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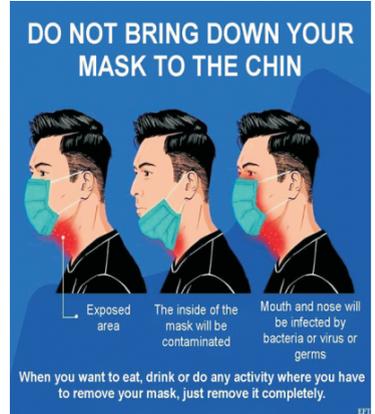
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The New Dawn

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Dysfunctional country

-Laymah Gbowee



Madam Laymah Gbowee

P11



P11

Riot at Abu Kamara's residence

--One injured

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Continental News

Coronavirus Infections Accelerate in Africa

The spread of the coronavirus in Africa has lagged much of the globe, but it's picking up speed. Health authorities say the highly infectious virus poses a heightened threat to countries with weak healthcare systems and especially to vulnerable populations of refugees, migrants and forcibly displaced people.

The continent passed a milestone of 750,000 confirmed cases, Reuters reported Wednesday. The news service, using government and World Health Organization data, tallied 751,151 cases, 15,721 deaths and 407,461 recoveries. It noted that Africa had 500,000 confirmed cases on July 8.

"I think what we're starting to see is a continued acceleration of transmission in a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and I think that has to be taken very, very seriously," epidemiologist Michael Ryan, who leads the WHO's health emergencies program, told journalists at a news briefing earlier this week. As Ryan pointed out, "Many of those countries exist in the midst of fragility and

conflict."

Yet COVID-19 so far has hit hardest at one of the continent's wealthiest nations. South Africa accounted for just over half of the continent's confirmed infections - which the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recorded at over 751,000 as of Tuesday - and roughly a third of its nearly 16,000 fatalities.

Infections have ravaged urban areas, especially poor Black townships, but now have "moved into more rural areas,

affecting different populations," said Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove, a WHO epidemiologist specializing in emerging infectious diseases who joined in the briefing.

"South Africa may unfortunately be a precursor," Ryan said. "It may be a warning for what will happen in the rest of Africa." The pandemic's relatively slow arrival gave the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention time to coordinate with government health

ministries beginning early in the year, according to a Nature journal article whose co-authors include the centers' director, John Nkengasong. Africans implemented lockdowns, ramped up surveillance at border entry points, and increased clinical testing and research, including on new uses for traditional medicines. But many African nations have poor healthcare systems with inadequate supplies and too few workers. Nurses and doctors in Zimbabwe have gone on strike over the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE);

thousands across the continent have been infected. The Africa CDC warns the pandemic could bring about "a catastrophic shortage of healthcare professionals." Aside from frontline workers, the most vulnerable to the novel coronavirus are refugees, migrants and people who have been forcibly displaced. A record 29 million people in Africa fall into that category, the Africa Center for Strategic Studies reported in June.

Roughly nine in 10 are fleeing armed conflict, especially from Central Africa and the Greater Horn. "COVID has not stopped conflict," said Wendy Williams, an adjunct research fellow at the center and the report's author. The pandemic, she told VOA, "is not the priority" for combatants - or for people on the run from violence. VOA



Funeral home workers in protective suits carry the coffin of a woman who died from COVID-19 into a hearse in Katlehong

Aid workers 'killed by jihadists' in Nigeria

Five aid workers abducted last month in north-east Nigeria's Borno State have been killed, reportedly by jihadists. The men were working for Action Against Hunger, the International Rescue Committee, Rich International and the country's State Emergency

Management Agency, Nigeria's president confirmed.

Muhammadu Buhari blamed Boko Haram and vowed to bring the killers to justice.

He also pledged to "wipe out the remaining vestiges" of the Islamist group, which has dominated the region.

The group's decade-long insurgency has left thousands

dead, displaced many more and resulted in a humanitarian crisis. Aid workers have frequently been targeted. The Nigerian online newspaper Premium Times says the killers belong to a sect of Boko Haram and posted a 35-second video of the executions.

According to the newspaper, five hooded armed men stand with the blindfolded hostages.

An unidentified voice delivers a speech to "the infidels" telling them to "repeat and turn to God" before one of the gunmen orders the others to shoot their captives. In strongly worded statements both Action Against Hunger and the International Rescue Committee paid tribute to the workers who were executed.

Action Against Hunger said it deeply regretted that its calls for their release had not been answered.

International Rescue Committee condemned the killings as "senseless" and "barbaric".

Prominent Zimbabwean journalist charged with inciting violence

Hopewell Chin'ono, an award-winning Zimbabwean journalist and government critic, has been charged with incitement to violence in a magistrates' court in the capital, Harare. He did not enter a plea.

Prosecutor Whisper Mabhaudhi accused Mr Chin'ono of inciting Zimbabweans to join a planned anti-government protest during the coronavirus

alleged Covid-19 procurement fraud within the health ministry led to the arrest and sacking of Health Minister Obadiah Moyo.

His arrest coincided with the detention of opposition politician Jacob Ngarivhume - the leader of a small party named Transform Zimbabwe - which had called for nationwide protests against state corruption and the country's economic crisis.



outbreak, which showed "no regard for human life", news agency AFP quoted the prosecutor as saying. Mr Chin'ono's lawyers complained about the circumstances of his arrest on Monday and his stay in custody.

A video clip recorded at the journalist's house showed the remains of the glass door that police smashed in order to gain entry.

Mr Chin'ono's reporting on

The protest was to be held on 31 July, the second anniversary of a general election won by President Emmerson Mnangagwa amid accusations of fraud.

The government has, however, imposed a strict curfew to, it says, curb the spread of coronavirus.

Bail hearings for Mr Ngarivhume and Mr Chin'ono will continue on Thursday. BBC

Paying tribute to their staff member Luka Filibus who, they said, had been "forced to flee his home and was still

compelled to alleviate the suffering of children", they demanded the return of his body. BBC



Boko Haram gunma

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 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.

NEW 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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Lord, you see what this Brabeena do again?

Dear Father:

You see this other trouble this Brabeena bring us again? Of all the time in the Village, look at the time he com say no more State of Emergency?

This one da na real wahala he com go bring on people here in this village? At least some people were hiding behind this State of Emergency to dodge their responsibilities and put everything on COVID-19 lockdown and no way to go out.

Now, Brabee them will be forced to answer their phones no more excuse like "I can't talk right now the madam is here." And for the girls -puah, plenty signals coming lost again. "Helo, helo ay mehn I can't hear you sef." Hmm we in side.

Hmm da the one you call trouble my son? But Father, let talk so, we talk so, this entire lockdown kept some men them home oh. There was no way for them to close from work and stop somewhere sef. It actually help plenty papa them to go straight home.

I mean no more excuse like-oh, I stopped over to the entertainment center -Barca and Madrid were playing or Chelsea and City. Da whatin, you will answer.

Da it you talking slow so, my son? I heard the side chick them were on by force diet because no way for the people married men them to pass there.

Hmmm, Father some of them did oo especially the one them da were have the curfew pass-awwa, da small thing they did?

Some of the girls used to say "ehn you get curfew pass, my boyfriend na get some, wait as soon as it reaches 6:00Pm he will be going home then you can come.

Tell me something!

Oh Father puah, the children get time sef. They say many ways to skin the cat. So why the married men were acting tight with themselves playing lovely dolly with their wives, the girls were taking changes with the few men da had passes running around.

But with all this at least there was no plenty wahala. Girl friends or side chick had to understand that it was lockdown so no one could put their friend under pressure for money. So everybody could understand and the excuses fitted well.

Born na, walaye, especially 26, you lie and pray yor own naBassa girl because da na small pay you will pay.

Bor my son how you talking like you na get experience from Bassa girl so?

Ah, Father, me da the one I na talk there so oo. I say the 26 noise will na be easy. At least if the Brabee had waited for the Independence Day celebration to pass. Ehn, then the noise was na coming to be heavy on the block.

Bor the way it happened so da double some men them will pay oo-for the end of lockdown celebration and the 26-My name oo! Me I na here sef I gone back.

OPINION

By Katharina Pistor

The Debt Predators

The financial system has turned credit intermediation into a debt mint that produces assets to enrich investors but leaves households, firms, and governments struggling with unsustainable liabilities. The COVID-19 crisis makes reform more urgent than ever.

NEW YORK - What do the Calabrian organized crime syndicate 'Ndrangheta, Hertz, China's Sichuan Trust, and the US Federal Reserve have in common? They are all deeply entangled in a financial system that has turned credit intermediation into a debt mint that produces assets to enrich investors but leaves households, firms, and governments struggling with unsustainable liabilities.

Investors have always been hungry for safety and yield. Logic suggests that you can't have both, but that was before the age of structured finance and shadow banking. With the right legal coding strategy, simple payment obligations can be turned into liquid assets for investors.

Minting debt has little to do with conventional credit intermediation. It is all about investors and fee-charging intermediaries, not about debtors. They and their assets only provide the input to sustain the production line. And whenever it breaks down, which it does when the quality of inputs deteriorates or external factors (like a pandemic) disturb its operation, central banks stand ready to absorb the risk and recycle the financial junk.

The techniques for putting together this assembly line are relatively simple. You buy a bunch of claims at a discount from loan originators, pool them with other claims and transfer them to a special purpose vehicle. The SPV serves as a legal vessel to separate its assets from those of others so that investors who buy interests in the SPV do not have to worry about any exposure to loan originators, SPV trustees, or administrators.

When mortgage-backed securities were still the hottest asset around, brokers originated loans and sold them wholesale to large banks, which set up off-balance-sheet SPVs that issued fixed-income assets to investors. Once in motion, the debt mint is insatiable. Not surprisingly, the quality of inputs (the loans and the collateral) tends to deteriorate over time. This is what gave us the subprime mortgage crisis. Post-crisis regulatory reforms focused on banks and their role, but did not tackle the asset assembly line itself. If anything, debt mints - and the raw inputs that feed them and produce the assets investors want - have multiplied.

For example, the 'Ndrangheta sent its offspring to business schools, where they learned how to earn substantial returns by supplying inputs to the debt mint. Soon enough, the 'Ndrangheta set up front companies to collect and often extort bills from health-service providers against regional governments and sold them at a premium to financial intermediaries that operate the mint. Conveniently, anti-money laundering and know-your-customer regulations do not apply to these shadow banking operations. Thus, no one questioned where these bills came from and how they had been obtained.

When Hertz filed for bankruptcy in May 2020, it was \$19 billion deep in liabilities. Most were owed to company-affiliated, but legally separate SPVs. The inputs for these SPVs were intra-company loan obligations.

The first SPV raised funds from investors, lent them to the second, which offered the cars it owned as collateral and its leasing operations to produce the cash to pay back the loans. Investors were further protected by collateral calls in the event that the value of the collateral declined. For a while, the cash inflows boosted Hertz's financial performance, but at the price of turning a car-rental company into a shadow bank whose core business was reduced to producing the collateral and cash flows for repayment. Hertz's capital structure reflects this transformation: 90% liabilities and only 10% equity. This is what the capital structure of banks, not ordinary corporations, looks like.

Even China, a country that carefully guards the stability of its financial system, has not been spared. The trust industry market, an alternative to China's largely state-controlled banking system, witnessed its "golden decade" in the 2000s and reached \$3 trillion in 2020. Sichuan Trust Company Ltd. and other financial intermediaries packaged loans to real estate and infrastructure projects into assets for investors. As the practice expanded, the quality of loans declined. The COVID-19 crisis exposed the vulnerability of this scheme, forcing Sichuan and others to miss payments to investors and prompting government intervention.

The 'Ndrangheta, Hertz, and Sichuan Trust are all part of debt mints that follow the same script and are designed for a single purpose: to produce assets to enrich investors and generate fees for intermediaries. The debtors, their houses, cars, or business operations supply only the raw material to the mint. This system is not merely incidentally fragile; it is designed to produce excessive debt, which translates directly into systemic risk.

Here is where the Federal Reserve and other central banks come in. The Fed backstops this system by facilitating, in times of distress, the recycling of these assets once investors have deemed them junk, and by offering liquidity support for unregulated financial intermediaries - even ordinary non-financial companies that find themselves in a liquidity squeeze. It assures investors that they will always find a buyer, even in the midst of a crisis. No wonder that Goldman Sachs could make \$4.24 billion in profits from its fixed-income-asset division between April and June, at a time when the US economy was in lockdown and many businesses were in free fall.



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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

NPHIL boss calls for strict compliance

The director general-designate for the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL), Dr. Mosoka Fallah has reiterated calls for strict compliance with health protocols across the country.

Speaking in an exclusive interview via mobile phone upon his return from Nimba County, where he had gone to assess activities at one of the nation's 131 informal crossing points, the NPHIL boss noted that nose masks wearing and

International Organization on Migration (IOM) to assess activities of people in Ganta and at one of the nation's illegal crossing points.

"The intent of our visit was to detect the activities at one of these illegal crossing points to know whether the health protocols are working there. Most of the counties have this issue, but if we can understand one, then we can do the others," he explained.

According to him, there were lots of eye-openers on

informal crossing point visited is a clear indication that all 131 illegal crossing points pose great risks to the country in terms of cases, with people still carrying on illegal trade without any strict adherence to health protocols.

He stressed the need for strong collaboration with key stakeholders both in government and international partners, including the International Organization on Migration (IOM) and United Nations agencies.

"There is a need to concentrate our energy and focus by working in collaboration with the Legislature and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, IOM and UN agencies to curtail this disease. I tell you, there are huge activities taking place in terms of the movements of goods and services without control," Dr. Fallah furthered.

In a bid to start the process of engagement, he disclosed that the team met with the local community to find a way forward.

"After leaving the borders, we had mass meeting with the chiefs, the youth, and watch forum. They spoke their minds and we thought to find a way forward. The district commissioner will liaise with the youth so that we can have a joint team so that those protocols can be put into place, because those modules existed during the Ebola," he added. Liberia has registered 1,114 confirmed cases of the virus, including 70 deaths and 592 recoveries, as of Tuesday, 21 July. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



Dr. Mosoka Fallah

hand washing are among major health protocols being ignored citizens, not just at the border, but within the city center of Ganta.

The NPHIL boss had gone to Nimba along with a team comprising Deputy Border Patrol Commander, Col. Aaron Kermue of the Liberia Immigration Service (LIS), Mr. Olayee Collins, Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs, and Dr. Solomon Campante, Medical Specialist at the

severe breaches of the two main health protocols (nose mask use and hand washing).

"It was a challenging trip as we had to see one of those illegal crossing points. There were lots of eye-opening on a couple of issues that need to be addressed. The use of mask was extremely low. In fact, about 98 percent of the people were not using masks in the major market center and at the border."

He said findings at the only

Low turnout at health facilities in Maryland

By Patrick Mensah, Maryland

Amid increasing cases of COVID-19 across Liberia, health institutions in Maryland County, southeast of the country are experiencing low turnout of patients, posing the probability of spreading the virus very high among the population.

County Health Team describes low turnout of residents as worrisome, especially in the wake of upsurge in the virus.

County Health Promotion Focus person, Augusta Nugba said prefer self-medicating or being treated at their homes rather than going to

health facilities, which has been providing services prior to the coronavirus pandemic.

She made the observation

recently during a press conference in the county, noting the altitude of

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



GVL Management alarms over increase Palm theft at Concession areas

GVL Communication Coordinator, Alphonso S. Kofi, said the company has been carrying on community awareness aimed at discouraging the act to enable it maximize production to match its labor and other costs. However, the company has been experiencing palm theft for years from the hands of residents in Butaw area, Sinoe County.

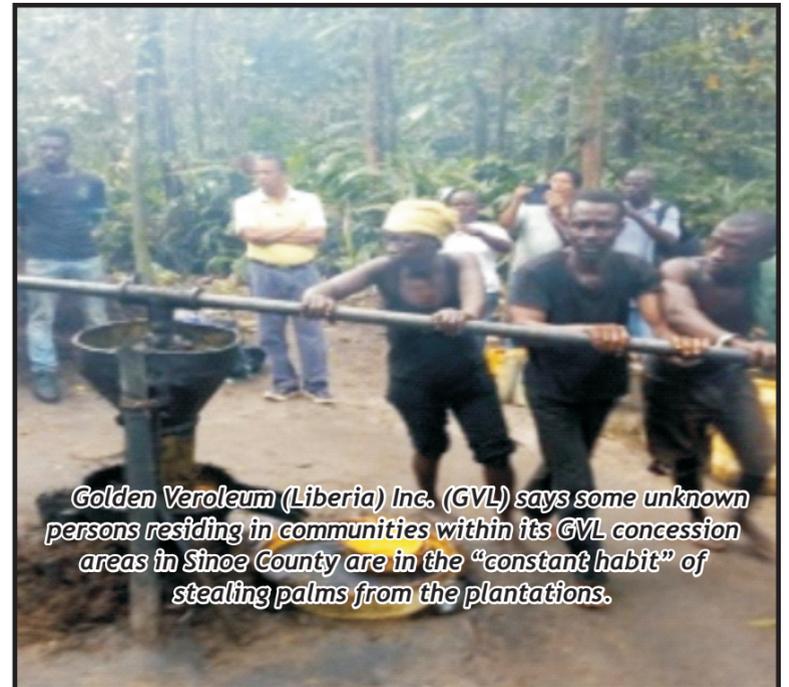
He also said that the majority of the citizens who attended some of those meetings condemned the act and told GVL that if any of their citizens are caught in such act, the law should take its course but act the continue be on the increase. "Over the past three years, some residents, especially in Butaw where the company has its regional

plantation products for the company."

"The company has been experiencing this palm theft for more than three years running, GVL has engaged with the communities within its plantations through their leaders but the act can't just stop and it is seriously hampering the company's operation in the county,"

Kofi however disclosed that several arrest have been made and turn over to the Liberia National Police but the act is still ongoing which harms the company's operation with further loss that company must have.

"We conducted community meetings creating the awareness and the danger act posed on the company's operation, all of their



Golden Veroleum (Liberia) Inc. (GVL) says some unknown persons residing in communities within its GVL concession areas in Sinoe County are in the "constant habit" of stealing palms from the plantations.

plantation office in Sinoe County, have been purposefully stealing palms from the farm mainly at night", Kofi told the reporters. The company consequently has issued a warning to persons involved to desist or risk legal action when getting caught. Adding that "GVL is losing millions of dollars to the criminals. We pay people to harvest and right after harvesting, the thieves will collect the palms, causing the company to lose every day, if anyone is caught, they will be taken to court."

Kofi described the thievery as being on the increase thereby negatively affecting production, noting that "GVL is spending number of million dollars monthly for paying its employees' salaries and contractors who are harvesting and transporting the

community leaders were present in the meeting and they assured us that the act was going to stop but the company is still experiencing it, it is sad my brothers," he noted in disappointment.

He also disclosed that the memorandum of understanding signed between communities and the company commits the communities to help protect the company's investment and its premises in all of the operational areas in the counties and not to destroy it.

"Those who are involved into such palm theft are violating the memorandum of understanding that the company signed with communities, they need to stop, we called on the government through the

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Yekeh Kolubah hasn't done much -Ex-lawmaker Berrain

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Former Montserrado County District#10 lawmaker Julius Berrain, has questioned the performance of his successor, Representative Yekeh Kolubah, noting that Kolubah has not done much in the areas of lawmaking, representation and advocacy.

Mr. Berrain lost the district#10 seat to now Representative Yekeh Koluba during the 2017 Presidential and Legislative Elections on

At the same time, he termed as improper, frequent rants by Rep. Kolubah against President George Weah and officials of government.

Kolubah, who won the district#10 seat as an Independent Candidate, is on record for spewing invectives at President Weah and senior officials of the Coalition for Democratic Change-led government.

He accused the Pro-poor government of bad governance and widespread corruption.

respect the presidency. So what happens to our children that are in school? What is he teaching our kids? This is unacceptable of a legislator."

The former lawmaker spoke minutes after he donated rice and cash to over 300 family heads and intellectual centers in the district, terming the gesture as a duty, being a former lawmaker to identifying with his people during the current health crisis.

"I thought it is wise to identify with my people. As we battle this global health crisis, people need to get food so that can battle the virus. This is normal thing. We do this every time. As God blesses us, we also bless others", he expressed.

Intellectual centers that benefited from the donation include Oldroad Concerned Intellectual Discourse (ORCID), Concerned Intellectual Association (CIA), Elders Discussion Forum, and Tarr Town Intellectual Center, respectively.

Each of the centers received two bags of 25 kg bags of rice and 5,000 Liberian dollars. The gesture to the above intellectual centers came after the ex-lawmaker also identified with three hundred family heads in the same district.

A resident of the district, Bobby Zenneh Johnson, presented the items on behalf of Mr. Berrain and the "Friends of Berrain."

The beneficiaries lauded the former CDC lawmaker for the gesture, which they described as timely.

"This is strange. This is the first time for somebody to come to us without making any request. We pray that Berrain will be blessed by God to continue his good work", Sam Browne, acting chairman of the Elders Discussion Forum of Chugbor, Oldroad said. -

Editing by Jonathan Browne



the ticket of the opposition People's Unification Party (PUP).

Giving his assessment of Yekeh's performance to group of journalists in Monrovia recently via mobile phone from America where he's furthering his education, he said the lawmaker hasn't met his target.

"Going to the Capitol Building, doing an appraisal in terms of the number of bills he has submitted, number of times he spoke on the floor, I don't think our lawmaker has met his target. His deliverables, his performances are highly questionable now", the ex-lawmaker noted.

But Berrain said the pattern Yekeh uses in communicating his disappointments to the public is demeaning.

"I think the methodology that our lawmaker uses to get his message across is not unique. It's very colonial. I would term it as immoral. In this 21st century I don't think it's time for a lawmaker to use all kinds of indecent words on national radio."

Berrain stressed that the President, as the first citizen of the country, deserves courtesy at all times.

"You cannot sit to abuse the presidency. One thing we need to do in this place is to protect and respect the presidency. It's mandatory for everyone to

Veep Taylor seeks

Starts from back page

cases in the country are alarming and worrisome.

Vice President Taylor continued that the wave of abuse, particularly rape, suggests that some fathers are not playing their fatherly role, thereby making the female kids vulnerable to cruel men, who roam the streets.

The 14-year-old survivor was last year raped by a classroom teacher of the Pejuhum public school identified as Sense Kaiwu, impregnating her. She gave birth subsequently to a male child on 14th of July, 2020 at the Diah Clinic in Tewor District, Grand Cape Mount.

Holding the child in her

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 require each of us in this county to stand up, fight and take action."

Madam Taylor, who presented several baby essentials and cash to the survivor and her 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. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

GVL Management alarms

Cont'd from page 6

Liberia National Police to come to our aid, this act is seriously affecting production and company's operation," he said. Golden Veroleum (Liberia) Inc. remains to collaborate with communities for delivering its commitment and improving the well-being of its employees and communities; in which the company has invested millions

of united states dollar into the Liberian economy through government taxes, salaries, contractors and local purchases and has contributed over US\$20 million in providing free education, healthcare, housing, road rehabilitation, local market facility and security support at the local, county and national levels.

Low turnout at health

Cont'd from page 6

citizens and residents is causing health workers to live in fear over cases of the virus increasing in the public.

She noted that since the coronavirus pandemic, people are out-rightly refusing to go to the health facilities for medication.

"Since the Coronavirus pandemic, we are expressing low turnout at all of our health facilities around the county. I strongly believe that many persons are afraid because of rumors circulating around that once you visit any health facility, medical practitioners will test you positive of the virus and this is not true", she said.

"In fact, almost all of our pregnant women are even afraid and during pregnancy that is the best time to visit Hospital, as we always tell them."

She said, common sicknesses like, cold, fever and headache were in existence prior to the COVID-19 and people are treated base on their conditions or

problems they take to the health facilities adding, "But I really don't understand why our people hold that fear."

Martha Jayfin, a resident of Juluken #1, Barrobo expressed dissatisfaction about the pandemic and noted that most people are hesitant to visit Health Facilities in the County during illness for treatment because of fear.

She added that rumors and fear have permeated communities and residents about ways in which people contract the virus, something, she termed as worrisome.

Another resident of Harper City, Maryland County, John Harmon, said health practitioners at many health facilities in the county attributed the low turnout to citizens' unwillingness to understand that the virus does not live in health centers.

He stressed a need for more awareness to encourage citizens, including patients to continue to visit health facilities regularly.

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Français

Senat/Scandale financier : Le sénateur Saytumah visé par une enquête parlementaire

La plénière du Sénat libérien a voté à une écrasante majorité mercredi 22 juillet en faveur d'une décision portant ouverture d'une enquête dans le cadre de la disparition présumée de 557000 \$ US, soit un peu plus d'un demi-million de dollars américains. Le sénateur du comté de

Bomi, Morris Saytumah, est visé par cette enquête pour son rôle dans la gestion de cet argent.

Les membres du personnel du sénat manifestent depuis près de deux semaines pour réclamer une partie de leurs salaires en dollar libérien qui, depuis juillet 2019, ne leur a pas été versée.

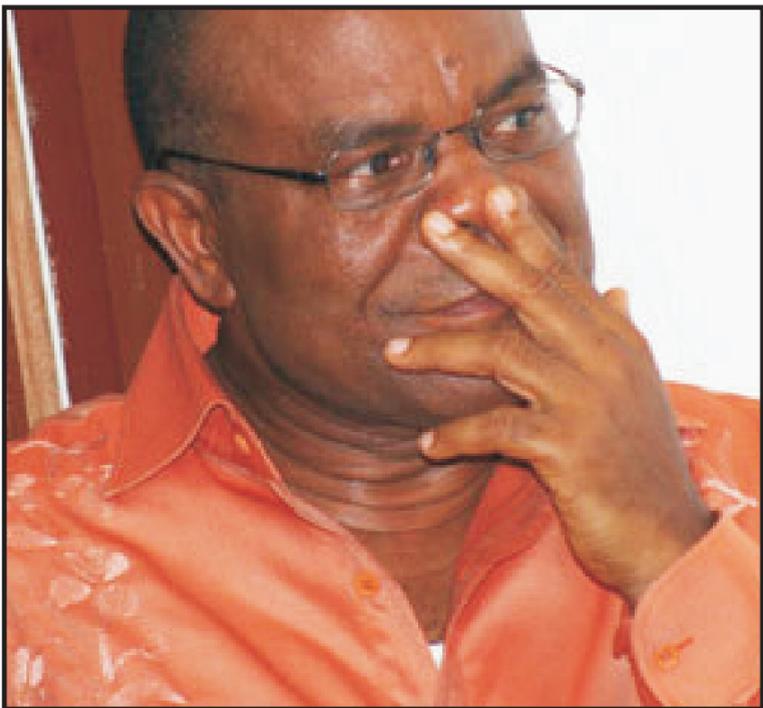
Les travailleurs du Sénat ont

verrouillé lundi le bureau des finances du Sénat au Capitole, exigeant que leur paie soit transférée au département des ressources humaines.

Le porte-parole des travailleurs, Charles S. Brown, a déclaré que lors d'une réunion la semaine dernière, ils avaient demandé au service des finances de remettre la fiche salariale au service des ressources humaines. Mais que cela ne pas été fait, c'est pourquoi ils ont donc décidé de fermer le bureau jusqu'à ce qu'ils soient payés.

Brown a révélé qu'au cours de la réunion, le responsable des ressources humaines Alvin Yan les avait informés de ce qu'il avait demandé leur salaire au département des finances, mais celui-ci n'a pas voulu répondre.

Les 557000 dollars américains avaient été débloqués par le sénat pour compenser la réduction des salaires du personnel dans le cadre du programme d'harmonisation salariale du



▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

Retour à la normale : Weah met fin à l'état d'urgence

Le président George Manneh Weah a ordonné aux Forces armées du Libéria (AFL) de retourner dans leurs casernes après avoir mis fin à l'état d'urgence qui avait été déclaré pour lutter contre le coronavirus.

L'armée a aidé la Force conjointe de sécurité à faire appliquer les mesures imposées par les autorités pour contrôler la propagation du virus. Cependant, les cas de virus sont maintenant beaucoup plus élevés dans le pays qu'ils ne l'étaient initialement lorsque M. Weah a déclaré pour la première fois l'état d'urgence au début du mois d'avril.

Jusqu'au mardi 21 juillet, le Libéria dispose de 452 cas actifs de coronavirus sur 1114 cas confirmés signalés depuis que la crise a frappé le pays.

Les autorités sanitaires ont affirmé qu'un total de 70 victimes ont été tuées par le virus tandis que 592 autres se sont rétablies.

Le président Weah a ordonné mardi aux hommes et aux femmes des forces armées du Libéria de retourner dans leur caserne à compter du 21 juillet à minuit.

Selon lui, il n'y plus de base légale pour la présence continue de l'armée dans certaines régions du pays pour aider à la lutte contre le Coronavirus étant donné que la fin de l'état d'urgence a été déclarée. Il a toutefois souligné que vu que l'armée dispose de capacités logistiques et humaines spéciales, elle pourrait être sollicitée en cas de besoin.

Pendant ce temps, M. Weah a instruit la ministre de la Santé, Dr Wilhelmina Jallah, et les autres autorités compétentes

d'utiliser scrupuleusement les lois sur la santé publique pour réduire la propagation du COVID-19 dans le pays. Il a exhorté les autorités sanitaires à veiller au respect strict des mesures prises, dont le port de masques, la distanciation sociale, le lavage des mains et d'autres mesures barrières.

M. Weah a exhorté le public à ne pas interpréter la fin de l'état d'urgence comme une autorisation de se livrer à des comportements susceptibles d'entraîner une propagation plus poussée du virus, car la violation des lois sur la santé publique est passible de punition.



Plus de 10 000 travailleurs de la santé en Afrique infectés par la COVID-19

L'accès insuffisant aux équipements de protection individuelle ou la faiblesse des mesures de prévention et de contrôle des infections augmentent le risque d'infection des travailleurs de la santé

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo, 23 juillet 2020/ – L'Organisation mondiale de la Santé (OMS) a mis en garde aujourd'hui contre la menace que représente la COVID-19 pour les professionnels de la santé en Afrique. Plus de 10 000 travailleurs de la santé dans les 40 pays qui ont signalé de telles infections ont été infectés par la COVID-19 jusqu'à présent, ce qui illustre les défis auxquels le personnel médical de première ligne est confronté.

Cette situation survient au moment où les cas de COVID-19 en Afrique semblent s'accroître. Il y a maintenant plus de 750 000 cas de COVID-19, et plus de 15 000 décès. Certains pays frôlent un nombre critique d'infections qui peuvent mettre à rude épreuve les systèmes de santé. L'Afrique du Sud est aujourd'hui l'un des pays les plus touchés au monde.

« L'augmentation du nombre de cas de COVID-19 en Afrique exerce une pression de plus en plus forte sur les services de santé de tout le continent », a déclaré Dr Matshidiso Moeti, directrice régionale de l'OMS pour l'Afrique. « Cela a des conséquences très réelles pour les personnes qui y travaillent, et il n'y a pas d'illustration plus frappante de ce phénomène que le nombre croissant d'infections chez les travailleurs de la santé. »

Jusqu'à présent, environ 10 % de tous les cas dans le monde concernent des travailleurs de la santé, bien qu'il y ait une grande différence entre les différents pays. En Afrique, les informations sur les infections des travailleurs de la santé sont encore limitées, mais les données préliminaires montrent que ces infections représentent plus de 5 % des cas dans 14 pays d'Afrique subsaharienne seulement, et dans quatre de ces pays, les travailleurs de la santé représentent plus de 10 % de toutes les infections.

L'accès insuffisant aux équipements de protection individuelle ou la faiblesse des mesures de prévention et de contrôle des infections augmentent le risque d'infection des travailleurs de la santé. L'augmentation de la demande mondiale d'équipements de protection ainsi que les restrictions mondiales sur les voyages ont provoqué des pénuries d'approvisionnement. Les travailleurs de la santé peuvent également être exposés à des patients qui ne présentent pas de signes de la maladie et qui se trouvent dans les structures de

santé pour d'autres services. Des risques peuvent également survenir lorsque le personnel de santé est réaffecté à la réponse à la COVID-19 sans avoir reçu un briefing adéquat, ou en raison d'une lourde charge de travail qui entraîne de la fatigue, de l'épuisement professionnel et peut-être une application insuffisante des procédures opérationnelles standard.

Dans de nombreux pays africains, les mesures de prévention et de contrôle des infections visant à prévenir les infections dans les structures de santé ne sont pas encore pleinement mises en œuvre. Lorsque l'OMS a évalué les cliniques et les hôpitaux du continent pour ces mesures, seuls 16 % des quelque 30 000 établissements étudiés ont obtenu un score d'évaluation supérieur à 75 %. Il a été constaté que de nombreux établissements de santé ne disposaient pas de l'infrastructure nécessaire pour mettre en œuvre les principales mesures de prévention des infections ou pour éviter la surpopulation. Seuls 7,8 % (2213) disposaient de capacités d'isolement et seulement un tiers avaient la capacité de trier les patients.

« Une infection parmi les travailleurs de la santé est une infection de trop », a déclaré Dr Moeti. « Les médecins, le personnel infirmier et les autres professionnels de la santé sont nos mères, nos frères et nos sœurs. Ils concourent à sauver des vies mises en danger par la COVID-19. Nous devons nous assurer qu'ils disposent du matériel, des compétences et des informations dont ils ont besoin pour assurer leur propre sécurité, celle de leurs patients et de leurs collègues. »

Depuis le début de l'épidémie, l'OMS travaille en étroite collaboration avec les ministères de la santé pour réduire les infections des travailleurs de la santé. L'Organisation a formé plus de 50 000 professionnels de la santé en Afrique à la prévention et au contrôle des infections, et prévoit d'en former plus de 200 000 autres.

Elle fournit également des documents d'orientation et des lignes directrices sur les meilleures pratiques de soins et les schémas de traitement les plus récents.

L'OMS contribue également à pallier les insuffisances dans la fourniture d'équipements de protection individuelle. Présentement, 41 millions d'équipements de protection individuelle sont prêts à être expédiés de Chine pour couvrir les besoins de 47 pays africains. Les expéditions pour une première vague de 23 pays africains devraient commencer ce week-end.

Français

Senat/Scandale financier :

gouvernement. Le programme de la réduction des salaires aurait affecté la composante du salaire en dollars libériens de chaque employé du sénat. Pour ainsi compenser ce manque à gagner les sénateurs avaient jugé bon d'allouer 557 000 USD aux salaires de ces derniers, mais aucun membre du personnel n'a bénéficié de cet argent.

Pourtant la vice-présidente Jewel Howard Taylor, en sa qualité de présidente du Sénat libérien, a précisé que l'allocation budgétaire du pouvoir législatif libérien n'a pas été affecté par l'harmonisation des salaires entreprise par le gouvernement.

Mme Taylor a rencontré les travailleurs. Elle s'est dite choquée par les allégations selon lesquelles la composante salariale en dollars libériens des fonctionnaires avait été supprimée alors qu'en fait, les autorités du Ministère des finances et de la planification du développement n'ont en aucun moment été responsables des salaires du personnel du parlement.

Les membres du Sénat libérien, lors de leur session ordinaire le 15 juillet, avaient demandé au Comité sénatorial sur les voies, les moyens et les finances de rendre compte de l'argent qui avait été décaissé pour augmenter le salaire des travailleurs.

Le sénateur du comté de Maryland, James Gble-bo Brown, a déclaré que lorsque le comité sénatorial s'est rendu compte que le gouvernement avait supprimé la composante salariale en dollars libériens des employés du Capitole en raison de la politique d'harmonisation des salaires, la direction a puisé dans le budget interne du Sénat 500 000 USD pour payer le personnel afin d'alléger leur fardeau économique.

Il s'est dit choqué par le fait que le montant n'ait pas été ajouté au salaire net du personnel depuis juillet de l'année dernière.

Cependant, le président du Sénat Albert Chie a fait valoir qu'inviter des auditeurs externes pour vérifier la masse salariale des membres du personnel va perdre beaucoup de temps, il a donc nommé un comité de trois hommes dirigé par le sénateur du comté de Grand Gedeh, Alphonso Gaye. Le comité est chargé d'enquêter

sur la disparition présumée des 5570 000 dollars américains. Les deux autres membres du comité sont le sénateur du comté de Montserrado Abraham Darius Dillon et le sénateur du comté de Bong Henrique Togba.

Le sénateur Chie a demandé au président du Sénat sur les moyens, les moyens, les finances et le budget, le sénateur du comté de Bomi Morris Saytumah, de remettre la fiche salariale et tous les autres documents pertinents en sa possession au président du comité, le sénateur Gaye, pour commencer l'enquête et présenter un rapport à la plénière dans cinq jours. Il a souligné que de nouveaux retards dans le traitement de la question pourraient soulever davantage de doutes.

Le sénateur de Grand Kru a révélé son intention de distribuer du riz aux membres du personnel pour la fête nationale de l'indépendance du 26 juillet.

Pendant ce temps, le chef du budget du Sénat libérien, Gblebo Brown, a averti que la question de salaires des membres du personnel n'a pas encore été réglée, car ces derniers ne cessent de se plaindre qu'ils n'ont ressenti aucune augmentation de salaire.

Le sénateur Brown a dit avoir eu une réunion avec les membres du personnel pour leur faire comprendre que la composante en dollars libériens de leurs salaires avait été complètement supprimée.

Pour sa part, la chef du comité sénatorial sur le Règlement, des ordres et de l'administration, la sénatrice Nyonblee Kangar Lawrence du comté de Grand Bassa, a déclaré qu'elle n'était pas là lorsque le comité des voies, des moyens, des finances et du budget a rencontré les membres du personnel. Elle a fait savoir cependant que quand elle a demandé au bureau des finances à de nombreuses reprises de lui montrer la fiche salariale, il a refusé de le faire. Elle a insisté sur la nécessité d'auditer la masse salariale, « car des noms fantômes ont été remarqués, certains recevant des coupons d'essence, et même les administrateurs se plaignent de la situation ».

De même, le sénateur Abraham Darius Dillon de Montserrado a souligné que la question des salaires des membres du personnel devrait faire l'objet d'une enquête rapide car les sénateurs sont sur le point d'aller en congé pour la célébration de la fête nationale de l'indépendance le 26 juillet, ajoutant que les sénateurs

COMMENTAIRE

By David Stasavage

Le mensonge ancestral de Trump autour du scrutin

NEW YORK - Tandis que les États-Unis s'approchent de leur élection présidentielle la plus importante et la plus conflictuelle depuis de nombreuses années, le vote par correspondance occupe tous les débats. Certains y voient une option nécessaire permettant à chacun d'accéder aux urnes en pleine pandémie de COVID-19, notamment pour la classe ouvrière et les minorités, qui présentent des taux d'infection disproportionnellement élevés. D'autres, comme le président Donald Trump, s'opposent vivement à cette proposition de scrutin par correspondance, faisant valoir un potentiel risque de fraude.

Leur argumentaire ne tient pas la route - et ce manque de franchise ne date pas d'hier. Au cours des six derniers siècles, ceux qui ont cherché à limiter le droit de vote ont toujours défendu leur position en faisant valoir la nécessité de préserver « l'intégrité » du système électoral.

Prenons l'exemple de l'Angleterre du début du XVIe siècle. À cette époque, chaque comté anglais envoie deux « chevaliers » au Parlement pour être représenté. Aucune loi formelle ne régissant le mode de désignation de ces chevaliers (qui portent un titre principalement honorifique), il revient au chérif d'organiser une élection.

Selon la coutume, tous les homes libres du comté sont en droit de participer à l'élection, dont sont exclues les femmes. Certaines de ces élections se font à l'époque dans le désordre et l'indiscipline - comme souvent en démocratie - mais elles permettent une participation (masculine) beaucoup plus large que celle mise en place par la suite.

En 1429, les membres de la Chambre des communes demandent en effet au roi Henri VI son accord concernant une nouvelle loi visant explicitement à rétablir de l'ordre dans les élections des comtés au Parlement. La pétition énonce que sans cette nouvelle loi, « meurtres, émeutes, agressions et divisions ne cesseront de survenir ». Autrement dit, les partisans de cette loi prétendent à l'époque que l'intégrité du processus électoral est en danger.

Or, la méthode proposée par les parlementaires pour remédier au problème qu'ils dénoncent trahit leur véritable motivation. Ils demandent en effet que le droit de vote dans le cadre des élections au niveau des comtés soit réservé aux propriétaires de terres produisant un rendement annuel d'au moins 40 shillings, une somme importante à l'époque.

Les partisans de cette loi considèrent que la source du problème réside dans « un trop grand nombre » de participants aux élections. La règle des 40 shillings deviendra une loi anglaise en 1430, et demeurera en vigueur jusqu'à ce que le Parlement adopte le Great Reform Act de 1832.

À travers cette réforme, le Parlement

reconnaît enfin le caractère anachronique de la règle des 40 shillings. Un nouveau rebondissement va par ailleurs produire une caractéristique du scrutin que nous considérons aujourd'hui comme sacrée. Certains membres du Parlement vont en effet proposer non seulement d'étendre le droit de vote, mais également de rendre secret le scrutin des élections à la Chambre des communes. Depuis des temps lointains, le vote dans le cadre des élections au niveau des comtés s'effectuait en public, permettant à certains d'en intimider ou d'en corrompre d'autres pour influencer leur vote.

Il faudra néanmoins attendre 40 ans pour que le Parlement adopte enfin le Ballot Act de 1872. Parmi les principales raisons de cette longue attente sur la voie du scrutin secret, les détracteurs de cette règle prétendaient - une fois de plus - qu'elle menacerait l'intégrité du processus électoral. Certains parlementaires proposeront le scrutin secret dès 1830, là où d'autres feront valoir qu'une telle mesure engendrerait éternellement « suspicion et hypocrisie ». En 1862, un autre opposant au scrutin secret affirme pour l'essentiel la même chose : « Loin d'empêcher la corruption, cette règle ne pourra que la faciliter, en empêchant bien souvent qu'elle soit détectée ».

Triste constat, nous retrouvons à nouveau ces arguments aujourd'hui aux États-Unis, qui entrent dans une nouvelle ère de limitation du droit de vote, laquelle rappelle l'histoire de privation des droits des Afro-Américains dans le pays. Ces dernières années, 25 États américains ont adopté des lois rendant plus le vote plus difficile, par exemple en exigeant une carte d'identité avec photo, voire une preuve de citoyenneté. Certains États ont également mis à mal la participation électorale en réduisant le nombre de bureaux de vote.

Ces mesures font incontestablement pencher la balance en défaveur des catégories minoritaires et à faibles revenus. Comme dans l'Angleterre d'il y a 600 ans, l'objectif proclamé - la préservation de l'intégrité du processus électoral - n'est qu'un écran de fumée bien commode.

Dans l'actuel débat américain autour du vote par correspondance - mesure soutenue par une importante majorité d'Américains adultes - les opposants à une large participation électorale brandissent une fois de plus le spectre de la fraude et de la corruption, dans la poursuite étroite de leurs objectifs partisans. Sans faire valoir aucun élément de preuve, ils prétendent que ce nouveau système de scrutin serait d'une manière ou d'une autre plus susceptible d'irrégularités que le traditionnel vote en personne.

Or, la véritable crainte de Trump et d'autres réside dans la possibilité de voir le vote par courrier booster la participation électorale en faveur des candidats démocrates, bien qu'il ne soit pas certain que cet effet existe dans les États qui l'autorisent déjà. Espérons que les défenseurs du suffrage étendu renouent avec leur séquence historique victorieuse.

FEATURE

FEATURE

Understanding Russia-Algerian Strategic Partnership

By KesterKennKlomegah

For almost 20 years, Russia has pursued its economic cooperation and other geo-strategic interests using the Declaration on Strategic Partnership agreement signed in 2001 with the Arab Republic of Algeria in the Maghreb region. The Maghreb also known as Northwest Africa, the Arab Maghreb is a subregion of North Africa that is effectively a western part of the Arab world and is predominantly Muslim.

Russia has an excellent relations in this region compared to the rest of Africa. While that two-decade old Declaration on Strategic Partnership agreement has primarily allowed Russia to step up military-technical cooperation by supplying arms and military equipment, it also sets out principles for the consolidating long-term bilateral policy goals between the two countries.

During her weekly media briefing, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova hinted about the official visit of Algerian Foreign Minister SabriBoukadoum. "Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will hold talks with the Algerian Foreign Minister in Moscow on July 22 in order to maintain dialogue on the current issues of bilateral relations and the issues on the regional agenda," the diplomat said.

She reminded that Russia and Algeria had signed the Declaration on Strategic Partnership in 2001, which set out the long-term goals of joint work. "In nearly two decades, we have managed to expand the basis of our cooperation significantly. We are successfully developing mutually beneficial ties in the economic, military-technical, research and humanitarian spheres, and in 2019, the turnover between two states reached \$3.4 billion. This is a significant figure," Zakharova said.

Undoubtedly, Russia has tried to sustain its multifaceted bilateral relations with Algeria that plays an important role in maintaining regional stability in North Africa.

SabriBoukadoum has served as Minister of Foreign Affairs since April 2019. In this short period though, he has expressed his country's keenness on resolving the Libyan crisis through dialogue and maintaining the integrity of the country's territory.

According to him, Algeria does not accept the presence of foreign forces in Libya, regardless of which country they represent. Currently there is an intense fight between the Government of National Accord (GNA) and Marshal KhalifaHaftar's forces (the opposition from the Eastern region) to control the Libyan capital. There are external forces already supporting the two warring groups.

The inflow of arms for the conflicting sides in Libya is only aggravating the situation in the country. It adds to the involvement of foreign mercenaries and the presence of extremist and terrorist groups, whose activities reinvigorated jointly with the military escalation and is threatening the local, regional and global peace.

This development largely worries Algeria that wanted to assist Libyans in addressing "structural governance and security issues" and prevent a new Arab Spring from spilling over unto its territory.

From Russia's perspective, besides Algeria's role in ensuring regional stability in North Africa, this country makes a significant contribution to the fight against terrorism in the Sahara-Sahel zone, actively participates in international efforts to achieve national

accord in Mali, and has a constructive mediating potential in the Libyan settlement.

On this basis, Russia wants to proceed from the premise that the upcoming talks help to strengthen multifaceted bilateral cooperation and to engage in the peaceful negotiation process in its neighboring Libya.

As a sign of cordial friendship, Russia promptly responded to Algeria's request for humanitarian aid by delivering a cargo full of medical protective equipment to help tackle the novel coronavirus pandemic. That aid was purchased and delivered by Rosoboronexport, which is the sole State Arms Exporter, on instructions from the Russian government late April. Algeria has one of the biggest number of coronavirus-related deaths among the African nations, according to official statistics.

On July 8, while addressing the first political consultation meeting at the foreign minister level between Russia and three members of the African Union, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stressed that the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Libya has been vacant for almost half a year ago. UN Secretary-

time Lavrov paid a working visit to the Maghreb countries, including the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Tunisia.

Since then the Minister has maintained regular contacts. Lavrov hopes the upcoming bilateral talks with SabriBoukadoum could lay a new roadmap to the diverse aspects of the bilateral relations and the possibility of strengthening bilateral cooperation in a number of spheres. Both are looking to have in-depth discussion into adopting strategies toward resolving the crisis in Libya.

Both countries, of course, want the effective use of the Joint Russian-Algerian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic and Scientific and Technical Cooperation, as the instrument for full-fledged realization of the all the set policy goals including those outlined during the Sochi last year.

Significant to recall that Russian and Algerian leaders also held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Russia-Africa summit in Sochi. During the discussion, Putin said that Russia was ready to render the Algerian people assistance in strengthening their statehood and sovereignty.



General Antonio Guterres has been unable to appoint a successor so far.

His first proposal for UN Secretary-General position was Foreign Minister of Algeria, Ramtane Lamamra, and was supported by most countries except the American colleagues. They refused to support his nomination. Then, another proposal put forward to appoint former Foreign Minister of Ghana, Hannah Tetteh, but for some reasons Mr Antonio Guterres has failed to have her nomination approved, according to Sergey Lavrov.

The political consultation meeting at the foreign minister level between Russia and three members of the African Union was established after the first Russia-Africa Summit held in Sochi last October. The three African Union countries are the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of South Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They are the former, current and next presidents of the African Union.

Late January 2019, just before Russia's presidential election and the first Russia-Africa summit, was the last

He further indicated that Moscow attached great importance to developing inter-state strategic partnership with Algeria "which is based on the solid traditions of longstanding friendship and mutual respect."

The Kremlin report says Algeria is among Russia's major partners in Africa in the sphere of military and technical cooperation. The largest arms contract worth \$7.5 billion was signed in 2006 as part of a deal, under which Russia agreed to write off Algeria's debt owed to the Soviet Union.

Besides bilateral relationship, Russia relates with Algeria in the framework of the broad partnerships between Russia and the African Union, and Russia and the Arab League. The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria is bordered to the northeast by Tunisia, to the east by Libya, to the southeast by Niger, to southwest by Mali, to the west by Morocco and to the north by the Mediterranean Sea.

Dysfunctional country

By Winston W. Parley

Madam Laymah Gbowee, one of Liberia's 2011 co-winners of the Nobel Laureate says Liberia is a dysfunctional country under President George Manneh Weah who doesn't show leadership during a global pandemic and has lawmakers who sign documents without reading them.

"We have a dysfunctional country. I'm sorry. Liberia is not functioning the way she should function," she said during a live talk show via mobile on local broadcaster OK FM Wednesday, 22 July.

Madam Gbowee whose 2019 speech as National Orator for Liberia's 172nd Independence Day celebration shoke almost every sector of the society, criticizes lawmakers here for signing documents without first reading to make informed decisions before signing those documents.

"I mean, let me go to the House first, for example. Who signs documents, pass a bill and then when the actual spending starts happening they go on social media to say we didn't know that's how this money business was going to be? Do they read at all?"



she asks.

While she makes no specific reference to occasions at which these lawmakers signed documents without reading, her comment comes at a time Liberians still bear fresh memory of legislators' controversial signing of a recast budget that contained US\$25m as government's contribution toward a US\$30m for coronavirus food package.

Some of the lawmakers later began criticizing the very document after it had been passed.

She wonders if lawmakers here are just concerned about "what we are going to get out of this particular thing," because she sees Liberia still functions in a way that "nobody understands what the hell is happening."

"The executive is at loggerhead with the legislative and those in opposition ..., and you know it says that a house divided against itself will never stand," she notes.

Madam Gbowee rules out any plan right now to contest

the 2020 senatorial race due to love for doing what she is doing, but adds that when that time comes she will step into the politics of Liberia.

According to Madam Gbowee, there's a serious global pandemic happening, under which a civil society group just did a survey that reported that about 40 percent of health institutions in Liberia lack personal protective equipment (PPEs).

Viewing such a report, Madam Gbowee says it leaves her thinking that God is on extra watch for Liberia because everyone here is just going by the mercy of God.

"There is no leadership. How many times have we heard the president's voice since this corona crisis?" she wonders.

In a time of global pandemic, Madam Gbowee argues, every citizen needs to hear from the head of the country, saying his voice portrays the leadership even if what he says will be written by someone else.

"Where is that voice? During the Ebola crisis, and I'm not comparing good or bad. I'm just saying President Sirleaf was consistent in talking to the people. If you watch the global news that presidents and leaders out there talking in different countries of the world," she continues.

"Where is President Weah's voice? Leadership matters in these times," Madam Gbowee says, adding that you as the father needs to get up and show authority, the one that she says Liberians do not see.

She believes that in ending the State of Emergency and ordering the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to return to their barracks, there was a need for President Weah to come back, address Liberians and update them on how far the country has come in battling the virus.

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

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.

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 Wednesday, 22 July, Liberia's total confirmed active cases had dropped to 433, down from 452 total active confirmed coronavirus cases as reported earlier on Tuesday, 21 July.

And that's because the health authorities here had reported by 10:00PM on Wednesday, 22 July that there were 21 new recoveries while the death toll had risen to 71.

In all, Liberia has had 1,117 total confirmed cases since the coronavirus crisis started here and the country has also reported a total recovered cases of 613 throughout the crisis, that's according to the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) statistics.

Riot at Abu Kamara's residence

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Planned dedication of a radio station by Montserrado County District #15 Representative Abu Bana Kamara turned ugly Thursday, 23 July when a gang armed with cutlasses, scissors and other deadly weapons and demanding gifts, invaded the lawmaker's residence and injured one victim.

The dedication of the radio station had been scheduled to take place at Mr. Kamara's residence on Bushrod Island when the gang stormed the ruling Coalition for

Democratic Change (CDC) lawmaker's residence to demand gifts from him.

The situation happened while guests, community residents and staff of the Abu Development Initiative (ADI) Communications were waiting for the arrival of President George Manneh Weah.

Our reporter who witnessed the incident reveals that Mr. Kamara was in his compound assessing a short socket that had caused an electric wire to put out smoke when he was informed that a gang was outside his fence fighting

private securities officers assigned at the main entrance of his residence.

Without any delay, our reporter says, Mr. Kamara rushed out of the fence and tried to calm down the situation, but the gang would not listen to him.

The gang and the private securities continued to fight, but suddenly withdrew from the scene upon noticing that their aim was not accomplished.

In no time the gang returned and began a serious stone - throwing battle against the private security officers at every direction, leaving one of the staff of ADI Communications injured on his forehead.

The gang then managed to force their way into Mr. Kamara's compound with cutlasses and other deadly weapons, seeking to cause serious human damage.

But they were finally overpowered by Representative Kamara when he disarmed one of the men who was carrying cutlass and scissor under his clothe in the compound of the lawmaker.

The riot left residents running helter-skelter to prevent themselves from being hurt by stones coming from the disgruntled individuals.



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The Liberia National Police (LNP) was called in, but three unarmed LNP officers that arrived on the scene could not make any arrest while the gang escaped.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Samuel Tweah and Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Nathaniel McGill arrived minutes following the situation.

When Representative Kamara was contacted regarding the incident, he told reporters to give him some time to speak on the issue.

The police have assured the representative that the gang will be apprehended and prosecuted in keeping with the law. --Edited by Winston W. Parley

Veep Taylor seeks justice for rape victim



By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Liberia's Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor is calling for the arrest of a classroom teacher who allegedly raped and impregnated a 14-year-old girl at the Pujahun public school in Camp#4, Tewel District, Grand Cape Mount

County.

Madam Taylor, who identified with the victim recently, is calling on elders, traditional leaders of the county and authorities of the Liberia National Police to launch a search and arrest the alleged perpetrator, adding, that the government is totally against those who take pleasure

in raping babies, who are future leaders of the country.

Speaking to this paper via mobile phone Thursday, July 23, in Monrovia, the Communications Director in the Office of the Vice President Solomon Ware, said Ms. Taylor is encouraging all stakeholders, including authorities of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and the Police to ensuring the perpetrator is brought to justice in the soonest possible time.

Ware added that the vice president believes when justice served justly and timely, it would help to reduce pains of the victim and her parents.

Recently appearing on Spoon fm night show via mobile phone in Monrovia, Madam Taylor burst out her guts that any man who will rape any of her family members especially, kids, will be brunt with car tires in the streets, lamenting that rape

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Juve miss chance to seal title with Udinese defeat

Juventus must wait to claim a ninth successive Serie A title after they slumped to a shock 2-1 defeat at lowly Udinese on Thursday after Seko Fofana scoring a stoppage-time winner with a solo goal.

Needing a victory to wrap up the title with three games to spare, Juve produced another strangely subdued performance but went ahead with a long-range shot by defender Matthijs de Ligt

three minutes before halftime. However, Ilija Nestorovski's diving header and Fofana's superb individual effort stunned the Turin side on a stifling evening.

Juventus, who have won only one of their last five games and have dropped 18 points from winning positions this season, stay on 80 points followed by Atalanta with 74 and Inter Milan on 73 with three games each to play.

Fourth-placed Lazio, who have four matches remaining



starting against Cagliari later on Thursday, have 69 points. The win took Udinese up to 15th place on 39 points, seven points clear of the relegation zone.

It was the latest twist in an extraordinary title race which has seen three of the four contenders repeatedly drop points. Inter have won only two of their last six matches and Lazio had taken one point from a possible 15 before Thursday.

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