,000 to spread among staffers to ease their economic burden.

According to him, they agreed the allocation should be effected, but also expressed shock the amount has not been reflected in the take-home-pay of the staffers' something, he said, was addressed since July last year during the budget hearing and allocation.

However, Senate President Pro-Tempore Albert Chie noted that hiring auditors from outside to audit the staffers' payroll could waste a lot of time, so he has appointed a three-man committee headed by Grand Gedeh County Senator Alphonso Gaye to investigate the alleged missing US\$.5million dollars. Members of the committee include Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon and Bong County Senator Henrique Togba.

Pro-Tempore Chie instructed the Senate chairman on Ways, Means, Finance and Budget, Bomi County Senator Morris

Saytumah to turn over the payroll and all other relevant documents in his possession to committee head Senator Gaye, to commence the probe and report to the leadership of plenary within five days, stressing that further delays in handling the matter could raise more doubts.

The Grand Kru Senator disclosed plan to distribute rice among staffers for the July 26 Independence festivities.

Meanwhile, the head of budget at the Liberian Senate Gble-bo Brown warned that issues of staffers' salaries are yet to be settled, as staffers complained of not receiving any increment in their salary from the US\$557,000 allotted by Senators.

Senator Brown added that he had a meeting with the staffers to make them understand that the Liberian dollars component of their salaries were cut off completely.

At the same time, the head of Rules, Orders and Administration, Senator NyonbleeKangar Lawrence of Grand Bassa County said, she wasn't part of the process when the Ways, Means, Finance and Budget committee met with staffers but informed plenary that she had requested for the payroll from the Finance office on many occasions without a positive response.

She insisted that the payroll should be audited, as ghost names were noticed with some receiving gas coupons marred by wide discrepancies, and that even Directors are complaining about the situation.

For his part, Senator Abraham Darius Dillon of Montserrado emphasized the issue of staffers' salaries should be investigated quickly because senators are on the way for the '26' Independence break, adding that senators need to know what went wrong with the US\$557,000 deducted from their salaries for staffers.

-Editing by Jonathan Browne

## Back to the barracks

President George Manneh Weah has ordered the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to return to its barracks as he ends several months of a State of Emergency declared to help combat coronavirus.

The military has been helping the Joint Security Force here in enforcing measures imposed by authorities to control the spread of the virus.

However, cases of the virus are now far higher in the country than they were initially when Mr. Weah first

declared the State State of Emergency in early April which had the country placed under a lockdown.

As at Tuesday, 21 July the Liberia had reported 452 total active confirmed coronavirus cases out of 1,114 confirmed cases reported since the crisis hit the country.

Health authorities say a total of 70 victims have been killed by the virus while 592 others have recovered from treatment.

President Weah on Tuesday ordered the men and women of the Armed Forces of Liberia to

return to barracks effective 12 midnight on 21 July.

According to him, the legal basis for the continuous presence of the army in some parts of the country to assist with the fight against the Coronavirus elapsed with the end of the State of Emergency.

He however pointed out that the army has special logistical and human resource capabilities that could be called upon when needed.

Meanwhile, Mr. Weah has mandated the Minister of Health, Dr. Wilhelmina Jallah and other relevant authorities to scrupulously utilize the public health laws going forward as the guiding tool for curtailing the spread of COVID-19 in the country.

He urges the health authorities to strictly implement these laws in order to reinforce the practice of the wearing of face-masks, social distancing and washing of hands along with other health protocols.

Mr. Weah admonished the public not to construe the cessation of the State of Emergency as license to engage in behaviors that may lead to further spread of the virus, as delinquent acts can be punished under the public health laws.



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## C. Ronaldo sets two impressive scoring records



Cristiano Ronaldo is at it again. Another night, two more goal-scoring records for the Portuguese superstar. But his latest two - having achieved both in the win over Lazio on Monday - are certainly no mean feat. The 35-year-old bagged a

brace in the clash with Juve's title rivals, who have fallen off the pace since the restart. Indeed at one stage in the match Ronaldo even jumped ahead of Lazio's *Ciro Immobile* in the Serie A top scoring charts, only until the Italian's late penalty drew them level for the season. Yet Ronaldo had already

made history by then, having become the first player to rack up 50 or more goals in not just Serie A, but in La Liga and the Premier League, too. What's more, Ronaldo is the fastest player to hit half a century in the whole of Serie A history - taking just 61 matches to reach the impressive tally. He beat AC Milan legend *Andriy Shevchenko* to the total by a clear seven games, while namesake Brazilian icon *Ronaldo* took 70 fixtures during his time with Inter Milan. The Juventus talisman reached the milestone with a penalty of his own, placing the ball into the bottom right corner to open the scoring after 51 minutes. It didn't take him long to double his side's advantage, as he and *Paulo Dybala* raced clear beyond Lazio's defence, before the Argentinian slid in his teammate for an easy finish.



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## Arsenal fans protest against owner with flying message

Arsenal owner Stan Kroenke found himself the subject of protests at Villa Park on Tuesday as a group of fans flew a message over the stadium calling for his head. The initiative came from an anonymous Gunners supporter who, under the username *KroenkeOut*, raised £1,750 on the crowdfunding site *JustGiving* in order to hire an airplane bearing the message "Back Arteta Kroenke Out".

"Mikel Arteta has expressed his concerns over our transfer budget for the upcoming transfer window," the organiser stated on the website. "Now it's time for us to express ours. Help fund this banner and the whole of Arsenal will undoubtedly see the discontent within the fanbase. "It's time to put some real pressure on Kroenke and the board!" More than 150 fellow Arsenal fans supported the proposal, meaning *KroenkeOut* passed the



stated target of £1,700 in just a handful of days. And as promised an airplane was spotted over Villa Park as Arsenal prepared to kick off against *Aston Villa*, bearing the criticism of the club chief while backing rookie manager *Arteta* in his debut season with the north Londoners. Kroenke has found himself in the firing line despite this week's victories over *Liverpool* and *Manchester City* due to a perceived unwillingness to spend heavily in order to

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