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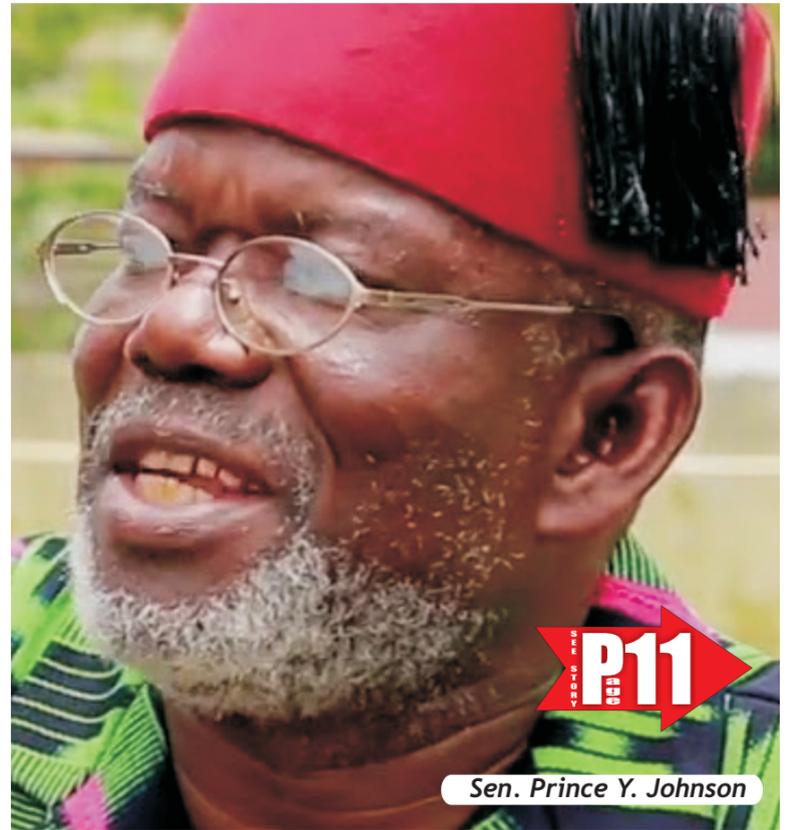
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Larry Youngquoi envies me

-Sen. PYJ reacts to attack



P11

Sen. Prince Y. Johnson



P10

Agriculture Minister Jeannie Cooper

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-as MOA jumpstarts activities

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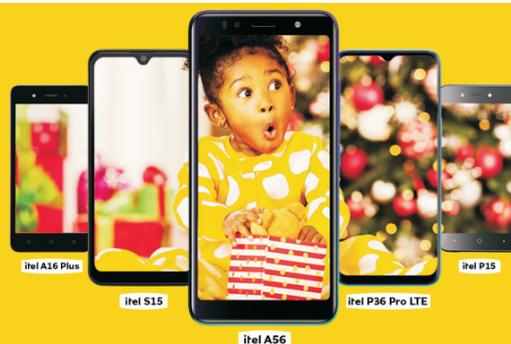
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Continental News

The president who won an election but could lose the country

After an election marred by violence, the president of the Central African Republic (CAR) has won five more years in power. But his victory is contested and the fate of the country balances on a knife edge.

A disparate jumble of armed groups formed an alliance last month and launched an offensive in a bid to disrupt this crucial vote.

Since the election, fighting has continued in towns nationwide, with the rebels threatening to march on the capital, Bangui. So far, they have been kept away by United Nations peacekeepers, CAR's armed forces and hundreds of reinforcements from Russia and Rwanda.

The political opposition has said Faustin-Archange Touadéra's victory lacks legitimacy and are demanding a re-run. While voters turned out in force in Bangui and some other towns, militants launched a violent and disruptive campaign of intimidation elsewhere - burning ballot boxes, ransacking polling stations

and preventing the vote in over 40% of electoral districts in this chronically unstable country. The rebel alliance calls itself the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC). This formation is new but the armed groups within it have been around for many years.

With origins stretching back to the insurgencies of the 2000s, many of them were involved in the civil war that erupted in

2013 albeit in a different guise. That year, mainly Muslim rebel groups from the lawless north banded together into the so-called Seleka coalition and ousted then-President Francois Bozizé.

The Seleka's brutal rule prompted the creation of another group of militants known as the Anti-Balaka, drawn mainly from Christian and animist communities.

These militias fought back against the rebels and carried out reprisals against CAR's minority Muslim population, pushing the country deeper into bloodshed.

The Seleka coalition eventually splintered into various rebel factions, often drawn along ethnic lines and known by a bewildering array of acronyms - the FPRC, the MPC, the UPC, 3R and so on. Along with Anti-Balaka militias, these armed groups have terrorised civilians for years, clashing over the control of mineral resources, such as diamonds and gold, and cattle migration routes, and occupying some two-thirds of the country. Despite sporadic violence, a peace deal signed between CAR's government and 14 rebel groups in 2019 raised hopes of stability. But last month, these armed groups - despite supposedly being sworn

enemies - said they were uniting "into a single entity" and launched a new uprising.

It is not clear exactly why these rival armed groups have banded together, except that rebellions in CAR have a history of being used as a tool to extract concessions from the government and to secure lucrative official positions. A key figure amid this mayhem is Francois Bozizé - a former general who seized power in a 2003 coup before being toppled by Seleka rebels a decade later. He fled the country, allegedly supporting the Anti-Balaka's rampage from afar, which resulted in UN sanctions against him, although he has denied controlling the group. Despite an international warrant for his arrest, the 74-year-old Mr Bozizé slipped back into CAR in late 2019 after years in exile and announced his presidential candidacy last July. The country's top court barred him in December from running, saying he did not satisfy the "good morality" requirement for candidates. BBC



Ghana president sworn in after chaos in parliament

Nana Akufo-Addo has been sworn in for a second term as Ghana's president, a day after scuffles between rival politicians broke out in parliament.

Soldiers were briefly deployed after the unusual scenes in one of Africa's most

stable democracies.

The president defeated his main rival, former President John Mahama, in December's tightly fought election.

He faces the twin challenges of dealing with the coronavirus pandemic and trying to boost the economy.

Ghana has had more than

50,000 confirmed cases of the virus, and like many countries has experienced major economic disruption. Things came to a head in parliament on Wednesday while MPs were voting on a new speaker. The situation escalated after one MP snatched a ballot paper and tried to run out of the building with it.

"There was total breakdown of law and order," said MP-elect Kwame Twumasi Ampofo of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Scuffles between MPs from the NDC and Mr Akufo-Addo's New Patriotic Party (NPP), neither of which has a majority, were eventually broken up by soldiers who briefly intervened.

An NDC MP, Alban Bagbin, was later sworn in as speaker. It is the first time Ghana has a president and speaker from different parties.

Earlier this week, in what was the final speech of his first term in office, President Akufo-Addo had urged

Omar plans to initiate Trump's impeachment



Somali-American Congresswoman Ilhan Omar is planning to initiate a process of impeaching US President Donald Trump after his supporters stormed the Capitol Building - the seat of the country's legislature. "We can't allow him to remain in office, it's a matter of preserving our republic and we need to fulfil our oath," Ms Omar tweeted. Hundreds of Mr Trump's supporters breached

security barriers and entered the Capitol after attending his rally on Wednesday.

The US president told his supporters to protest against the certification of President-elect Joe Biden win falsely claiming that there was widespread fraud in the November election.

At least four people were killed with several injured during the violent protest, US media report. BBC

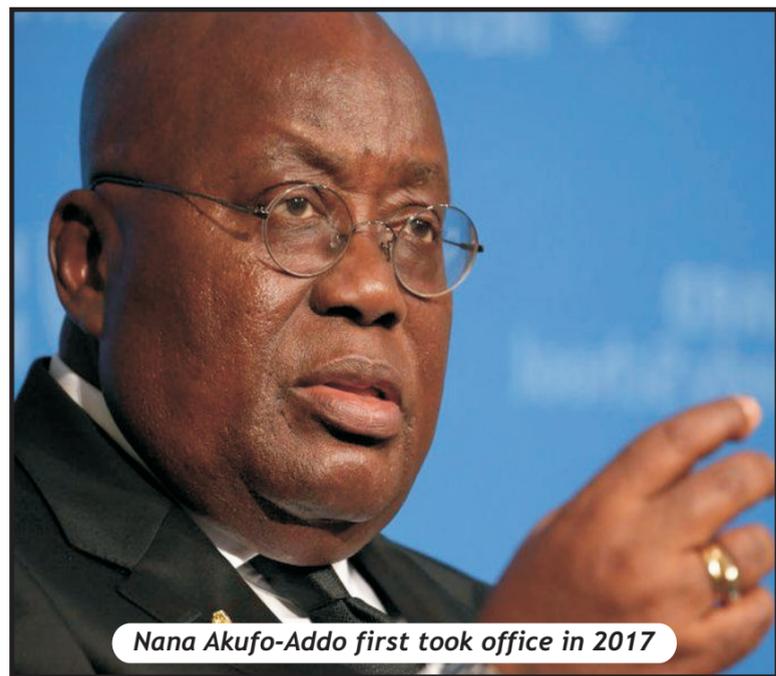
parliamentarians to unite and accommodate each others' views.

The two parties have exactly the same number of MPs in the newly elected legislature, so there is the possibility of political gridlock.

Last week the NDC filed a

petition at the Supreme Court seeking to annul President Nana Akufo-Addo's victory, citing voting irregularities.

The president obtained 51.6% of the vote in the 7 December election, compared with 47.4% won by Mr Mahama, who served in the top job from 2012 to 2017. BBC



Nana Akufo-Addo first took office in 2017

EDITORIAL

Weah's Executive Order#103 and Liberia's economic woes

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH WEAH at the close of 2020 issued Executive Order No.103 in what the Executive Mansion in Monrovia says is aimed at stimulating economic growth in the country without explaining clearly how.

THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE Order#103 slashes taxes here and there, and effects series of waivers but stops short of detailing how the Liberian economy, that has nose-dived, would experience a turnaround and hit growth that had diminished in the last three years.

FOR INSTANCE, THE President's Order declares that the Commissioner General of the Liberia Revenue Authority, in consultation with the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, may set forth a schedule of Waivers, in Regulation, to be reviewed annually for the granting of relief from assessment of penalties and interest related to Real Estate Taxes, Customs Duties and Related Levies including those under Administrative Review, Judicial Review, Audits or Examinations as a result of either or both failure to file or failure to pay such Taxes, Duties and Levies when due.

"FAILURE ON THE part of a Taxpayer to take advantage of a Waiver offered during an annual period shall preclude the Taxpayer from taking advantage of future annual Waivers for a period of 5 (five) years, during which period the Taxpayer is to be subject to sanctions, including the seizure and forfeiture of assets," noted the President's Executive Order.

BUT HOW CAN citizens and foreign business people remain faithful to paying taxes regularly when the economy is plummeted due to serious cash shortage and poor sales? The President failed to address the key issue of depleting the Government Consolidated Account with the Central Bank of Liberia that has led to borrowing from commercial banks without paying thus, affecting banks' liquidity.

WE ALSO WONDER how reducing taxes on air travel tickets from 10 percent to 7 percent and extending Work Permits to five years amid a heightened global pandemic stimulate growth in an economy that is heavily consumption-based.

"COLLECTION OF WORK and Residence Permits Fees: All fees for Work and Residence Permits shall be paid directly to the Liberia Revenue Authority for deposit into the Consolidated Account of the Government of Liberia."

THE EXECUTIVE MANSION also failed to address the critical issue of confidence crisis in the banking sector that has been characterized by restricting daily withdrawal which has inversely discouraged depositors from banking.

IF THE ECONOMY is to be resuscitated, restoring confidence in the banking sector is very critical to generating liquidity to avoid speculation and capital flight.

ADHERENCE TO TRANSPARENCY and accountability are similarly important to having a predictive economy that can stimulate forecasting and reliability. But when billions of local banknotes are printed and brought into the country, but never put in circulation without any explanation it leaves room for uncertainty and apprehension.

PRESIDENT WEAH AND his Economic Management Team should go back to the drawing board and carve a realistic economic plan that would give Liberians hope both for the short and long-term that they would get out of the current quagmire that is leaving many family heads with serious hypertension and early death.

COMMENTARY

By Jeffrey D. Sachs

Optimism for the New Year

There are at least five reasons for optimism in 2021. In the coming year, we can lay the foundations for a new era of sustainable development, peace, and cooperation, though we must also be vigilant to stop the forces of greed, ignorance, and hatred from hijacking the new technologies for their ulterior purposes.

NEW YORK - The year 2020 was a harrowing one, with the COVID-19 pandemic, worldwide economic reversals, widespread climate-related disasters, pervasive social unrest, and even US President Donald Trump's phony claims about massive electoral fraud and calls among his backers for martial law. Yet, despite the grim news, the year also brought some powerful reasons for optimism. In the coming year, we can lay the foundations for a new era of sustainable development, peace, and cooperation.

The first reason for optimism was the success of many countries in suppressing COVID-19. Countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region, as varied culturally and politically as Australia, China, South Korea, Laos, New Zealand, and Vietnam, deployed effective public health strategies to contain the pandemic. So, too, did some countries in other regions, including in Sub-Saharan Africa. While the headlines were dominated by the disastrous shortcomings of the pandemic response in the United States and Europe, the successes in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere show us how the combination of good governance, a responsible citizenry, and evidence-based policies can solve big and urgent challenges. 1

The second reason for optimism is the arrival of new vaccines, which are not only a source of great hope for saving lives and stopping the virus, but also a sign of the power of modern science to deliver technological breakthroughs in record time. The vaccine development exemplified the "mission approach" of targeting research and development in a public-private effort. The same mission approach should be deployed to address other global challenges, such as boosting renewable energy, sustainable farming, and the conservation of biodiversity.

The third reason for optimism is that Trump was decisively defeated in the November election. Like many demagogues of the past and present, Trump was able to generate a broad public following with the backing of mass propaganda, especially Rupert Murdoch's Fox News. Yet enough of the public saw through the lies and smears to enable the US to make a new start after Trump's disastrous reign of ineptitude, hatred, and lies. 1

Trump's ignorance and lying contributed to more than 330,000 US deaths from COVID-19 in 2020, roughly one-quarter of the world's deaths from the virus, though the US accounts for only 4% of the world's population. Trump's disastrous mishandling of COVID-19 ultimately led to his election defeat, yet even then Trump tried to maintain power by making desperate and delusional claims about widespread voter fraud. Fortunately, both the public and US institutions - mayors, governors, state legislatures, courts, and the military - resisted Trump's authoritarian impulses, so that President-elect Joe Biden, a decent, honorable, and rational man, will soon be inaugurated.

The fourth reason for optimism is the United Nations' strong performance, despite the powerful headwinds in 2020. The UN was ushered into existence 75 years ago by America's greatest president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as a bulwark against future wars. It defends the three pillars of multilateralism: peace, human rights, and sustainable development. In 2020, it performed admirably on all three fronts, despite the provocations from the Trump administration. 3

The UN agencies today are led by men and women of great skill and integrity, and Secretary-General António Guterres has guided the organization with enormous skill and vision during the toughest year since it was founded. In 2021, the UN will host several crucial global gatherings - on oceans, biodiversity, foods systems, and climate - that together can lay the foundations for decades of global cooperation on sustainable development.

The fifth reason for optimism is the digital revolution, the leading unspoken protagonist of the global pandemic response. Online activities kept the world functioning. Within weeks, businesses, schools, finance, government, commerce, payments, health-care providers, and the UN system went online at a rate, scope, and depth unimaginable until that point. The digital technologies played a direct role in fighting the epidemic, providing information, monitoring disease transmission patterns, and providing multiple health-system services.

Obviously, the new digital world has not been an unalloyed paradise. Distressingly, half the world still lacks Internet access. As a result, the rapid shift of work, school, social life, commerce, and entertainment to online platforms fueled dramatic inequalities between the Internet haves and have-nots. Moreover, digital technologies have given rise to other new and serious social ills, including large-scale hacking, fake news, cyberwarfare, and unwarranted surveillance by governments and private companies.

The two faces of the digital age, positive and negative, exemplify the situation we face on many fronts. We can be optimistic knowing that the world's cutting-edge technologies and scientific knowledge empower us to solve pressing global problems. Yet we must also be vigilant to stop the forces of greed, ignorance, and hatred from hijacking the new technologies for their ulterior purposes.

The ancient Greek philosophers believed that politics and ethics must go hand in hand. Aristotle wrote two of his masterworks, the *Nicomachean Ethics* and *The Politics*, as companion studies, the first as a guide to human happiness and the latter as a guide to how politics can promote happiness in the Greek city-state (the polis). 1

In our time, Pope Francis has presented two great encyclicals, *Laudato si'* in 2015 and *Fratelli tutti* in 2020, to show how ethics can help guide the world to environmental sustainability and global peace. The new encyclical offers a profound description of how we can reach beyond our own families, communities, and countries to build dialogue and trust around the world.

So, let us enter 2021 with real yet cautious optimism. Let us resolve to extend the public-health successes of the Asia-Pacific region and the new vaccines developed in the US, Europe, Russia, and China to benefit the entire world. Let us resolve to set aside the hatreds that have undermined global cooperation, and join forces to overcome the inequality, poverty, exclusion, and environmental destruction that threatens the world. Let us redouble our support for the UN, to build a future based on peace, human rights, and sustainable development. And for those in the US, let us begin to heal a wounded and divided nation.

The New Dawn
FULLY INDEPENDENT



Lord, let us here oo

Dear Father:

Hmmm, 2020 and all gone oo, let us here oo. The way it treated us sefna fun. And you know, come to think of it, me I na blame the people them who say they will not add 2020 to their ages because the thing 2020 did around the world da na small thing.

They say they did not do anything, so hat year should not be added to their ages. Me, I na there oo because I got married in that year.

But who will you blame na my son?
Father, who else I will blame besides this Corona girl. She started her gronna thing in Pekin Land I na know why she na stay there and starting moving from village to village causing trouble for everybody.

Can you imagine, our own village that already gat its own trouble she didn't spare us. Father da na small trouble Corona brought in 2020.

But has she gone with it sef?
Father da the million dollar question there oo. All the trouble and pain she caused people, everybody think say she went with it but we still hearing news that she has developed another baby that is wicked than herself.

Da true?
Oh, Father, da what we hearing all over the pace oo. The one she did in our village in the first three months where married women and married men seized their partner them and all the side chicks and side boyfriends them were catching it, it na satisfy her?
So what is the name of her baby?

Father, we only know it as Corona baby here oo, buut the book people say da new variant. They said da new one is wicked it can't waste time.

Hmm, but ehn the people say they na find vaccine for it?
Aah, da what they say oo, but the vaccine sef da trouble.
What do you mean?

Father, the people in Uncle Sam's village and his cousins are telling other people na to take it because they say that the devil mark they will be giving people.

Tell me something!
Oh, Father, you na hear da one yet? They say that 666, ehn you na hear about the Mark of the Beast-oo. Some even say the vaccine get something in it that when you take it they will be spying on you everywhere you go and anything you do. Imagine some of the people in Uncle Sam's village have refused to even take it-even our man Doe-Nut says he na taking it.
Da your other man pa da something else.

I say. The man na get time for anybody. He na turned the people village into something else and everybody na putting mouth on them.

Anyway we inside, at least they na taste some of the things we can go through in our little villages.

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With Jones Mallay

LIBERIA POLITICAL HOT-FIRE

fredrickdiamondm@yahoo.com

Can Pres. Weah Football Popularity Earns Him A 2nd-Term in 2023 Given the Humiliating Defeat His Party Sustained in the December 8th, 2020 Senatorial Election?

The Congress for Democratic Change was established in 2004. A credible source revealed that one Joshua Sackie led a movement to petition President Weah to contest the Liberian presidency for the first time in 2005 because according to the source George Weah wanted to kill himself due to the unavailability of a job. The movement was quickly transformed into a political party known and styled today as Congress for Democratic Change, CDC.

The party was officially certificated in July 2005 by the National Elections Commission as a political party to contest the October general and presidential elections which took Pres. What to an election for the first time when he was endorsed as the party standard-bearer in a convention held in August 2005? The CDC is not one of the known mainstream political parties in Liberia such as the Unity Party, Liberty Party, National Democratic Party of Liberia, etc., it was formed out of political desperation by George Weah to gain political power according to one source familiar with the CDC.

CDC political survival and total independence rest exclusively on the shoulders of Pres. George MannahWeah's popularity which he earned during his 18 years of successful football adventures at home and abroad. Interestingly, looking at the illiteracy rate at 52% in Liberia coupled with acute poverty, weak educational system, and devastating economy, Pres. With magnificently used his advantage to translate his 18 years of football popularity to exploit those volatilized sectors in gaining a huge political victory first, as senior Senator in 2014 and current Liberia 25th president.

Pres. Weah's popularity resonated with Liberia's young millennium, especially the so-called downtrodden, Yanna-boys, market women, school dropouts, and most especially ex-rebel fighters and war-lords who viewed him as their Mensah, a Hero and their guy who will not implement a war crime court in Liberia. He was also viewed as a downtrodden who lived and grew up and experienced acute poverty and survived in one of Monrovia's known slums Borough of New Kru Town, like thousands of other less fortunate young Liberians.

Aside from the aforementioned different populations, there is another population that joined the rank and file of Pres. Weah's CDC, that population includes some traditional corrupt retired Liberian politicians whose fundamental mission in the CDC is to exploit Pres. Due to his little experience in politics and lack of exposure internationally to manage a government. The CDC party is therefore a host to multiple different populations with computing interests and hidden political objectives.

For example, the massive humiliation defeat of the CDC in the just ended Dec. 8th, 2020 Senatorial election is a serious referendum on Pres. Weah's popularity and his bid for the 2023 presidential election for his 2nd term. It is also a huge referendum on the entire CDC's different computing populations within the rank of the CDC starting with its centralized leadership trend. Emphatically, the entire CDC leadership has zero popularity of its own and zero political influence and contacts at home and abroad.

Sources confirmed that 95% of CeDecians and their leadership are regarded as a bunch of hustlers and wealth hunters, who are militant in thinking, lack interest in schooling, lack domestic political experience, very acrimonious, emotional, lack former education to manage the CDC as a political institution. The source continues, the CeDecians possessed the characteristics of being desperately provocative with rebellion posture and intolerable. What is annoying according to the source is the fact that when experienced, well-educated and politically talented Liberians try to join the CDC party, Cedecians fostered politics of marginalization, segregation, discrimination and suddenly declared such person of interest as a stranger in the CDC party. As a result, the new members leave the party. This is one major problem that will continue to create avenues of defeat for the CDC's political party in Liberia.

Another problem that will always cause the defeat of CeDecians in any future political contest is their habitual singing tendencies, yelling attitude, marginalization theory within its rank and file, direct and indirect extortion of money from people for jobs, massive corrupt practices, making tremendous unnecessary political battle-cries coupled with numerous militant proclamations to energize CeDecians politically, is doing the CDC more harm than good. The CDC party is not financially accountable and transparent, the party according to one source survives on state resources, because the entire leadership lacks the abilities and the experience to generate funds apart from donations, heavy fines, and taxations of its poor members, and exertion of funds for the promise of a job.

Another problem that would affect CDC future elections will be due to Pres. What's a failure to address the acute multiple economic, social welfare, educational challenges facing the downtrodden masses, especially the youth who do not have food to eat, and do they have a place to sleep. Most of the youths in the CDC party have either become visible vagabonds or they have lost total hope in Pres. Weah and the CDC have no solution to their nightmare. The party has created a middleman status where the top dogs look down on the illiterate youths in the party and this will continue to affect CDC future changes to succeed in any political elections.

The final problem is the fact that CDC has marginalized its original political alliances, these include, the National Patriotic Party and the Liberia People's Democratic Party. All political appointees are Cedecians. Members of the alliance are being discriminated against and sidelined by CDC political doctrine of discrimination and segregation constitutes a deep-seated betrayal by leadership endorsed by Pres. We will affect CDC in any future political elections.

SPECIAL

ARTICLE

21st Press Conference by Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Xinjiang-related issues in Beijing

CONT'D FROM LAST EDITION

Today, Xinjiang is safe and stable, people are living in peace and contentment. We will persist in governing Xinjiang according to law, stabilizing Xinjiang by shared solidarity, culturally moistening the Xinjiang, enriching the people and prospering the region, building Xinjiang with a long-term goal, and strive to an era of socialism with Chinese characteristics in Xinjiang featuring unity, harmony, prosperity, civilization, progress, peaceful living and work, and sound ecology.

To answer your second question, I'd like to stress that Xinjiang is an open region. We conduct ourselves honestly and handle each thing according to its merits, and therefore we have nothing to hide. Since the end of 2018, over 1,000 people have visited Xinjiang. They include foreign diplomatic envoys to China, UN officials, Geneva-based senior diplomats of various countries, as well as more than 70 groups (or delegations) of people from news media and religious organizations of various countries. We welcome foreign visitors to Xinjiang, including those from UN Security Council and diplomats of EU countries to China, to see for themselves the real situation in Xinjiang. A joyful and harmonious Xinjiang awaits your visit.

Al Jazeera: 1) Last year, Xinjiang government announced all trainees had graduated. But the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) alleges that China has set up larger "detention centers." As all trainees have graduated, what measures government is going to take against those who are considered to have "separatist" tendency. 2) Could you provide some statistics on how many laborers from Xinjiang are now working in factories in other parts of China? how many people have benefited from this policy? and what do local government do to implement such a policy and are there any indicators to measure?

Ilijan Anayat: On your first question, I want to sternly state that over a past period of time, terrorists and extremists had been very rampant and deceived a large number of people. Through the vocational education and training program centered on learning the country's common language, legal knowledge and vocational skills as well as deradicalization, we have helped many trainees realize the criminal nature and serious harm of terrorism and extremism, get rid of the terrorists and extremists' influence and control, and achieved remarkable results. By October, 2019, all trainees under the vocational education and training program had graduated.

The ASPI's claim that "Xinjiang has built even bigger detention centers" is in every way conjecture and nonsense. Even Australian Citizens Part's official publication Australian Alert Service could not stand it anymore, so it published an article pointing out that the ASPI report was absolutely ridiculous. The two so-called "detention centers" in Turpan City alleged in the report are in fact office buildings respectively of the Industrial and Commercial Information Technology Bureau and Veterans' Affairs Bureau of Gaochang District; and the "detention centers" in Kashgar City are in fact local high schools and technical secondary schools. The ASPI report does not make any sense apart from fabricating sensational fake news. We have shown relevant photos on the scene of press conferences on Xinjiang-related issues. I hope our friends from the press can also read about the reports of these press conferences, and will not be blinded by

ASPI's lies.

Let's take a look at what on earth the ASPI is. It has long received financial support from the US government and arms dealers. It has been keen on fabricating and hyping various anti-China topics and spreading rumors for the benefit of its paymasters to stigmatize and demonize China. It is not an academic research institution at all, but an anti-China tool manipulated by the US government, and an anti-China vanguard in an academic guise. In particular, it has been notorious for throwing out fallacies on Xinjiang related issues that are unfounded and full of illusions and groundless suppositions. The ASPI just fawns on its paymasters so as to make more money. It is not responsible to its readers.

Of course, counter-terrorism and deradicalization is a long-term and arduous mission. Some violent terrorists and separatists are still trying to incite and deceive, and it cannot be ruled out that individuals may be deceived, but we believe that the vast majority of the people are clear-minded and have already seen through their ugly face and evil intentions, and thus will not follow those bad guys. For individual people who may be affected by terrorism and extremism, we will provide them with assistance, education and guidance in strict accordance with relevant Chinese laws and regulations, so as to enhance their capability to



guard against infiltration of erroneous thoughts and avoid taking the road of crimes.

Xu Guixiang: On your second question, in recent years, Xinjiang has prioritized employment, made and taken a series of policies and measures to enlarge employment, which aim to help workers of all ethnic groups to realize stable, sustained and long-term employment, so that they can live a well-to-do life through their hard work. One of the key measures is to utilize the central government's Xinjiang-aiding mechanism to make overall plan on employment in and out of Xinjiang and actively facilitate people of all ethnic groups to find jobs in inland provinces and cities. Since 2014, a total of 117,000 Xinjiang people have worked or been working in inland provinces and cities.

Supported and guided by the employment-oriented policies, many people from rural area in Xinjiang, especially those in southern Xinjiang, have migrated to cities to work. From farmlands to factories, the farmers have become workers, who have not only got higher pay but also realized their ideals and value of life. For example, Arapat Ahmatjan, from Charbagh village, Lop county, Hotan Prefecture, used to earn less than 10,000 yuan a year as a farmer. In 2017, he went to work in an electrical company in Nanchang city, Jiangxi province and earned more than 160,000 yuan within 3 years. Another example, Pashagul Keram,

from Bartokay Village, Wuqia County, Kizilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture, signed up voluntarily for a job in a company in Dongguan City. Today, she makes an annual income of 60,000 yuan from the job. Inspired by her experience, more than 1,300 workers from Kizilsu Prefecture have gone to Guangdong Province for work and most of them have shaken off poverty. Because of her leading role in hard work, Pashagul also won several awards, such as "China's most beautiful workers of 2020".

To assist Xinjiang's surplus urban and rural laborers in obtaining employment in other provinces, local authorities in Xinjiang have adopted a bulk of attentive and effective measures. First, forming a comprehensive picture of the local labor resources. Based on the labor offices at township/sub-district and village/community levels, local authorities have established basic information on the number, age, gender, education level, and employment status of the workforce in their respective jurisdiction, and formulated employment plans in line with local realities. Second, keeping track of the job preferences and needs of workers. The local government conducts regular surveys of the job preferences of workers, to keep track of their expectations in terms of location, position, salary, future prospects, and working and living environment, so as to increase effectiveness of employment services. Third, building employment information platforms. The local authorities have built an extensive contact network with employers to collect and collate job information, which is released timely through the human resource market, public placement agencies and online platforms, radio, TV, village and community bulletin boards, updating the laborers with information for voluntary and free choice of employment. Fourth, bolstering public employment services. The local authorities have built a well-defined, dynamic, five-tiered public employment service system for employers and employees, which is well-coordinated at all levels and covers every part of Xinjiang. It has also expanded its services in areas such as policy advice, employment and unemployment registration, career guidance and recommendation, and skills and business startup training.

By the end of 2019, there were 144 human resource markets at the county level or above and 8,668 primary-level labor offices across Xinjiang, providing employment services to more than 21.73 million people that year, and winning extensive praise from all ethnic groups.

Relocation of urban and rural surplus laborers for employment in Xinjiang adheres to the principle of voluntariness. There is no designated targets imposed nor any forced relocation. Laborers of all ethnic groups can get recruitment information from human resources markets or primary-level labor offices, such as weather conditions of the working place as well as type of work, accommodation and salaries that the employer offer, etc. After being well-informed, they could sign up for a job voluntarily according to their own conditions. Where to go, which enterprise to work for, and what post to take, all are their free choice.

Associated Press of Pakistan: How many students have graduated from vocational education and training centers in Xinjiang? How many of them have started business or got jobs? Can you update us on it?

TO BE CONTINUED

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

River Cess citizens decry development setback

Citizens of Central River Cess District have decry serious setback in the development agenda of both the district and the entire county since the “unceremonious” closure

in 2008, and later extended the deal to an additional five years in December 2016.

However, the company “unceremoniously deserted the forest on grounds that some “illegal” pit sawyers were

Community Development Committee (CFDC) of the Forest Management Contract-B explained how major development projects, which were sponsored through funds paid by the company as land rental fees, are currently at a standstill.

Basically, there are CFDCs in River Cess County with FMC-B being the biggest, totaling 57,262 hectares with 11 affected communities and headquarters in Nezuin, Central River Cess District.

Mr. Matthew Wallace, Head of the CFDC FMC-B explained that citizens of the district and the county at large have benefited proceeds from land rental paid by the company as well as other benefits in kind and cash since the company began operation in 2008.

However, he said those benefits, which were moving the district and the county forward in terms of development no longer exist since the departure in 2008.

“We signed the first forestry agreement in 2008 with EJ and J Logging Company and we have been getting benefits in kind and

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Partial view of the deserted compound of EJ And J Logging Company and CFDC chair Matthew Wallace

of EJ and J Logging Company. EJ and J signed its first concession agreement with the people of River Cess County by and thru its representatives and the Government of Liberia (GoL)

intruding into its concession area.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with this paper during a recent visit to the county, several citizens of Central River Cess and the Head of the

LRA, MFDP begin month-long workshop

The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) begins a month-long training workshop on the procedures and processes leading to the imposition of excise tax stamps on several commodities and goods

currently on the Liberian market.

The LRA says the workshop is sponsored by USAID through its Revenue Generation, Growth and Governance project (RG3) and aims to educate and enhance the capacity of key stakeholders, manufacturers, importers, suppliers, taxpayers and tax practitioners on the

rules, procedures, modules and solutions to problems that may arise when trading in commodities such as alcohol, fuel and tobacco products.

LRA Assistant Customs Commissioner for Ports Operation, Edwin F. Kendema says the specially designed stamps as per the established tax regulation are customized and unique to each one of the listed commodity and can be

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



A group photo of participants during the Excise Stamp Training Workshop

Motorcycles sanctioning is to save lives

-Deputy Police Director

By Lewis S. Teh

Police deputy inspector general for operation Col. Marvin Sackor says recent restriction imposed on commercial motorbikes and tricycles from plying central Monrovia is meant to avoid frequent road accidents and save lives in the country.

“We didn't put sanction on motorbike and tricycle riders to put the youthful population out of jobs, but we did that to reduce the huge number of road accidents as the result of their motorcycles”, he says.

Col. Sackor made the clarification Wednesday,

Col. Sackor narrates that in the meeting, the leadership of the motorcycle union appealed and they were allowed to speak, but the Police will not compromise public safety.

However, he notes that motorcycles coming from Brewerville, Montserrado County may use the back road to get to Logan town and then Somali Drive, instead of the main route from Monrovia to Duala, Bushrod Island, while tricycles are only permitted to ply the route to the Waterside General Market.

At the same Col. Sackor



January 6, 2021 when he spoke to reporters in Monrovia. According to him, Police authorities had meeting with the leadership of the federation motorcycle union, cognizant that some of them tax payers.

“In the meeting we told them that due to our road safety statistics, there is huge number of accidents and based on the statistics, we told them we were going back to status code anti, where there will be demarcation and they will only be allowed to ply the feeder roads.”

observes government and private institutions also use motorcycles, but owners of those bikes should proceed to the National Police Headquarters on Capitol Hill to obtain passes that will allow them move freely.

Recently, the government, thru the Police barred commercial bike and tricycle riders from plying to Central Monrovia, but the riders, majority of the youth are protesting and saying this is an attempt by the authorities to render them jobless. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Liberian academic launches book on dual citizenship

By Winston W. Parley

Young Liberian academic Dr. Robtel Neajai Pailey has launched a book in Monrovia on Development, (Dual) Citizenship and Its Discontents in Africa: The Political Economy of Belonging to Liberia.

Launching the book in the auditorium of the University of Liberia (UL) Thursday, 7 January on Capitol Hill, Dr. Pailey, an activist and author with years of professional and personal experiences in Africa, Europe and North America, said this research started in Liberia and it was written by a Liberian for Liberians.

Even though she's based in London, the United Kingdom, Dr. Pailey says she was determined to ensure that the actual launch of her book would be done on Liberian soil.



An edition of the the University of Liberia's intellectual platform Lux Talk was used for the launching of the book graced by several officials including Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon, Lofa County Senator - elect Brownie J. Samukai, UL Vice President for Graduate Programs Dr. Jonathan Taylor and others.

While acknowledging that dual citizenship is inevitable in Liberia given the continental trend, Dr. Pailey recommends however that Liberia needs to take a gradual approach to dual citizenship.

She thinks that because of continental and regional pressures, Liberia will eventually get dual citizenship, but it's going to take some time.

In the book, she says she argues that there are a number of policy prescriptions that the government can take on, first of which is to reconcile the contradiction between the 1973 Alien and Nationality Law and the 1986 Constitution in respect to who's eligible for citizenship in Liberia.

Also she says Liberia needs to focus on reforming the Judiciary because one of the main reasons many Liberians reject dual citizenship is that they fear that people who have two passports or two citizenships will be able to flout the laws, disobey the laws and then leave the country without the possibility for the authorities here to extradite them.

"And that happened before in the past, and they have this sort of ... experience of that happening, and they're [afraid] for [that] and I think that fear is legitimate," she says.

Dr. Pailey indicates that

reforming the judiciary, making sure that laws are actually enforced will give people the confidence to consider introducing and endorsing dual citizenship.

Another thing she believes must be addressed is the inequality in Liberia, including income inequality, land access and transitional justice, among others.

Talking about the originality, importance of the book and what contribution it might make, Dr. Pailey says the book is about the continent of Africa, but it's specifically a case study on Liberia.

She suggests that this is the first study that actually looks at both domestic and diaspora construction and practices of citizenship across space and time.

Looking at what the construction and practices of

citizenship across space and time mean for development, she says.

She says the first of her three major arguments in the book is that in the mid 19th to mid 20th century, the Liberian citizenship was passive and constructed by a very powerful state.

On the other hand, she says in the mid 20th century Liberian citizenship onward has been active reconstructed by citizens themselves through processes of protests and events like the rice riot, armed conflicts.

In her second argument, she notes that the 21st century Liberia is one of seven countries (Cameroon, DR Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Tanzania) in the continent of Africa that do not recognize dual citizenship.

On the third argument, she says domestic and diaspora Liberians really interpret and understand citizenship and dual citizenship differently.

In the book she says she talks about the fact that quite often scholars' work or maybe in the public discourse in Liberian there is an underlying assumption that dual citizenship leads to development, but notes that this assumption actually isn't true.

She argues that there are a number of scholars who refute this claim and suggest that there's no relationship and there's "no empirical evidence to support those claims" that dual citizenship leads to development.

"And this is why dual citizenship is so visually contested in Liberia right, because many Liberians in country believe that dual citizenship will reproduce, make sure that inequality prevails," she says.

She says many Liberians believe that dual citizenship will increase development, but again there is no empirical evidence to support the claim.

In a welcome statement earlier, UL President Rev. Dr. Julius JulukonSarwolo Nelson said the university celebrates academic excellence.

He adds that the university celebrates Dr. Pailey for her work and scholarship, adding that he looks forward to the reflection of her book.

"As we journey for 2021, we at the university will continue to pray for academic excellence, scholarship, good health, prosperity,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Police arrest criminal gang leader

By Winston W. Parley

Following a series of attacks waged by a criminal gang named KUBAH against peaceful citizens as well as disarming a police officer, the Liberia National police (LNP) early Thursday morning, 7 January arrested gang leader Varney Kiazolu, Alias Azonto around the 12 House community in Paynesville.

His arrest came barely 24 hours after he and his gang being declared wanted for prosecution on Wednesday, 6 January. He is undergoing preliminary investigation at the LNP headquarters in Monrovia.

Ahead of their arrest, the LNP has charged Azonto and his gangs in absentia with

LNP from an isolated site.

Also he says on 19 December, Liberian comedian John Flomo was attacked and wounded by Azonto and his gang operatives.

"Sadly, on December 14, 2020, Azonto and his gang again were involved with arson attack thereby looting and burning the home of a family, Gloria Barloun and Emmanuel D. C. Freeman in the Marshall Boys Town road community," Carter explains.

He details that on 6 January 2021, a Liberian identified as Daniel Davis, alias, DMX, a resident of 3rd Street, Sinkor was gruesomely attacked by Azonto and his gangs thereby slashing the victim's neck with a sharp instrument believed to be a knife.



Criminal gang named KUBAH

multiple crimes ranging from arson, criminal attempt to commit murder, armed robbery and illegal possession of firearm in line with the Penal Code of the Republic of Liberia in view of these circumstances and attacks on peaceful citizens.

Police Spokesman Moses Carter told a press conference Wednesday, 6 January at the LNP Headquarters that on 16 December 2020, a police officer identified as Albert Logan was severely attacked with his firearm taken away by Azonto and his gang operatives.

However Carter says the firearm was later retrieved by the Anti-robbery unit of the

Carter indicates that victim Daniel Davis was taken to ELWA Hospital where he was treated and discharged.

"It's important to note that Azonto and his gangs are on the run and are being pursued by the Anti-robbery of the LNP," the Police Spokesman continues, as he calls on the public to contact the police on the whereabouts of Azonto and any of his gangs on contact numbers: 0770800111; 0770800109; 0770800420; 0770800428; 0770800412 and 0780800412.

The Police assure members of the public that everything will be done to ensure that Azonto and his KUBAH gang will face the full weight of the law.

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Français

Le FMI applaudit le gouvernement libérien

« La politique monétaire stricte, l'amélioration de la gestion des finances publiques, la mobilisation des recettes intérieures et le financement sans la banque centrale, voilà les facteurs qui ont soutenu les efforts de l'administration pour parvenir à la stabilité des prix et des taux de change », a déclaré le Fonds monétaire international dans son premier examen et deuxième examen de la facilité élargie de crédit du pays.

Le FMI a octroyé au gouvernement libérien un montant instantané de 38 millions de dollars américains pour répondre aux conditions énoncées dans le programme.

Les deux examens se sont penchés sur les conditions fixées dans le cadre de la facilité de crédit étendue, la demande de dérogation pour non-respect des critères de performance et la modification des critères de performance.

Le gouvernement libérien a demandé une dérogation pour non-respect fin décembre 2019 et fin juin 2020.

Selon le FMI, la politique du gouvernement a contribué

à préserver le pouvoir d'achat des pauvres qui sont les plus touchés par l'inflation au début du programme.

Le gouvernement libérien a envisagé de mettre le programme appuyé par la FEC en tête des priorités et s'est engagé à respecter son plan de développement, le Programme des pauvres pour la prospérité et le développement (PAPD).

Le rétablissement de la stabilité macroéconomique, la mise en place d'une base pour une croissance inclusive

durable et la correction des faiblesses de la gouvernance restent les principaux objectifs de ce programme, à en croire le FMI.

Statut du programme.

Le Conseil d'administration du FMI a approuvé un accord de quatre ans au titre de la FEC (60% de la quote-part) en décembre 2019.

Le Conseil a également approuvé, dans le cadre de la pandémie COVID-19, un allègement de la dette au

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



CÔTE D'IVOIRE: L'ENSEMBLE DE L'OPPOSITION PARTICIPERA AUX LÉGISLATIVES DE MARS

L'ensemble de l'opposition ivoirienne, qui avait boycotté la dernière présidentielle et appelé à la "désobéissance civile", a annoncé jeudi sa participation aux élections législatives du 6 mars avec pour objectif de décrocher "la majorité au Parlement". "La

coalition des plateformes et des partis politiques d'opposition voudrait annoncer de façon solennelle qu'elle participera aux élections à venir", a déclaré Georges Armand Ouégnin, au nom de tous les partis de l'opposition au siège du Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire

(PDCI), le parti du principal opposant l'ex-président Henri Konan Bédié.

Les deux principaux partis d'opposition, le PDCI et le Front populaire ivoirien (FPI) de l'ancien président Laurent Gbagbo, font partie de cette "coalition des plateformes".

Cette annonce marque une nouvelle décrispation de la situation politique, qui était tendue depuis des mois. Le 23 décembre, le FPI, qui boycottait tous les scrutins depuis 10 ans, avait déjà annoncé son retour dans l'arène électorale.

"Notre coalition ira en rangs serrés avec une stratégie commune impliquant tous ses acteurs pour faire barrage au projet du RHDP (le Rassemblement des houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix, parti du président Alassane Ouattara), qui vise à confisquer tous les pouvoirs et à soumettre le peuple", a ajouté M. Ouégnin, assurant avoir comme "objectif une

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Éditorial

Le décret n° 103 de Weah et les difficultés économiques du Libéria

À la fin de 2020, le président George Manneh Weah a pris le décret n° 103, qui, selon la présidence, s'inscrit dans des efforts du gouvernement de stimuler la croissance économique, sans expliquer clairement le comment.

Le décret présidentiel n° 103 réduit les impôts ici et là, et effectue une série de dérogations, mais s'arrête avant de détailler comment l'économie libérienne, qui a piqué du nez, connaîtrait un revirement et une croissance qui avait diminué au cours des trois dernières années.

Par exemple, le décret présidentiel donne le pouvoir au commissaire général de l'Autorité fiscale du Libéria, en consultation avec le ministre des Finances et de la Planification du développement, d'établir un calendrier de dérogations, dans le règlement, qui sera révisé chaque année pour l'octroi d'une dispense de cotisation. Des pénalités et des intérêts liés aux taxes foncières, aux droits de douane et aux prélèvements connexes, y compris ceux faisant l'objet d'un examen administratif, d'un contrôle judiciaire, d'audits ou d'examens en raison d'un ou des deux manquements à la production ou au non-paiement de ces taxes, droits et prélèvements à l'échéance.

« Tout contribuable qui ne profitera pas de l'offre pendant la période d'une année se verra refuser toutes exemptions annuelles futures pendant une période de 5 (cinq) ans, période pendant laquelle le contribuable sera soumis à des sanctions, dont la saisie et la confiscation des biens », a dit le décret présidentiel.

Mais comment les citoyens et les hommes d'affaires étrangers peuvent-ils rester fidèles au paiement régulier des impôts lorsque l'économie s'effondre en raison d'une grave pénurie de liquidités et de mauvaises ventes? Le Président n'a pas abordé la question clé de l'épuisement du compte consolidé du gouvernement auprès de la Banque centrale du Libéria, qui a conduit à emprunter aux banques commerciales sans payer ainsi, ce qui a eu une incidence sur la liquidité des banques.

Nous nous demandons également comment la réduction des taxes sur les billets d'avion de 10% à 7% et l'extension des permis de travail à cinq ans au milieu d'une pandémie mondiale accrue stimuleront la croissance d'une économie fortement basée sur la consommation.

« Frais de recouvrement des permis de travail et de séjour : tous les frais relatifs aux permis de travail et de séjour doivent être payés directement à l'Autorité fiscale du Libéria pour dépôt sur le compte consolidé du Gouvernement libérien. »

La présidence n'a pas non plus abordé le problème critique de la crise de confiance dans le secteur bancaire qui a été caractérisé par la restriction des retraits quotidiens, ce qui a inversément découragé les usagers.

Si l'économie doit être relancée, le rétablissement de la confiance dans le secteur bancaire est essentiel pour générer des liquidités afin d'éviter la spéculation et la fuite des capitaux.

Le respect de la transparence et de la responsabilité est tout aussi important pour avoir une économie prédictive qui peut stimuler les prévisions et la fiabilité. Mais lorsque des milliards de billets de banque locaux sont imprimés et introduits dans le pays, mais jamais mis en circulation sans aucune explication, cela laisse place à l'incertitude et à l'appréhension.

Le président Weah et son équipe de gestion économique devraient élaborer un plan économique réaliste qui donnera aux Libériens l'espoir à court et à long terme de sortir du borbier actuel qui provoque de sérieuse hypertension et mort prématurée chez les pères de famille.

Français

Le FMI applaudit le

titre du Fonds de confinement et de secours en cas de catastrophe (4,5% de la quote-part) en avril 2020 et un décaissement au titre de la Facilité de crédit rapide (FCR) (14% de la quote-part) en juin 2020.

Performance du programme.

Le FMI estime que trois des six critères de performance (PC) fin 2019 n'ont pas été remplis en raison de la pandémie de la COVID-19, en particulier, dit-il, le critère de performance sur les réserves internationales nettes (NIR) a été raté de loin en raison d'une intervention de change plus élevée que l'aide de liquidité programmée en dollars américains au secteur bancaire.

Deux repères structurels (SB) ont été atteints ; quatre n'ont pas été atteints, car la pandémie a encore mis à rude épreuve la capacité de mise en œuvre, tandis qu'une été mis en œuvre avec un retard et que des progrès notables ont été accomplis sur plusieurs autres.

Entre-temps, pour renforcer encore la performance du programme, les autorités libériennes ont mis en œuvre des mesures clés comme actions préalables, notamment l'adoption d'un budget plus conforme aux paramètres du programme et l'apurement de tous les arriérés du service de la dette, entre autres mesures, indique le fonds.

Risques pour le

programme

Selon le rapport du FMI, les risques sont élevés malgré des mesures de contrôle importantes intégrées dans les actions antérieures et les Critères de performance.

Il craint que les principaux risques n'aient un impact pire et plus long que prévu. Il redoute un dérapage des pressions sur les dépenses budgétaires, une réémergence des besoins de liquidité en dollars américains dans le secteur bancaire et une réapparition de pénuries de billets en dollars libériens.

Les efforts des autorités fiscales, selon le Fonds, sont axés sur l'amélioration de la gestion et du contrôle de la trésorerie budgétaire et sur la mobilisation des recettes intérieures, dans le but de financer de vastes besoins de développement et de mieux protéger les pauvres.

Il souligne en outre que la banque centrale rétablit la confiance dans le secteur bancaire en s'attaquant à la cause profonde des besoins de liquidité en dollars américains apparus l'année dernière et en garantissant un approvisionnement adéquat en billets en dollars libériens.

Tout en notant l'engagement de la banque centrale à reconstruire le NIR pour réduire la vulnérabilité aux chocs extérieurs, le rapport souligne la résolution globale adoptée par le gouvernement libérien pour lutter contre la corruption, qui est une étape importante dont la mise en œuvre effective est vitale.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE: L'ENSEMBLE DE L'OPPOSITION

majorité au parlement".

"La coalition invite le gouvernement et les institutions concernées à poursuivre le dialogue, la négociation, afin que l'ensemble des questions abordées trouvent des solutions pour des élections transparentes, crédibles et apaisées", a-t-il précisé.

La situation était très tendue après la réélection du président Alassane Ouattara le 27 octobre à un troisième mandat controversé, jugé inconstitutionnel par l'opposition.

Les violences électorales ont fait 85 morts et un demi-millier de blessés entre août et novembre. L'opposition, qui ne reconnaissait pas l'élection, avait créé un Conseil national de transition

(CNT), censé prendre le pouvoir en lieu et place de Ouattara, déclenchant une série d'arrestations d'opposants. La situation s'était toutefois apaisée après une rencontre entre MM. Ouattara et Bédié, puis avec l'annonce du retour prochain de Laurent Gbagbo, actuellement en liberté conditionnelle en Belgique dans le cadre de son procès à la Cour Pénale Internationale, et enfin avec la libération d'une partie des opposants arrêtés.

L'opposition, qui ne reconnaît toujours pas l'élection présidentielle, continue notamment à demander l'arrêt des poursuites et des réformes de la commission électorale. Néanmoins le pouvoir et l'opposition s'accordent pour dire que de grands progrès ont été réalisés.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Jeffrey D. Sachs

Optimisme pour la nouvelle année

NEW YORK - Marquée par la pandémie de Covid-19, par le retournement de la conjoncture économique dans le monde entier, par nombre de catastrophes naturelles liées au bouleversement climatique, par une agitation sociale généralisée, mais aussi par les réclamations absurdes du président des États-Unis Donald Trump contre une fraude électorale massive autant qu'imaginaire et par les appels de ses partisans au recours à la loi martiale, l'année 2020 fut éprouvante. Pourtant, malgré ces tristes événements, cette année fut aussi porteuse de puissantes raisons d'espérer. Au cours de l'année qui vient, nous pouvons jeter les fondations d'une nouvelle ère de développement durable, de paix et de coopération.

La première raison de cet optimisme tient aux succès de nombreux pays parvenus à contrôler le Covid-19. Dans toute la région Asie-Pacifique, des pays aussi différents sur les plans politique et culturel que l'Australie, la Chine, la Corée du Sud, le Laos, la Nouvelle-Zélande et le Vietnam ont mis en œuvre des stratégies de santé publique efficaces, qui ont permis de contenir la pandémie. Certains pays, dans d'autres régions, notamment en Afrique subsaharienne, ont aussi obtenu de bons résultats. Alors que les désastreuses insuffisances des réactions à la pandémie en Europe et aux États-Unis faisaient les gros titres, les réussites enregistrées dans la région Asie-Pacifique et ailleurs nous montrent que la combinaison d'une bonne gouvernance, d'une population responsable et de mesures fondées sur des preuves peut relever les défis les plus urgents et les plus insurmontables.

La deuxième raison de cet optimisme est l'arrivée de nouveaux vaccins, qui non seulement nourrissent les espoirs de sauver des vies et de stopper la diffusion du virus, mais marquent aussi les capacités de la science moderne à permettre en un temps record des bonds en avant technologiques. La mise au point du vaccin illustre les mérites d'une stratégie qui fixe des « missions » à la recherche-développement et s'appuie sur des projets mêlant politiques publiques et initiative privée. C'est ce type de stratégie qui doit être mis en œuvre pour relever les autres défis planétaires, pour accélérer le développement des énergies renouvelables et de l'agriculture durable comme pour permettre de préserver la biodiversité.

La troisième raison d'être optimiste est la défaite décisive de Trump lors des élections présidentielles du mois de novembre aux États-Unis. Comme beaucoup de démagogues d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, Trump s'est montré capable d'obtenir le soutien d'un large secteur de l'opinion en s'appuyant sur des moyens de propagande de masse, notamment sur la chaîne Fox News de Rupert Murdoch. Mais une part suffisante de cette opinion a pu percer les mensonges et les calomnies pour permettre aux États-Unis de prendre un nouveau départ après le désastreux règne de Trump, marqué par l'inaptitude, l'imposture et la haine.

L'ignorance de Trump et ses mensonges ont eu leur part dans la mort de plus de 330 000 personnes aux États-Unis depuis le début de la pandémie de Covid-19 en 2020, soit environ un quart des décès causés dans le monde par le nouveau virus, alors que les États-Unis représentent seulement 4 % de la population mondiale. Sa gestion catastrophique du Covid-19 a fini par conduire Trump à la défaite électorale, alors même qu'il s'accroche au pouvoir, multipliant les allégations fausses et désespérées ou les recours en justice contre des fraudes à grande échelle qui ne se sont pas produites. Fort heureusement, l'opinion et les institutions américaines - les maires, les gouverneurs, les chambres des États, les tribunaux et l'armée - ont résisté aux élans autoritaires de Trump, de sorte que le président élu Joe Biden, homme rationnel, décent, honorable, prêtera bientôt serment.

La quatrième raison d'être optimiste tient à l'action remarquable des Nations Unies, malgré la puissance des vents contraires qui ont soufflé en 2020. L'ONU a vu le jour voici soixante-quinze ans, grâce à la volonté du plus grand des présidents américains, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, afin de former un rempart contre de futurs conflits. Elle défend les trois piliers du multilatéralisme : la paix, les droits humains et le développement durable. En 2020, sur ces trois fronts, elle s'est admirablement comportée, malgré les provocations de l'administration Trump.

Les agences de l'ONU sont aujourd'hui dirigées par des femmes et des hommes de grandes compétences et d'une intégrité sans faille ; Antonio Guterres, le secrétaire général, a conduit l'Organisation avec un immense talent et une grande profondeur de vues durant l'année la plus difficile qu'elle ait connue depuis sa fondation. En 2021, l'ONU accueillera plusieurs sommets mondiaux d'une importance cruciale - sur les océans, la biodiversité, les systèmes alimentaires et le climat - qui peuvent, ensemble, poser les fondations pour des décennies de la coopération mondiale et du développement durable.

La cinquième raison d'être optimiste est apportée par la révolution numérique, le grand acteur implicite de la réaction mondiale à la pandémie. Les activités en ligne ont maintenu le monde en état de fonctionner. En quelques semaines, entreprises, écoles, banques, administrations, échanges commerciaux, paiements, prestations de santé, mais aussi l'architecture de l'ONU se sont organisés en ligne à une échelle, une étendue, une profondeur jusqu'alors inimaginables. Les technologies numériques ont directement contribué à la lutte contre l'épidémie, à la diffusion de l'information, la surveillance des modes de transmission de la maladie, et fourni de multiples services de soins de santé.

Évidemment, le nouvel univers numérique n'est pas un paradis merveilleux. Et l'on peut se désespérer que la moitié du monde n'ait pas encore accès à Internet. La migration rapide du travail, de l'enseignement, de la vie sociale, des échanges commerciaux et des activités de loisir sur les plateformes numériques a par conséquent alimenté de cruelles inégalités entre celles et ceux qui disposent d'Internet et celles et ceux qui n'en disposent pas. En outre, les technologies numériques ont donné naissance à des maux sociaux nouveaux et graves, notamment le piratage à grande échelle, l'infox et les forgeries, la guerre informatique et la surveillance abusive pratiquée par les États comme par les entreprises privées.

Les deux visages de l'âge numérique, le bon et le mauvais, illustrent la situation à laquelle nous devons faire face sur de nombreux fronts. Nous pouvons être optimistes car nous savons que les technologies de pointe et la connaissance scientifique renforcent nos capacités à résoudre les problèmes urgents auxquels le monde entier est confronté. Mais nous devons aussi veiller à empêcher que les forces de la cupidité, de l'ignorance et de la haine ne détournent pour leurs propres fins les nouvelles technologies.

Les philosophes de la Grèce antique pensaient que politique et éthique devaient aller ensemble. Aristote nous a légué deux de ses chefs-d'œuvre comme vademecum, l'Éthique à Nicomaque et La Politique, guides, vers le bonheur humain pour le premier, vers une action politique capable, pour le second, de conduire également au bonheur la cité-État grecque, la polis.

Aujourd'hui, le pape François consacre deux grandes encycliques, *Laudato si'*, en 2015, et *Fratelli Tutti*, en 2020, à l'éthique et à sa capacité de conduire le monde vers un environnement durable et vers la paix globale. Les nouvelles encycliques décrivent en profondeur comment nous pouvons aller au-delà de nos propres familles, de nos propres communautés, de nos propres pays, pour construire le dialogue et bâtir la confiance dans le monde.

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Agriculture nets US\$15m

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

First in history, under the Weah administration with Madam Jeanine Cooper as Minister, the Ministry of Agriculture has netted US\$15 million from government and partners to invest in the sector.

According to quarterly reports generated in mid 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture through the lobbying strategies of Minister Cooper secured the funding from the Liberian government, with the African Development Bank (ABD) providing US\$3.1 million, while US\$2.29 million came from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and US\$10.525 million from the World Bank to support the COVID-19 National Emergency Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihood Plan.

The reports also indicates that of that last amount, US\$5 million was channeled

and fertilizers with more than 50 tons of various types of fertilizers and thousands of gallons of different insecticides and fungicides purchased through the Smallholder Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P) to protect insects and diseases against food and tree crops which farmers face at times.

In order to boast the agricultural sector and have more food, the Ministry provided seeds, including vegetable seeds to bring relief to farmers who have lost incomes as a result of the pandemic.

“In addition, under the emergency plan, cassava cuttings, rice seeds and oil palm seedlings have been procured with IFAD’s financing and African Development Bank’s financing commitments. ADB funds MOA’s Smallholder Agricultural Productivity Enhancement and Commercialization Project (SAPEC),” the report says.

Already, the ministry has

other agro machineries for farmers are expected in the country this year, the quarterly report indicates.

For the first time, Liberia now has a 30.4-hectare land cocoa seed garden in Beeplay, Nimba County. Planting of cocoa in this garden is progressing.

By 2025, the garden will provide cocoa seedlings to thousands of Liberian cocoa farmers who will not have to travel or import cocoa seeds from neighboring countries.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) through the MOA’s Tree Crops Expansion Program (TCEP) is financing the garden’s development.

The Ministry under its joint IFAD and World Bank financed Smallholder Agriculture Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P), distributed 23,000 high-yielding oil palm seedlings to smallholder farming groups in Bomi, Bong,



through the World Food Program as contribution to the government’s COVID-19 Household Food Support Program, which is meant to mitigate impacts on farmers, should the Covid-19 pandemic continue amidst global shutdown of supply chains that may affect food.

Minister Cooper is now focusing on agro machineries support with more than 200 pieces of agro-processing equipment, including power tillers, rice mills, tractors, and cassava processing machines being procured under the ministry’s Smallholder Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P) to enable farmers across the country shift from subsistence to mechanized farming.

Madam Cooper, who took over the ministry mid last year, has also engaged in provision of agrochemicals

kicked off distribution of varieties of fertilizers and agrochemicals as well as safety gears, beginning with 70 farmers groups in Montserrado and, with more transport logistics arrangements already in place, the distribution moves to Bong, Bomi, Gbarpolu Grand Bassa, Lofa, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi and Nimba counties next to be subsequently extended to counties in southeastern Liberia.

The Cooper’s leadership employed livestock producers, and empowered six large producers with feed mills to process feeds for their poultry, while a main producer in central Liberia received incubators to increase hatchery.

Vegetable seeds for Nimba and Lofa counties have been procured, while orders are in for 30 power tillers for those two counties under the IFAD’s financed TCEP projects.

Additionally, more cassava processing, rice threshers and

Grand Cape Mount, Lofa and Nimba counties to boost planting of new acreage of oil palm.

The STAR-P program is expected to purchase palm oil from local processors in order to stimulate purchasing from farmers who have limited access to markets. The palm oil that is purchased will form part of the national food reserves currently being managed by the General Services Agency.

For the agribusiness program, the ministry has made significant impact on the local market; the report shows there is a surge in the production of plant-based consumer packaged goods (CPG) in Liberia by small and medium enterprises. Liberians are producing soap and cosmetic products from palm and coconut oils, and from local Shea butter; several companies producing rum from sugar cane; fruit

NEC schedules

Starts from back page

candidates and the 960 registered voters in Beloken, Wakpo and Boluwein to fully participate in the election and referendum slated for 13 January 2021.

Meanwhile, the National Elections Commission says all accredited media institutions,

local and International Organizations for the 8 December 2020 Special Senatorial Elections and Constitutional Referendum will be allowed to cover the 13 January 2021 election in Grand Kru County.

LBDI, Lonestar

Starts from back page

LBDI CEO, John BS Davies expressed satisfaction in partnering with Lonestar Cell MTN to bring efficiency to their customers, “LBDI has been an active campaigner for digital banking in Liberia. We remain committed to working with institutions like Lonestar Cell MTN to digitalize payment systems in the country. I urge customers to take advantage of the new platform and use all the features to make their

lives better.” MTN Mobile Money has always been more than just sending and receiving money. The platform facilitates fast, convenient, and most importantly, secure transactions. Signing up for MoMo is free. Just visit any Lonestar Cell MTN Service Center or registered MoMo agent with a valid identification card and fill out an application form.

JUDICIAL BRANCH
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

SITTING IN ITS DECEMBER TERM A.D. 2020

BEFORE HIS HONOUR: **SCHAEPLOR R. DUNBAR** ASSIGNED CIRCUIT JUDGE




THE PETITION OF RICHMOND KORMA AKOI OF THE CITY OF MONROVIA, MONTSERRADO COUNTY, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA PETITIONER PRAYING THIS HONOURABLE COURT FOR A DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME TO BE KNOWN, REGARDED AND CALLED, AS “RICHMOND DENNIS”

COURT’S DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME:

RICHMOND KORMA AKOI filed a Petition through his legal counsel requesting this Honourable Court to order the change of his name to “RICHMOND DENNIS”

During the hearing, the Petitioner’s testified that the change of his name, requesting this Honourable Court is intended to reflect his true family name and render his identity more explicit and absolute After conducting the necessary interrogations required by law in these proceedings, the Court observed that the intention is just and legal and that there is no objection to the Change of his name proposed by him is therefore, it is adjusted as follows:

That the Petitioner having shown with justification and satisfaction that he was born on SEPTEMBER 27, 1988 in MONROVIA, MONTSERRADO COUNTY, Republic of Liberia unt MR. JOSEPH DENNIS and MRS. MAMIE DENNIS respectively, all of the City of Monrovia Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia and that the Change of name will substantially promote his interest In all of the understandings and help to establish just identify more firmly, and being Satisfied that he has met all legal requirements for the Change of his Name in this Jurisdiction, it therefore DECREED as follows:

That the PETITION having been heard be and same is hereby ordered granted and we now Render that the name RICHMOND KORMA AKOI be changed to “RICHMOND DENNIS” Beginning this 5TH day of JANUARY A.D. 2021.

THIS DECREE shall be registered in the office of the Registrar of DEEDS and other Official Documentations within (10) days from this date and also be published twice in any recognized Newspaper operating in the Republic of Liberia within twenty (20) days from this date. AND IT IS HEREBY SO ORDERED.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN OPEN COURT, THIS _____ DAY OF JANUARY A.D. 2021

COURT SEAL: **SCHAEPLOR R. DUNBAR**
ASSIGNED CIRCUIT JUDGE PRESIDING
SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CIVIL LAW COURT

REGISTERED ACCORDING TO LAW IN VOLUME _____ PAGE(S) _____

REGISTRAR, NATIONAL ARCHIVES CENTER/MONT.CO, R. L.

juices, baking and cooking mixes, food snacks like plantain chips and granola, dried fruit, spice rubs and seasonings, among others.

The report also points out that with World Bank’s funding, the Liberian government, through the MOA, has completed the evaluation of Liberian agribusinesses for both the formal and informal agribusinesses that applied for

matching grants to minimize the effects of COVID-19 on them.

Meanwhile, the World Food Programme, through the MOA has requested for an extension of the World Bank’s Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) from December 31, 2020 to June 30, 2021 to allow WFP completes the remaining counties. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Larry Younquoi envies me

By Jonathan Browne

Nimba County Senator Prince Yormie Johnson sternly reacts to persistent attack from kinsman Representative Larry P. Younquoi, on his personality, terming it as sheer envy due to the level of development he (Johnson) has undertaken in Nimba.

He brags of establishing a modern polytechnic university in Nimba, the first ever in the history of the county, claiming that in Representative Younquoi's

of the PYJ Education Foundation, a personal initiative, among other achievements, arguing that Bob Jones University and Oral Roberts University in America are not owned by the United States government.

His reaction follows wild allegations by Rep. Younquoi that Sen. PYJ, leader of the defunct rebels Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia or INPFL, killed more people from Nimba during the Liberian Civil War than all other former warlords in Liberia.

He terms the allegation as

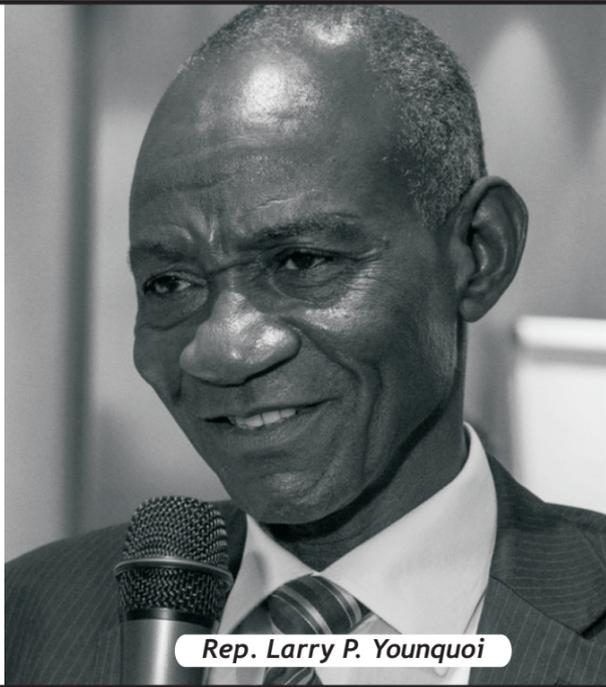
to peacekeepers, and from Nigeria, I issued a communication via video recording to one Joseph Kokor in July 1992, instructing all of my men to disarm, so they were disarmed", he says.

On claim that he was taken from Liberia by ECOMOG in the 90s as a mere refugee after surrendering to the regional force, Sen. Johnson says he left here under the umbrella of the Federal Government of Nigeria, and was not a mere refugee, as Younquoi alleged.

Relationship between the



Sen. Prince Y. Johnson



Rep. Larry P. Younquoi

two terms in office, he has never executed any development in electoral district#8, his constituency.

Speaking to The New Dawn Wednesday, January 06, 2021 via mobile phone in Monrovia, Sen. Johnson explained that unlike him, Rep. Younquoi has no home in Nimba, alleging that the Nimba district#8 lawmaker currently resides in a family house with no property or development of his own.

He points to establishment

blatant lies, saying, "Larry just hate to see me."

Younquoi further claimed on Tuesday, 05 January in a live talk show in Monrovia that the rebel leader-turn politician has never disarmed since the end of the 14-year bloody crisis that killed over 300,000 people, including women and children.

But PYJ debunks the assertion, saying he fully disarmed to international peacekeepers thru the United States Embassy in Liberia.

"I surrendered my weapons

two Nimba lawmakers has never been cordial since Rep. Larry Younquoi got elected to the House, with the latter seeing Sen. PYJ as imposing and domineering in the county's politics, always wanting his voice to be the final.

But Younquoi has disclosed that he is on a mission to demystify Sen. PYJ, who he said, continues to portray himself to the Nimba people as a deity.

River Cess citizens

Cont'd from page 6

cash and other things. Mainly our 30%, we have benefited from that. We have built a vocational training center with 56,340 US, and we have built a clinic that worth USD62,000. We are building a bridge that we have contributed 35,000 to. We have gotten money for the cubic meter fees and we have distributed 1,000 in each of the 75 towns in the 11 clans and have carried some things there. So, with benefit, we have really benefited, even though that may not be to our expectation," Wallace stated.

He said they signed a second agreement in 2016 on December 21, 2016 that covers land rental and scholarship besides cubic meter fees, adding, "So we supposed to receive 5,000 per semester for our students. But we went six semesters and we were only able to receive only two, the other four semesters left on the company and the company closed down unceremoniously and the only complaint they gave us is that pit sawyers illegally got into the forest

disappointment with the local authorities and the community people.

"I brought the matter to the attention of the FDA and it said the money being paid by the pit sawyers doesn't give them ground to saw in concession areas. It means that they supposed to go to leftover forest, where community people have their own forest. FDA again said it never knew that the people were sawing planks from the concession. They promised for us to work together and go to the forest to take the people from there, but since then we have not been able to form that team. It has been a year now, since January 2020. The sawing is against that contract. This is hampering the developmental needs of the county," Wallace concluded.

When contacted, the Chief Executive Officer of EJ and J Logging Company, Madam Mrs. Eliza D. J. Kronyahn, admitted the sudden departure of the company, stating that it has not been protected.

"I don't want to discuss this because it has to do with the



against the will of the CFDC and the company and they started sawing pieces. The company said since we could not do anything, it was leaving and since it left, we are not getting those benefits anymore."

He said all 11 affected communities have been affected since the closure of the company and there is no prospect for completion of those projects that had already started or to begin new development projects.

"The second contract has duration of five years, but the company closed down just in the second year. As I speak to you all the 11 communities are all affected by this, because it hampers our developmental progress," he lamented.

He added that they contacted relevant authorities, including Forestry Development Authority and the CEO of the company, Madam Eliza Kronyahn, who told them she has written an official communication to the FDA, stating her

government and FDA is the government. Just take car and go there and you will see exactly what really wrong. You will see it and nobody will have to tell you. Just go there and take picture," she explained.

"FDA is sitting here and a concession that the President has signed; the Legislature has ratified has been in a ruin. What happens, they will tell you. I paid all debts, I don't owe government one cent. Be it premier, be it reactive premier, or land rental, I paid all. So that's it yaa baby. The people put me in mess," said Madam Kronyahn, who is also Treasurer of the Liberia Timber Association.

FDA has yet to comment despite several engagements through calls and text messages to Managing Director Mr. C. Mike Doryen and Department of Communications. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Cont'd from page 6

easily detected if counterfeited or tempered with by any supplier or manufacturer.

He indicates the training is scheduled to take place in all 15 counties of Liberia for the next 30 days.

LRA, MFDP begins

The imposition of excise stamps on selected goods and products is a result of an administrative regulation formulated by the LRA and the MFDP and has made it possible to put in place the proper use of specific stamps for

manufacturers and suppliers of petroleum, tobacco and alcohol products on the Liberian market as well as curtail leakages of potential tariffs for the country. -Press Release

Cont'd from page 7

partnership, peace, unity, togetherness, justice, reconciliation, sustainable development at the University of Liberia, the

Liberian academic

nation's premier institution of higher learning...," he says.

In celebration of the launching of the book, Dr. Nelson announces that 15 of its

copies were being purchased by the University of Liberia, as Dr. Pailey adds five copies to the number being purchased by UL. The book costs

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NEC schedules election rerun in Grand Kru for next Wednesday



The National Elections Commission, (NEC), has announced Wednesday, 13 January 2021, for the re-run of the Special Senatorial Elections and Constitutional Referendum elections in Grand Kru County.

says the re-run election will be conducted in three voting precincts in Electoral Districts Number One and Two.

The three precincts, according to the Commission include Beloken Town Hall with Code Number 18050, Wakpo Public School, Code Number 18024 and in the Boluwein Town

Hall with Code Number 18029 in Grand Kru County.

The NEC says, the three Grand Kru precincts consist of three polling places with a total number of 960 registered voters.

A Release issued today Thursday 7 January 2021 says the Commission is in full readiness to conduct the election after procuring new election materials, including ballot papers.

A new Electoral Team of Technicians has been constituted to conduct the re-run election and referendum on 13 January 2021, in Grand Kru County, the NEC release says.

The Commission's decision to conduct the election on Wednesday, 13 January 2021 follows a confidence building meeting with all stakeholders, including candidates and or their representatives.

The NEC is encouraging all

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

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LBDI, Lonestar MTN launches push and pull

Lonestar Cell MTN, Liberia's leading GSM and mobile financial services company, announces that effective Thursday January 7, LBDI customers can now connect their bank accounts to their MTN Mobile Money (MoMo) accounts.

money from their MoMo accounts directly to their bank accounts.

To use this service, LBDI customers need to visit their nearest branch to link their bank account to their Mobile Money account; then, they dial *156*7# on their phones and follow the prompts. Customers must have their LBDI account numbers on hand to complete the setup process.

Rahul De, CEO of Lonestar Cell MTN, said, "We believe that



digital advancements improve lives. We support the government's aim for a cashless digital economy. We are excited about the service because we are giving customers access to their money anytime and anywhere. In just a few easy steps, MoMo customers can conveniently transfer money between their MoMo wallets and their bank accounts when they need to."

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

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