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Photo of burn down villages (Courtesy GNN)



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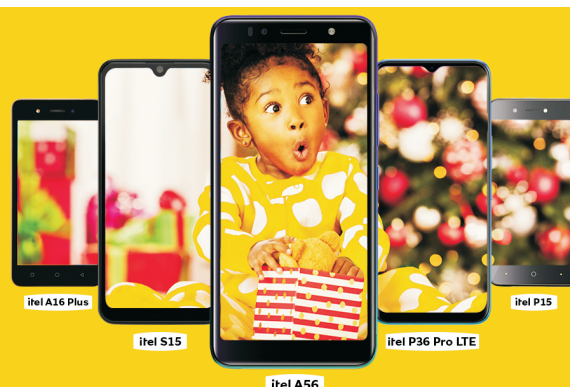
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Continental News

CAR former president denies 'attempted coup'

The ex-president of the Central African Republic has denied, through his spokesman, that he is plotting a coup. On Saturday, the government accused François Bozizé of marching with a rebel alliance on the capital, Bangui, a week before a general election.

But spokesman Christian Guenebem said he was in his house in Bossangoa.

"If, in the minds of some men in armed groups he represents an alternative, that's not François Bozizé's fault", he told French-language broadcaster RFI.

"Perhaps it's the fault of those who have failed to offer a credible alternative."

Tensions rose after Mr Bozizé's candidacy for next week's national elections was rejected by the country's highest court. The UN said on Friday it had deployed peacekeeping forces to the country.

President Faustin Archange Touadéra has insisted the poll



Former President François Bozizé has tried unsuccessfully to run in this month's elections

will go ahead, saying the presence of the army and UN peacekeepers means people have nothing to fear.

But opposition parties, including that of Mr Bozizé, have called for the vote to be postponed "until the re-establishment of peace and

security". Rebel groups have seized several towns close to CAR's capital, clashing with government forces and looting property, and the UN said its troops were working to prevent a blockade of Bangui.

Mr Guenebem told AFP news agency: "We

categorically deny that Bozizé is at the origin of anything."

The CAR is one of Africa's poorest and most unstable countries, even though it is rich in resources like diamonds and uranium. The UN estimates that half of the population are dependent on humanitarian assistance and up to a fifth have been displaced. François Bozizé, a Christian, came to power after a coup in 2003 and subsequently won two elections that were widely seen as fraudulent. He was ousted in 2013 by the Séléka - a rebel coalition drawn largely from the Muslim minority - which accused him of breaking peace agreements. The country has since been caught in conflict between the Séléka and the so-called "anti-Balaka" self-defence forces, who are mainly Christian. After military intervention by France, the country's former colonial ruler, elections were held in 2016

and won by President Faustin-Archange Touadéra, who is currently seeking re-election. But fighting among militias has continued, and the UN has blamed rebel groups for the country's instability. Mr Bozizé, 74, returned to the CAR in December 2019 after living in exile for six years in Benin, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

He announced in July he would stand in the 27 December election - a move that was seen as high-risk given the country's lingering civil unrest, but not unexpected.

Mr Bozizé still maintains a large following, especially in the army and among the country's largest ethnic group, the Gbaya. But he faces UN sanctions for his alleged support of the "anti-Balaka" groups in 2013. CAR authorities have also issued an arrest warrant against him for "crimes against humanity and incitement of genocide". BBC

Kidnapped Nigerian children freed after gun battle

Police in Nigeria say they have rescued at least 84 schoolchildren who were abducted on Saturday.

They say the children were seized by gunmen as they returned home to Mahuta village after taking part in a religious ceremony.

The children were released following a gun battle between the abductors, security forces and local vigilantes. It is the second

mass kidnapping in Nigeria's Katsina state in eight days.

On Friday, 344 schoolboys who had been kidnapped from their boarding school in Kankara town a week beforehand were released. In a statement following the latest abductions, Katsina state police said that at least 80 of those abducted were students of an Islamic school called Hizburrahim Islamiyya.

The force also said the armed kidnappers had also stolen 12 cows from nearby Danbaure

village.

Police did not reveal more about the attackers' identities or their motives, referring to them only as "bandits".

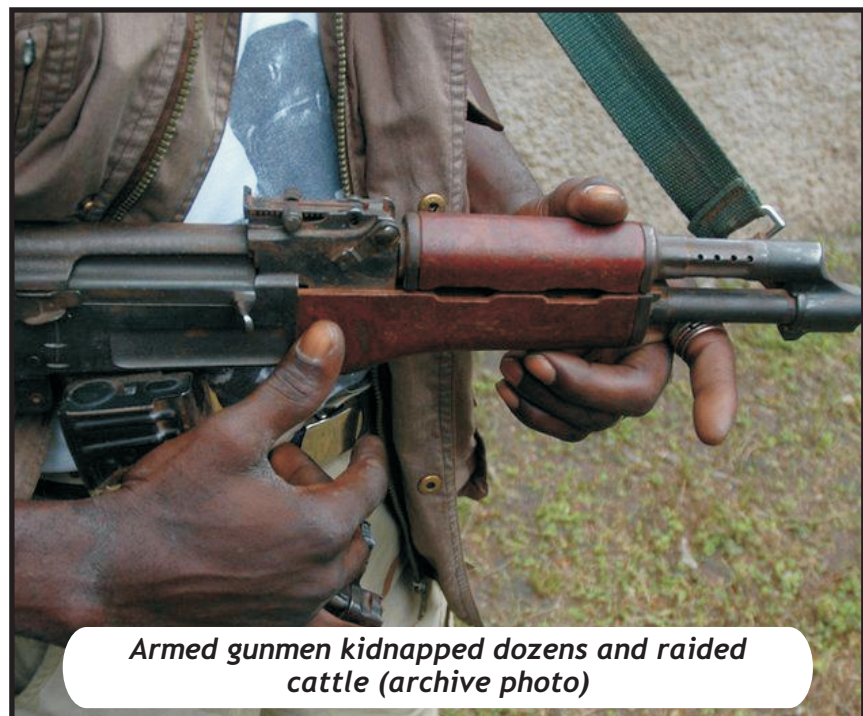
It is a catch-all phrase in north-western Nigeria covering Fulani herdsman, armed vigilante groups and even Islamist militants fleeing the insurgency in the north-east, says the BBC's Nduka Orjinmo in Lagos.

Most kidnappings by "bandits" are done for ransom. In the past some leaders of bandit groups,

who engage in kidnapping and attacks on farming communities,

have openly met governors and other state authorities to negotiate, our reporter adds. Deadly clashes in north-western Nigeria have increased in recent years as warring farmers and herdsman have employed armed vigilantes.

AFP news agency quotes a leader of a local vigilante group who pursued the attackers on Saturday as saying a total of 113 people had been abducted, a higher number than the 84 announced by police. BBC



Armed gunmen kidnapped dozens and raided cattle (archive photo)

No, Joe Biden is not backing Uganda's opposition



With Uganda's elections due in January, there's plenty of misinformation being shared in a heated campaign which has seen serious violence.

President Yoweri Museveni, in power since 1986, is facing a challenge from 11 candidates, amongst them a young musician known as Bobi Wine.

Some of the misinformation about the campaign involves fabricated content, and in some cases videos taken out of context. Our first example is a widely-shared video clip, with social media users claiming it shows US President-elect Joe Biden at an event calling for the release of Bobi Wine (real name Robert Kyagulanyi). Some even claim it shows Mr Biden endorsing him in Ugandan elections.

The grey-haired white man

speaking in the video can be heard saying: "We all care about the freedom to exercise our own religion. We all stand together, we need democracy in Uganda."

But the man speaking is not Joe Biden, and the video is two years old.

We traced it back to protests by Ugandan pro-opposition groups held in various cities around the world after Bobi Wine was detained in August 2018. This particular event was held in Boston, and the man speaking is Nick Carter, a Democratic politician who was contesting a local election there.

He can be heard about three minutes into the video, seeking support from the local community for his bid for a place on the Massachusetts Governor's Council. BBC

EDITORIAL

We demand free, fair election in Gbarpolu

NEWS COMING OUT of Gbarpolu County is not pleasant at all, as candidates are reportedly being harassed and intimidated on one hand, while voters are being induced and coerced to cast their ballots only for the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change in what supposed to be a democratic process.

THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS Commission was constrained to postpone Tuesday, December 15 re-run poll specifically in Nomodatanau, electoral District#3, due to the security situation there. The NEC has again rescheduled the re-run election for Friday, 18 December.

SPECIFICALLY, REPORT COMING out of the remote county in the western region speaks of cash inducement or vote-buying by politicians to stifle the only woman in the race from getting elected to the Legislature, which is discouraging our mothers, daughters, sisters, wives and friends from running for office and winning.

ABOUT 2021 VOTERS in Nomodatanau, a bordering town with neighboring Sierra Leone, are headed for the re-run to elect the county's next Senator. The re-run comes about after a group of young men seized four ballot boxes during the December 8th senatorial election because they claimed most of the people who voted came from Sierra Leone.

THE ONLY FEMALE in the race is BotoeKanneh, a dried meat seller, who is leading her male counterparts by 449 votes. She is said to be very popular in Nomodatonau, but she and her delegation have been denied entry there allegedly by Police and other state security forces, while the ruling CDC candidate has been holding meetings in the area with the Clan Chief, who forth night ago seized ballot boxes.

THE COALITION SEEMS to be paranoid by recent defeats across the country, and is going all out in apparent desperation to get grip on Gbarpolu County, even by unfair competition. Such tactic contradicts democratic principles that require will of the people to prevail in any election.

NO ONE SHOULD TAKE the Liberian people for granted, that they can be used and abandoned. Liberians are a resilient people, who are very cognizant of their rights as citizens. They should be given the opportunity to exercise such right at the ballot box, void of financial inducement.

GBARPOLU IS ONE of the remote counties that are yet to benefit development due to bad governance and neglect. Knowing the power of women leadership in advocating for development and people-centered service, Madam Kanneh is being unduly harassed to jeopardize her chances in the race.

WE DEMAND NOTHING less than free, fair election in Gbarpolu so that the poll results would reflect will of the electorate, as is expected in any democracy. National Elections Commission should make sure the right thing is done.

THE RULING COALITION has shown no respect for women, as demonstrated by having no female candidates on its tickets. Now the only female face in the Gbarpolu senatorial election, Independent Candidate BotoeKanneh, is being subjected to serious intimidation. This is unacceptable!

COMMENTARY

By Todd G. Buchholz

Hamilton Beats MMT

Ultra-low interest rates have fueled growing support for Modern Monetary Theory, which holds that governments can simply print money and ignore rising public debt levels without having to face the consequences. It is a neat and tempting argument, as long as one ignores history and common sense.

SAN DIEGO - Was Alexander Hamilton a fool? Modern Monetary Theorists must think so. Hamilton, whose story is now sung by millions of schoolchildren, persuaded the young United States to absorb state debt, pay it back, and build a trustworthy reputation. "If we assume the debts," goes a lyric from the musical Hamilton, "the union gets a new line of credit, a financial diuretic. How do you not get it?"¹

Should Hamilton have simply torn up the states' Revolutionary War debt? MMTers seem to believe so, arguing that countries can often print money and ignore debt with little pain. I wish I could believe that government debt doesn't matter (or that Elvis is still alive). But debt matters a great deal, and we should be thankful that US President-elect Joe Biden's presumptive treasury secretary, Janet Yellen, is not an MMT acolyte.²

Nonetheless, MMTers have been picking up ever more support. Ultra-low interest rates have fueled a growing temptation to keep printing money and ignoring debt until the very moment inflation flares up. Whenever that moment comes, MMTers assure us that the government will simply cut spending to cool off the economy. They present a neat argument if you ignore history and common sense by trusting politicians to do precisely what they are most averse to doing.¹

This is not to suggest that governments should slash spending during the COVID-19 Great Cessation, which has pushed the US jobless rate close to 7%. I support big deficits now, but eventually the US and other governments will need to rein in their raging budgets. In ten years, the Medicare and Social Security trust funds will run dry, triggering 10-25% cuts in health and pension benefits for the elderly.¹

The age-old refrain from debt apologists is, "We owe the money to ourselves." But we don't just owe money to ourselves: about one-third of US debt is held by foreigners, including around \$1.1 trillion that is in China's hands. Moreover, even if we consider only the debt held by Americans, we must ask, "Who is 'we'?" Lenders who bought US Treasuries in good faith are not the same individuals who would benefit from tearing up the bonds or inflating away their value.

Today's debt apologists have many forerunners, some buried in the rubble of ancient Greece, where fourth century BC municipalities defaulted to the Temple of Delos. In 1793, Louis XVI lost his head while trying to placate the French monarchy's creditors. In the 1920s, the Weimar Republic experienced devastating hyperinflation until the central bank gained enough freedom from freewheeling politicians to stabilize a new currency. More recently, Chile, Peru, Zimbabwe, Argentina, and Brazil have all met with near ruin after implementing MMT. Venezuela's debt is now twice its GDP, and its inflation rate is best expressed using scientific

notation.¹

Of course, MMTers dismiss these cases as exotic examples from the dizzy tropics. As MMT popularizer Stephanie Kelton of Stony Brook University tweeted in 2012, "People who scream, 'Zimbabwe!' have no idea what caused hyperinflation there..."

Fine, then, let's look instead at "advanced" economies. In the 1970s, the United Kingdom was the "sick man of Europe" (a phrase first applied by Czar Nicholas I to the crumbling Ottoman Empire), suffering explosive inflation and a sinking currency. In 1976, following an extraordinary conversion, Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan begged the International Monetary Fund for a bailout, performed a fiscal about-face, and declared to debt apologists, "I tell you in all candor that that option no longer exists."¹

Fortunately, responsible budgeting can indeed revive a country's prospects. During the 1990s, Canada and Sweden faced dreadful economic crises that wiped out millions of jobs. In 1992, Sweden's central bank raised interest rates to 500% to protect the currency from collapsing after politicians had more than doubled the country's level of borrowing. Both Sweden and Canada adopted responsible measures to slash spending, and their economies soon boomed. For its part, the US created about 18 million net new jobs in the 1990s - a bonanza kicked off by a spending pact between President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, and congressional Republicans.¹

Faced with all of these examples, MMTers' only response is to claim that their approach has worked for Japan. Never mind that the Japanese have in fact rejected MMT in both word and deed. Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda specifically calls MMT "an extreme argument that won't be accepted."

Why does Japan not fit the MMT model? For starters, 90% of Japanese debt is Japanese-held, most of it by branches of government, not by private institutions. Second, Japan has doubled its consumption taxes to pare the debt, and reduced per capita spending for the elderly in recent years. Would MMTers support either of these policies?¹

In any case, even if we were to pretend that Japan is following the MMT playbook, why would anyone want to take credit for the results? The country has experienced 20 years of stagnation, with GDP growing at less than 1% per year, and private investment as a share of GDP eroding. Two decades ago, Sony and Toyota led the world; today, Apple and Tesla overshadow them.

Former IMF Chief Economist Kenneth Rogoff scoffs that MMT is neither modern, monetary, nor a theory. That is too harsh. MMT is indeed modern, but modern like a Jackson Pollock painting - colorful, hypnotic, and a mess. It may be alluring, but it is not safe for work or for school. Instead, children should rap to the wisdom of Hamilton.

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O-PED

By Paul De Grauwe

Brexit and the Brussels Effect

After long, ill-tempered negotiations in which the UK government has tried to secure privileges for itself that it would not extend to the European Union, it is not surprising that a trade deal remains out of reach. But if the fundamental issue is sovereignty, a deal could still be reached quite easily.

LONDON - In its negotiations with the European Union over post-Brexit trade relations, the British government has become entrenched in its demands for full sovereignty. In the future, it wants to determine all of the rules about safety, the environment, health, workers' rights, and subsidies to British companies without any interference from the European Commission.

That is fine. Insisting on the right to diverge from the EU's internal-market rules is fully in keeping with the meaning of sovereignty. The problem is that the British government is also trying to maintain the United Kingdom's access to that internal market under its own rules. For example, it wants the right both to apply its own sanitation rules to the production of chicken (allowing for the use of chlorine) and then to sell those chickens in the EU, where different rules apply. Never mind that the EU also is a sovereign entity with the right to decide and enforce its own standards, and to impose tariffs on imports that violate its rules.

How can a trade deal be made to work when both parties claim full sovereignty? This claim has two overarching implications for negotiations like the one between the UK and the EU. First, it means that each party decides independently which laws will apply in its jurisdiction. Thus, all firms (including EU-based firms) selling in the UK must comply with UK laws, and all firms (including UK-based firms) selling in the EU must comply with EU law.

The second implication is that each party decides independently how it will control compliance within its own borders. Firms that do not comply are sanctioned, and each party is free to decide on the nature of those sanctions (barring sales, imposing tariffs, and so forth). Thus, UK firms selling goods in the EU that do not comply with EU law will face whatever sanctions the EU has decided, and the same holds for EU firms selling in the UK.

A trade deal based on full sovereignty could be reached quickly and implemented easily. There would be no need for joint committees tasked with negotiating the specifics of how rules and regulations in both jurisdictions will be allowed to diverge, or for complicated procedures to settle disputes when new divergences are observed. Decision-making by such committees tends to take a long time, and there will always be hot-button issues that trigger a chronic or quasi-permanent conflict between the trading partners.

By contrast, a full-sovereignty model would be relatively easy to govern in the future, because each side would retain its power to identify rule divergences and sanction them as it sees fit. Of course, once such a deal is concluded, it would be difficult if not impossible to avoid asymmetric developments in the future, owing to the fact that the EU internal market is the biggest in the world.

This asymmetry will almost invariably lead to what is known as the "Brussels effect." UK firms will eagerly comply with EU rules of their own accord, in order to benefit from access to the European market. Not doing so would result in large losses, either from sanctions for noncompliance or from forfeiting that share of the market to competitors. By contrast, the UK market is relatively small. From the perspective of EU firms, abandoning it might lead to some losses; but these would pale in comparison to those suffered by UK firms losing access to the EU market.

This asymmetry will put significant pressure on future UK governments to align their laws with those of the EU - not just in the near term but indefinitely. Though the current UK government is determined to resist this pressure, its position will increasingly put UK firms at a competitive disadvantage. Required to produce for the UK market under UK rules, and for the (much larger) EU market under EU rules, their production costs will rise. Sooner or later, the UK government would be forced to acknowledge reality.

Although the current EU-UK negotiations have often been ill-tempered and are now poised to run past the deadline, it would still be easy to come to a trade agreement based on a strict interpretation of sovereignty. Over time, the Brussels effect will bring UK laws into line with EU laws anyway. There is no need to try to force the matter today. The whip of the market will do that.

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OPINION

By Minxin Pei

China's Green Gambit

China's ambitious climate pledges have drawn praise the world over. But China will demand a high price for its contributions and can be expected to use its promise of international cooperation to undermine any containment strategy that US President-elect Joe Biden's administration tries to pursue.

C LAREMONT, CALIFORNIA - Can US President-elect Joe Biden walk and chew gum at the same time? If walking is managing domestic pressures, and chewing gum is pursuing a balanced foreign policy, the answer is far from clear. The tension between bipartisan calls to contain China and the imperative of cooperating with Chinese President Xi Jinping on climate change is a case in point.

Biden plans to marshal a broad alliance of democratically-minded Pacific and European countries to check China's expansionism. In Xi's view, however, China may be able to use the promise to cooperate on climate change as a source of leverage with which to thwart Biden's containment strategy, especially in light of Republican opposition to climate action and hostility toward China.

The stakes could not be higher. Humanity faces a truly calamitous future if the world's two largest economies - and largest CO2 emitters - don't commit to cooperating to address climate change. And yet the grim prospect that the Sino-American geopolitical competition will hamper climate cooperation is rarely discussed in either Washington or Beijing.

In the United States, the prevailing wisdom is that curtailing its CO2 emissions is in China's self-interest. Beyond being the world's largest CO2 emitter, China is the world's leading consumer of coal, accounting for 52% of global use. And high levels of pollution threaten to undermine support for the ruling Communist Party among a growing Chinese middle class demanding a cleaner environment. International pressure is also mounting.

Unfortunately, this view fails to account for China's belief that, on climate change, the West needs it more than it needs the West. It will thus demand a high price, especially from the US and its European allies, for its contributions. And, to avoid losing the international community's goodwill - or overplaying its hand - it will likely proceed in a calculated manner.

The first prong of China's strategy is already visible. At the recent Climate Ambition Summit, convened by the United Nations, Xi reiterated his pledge to reach peak CO2 emissions before 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

Xi also vowed to meet even more ambitious climate goals by 2030. These include lowering CO2 emissions per unit of GDP by 65% (from 2005 levels); ensuring that renewables account for a quarter of primary energy consumption; and increasing total installed wind and solar capacity to more than 1.2 billion kilowatts (roughly three times China's installed capacity in 2019). Such declarations aim to boost China's international profile - and put the US on the spot.

The second prong of China's strategy has not yet been unveiled, but it is reasonable to expect it to try to leverage its apparent climate leadership to secure economic and political concessions. China would first call for broadly cooperative, non-confrontational international dialogue and request tariff reductions - outgoing President Donald Trump's administration imposed a 30% tariff on Chinese solar panels - and clean-technology transfers, to help it meet its climate commitments. Besides these pragmatic demands, China's leaders will be tempted to pressure the West to tone down its criticisms of Chinese human-rights abuses, particularly the crackdown in Hong Kong and the mass incarceration of largely Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang.

This two-pronged strategy will put Biden in a bind. If his climate pledges fall short of the international community's expectations, China will look like the more responsible power. If he commits to ambitious climate goals, Republicans will undercut his credibility by sabotaging the relevant policies in Congress and the courts. Even if Republicans do not manage to block climate action today, there is the risk that a Republican administration - possibly even led by a second-term President Donald Trump - could reverse them in 2024, as Trump did when he became president in 2017.

At the same time, given bipartisan antipathy toward China in the US, Biden would probably not be able to grant even modest concessions on tariffs or technology transfers, and he would be under intense pressure to confront Xi over human-rights abuses. China could then use this as an excuse to adopt a similarly hardline stance, insisting that Biden make irrevocable climate commitments - an impossible demand given Republican opposition - before it takes more action.

The resulting stalemate would appear to be America's fault, undermining its position vis-à-vis China on the world stage. But it is from a climate perspective that this scenario would be truly catastrophic. The Biden administration must recognize how easily it can happen - and do everything possible to ensure that it doesn't.

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PERSPECTIVES PERSPECTIVES

Public Policy. Economics. Democratic Politics. Political/Economic Decentralization. Public Dishonesty. Dual Citizenship

EMMANUEL WETTEE AND HIS (LIBERIAN) GANG OF US CITIZENS NOW IN-COUNTRY (LIBERIA) CAMPAIGNING IN SUPPORT OF GROSSLY ILLEGAL, UNCONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM

With Bai M. Gbala, Sr.
December 5, 2020

Their rallying-cry is “*natural-born Liberian*” and the notion of “*once a Liberian, always a Liberian*”, made popular by the ULAA Guru for Dual Citizenship in Liberia, Mr. Emmanuel Wettee, says and preaches that “Dr. Martin Luther King’s historic Speech, ‘I Have a Dream’, is equivalent to *Once-a-Liberian, Always-a-Liberian*”.

But that statement is a *historical fallacy* and the notion of *Once-a-Liberian, Always-a-Liberian* is a planned, calculated lie.

What, indeed, are the facts and law?

Firstly, the Liberian, online *National Journal* (*Liberian National Journal*, August 28, 2013) reported the idea of “*once a Liberian, always a Liberian*”. Later, the Honorable Cllr. Varney Sherman, in his 2013 Independence Day Oration delivered as Chairman of the then Ruling Unity Political Party declared that “*once a Liberian, always a Liberian*” and turned it into the Rallying Cry of the Unity Party, US-based Diaspora former citizens of Liberia now naturalized citizens of the United States and other foreign countries, pushing for dual citizenship or dual nationality in Liberia. But that claim cannot, will not survive serious public policy, legal challenge not only that the argument is deeply untrue and illegal, but also that dual citizenship lacks the crucial, critical requirements of *allegiance, loyalty and patriotism*, with *citizenship of a single country at a given point in time*;

Secondly, the proponents of dual citizenship argument have been unable to vacate the all-time, validated truth that *no servant can serve two masters at the same time*; and the natural law of Physics that *no object can occupy two spaces at the same time*; and

Thirdly that only conditions and things such as one’s tribe and skin color may or can be described as “*always*”, because once a Gbandi person, will always be a Gbandi person; once a black person, will always be a black person; and once a white person, will always be a white person. Thus, anything that is inherent in a person that is God’s creation (naturally-endowed) that the human being lacks the ability to control or change can be properly described as “*always*”.

Citizenship may not or can never be “*always*”, because it is imposed by law (the Social Contract by the Social State). The term “*Liberian*” is a descriptive, legal term which states that *as long as one abides by such law*, then one will “*always*” be a Liberian. Therefore, we hold that “*Once-a-Liberian citizen is NOT always-a-Liberian citizen*”; here are the basic, truthful reasons and the Law in support:

1. Citizen/Citizenship is a socio-political concept *recognized, granted and adopted* by both national and international law made by humankind in society (*the Social state and Contract*), an agreement with “*terms &*



Marcus Sherman, United Liberian Association of Ghana (ULAG)
Emmanuel Wettee, All Liberian Conference on Dual Citizenship in Liberia (ALCDC)

conditions” that define mutually-binding rights, obligations and responsibilities of the individual or citizen to the state and of the state to the individual or citizen;

2. The terms “*Liberian*” & “*Citizen/Citizenship*” are designations/descriptivist that define and grant to individuals by humankind in society; *therefore, these designations/descriptivist’s may be rejected, withdrawn or held in perpetuity depending upon the holder’s obedience to or disobedience of the mutually-binding rules & regulations or “terms & conditions”;*
3. Thus, birth in Liberia or on Liberian soil (*Jus Soli, right of the soil*); but one may be born in country A and be naturalized citizen of country B;
4. Similarly, Liberian blood (*Jus Sanguinis, right of Liberian blood or ancestry*); again, one whose parents are or were citizens of country C at birth and, therefore, citizen of country C, but may be naturalized citizen of country D; and
5. Therefore, this notion of “*once a Liberian always a Liberian*” equates, unreasonably and wrongfully, Birth Rights (natural rights) to Citizenship Rights (a conditionality) given by the Social State, the political community, or confuses legitimate application of these important Rights;
6. Moreover, we repeat and emphasize that the “*crucial, critical nature and requirements of citizenship*” are exclusive *allegiance, loyalty and nationalism or Patriotism* and that *The Liberian Constitution and Elections laws forbid naturalized foreign citizenships*

simultaneously-held or Dual citizenship, while citizen of Liberia.

No doubt, we are sure, that Writer-Publisher Nyonseor is aware of the proper, legal and social applications of these Rights.

ULAA Imminent Person, Writer, Historian, Publisher (*The Perspective*, an online news magazine of Atlanta, GA., USA) and long-time political activist, Elder Nyonseor, Sr. writes “*We refuse to accept second-class Citizenship in the Country of Our Birth. I disagreed with the limitation placed on Diaspora Dual Citizens proposal submitted by Senator Varney G. Sherman; especially, for excluding dual citizens from holding the positions and office of the President, Vice President, Chief Justice, Speaker, Senate Pro tempore, Minister of Justice, Minister of Finance & Development Planning, among others*”.

“*Liberian Citizenship is our birthrights; therefore, the Liberian Legislature cannot deny us these rights because they feared us. We were born Liberians, therefore, we are prepared to see to its restoration*” (*The Perspective*, December 15, 2019).

The proposed December 8, 2020 Referendum includes that prohibition (*New Dawn Liberia*, December 2, 2020).

Importantly, a prominent, powerful but controversial Senator, very close political ally of the CDC hierarchy, “*predicts that the CDC will rig the 2020 senatorial elections as well as the 2023 presidential and general elections and that “there will be chaos”*”. This then, is the prevailing state of Liberian Politics (*Front Slider News*, November 6, 2019).

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Liberia nets US\$10.7M EU budgetary support

Liberia is set to benefit from a European Union (EU) emergency budget support in the amount of US \$10.7 Million (approximately €8.7 million) as the country battles the COVID-19 pandemic.

The amount is part of a larger envelop of of €84.26 million in support of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in four African countries: Benin, Central African Republic, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, declared that: "Our comprehensive response to the coronavirus is to offer urgent support to our partner countries in their efforts to respond to the health and socio-economic impact of the crisis. Beyond that, it involves planning the recovery in the long term so that together we can build a greener, fairer and more

involving training, awareness raising and the provision of personal protective equipment worth almost €2 million.

According to an EU release issued Friday, "in total, the EU's response to Liberia's socio-economic recovery efforts is worth upwards of €14.95 million in the form of budget support."

The EU further explains that "this emergency funding, which will be transferred to the State Treasury account, will give Liberia greater fiscal leeway to address the coronavirus pandemic in line with the priorities identified in the health, education, trade and industry, agriculture and infrastructure sectors".

Benin

The European Union is providing €46.56 million in budget support to Benin in response to the economic and health consequences of COVID-19. These funds will help increase the government's fiscal leeway in terms of financial

Republic Fiduciary Fund, has approved two decisions strengthening the European Union's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the country: additional funding of €10 million for its Santé III programme to ensure continuity of basic health care for the population throughout 2021, and a €4 million civil protection programme. The Central African fire brigade has been enlisted to implement an anti-contamination protocol, distribute water, disinfect certain public spaces and support the implementation of community surveillance in the capital's 3rd district.

Sierra Leone

To assist the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the EU has announced budget support worth €15 million. This comes on top of an emergency disbursement of €10 million announced in May 2020, bringing the total amount of EU support to €25 million. These funds will reduce pressure on the national budget and enable the government to prioritise spending in response to the pandemic, while ensuring continued support for development priorities. For example, the funds will enable increased spending on health care and social protection, the fight against food insecurity and support for the most vulnerable businesses.

Team Europe's total global response to COVID-19 stands at almost €38.5 billion, combining resources from the EU, its Member States, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Around €8 billion of this assistance is earmarked for African countries. These countries will also receive a significant share, worth €3.1 billion, of Team Europe investment guarantees. The guarantee scheme aims to promote access to finance for the private sector and to encourage investment.

measures addressing the pandemic, particularly for the most vulnerable and for business. They will also enable the government to continue its efforts to develop the country by ensuring its macroeconomic stability. This payment comes on top of an initial €10 million in the form of emergency budget support to Benin last June. In total, EU support in response to COVID-19 in Benin is worth €56.56 million.

Central African Republic

The Bêkou Fund Management Committee, the Central African

Nathaniel Blama cries foul

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The national chairperson of the opposition Liberia National Union has alarmed that the December 8th Special Senatorial election was reportedly infiltrated by foreigners from neighboring Sierra Leone.

Speaking at a news conference in Monrovia over the weekend, Mr. Nathaniel Blama said Police Inspector General, Col. Patrick Sudue admitted on radio that 36 Sierra Leoneans were arrested with Liberian voters' cards in Grand Cape Mount County.

He said such assertion from well placed official of government is worrisome and troubling for Liberia's young democracy.

Mr. Blama, a former government official, said it is terribly wrong for foreigners to intrude in the electoral process of the country, adding;

Nathaniel N. Bahway.

"Let me sound this as a warning to the NEC. You've administered very peaceful elections. But any attempt to circumvent the will and aspirations of the people through their votes has the propensities to undermine the entire outcome of the Elections." Blama stated.

Earlier, it was reported that an intense tussle between the National Elections Commission and LINU officials over whether or not votes should be recounted or a rerun conducted in district No. 2, Buluwin Town.

Blama told a news conference in Monrovia that suspicion of vote wracking in favor of CDC Candidate Dr. Peter Coleman, is a general perception of the opposition, including Independent Candidates that recently contested in the Grand Kru County, senatorial election.

He go to the Board of



sustainable world for future generations. I am convinced that Europe's engagement towards our African partners will make it possible to achieve these two key objectives."

The new EU funds will benefit the fight against coronavirus in the following countries: Benin (€46.56 million), Central African Republic (€14 million), Liberia (€8.7 million), and Sierra Leone (€15 million). These countries, which are all long-standing partners of the European Union, will be able to provide their populations with increased health and social protection support in 2021 at the same time as support to their business sector during this difficult period.

The amount in budgetary support to Liberia follows a previous emergency transfer of €6.25 million disbursed in May 2020 as well as actions



Liberians are the ones to decide their leaders, not foreigners.

He called on the government to promptly investigate the matter and make findings available to the public for timely actions to avoid a repeat of such ugly act.

The Liberia National Union says it will resist attempts by the National Elections Commission to conduct recount of ballots in contested polling precincts in Grand Kru County.

Blama claimed the party has sufficient evidence to substantiate that seals of ballot boxes were broken and remarked ballot papers stuffed.

He said refusal by the NEC to conduct rerun as opposed to recount is troubling, and an attempt to steal genuine votes in favor of LINU Candidate

Commissioners for further redress and thereafter, the Supreme Court, if there is no decision to have a re-run.

Voting is expected to take place shortly in three precincts namely: Boluwin Town, precinct No. 18029, Beloken Town Hall No. 18050 and WARKPO PUBLIC SCHOOL precinct No. 18024.

Blama lamented that NEC chairperson Cllr. Davidetta Browne Lansanah has vehemently rejected call by LINU for a rerun, citing legal provisions governing elections and lack of notice by NEC's Grand Kru county Magistrate for a rerun. Currently, Mr. Nathaniel N. Bahway -LINU leads with 22.22 percent.

Furthermore, Blama stated that the opposition Liberia National Union is alarmed over vicious intimidation of some of

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Bed bugs take over central prisons

-Prison Director

Rev. S. Sainleseh Kwaidah, Director of Prisons at the Ministry of Justice discloses that due to poor health services and congestion at the Monrovia Central Prison and other prison facilities in the country, bed-bugs commonly known here as 'chains' are taking over these institutions, posing serious threat to inmates.

"Bed bugs or 'Chains' are gradually taking over the Monrovia Central Prison because of the continued deteriorating health condition of the prison, over-population of prison facilities in the country is a major challenge; there is no budget

the total number of prisoners and beyond are pre-trial detainees, adding that most of those cases are individuals who were accused of rape and minor crimes.

Rev. Kwaidah reveals that only six out of 16 prison facilities in the country have clinics with assigned health workers from the Ministry of Health that report for duty daily, while the rest receive scheduled visitations.

Her continues there is only one ambulance for all 16 prisons, making it difficult for prisoners to be transported under protective custody for treatment whenever they are sick.

Statistics from the Monrovia Central Prison shows the facility was constructed for roughly 300

daily basis.

It was disclosed during the forum that meal prepared for prisoners can't nourish those inmates who are sick because of poor condition of the food, and sometimes it becomes impossible for prison officials to even get funds to purchase food for the inmates because of huge bureaucracy.

The Ministry of Health Prison Focal Person, Ernest Davis says there is no budgetary allotment within the Ministry of Health for prisons' health services across the country, so lack of drugs at prison facilities in Liberia affect inmates' survival.

Mr. Davis explains due to the lack of ambulances at prisons across the country, inmates are being transported on motorbikes, and often, correction officers have to walk with prisoners to health facilities in rural areas.

The purpose of the meeting, according to the Rural Human Rights Activists Programme (RHRAP) Executive Director, LormaBaysah, is to highlight need for Civil Society Organizations to identify structural solutions to prison's health and a collaborative problem-solving initiative for prison facilities in Liberia.

Baysah recalls that after two years of working to build the capacities of the Police and correction officers, it is time all CSOs come together and advocate for the Bureau of Correction and Rehabilitation to become autonomous.

According to him, if the Bureau is separated from the Ministry of Justice, those structural issues will be addressed and fundamental rights of inmates prioritized.

"There is a need for civil society intervention in buttressing government's efforts on the prison health, though it is not their responsibility. This may include more support to the BCR from CSOs and partners for the Bureau to secure its semi-autonomy. This will enhance prison operations in a robust manner," he said.

Meanwhile, the one-day meeting on strengthening the human rights of prisoners within correctional facilities and at grassroots level in Liberia program is being implemented by the Rural Human Rights Activists Programme (RHRAP) and Serving Humanity, Empowerment and Development (SHED) with funding from the European Union (EU). -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Liberians warned against violence

A concern Liberian has warned his fellow countrymen to desist from electoral violence if the country's democratic process will be sustained and advanced to an appreciable level for all to choose leaders of their choice through the ballot box.

Mr. Amos M. Lavalah narrated his experience of electoral violence at Moi River in Kongba District, Gbarpolu County, which is very hard to access by vehicles, but motorbikes due to lot of hills.

Mr. Lavalah alleged that supporters of one of the candidates in the senatorial

He noted that reports coming from Gbarpolu County through the electronic and print media of intimidation of Madam Kanneh are not factual, as reported in Monrovia and other women organizations condemning without proper investigation of the situation on the ground.

Mr. Lavalah said in holding elections in rural Liberia, government should ensure that lives and properties are protected by reinforcing the Police to prevent violence.

He observed that the lack of adequate police officers in more rural parts of the country after the civil war has made



allocation for inmates' health within the Ministries of Health and Justice for prison facilities in Liberia," Rev. Kwaidah laments.

He raised the alarm during a one-day meeting held at Corina Hotel in Sinkor on Friday, December 18, 2020 where over 15 Civil Society Organizations gathered to identify structural solution to prison's health and a collaborative problem-solving initiative.

According to the Director of Prisons, over-population of prisons is one of the major challenges threatening inmates' health besides shortage of medication.

He notes that one of the issues that is causing over-crowdedness of prison facilities is that two-thirds of

prisoners but to date, it holds over 1,261 prisoners.

Several prominent members of the Civil Society note that for years now the health system at prisons in Liberia remained deplorable; adding that prisoners are among the most vulnerable people in the society.

The express bluntly that the Government of Liberia is paying little or no attention at all, to prisoners and prison facilities because the authorities seem to believe substandard and less care is another way of punishing prisoners.

Addressing the one-day meeting, human rights activists and lawyers said the health condition of prisons in Liberia remains a major concern, as prison facilities deteriorate on a



election in Gbarpolu County, BotoeKanneh erected two checkpoints leading to Moi River with youth carrying cutlasses preventing other candidates' supporters from accessing places to share their messages with the people.

He explained that boys at the checkpoints also prevented him from accessing the places at Moi River, noting that they intimidated him while Madam Kanneh and her female friends were around watching their boys stopping other people from passing at the checkpoints, which according to him, reflected his mind back to the 14-year senseless civil war in Liberia.

some people to think they can take the law into their hands with impunity.

According to him, it is about time the National Elections Commission and the Liberia National Police work together to ensure enough police officers are present in the various counties to maintain law and order.

Mr. Lavalah urged the youth of Liberia to be mindful of politicians whose intention is to use them for electoral violence, urging them to resist violence in any form and ensure the fragile peace in Liberia is maintained and sustained. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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Français

Sénatoriales 2020 : Une délégation de l'opposition interpellée à Gbarpolu

Une délégation de la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP), une plateforme des principaux partis politiques de l'opposition (CPP), a été arrêtée par des agents des forces de sécurité dans le comté de Gbarpolu sur fond de violences post-électorales qui continuent d'empêcher la reprise partielle de l'élection sénatoriale dans une localité du comté.

La délégation s'était rendue dans le comté de Gbarpolu pour s'enquérir des réalités sur le

terrain et éventuellement apporter un soutien technique à la candidate indépendante Mme Gbotoe Kanneh qui ferait l'objet de harcèlement politique et de violation des droits de l'homme, selon les responsables de la CPP.

A cause de la violence électorale qui secoue ces derniers temps le comté, les autorités de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) ont reporté la reprise partielle de l'élection à Nomodatahum, dans le district numéro 3 du comté de Gbarpolu à une date méconnue.

La NEC a déclaré avoir retiré

tout son personnel de la zone et fait valoir qu'elle ne procéderait à leur redéploiement que lorsque la situation se sera normalisée. Jusqu'à présent, aucune date précise n'a été fixée pour la reprise partielle de l'élection dans cette localité frontalière proche de la Sierra Leone.

Lors d'un entretien téléphonique avec ce quotidien jeudi soir, le porte-parole de la police, Moses Carter, a confirmé que sept membres de

► CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Alfred Gayflor Koiwood

Madam Botoe Kanneh

Guinée : La présence d'opposants au 3e mandat dans le prochain gouvernement d'Alpha Condé ?

Des opposants au troisième mandat, dont Faya Millimono et Ousmane Kaba, ont fait le déplacement, le 15 décembre, pour prendre part au palais Moahmed V de Conakry à la cérémonie de prestation de serment du président Alpha Condé. Une

démarche qui ne surprend guère le leader de l'Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG).

"Le nomadisme politique existe", relativise Cellou Dalein Diallo qui précise que des opposants ont "combattu le troisième mandat avec beaucoup de force et

détermination. Mais il ne faut pas exclure de les voir demain dans le gouvernement d'Alpha Condé.

Il assure que son parti continuera à rester constant dans le combat qu'il mène. "On n'a jamais eu un double langage. On sera là tant que la gouvernance sera ce qu'elle est aujourd'hui. Nous allons la dénoncer et la combattre", s'engage l'ancien Premier ministre.

Malgré l'investiture d'Alpha Condé pour un troisième mandat de six, Dalein souligne qu'il n'entend pas abandonner la lutte pour le respect de la vérité des urnes. Il dit compter sur le soutien des guinéens "épris de paix, de justice et démocratie".

"C'est tout le peuple de Guinée qui souhaite que notre pays vive dans une société juste, régie par les règles de l'Etat de droit et de la démocratie. Ce combat-là, il sera mené jusqu'à bout", promet-il.



Les Libériens disent « oui » à George Weah, mais...

Les libériens ont certes voté « oui », mais ont par ailleurs sanctionné le camp du Président George Weah.

Les Libériens ont dit « oui » aux amendements du Président George Weah, visant à réduire le mandat du chef de l'Etat et à autoriser la double nationalité, selon des résultats partiels pour un tiers des régions du pays annoncés mardi. Dans le même temps, les électeurs ont infligé un sérieux revers au parti au pouvoir lors du vote sénatorial tenu le même jour.

En effet, l'opposition a remporté 15 des 30 sièges au Sénat, dont celui du comté de Montserrado, le comté le

l'emporte, il faut qu'il remporte les deux tiers des suffrages valides exprimés, ce qui pourrait compliquer les choses à en juger par les résultats partiels.

Dans le bastion électoral historique de George Weah, l'un de ses plus féroces opposants, le sénateur Darius Dillon, a été réélu avec 61% des voix, selon la Commission électorale. Le vote a également été un baromètre pour le Président George Weah, qui avait suscité de grands espoirs en 2018 en accédant au pouvoir dans ce pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest encore marqué par la guerre civile de 1989-2003 et



plus peuplé du pays, qui comprend la capitale Monrovia.

Selon la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) le « oui » sur les huit questions l'a emporté dans les cinq comtés où le décompte a été effectué, sur les 15 que compte le Liberia. Au Sénat, sur les sept comtés entièrement comptés, l'opposition en a remporté quatre, contre deux pour le Congrès pour le changement démocratique (CDC) de George Weah et un pour un candidat indépendant, selon la NEC.

Mais selon la loi électorale, pour que le « oui »

l'épidémie d'Ebola de 2014-2016.

Le dirigeant n'a pas réussi à redresser l'économie et l'enthousiasme a cédé la place au désenchantement.

Raison pour laquelle les principaux partis d'opposition avaient appelé au boycott du référendum.

Bien que George Weah, 54 ans, en soit encore à son premier mandat, ses opposants craignent qu'il ne profite d'un amendement constitutionnel pour affirmer que la loi lui offre un nouveau départ, tout comme son homologue guinéen et voisin Alpha Condé et le président ivoirien Alassane Ouattara.

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Français

Sénatoriales 2020 : Une délégation

la délégation de la CPP, dont Me AloysiousToe, ont été interpellés jeudi dans la ville de Bopolu pour « incitation à la violence électorale et avoir jeté des urnes dans la rivière ».

«La vérité est que tous ceux qui ont été interpellés à Bopolu aujourd’hui étaient des gens qui étaient responsables des violences électorales qui ont eu lieu à Nomo... dans le comté de Gbarpolu», a déclaré M. Carter. Selon le porte-parole de la police, parmi ces personnes figure Me Aloysious To, secrétaire général du Congrès national alternatif (ANC), un parti membre de la coalition CPP, pour incitation présumée à la violence.

«Ils sont au nombre de sept. On reproche à certains d’avoir jeté des urnes dans la rivière appelée ULC... et d’autres d’être responsables d’incitation à la violence », a expliqué Carter, qui a rejeté catégoriquement les informations selon lesquelles certaines femmes auraient été violées. Selon M. Carter, il n’y avait aucune femme parmi toutes les personnes qui ont été arrêtées par la police.

« Comment se fait-il qu’une femme ait été violée alors qu’aucune femme n’a été arrêtée et encore moins été détenue par la police », a-t-il dit, avant d’ajouter que la police n’a reçu aucun rapport de viol en relation avec la violence électorale dans le comté de Gbarpolu.

Concernant le lieu où se trouve actuellement la candidate indépendante BotoeKanneh, M. Carter a fait savoir la police n’en sait rien. D’après lui, la police a pris contacts son entourage, mais personne ne voulait dire où elle se trouve pour des raisons de sécurité. Un peu plus tôt, M. Kla Edward Toomey, un responsable de l’opposition, disait sur la radio OK FM que le chef du secrétariat de la CPP, Me AloysiousToe, avait été arrêté à Gbarpolu.

Selon lui, la délégation de la CPP s’était rendue à Gbarpolu pour une mission d’enquête sur la possibilité de prêter un appui technique à la candidate indépendante Mme GbotoeKanneh qui serait en tête du peloton, selon les résultats provisoires partiels de la sénatoriale dans le comté. «La délégation a été détenue pendant plus de 48 heures contre nos lois. Après une pression croissante de la CPP et des médias, ils ont été relâchés. Ce matin, alors qu’ils se rendaient en ville pour essayer de revenir à Monrovia, ils ont été de nouveau arrêtés et au moment où nous parlons, ils sont traités comme des criminels », a déploré M. Toomey. «Leur seul crime jusqu’à présent est de s’être

rendu dans cette partie du pays, dans leur propre pays, pour apporter leur soutien à une candidate. Deux membres de sa délégation auraient été violés.

Le représentant du comté de Gbarpolu, Alfred Koiwood, qui est le candidat du parti au pouvoir à l’élection sénatoriale, accuse pour sa part son adversaire Mme GbotoeKannehd’avoir aggravé la situation en faisant croire que son frèreBoakaiKanneh a été kidnappé et tué.

Il a démenti les informations qui font état de la sortie d’un masque sacré empêchant son adversaire de faire campagne et de ce que le ministre d’État aux Affaires présidentielles, M. Nathaniel McGill, aurait tout manigancé pour qu’il soit élu au Sénat. «Si quelqu’un dit que l’honorable McGill a orchestré tout pour que je devienne sénateur, alors il a menti. Ce n’est pas vrai », a dit M. Koiwood.

D’après lui, c’est plutôt son adversaire Mme Kanneh qui a érigé deux points de contrôle sur la route qui mène à la localité en question.

Nomodatahum est une localitéfrontalière proche de la Sierra Leone. Une reprise de l’élection sénatoriale de mi-mandat du 8 décembre 2020 y était prévue pour mardi 15 décembre, mais, pour cause de violences post-électorales dans le comté de Gbarpolu, elle a été reportée à une date ultérieure qui n’a pas encore été précisée.

L’élection a été perturbée le jour du scrutin par des jeunes en colère qui, sur instructions du chef de clan, ont pris d’assaut quatre centres de vote et emporté les urnes contenant des bulletins de vote et autres matériels de vote.

Actuellement, selon les résultats provisoires de la NEC à l’élection sénatoriale du comté, Mme BotoeKanneh, une candidate indépendante, est en tête avec quelque 449 voix de plus que le candidat de la Coalition au pouvoir, Alfred GayflorKoiwood, qui occupe la deuxième place. Une victoire de cette dernière dans cette localité pourrait sceller sa victoire définitivement.

Mais selon des informations qui circulent depuis lundi, les électeurs et surtout les militants de Mme Botoe seraient l’objet d’intimidation. Des témoins font état de la présence d’un masque traditionnel, qui serait sorti sur ordre du chef de clan, un militant inconditionnel de la Coalition pour le Changement Démocratique (coalition au pouvoir), ce qui empêcheraitles gens d’accéder à la localité.

L’équipe juridique de Mme BotoeKanneh de Sannah&Partners a déposé une plainte devant la présidente de la NEC Mme Davidetta Brown-Lasanah lundi, indiquant que sa cliente et ses militants sont la cible d’attaques.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Todd G. Buchholz

Hamilton gagnant contre la TMM

SAN DIEGO - Alexander Hamilton était-il un imbécile ? C’est ce que doivent penser les partisans de la théorie monétaire moderne. Hamilton, dont l’histoire est maintenant chantée par des millions d’écoliers, persuada les jeunes États-Unis d’absorber la dette publique, de la rembourser et de construire une réputation de fiabilité. « Si nous prenons les dettes à notre charge - disent les paroles de la comédie musicale Hamilton - l’Union obtiendra de nouvelles lignes de crédits, un diurétique financier. Comment ne pas le comprendre ? »

Hamilton aurait-il dû déchirer la dette accumulée par les États lors de la guerre révolutionnaire ? Les soutiens de la TMM semblent le penser, lorsqu’ils affirment que les pays peuvent à loisir imprimer de la monnaie et ignorer la dette sans en souffrir. Je serais heureux de pouvoir croire que la dette publique importe peu (ou qu’Elvis est toujours vivant), mais la dette importe, beaucoup, et nous devrions être reconnaissants au président élu Joe Biden d’avoir choisi pour secrétaire au Trésor, sous réserve de son approbation par le Sénat, Janet Yellen, qui n’est pas une adepte de la TMM.

Les partisans de la TMM voient cependant affluer des soutiens toujours plus nombreux. Des taux d’intérêt extrêmement bas ont nourri la tentation croissante de continuer à émettre de la monnaie et d’ignorer la dette jusqu’à ce que l’inflation ne reparte à la hausse. Lorsque ce moment arrivera, assurent les théoriciens monétaires modernes, il suffira de diminuer la dépense publique pour ralentir l’économie. L’argument est ingénieux, à condition d’ignorer l’histoire et de n’avoir pas de sens commun, car c’est croire que les élus accepteraient ce à quoi ils sont précisément le moins enclins.

Cela ne veut pas dire, bien sûr, qu’il serait opportun de couper dans les dépenses pendant la grande cessation d’activités liée au Covid-19, laquelle a fait remonter le taux de chômage aux États-Unis à presque 7 %. Si je soutiens le creusement actuel des déficits, il faudra que dans l’avenir les gouvernements des États-Unis et des autres pays limitent l’exubérance de leurs budgets. Dans dix ans, les fonds alloués à Medicare et à l’aide sociale s’épuiseront, ce qui déclenchera une baisse de 10 à 25 % des allocations de santé et de retraite des personnes âgées.

On connaît le vieux refrain des thuriféraires de la dette : « C’est à nous-mêmes que nous devons cet argent. » Mais nous ne le devons pas qu’à nous-même : un tiers environ de la dette des États-Unis est détenue à l’étranger, dont 1 100 milliards de dollars par la Chine. En outre, même si l’on ne considère que la dette détenue pas les Américains, nous devons nous demander qui est ce « nous ». Des prêteurs qui ont acheté de bonne foi des bons du Trésor sont à distinguer de ceux à qui profitera leur effondrement ou leur gonflement au-delà de leur valeur.

Les actuels laudateurs de la dette ont eu de nombreux précurseurs, dont certains sont enterrés dans les décombres de la Grèce antique, où certaines cités du IV^e siècle av. J.-C. ne purent rembourser leurs emprunts au temple de Délos. En 1793, Louis XVI a perdu sa tête alors qu’il tentait de calmer les créanciers de la monarchie française. Dans les années 1920, la république de Weimar a fait la cruelle expérience de l’hyperinflation, jusqu’à ce qu’une banque centrale obtienne de responsables politiques en perdition suffisamment d’autonomie pour stabiliser la nouvelle devise. Plus récemment, le Chili, le Pérou, le Zimbabwe, l’Argentine et le Brésil ont tous frôlé la ruine après avoir mis en œuvre les préceptes de la théorie monétaire moderne. La dette du Venezuela représente aujourd’hui deux fois son PIB, et il est devenu plus commode d’exprimer son taux d’inflation en utilisant la notation

scientifique - qui recourt aux puissances de 10.

Évidemment, les théoriciens monétaires modernes rejettent ces exemples qui ne relèvent à leurs yeux que de l’étourderie tropicale. Comme l’a lancé dans un tweet Stephanie Kelton, de l’université Stony Brook, qui a beaucoup fait pour la popularité de la TMM : « Les gens qui n’ont à la bouche que nom du Zimbabwe n’ont pas la moindre idée de ce qui a causé là-bas l’hyperinflation... »

D’accord, mais alors, regardons du côté des économies « avancées ». Dans les années 1970, le Royaume-Uni était l’« homme malade de l’Europe » (l’expression vient du tsar Nicolas Ier, qui désignait ainsi l’Empire ottoman), souffrant d’une inflation galopante et d’une monnaie qui faisait naufrage. En 1976, suite à une conversion pour le moins extraordinaire, le Premier ministre travailliste James Callaghan demanda l’aide du Fonds monétaire international et opéra un revirement budgétaire complet, déclarant aux champions de la dette : « Je vous dis en toute honnêteté [que son creusement] n’est plus envisageable. »

Fort heureusement, une politique budgétaire responsable peut, bien sûr, redonner des perspectives à un pays. Dans les années 1990, le Canada et la Suède durent faire face à d’épouvantables crises économiques, qui supprimèrent les millions d’emplois. En 1992, la Banque centrale de Suède releva ses taux d’intérêt à 500 %, afin d’empêcher l’effondrement de sa monnaie après que les élus eurent plus que doublé le niveau d’emprunt du pays. Mais la Suède et le Canada adoptèrent des mesures responsables pour réduire drastiquement leurs dépenses et leurs économies furent bientôt relancées. De leur côté, les États-Unis créèrent 18 millions d’emplois nets dans les années 1990 - une situation exceptionnelle que permit un pacte entre le président démocrate Bill Clinton et la majorité républicaine au Congrès.

Devant tous ces exemples, la seule réponse des théoriciens monétaire modernes est de prétendre que la méthode fonctionne au Japon. Peu leur importe que les Japonais aient rejeté la TMM en mots comme en actes. Le gouverneur de la Banque du Japon, Haruhiko Kuroda a pris le soin de qualifier la TMM de « raisonnement outrancier qui ne sera pas accepté ».

Pourquoi le Japon ne correspond-il pas au modèle de la TMM ? Pour commencer, 90 % de la dette japonaise sont effectivement détenus par des Japonais, mais pour l’essentiel par des organismes publics et non par des institutions privées. Deuxièmement, Le Japon a doublé ses taxes sur la consommation pour contenir sa dette, et réduit ces dernières années les pensions de retraite des personnes âgées. Les théoriciens monétaires modernes soutiendraient-ils l’une ou l’autre de ces mesures ?

Quoi qu’il en soit, si l’on prétend que le Japon suit réellement les principes de la TMM, pourquoi, dès lors, personne ne s’en attribue-t-il les mérites ? Le pays a connu vingt ans de stagnation avec un PIB dont la croissance n’atteignait pas 1 % par an, et la part de l’investissement privé dans le PIB est en baisse. Voici vingt ans, Sony et Toyota menaient le monde ; aujourd’hui, Apple et Tesla les ont doublées.

Kenneth Rogoff, ancien économiste en chef du FMI, raille la TMM pour n’être ni moderne, ni monétaire, ni même une théorie. C’est un peu rude. La MMT est évidemment moderne, mais moderne comme peut l’être un dripping de Jackson Pollock, hypnotique, vif, et désordonné. Elle peut séduire, mais n’est une manière prudente ni pour les emplois ni en classe. Les enfants devraient plutôt apprendre à rapper la sagesse d’Hamilton.

Liberia sees daily record of COVID-19 following elections

By J. Peter S. Dennis
(LMD Fellow)

It was an all-time daily record of newly confirmed COVID-19 cases on December 16 in Liberia. The spike comes one week after the elections concluded in Liberia, during which widespread disrespect of health protocols was observed throughout the nation.

On December 8, 2020, Liberians went to the polls to cast their ballots in the Special Senatorial Elections, National Referendum and the

be prevented from voting on the reasons of not wearing a facial mask.

Moreover, the majority of polling centers visited by this newspaper lacked a digital thermometer to measure the temperature, as fever is the primary indicator that a person may be ill.

This reporter visited more than a dozen polling centers, including Gbarnga Sports Stadium that has over 3,796 registered voters; the John Flomo Bakalu center with 3,952 registered voters; N.V. Massaquoi with 3,851

and vote."

The World Health Organizations advises that masks should not be shared among people, and there are extremely strict rules on how to wear a facial mask in order to prevent the spread of the deadly virus:

Clean your hands before you put your mask on, as well as before and after you take it off, and after you touch it at any time.

Make sure it covers your nose, mouth, and chin.

When you take off a mask, store it in a clean plastic bag, and every day either wash it if it is a fabric mask, or dispose of a medical mask in a trash bin.

Thirty-six years old Mary Sumo, from Foequellah, Panta district, said that she cannot afford a nose mask or hand sanitizer, a situation most people in poor countries face.

A piece of tailored nose mask is sold for 50 Liberian dollars, while a small bottle of hand sanitizer costs 250 Liberian dollars.

In 2014, the House of Representatives agreed with the Liberian Senate to set the daily minimum wage for skilled workers at US\$6.00, which totals US\$186.00 or an equivalent of LRD29, 760 per month, while unskilled and domestic workers are subject to US\$4.00 per day, amounting to US\$124.00 or an equivalent of LRD19, 840 monthly.

The legislation affects all sectors of the economy, including government and concessionaires.

Two staff of the NEC, who preferred not to be named for fear of retaliation, noted that wearing of nose masks or carrying disinfectants were not required, as the NEC had earlier announced they were not mandatory.



by-elections for the House of Representatives, mainly ignoring the fact that the country is in the midst of a pandemic.

According to the Johns Hopkins University, Liberia registered two of the highest daily record cases of new COVID-19 infections on December 3, with 68 cases and on December 16, with 97 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19. Liberia has a total of 1,779 confirmed COVID-19 cases, and 83 deaths, but the numbers are significantly higher as the people refuse to report symptoms and the ill due to fear of isolation and quarantine.

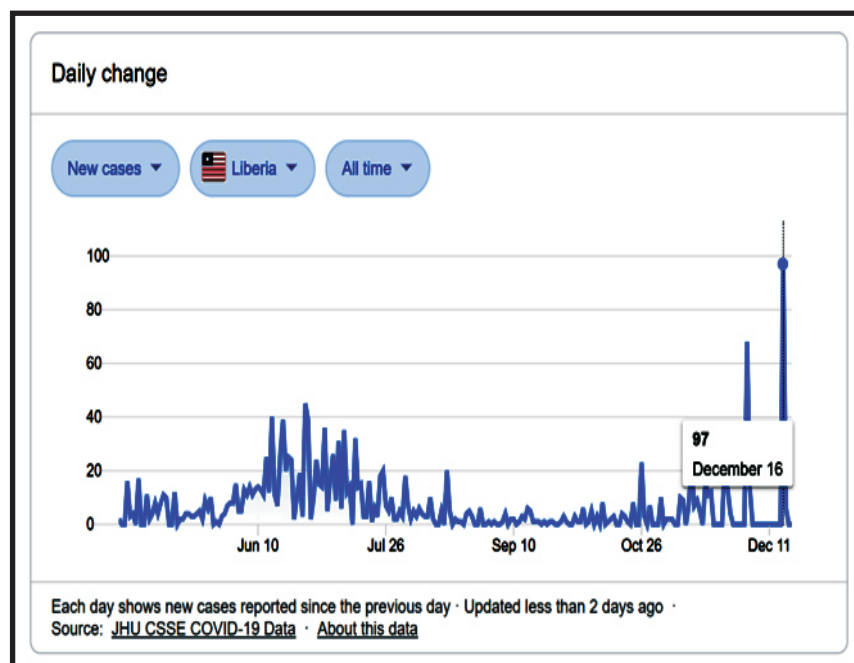
Enthusiastic voters, including first-time voters, health-challenged elderly voters and people living with disabilities, ignored the warnings of a superspreader event, took to the voting centers on December 8 without masks, social distancing, or handwashing, the three important measures that can help stop the spread of the virus.

The National Elections Commission (NEC), while it encouraged people to adhere to the health protocols, it made it clear that no one will

registrants; Elelepayea Public School with 3,253 registered voters; J.F. Clark Kindergarten with 3,998 registered voters, among others. The numbers of total registered voters are according to NEC official reports.

Hannah Flomo, a first-time voter in Bayata, electoral district number 2, was not aware of the health protocols, and in her family a mask is considered a luxury.

"I never knew whether people should wear nose masks before voting, so I did not take my father's nose mask to come



On December 16 Liberia recorded an all-time high number of daily confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Power Oil Liberia presents LD\$400,000 to MYS

By Lewis S. Teh

As the Liberia Football Association (LFA) 2020/2021 National County Sports meet gets underway, a Liberian - owned oil company Power Oil Liberia has presented LD\$400,000 check to officials of the Ministry of Youth and Sports as an initial contribution to the ministry in preparation to commence the county sports meet.

Power Oil Liberia is a Liberian - owned oil company that is involved in the importation and distribution of gasoline products in the country.

Presenting the check on behalf of Power Oil Chief Executive Officer Mr. Leon D. Nyenetue to two officials of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Power Oil Marketing

enabling environment where every youth can contribute in a meaningful way to the development of Liberia.

"It is our fervent hope that in the coming years, and in due time we will continue to promote our country because if we don't support and develop this country, no one will do it for us," he says.

Receiving the check on behalf of the MYS, the Director of Sports at the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Former Head Coach of the national soccer team Lonestar Mr. Thomas Kojo expresses at Power Oil Company for making such a huge donation in support of the upcoming national county sports meet.

"The government through the Ministry of Youth and Sports is excited to get such a check from a Liberian - owned



Manager Charles F. Amoh says the LD\$400, 000 was the company's own way of identifying with the ministry in providing sponsorship.

"Our contribution to the MYS is to contribute to the development of this country, and to support the Pro-poor Agenda for Peace and Prosperity, because we realize that President Weah alone can't do it all," Amoh says.

The Power Oil official uses the occasion to express the company's deepest appreciation to President Weah for providing the

company. There were many we wrote for sponsorship and Power Oil is one of them. All we can say is to thank [you] for their initial contribution," Mr. Kojo says.

He explains that in sports, it is very important that sponsorship comes in especially the financial sponsorship, stressing that everyone knows that the county meet is one of the biggest sporting tournaments here.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

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Fight for Deputy Speaker post intensifies

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The dust has not settled down totally from the December 08, 2020 special senatorial election and national referendum when lawmakers at the Capitol are already eyeing the post of deputy speaker, made vacant by the overwhelming election of Bong County Representative Prince Moye, to the Senate.

Now Senator-elect, Mr. Moye held the post for three years since the inauguration

of becoming Speaker of the House.

According to the rules of the House of Representatives, whenever there is vacancy for the deputy speakership, the leadership and the entire membership of the House shall elect a member during their first or second day of sitting statutorily in January.

Also, Representatives Samuel Kogar and Johnson Gwakolo both of Nimba County have expressed interest for the post, besides Montserrado

colleagues to join six other Representatives eyeing the deputy speaker position.

On Saturday, Rep. Koffa replied scores of journalists: "I have not joined anything. I am in consultation to join."

However, the complete line-up of lawmakers with interest for the second highest office in the House are: Lofa County District #3 Representative Clarence Massaquoi; Education Chairman, Rep. Johnson Gwaikolo of Nimba County District #9; Commerce Committee chairman Rep. Samuel Kogar (Nimba County District #5); Rep. Moima Briggs-Mensah of Bong County District #6 and Rep. Richard Koon of Montserrado County District #12, respectively.

Sources said if Rep. Koffa entered the race, he has 95% probability of winning, but could face strong challenge from Rep. Gwaikolo and Rep. Clarence Massaquoi in the impending fight to replace Prince K. Moye, who has ascended to the Senate.

Impeccable sources revealed that Rep. Koffa met with about 25 members of the House of Representatives on Friday night in a local hotel in Monrovia on his quest for the post.

One of those at the meeting said the "like-minded" Representatives present agreed to support Cllr. Koffa's candidature for deputy speaker, arguing that he has a "big heart, open hand and is educated to ably assist in steering the affairs of the Honorable House of Representatives in and outside" of Liberia. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



of President George Manneh Weah in 2018 until he vied for the Senate and won in his native Bong County.

Several members of the House have expressed desire to contest for the deputy speaker post, including Grand Kru County Electoral District #2 Representative, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa. Rumors had circulated in the corridors of the 54th Legislature that Representative Koffa has been nurturing the ambition

County Representative Richard Koon of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP).

But Cllr. Koffa, who chairs the House of Representatives statutory committee on Judiciary, is said to have already begun consultations, as the bid for the second leadership position intensifies.

The Grand Kru County District #2 Representative and former national chairman of the opposition Liberty Party has been petitioned by his

Clashes in Grand Kru Several homes burnt

Police authority in Monrovia have confirmed clashes in the south eastern towns of Grand Kru County over a stretch of land which resulted to the burning down of several homes.

Police spokesman Moses Carter told the New Dawn in Monrovia Sunday that the

citizens from Berwein left their town in Grand Kru and burned down structures in Worwein, in Maryland.

The police spokesman further told the New Dawn that it took the efforts of officers of the Liberian National police to bring the situation under control.

The police confirmation



clashes were over a boarder land between Grand Kru and Maryland with each of the nearby towns claiming ownership.

He named the towns as Worwein of Maryland County and Berwein in Grand Kru County. Carter said the stretch of disputed land is being divided by a creek.

He told the paper that

follows reports in two online editions Independent Probe and GNN, which reported of clashes over forestland.

Mr. Carter further told this paper that the Superintendent of both Grand Kru and Maryland have agreed to visit the disputed area for the demarcation of the border between the two counties.

Nathaniel Blama

Cont'd from page 6

its partisans in Grand Kru County, by officers of the Liberia National Police.

He said two of its members, including the party Grand Kru County Chairman, Samson Collins, and James Wheler, Party Representative, were arrested, intimidated and are now behind bars even after frantic efforts by Public defenders to seek their release from further detention failed.

The pairs are accused of inciting violence which narrowly left the Barclayville City Hall burned, with windshield of a NEC vehicle

smashed.

Information available to this paper says in Barclayville, members of the opposition bloc, including independent candidates have joined forces in calling for unconditional release of the poll results.

The NEC office in Barclay reported the insensitivity of the situation with protesters threatening to burn down the building, if the results are wrecked in favor of incumbent Senator Peter Coleman of the CDC. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Starts from back page

Covid-19 still

been recently developed that should possibly bring this pandemic under control, President Weah cautions that a second wave of infections that appears to be more deadly than ever before is being witnessed.

However, he says Liberians and foreign residents here should all be thankful to the Almighty God for sparing Liberia from the extremes of this global scourge.

"Through His bountiful Grace and Mercy, we have been able to implement measures that have enabled us to contain the pandemic and minimize its negative effects on our people," President Weah continues.

He further appreciates

God for having guided and strengthening the hands and given courage to the hearts of the doctors, nurses, and other care givers here who are on the frontline of Liberia's struggle with this deadly disease.

Regarding the lighting of the National Christmas Tree, President Weah notes that this ceremony marks the official beginning of the Christmas Season, when members of the Christian faith around the world celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"This event, which took place over two (2) centuries ago, has always been commemorated as a time of joy and happiness, a time of fellowship and goodwill, and a time of peace," he says.

He thanks Liberia's international and bilateral partners for their cooperation, goodwill, and support given to his government in assisting to keep the nation safe.

"And so, even as we celebrate the birth of the Infant Jesus, we must take pause to reflect on the blessings that God has bestowed upon us as a Nation and as a People. We have faced many challenges this year, but He has guided our Ship of State through contrary winds and troubled waters, with a steady hand, and brought us safely to a peaceful shore," he notes further.

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Covid-19 still a threat

-Weah cautions Liberians



By Winston W. Parley

President George Manneh Weah has cautioned Liberians and foreign residents to be careful as they gather for festive season celebrations, warning that coronavirus is still an ever-present threat to the health and well-being of the population here.

While carrying out a very important national tradition - the lighting of the National

Christmas Tree on the grounds of the Executive Mansion Friday, 18 December, Mr. Weah reflected on the terrible devastation suffered by all peoples and nations of the world since last year's Christmas, which was caused by the advent of Coronavirus pandemic.

"Let me also remind you that the Coronavirus is still an ever-present threat to our health and well-being. I therefore urge all of you to be careful as you

gather for your celebrations, take all necessary precautions, and strictly observe all health protocols as published by the Ministry of Health.

According to the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL), Liberia has 290 confirmed coronavirus cases, and the country has recorded 83 deaths and 1,406 recoveries so far out of 1,779 cases of the virus reported since the outbreak in March this year.

Last week NPHIL reported that no new confirmed case had been reported and that there had been no new death or recovery reported as of 10:00 PM on Thursday, 17 December.

In just this year alone, Mr. Weah indicates that this plague has infected dozens of millions of people around the globe, and has caused the untimely deaths of tens of thousands of these persons.

While new vaccines have

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