

News

Nigerians in Cameroon Schooled On Immigration, Taxation Laws

BY WALTER WILSON NANA

Nigerians resident in Cameroon have been schooled on new developments embedded in the Cameroon Criminal Procedure Code, CCPC, and the Tax Code.

HE is the background of an on-going seminar dubbed "Sensitization & Enlightenment of Nigerians in Cameroon on Immigration, Citizenship, Nationality & Taxation Laws."

According to Barrister Gilbert Bongam, the CCPC comes with innovations to protect the rights of Cameroonians and foreigners resident in Cameroon.

He said the CCPC is out to protect public order, fight criminality and protect privacy.

On personal rights and freedoms, Barrister Fon-Ndikum cautioned Nigerian nationals resident in Cameroon not to twist, bend and dodge the law. He urged them to know and protect the laws of their host country.

"You have to know your duties and rights in the law and not only to look at your rights and freedoms," he said.

Fon-Ndikum explained the roles of the Cameroon police, the State Counsel, the Examining Magistrate and the trial court in the processes of investigation as concerns a national or a foreigner in Cameroon.

He said court judgments are granted in the name of the people and Government of Cameroon.

He enjoined participants to know their rights and know where they end, while highlighting that the CCPC is applicable to all residents

in Cameroon- national and foreigners.

"The CCPC makes provision for silence, a lawyer, a medical doctor and a right to bail nationals and foreigners," he said.

Expounding on Citizenship and Nationality Laws in Cameroon: the Impact of Cameroon Immigration Laws on Foreigners, Barrister Julius Achu who was leading a four-man team to the seminar, said the law enacted in 1968 gives room for Cameroonian citizenship and nationality birth, marriage and naturalization.

Barrister Achu added that the processes to follow in the afore-mentioned ways to get Cameroonian nationality.

He said the law does not allow for dual nationality and the documents that gives Cameroonian nationality is the Certificate of Nationality issued by a judge.

He advised Nigerians who have come to stay in Cameroon to comply with the law, regularize their stay, be at peace with themselves and the law.

"The Cameroonian law does not discriminate when it comes to nationals and foreigners in the country because of the bi-cultural nature of the country". He noted.

For Nigerians to better understand the Cameroon Tax Code, Elvis Chenwi of Nana Consulting & Finance in Douala, said the Cameroonian tax system is declarative, meaning that business operators must inform the taxation department that they are existing.

However, Chenwi said that only foreign nationals with diplomatic status are exempted from taxes in Cameroon. He said there are laws governing the payment of taxes that citizens and other nationals resident in Cameroon must be



abreast with.

Chenwi advised that good accounting principles and book-keeping are ingredients to pursue hitch-free taxation operations.

He enumerated the various taxes found in the Cameroonian Tax Code, what they entail and the periodicity of payments.

Earlier, the South West Regional Delegate of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, Francisca Biaka, exhorted Nigerians in Cameroon to regularly acquaint themselves with laws. She requested Nigerian business operators to register their businesses and be part of the Chamber of Commerce, which she said, is the parliament for business men and women.

Mohammed Akan, Nigerian Consul General for the Southwest and Northwest Regions with

residence in Buea, said the seminar was out to educate Nigerians leaving in Cameroon on what their rights and obligations are, vis-à-vis the issues of immigration, citizenship, nationality and taxation.

According to Akan, it was also an opportunity to clear some of the frictions in the Nigeria/Cameroon relationship for the better.

His colleague of the Nigerian Consulate in Douala in charge of Nigerians living in the Littoral and West Regions of Cameroon, Haliru Shuaibu, highlighted issues pertaining to international laws, how they protect citizens with diplomatic status and those without diplomatic immunity.

After Douala and Buea, the Nigerian diplomats will take the same message to their compatriots in Bafoussam and Bamenda in the days ahead.

"CEHDev" Demystifies Traditional Hegemony

BY CHRIS MBUNWE

The Lord Mayor of Mamfe Municipal Council, Takunchong Bernard, has commended the management and staff of Centre for Environment and Human Development (CEHDev), for the great work they are doing in the division, and especially in the Mekende



region.

Mayor Takunchong was addressing a cross section of the Mamfe population that had turned out on Friday August 13 at the Town Hall to witness the handing over to CEHDev of an equipped office building provided by the Municipal Council.

He intimated that many civil society organizations have over the years failed to penetrate the Mekende tribe known for their mistreatment of women and girls in the name of tradition.

"When they first came to my office in May to introduce their project," he announced, "I had misgivings about their chances of success because I knew from experience that the biggest hurdle would be how to penetrate those patriarchal village communities ruled by diehard traditionalists."

Until UV did so in July 2010, no development organization with an agenda that questions traditional beliefs and practices had ever been accepted in these communities. In fact, even the

Catholic Church has decided to give a blind eye to these traditional beliefs and practices that are definitely anti-Christian.

But penetrating these communities was just the beginning. Eventually, CEHDev did something unbelievable: they empowered young girls to the point where these girls voluntarily led the mobilization and sensitization of their communities, and openly treated hitherto taboo subjects such as sex, forced marriages, Female Genital Mutilation and HIV/AIDS.

By the Mayor's estimation, even if CEHDev did nothing else in their life as an organization, they will be remembered for breaking the ice and creating an enabling environment in these traditional societies for other organizations to exploit. He called on representatives of NGOs present to borrow a leaf from CEHDev's community entry strategy as well as their methodology consisting in systematically empowering beneficiaries to fight for their own rights, instead of advocating on their behalf.

Chief Anyang Egbe Tabogow Laid to Rest

BY AZORE OPIO



The remains of the late Chief of Eshobi-Kan clan in Manyu Division, who died under suspicious circumstances early last week, were laid to rest last Saturday in his hometown. Earlier on Friday, a long motorcade conveying the corpse from the Mamfe District Hospital mortuary made the short but tortuous journey to Eshobi, accompanied by hundreds of people who had made the journey to pay their last respects. They included government functionaries, members of the Southwest Chiefs Conference, ordinary village folk and youth. In his days, Chief Anyang had been revered

by many people for his strong stance on many social and political issues. But he was also hated by the political elite of the Division and by members of his own clan Traditional Council for his vocal criticism of the ruling party and for introducing a new system of traditional governance that rendered certain age-old practices obsolete.

For those who regret his demise, Chief Anyang will be remembered especially for his defense of the rights of women and children. He unilaterally abolished forced and under-age marriages that is rampant among the Bayang people. He also outlawed some very disgraceful traditional practices such as giving the girl child as collateral for borrowing ridiculous sums of money with the understanding that the girl child becomes the wife of the creditor if the debtor fails to respect the terms of the bargain.

Chief Anyang will also be remembered for the role he played in promoting the ideals of the Southern Cameroons National Council, (SCNC) an out-lawed organization fighting to pull English-speaking Cameroon away from the dictatorship of La République du Cameroun and for his strong support for opposition parties during elections.

Chief Anyang leaves behind one surviving wife and four children as well as a host of friends and sympathizers to mourn his untimely death.

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Debate

AN ASSESSMENT OF RATTAN AND BAMBOO FOR SUSTAINING A THRIVING COTTAGE INDUSTRY IN MANYU DIVISION

By Enow-Ebot Enow

Centre for Environment and Human Development

In Cameroon, and in fact in the entire Central African sub region, the rural population is usually in excess of 75% of total population. These are mainly peasant farmers whose livelihoods and survival are hinged on the prowess and resilience of resource bases, essentially forests and wetlands, from which a wide variety of wood and non-wood forest products are harvested both for home consumption and for trade.

Within the mountain range of south western Cameroon alone, over 300 of these Non-Wood Forest Product (NWFP) species have been identified, that are of local, national and international significance.

Rattan and bamboo feature prominently among these Non-Wood Forest Products, but in a recent survey conducted by the Centre for Environment and Human Development, to determine their variability, abundance and distribution pattern, it was observed that despite the relative abundance of 2 rattan and 1 bamboo species in three vast forest areas in Manyu Division (Bayang-Mbo Reserve, Bachuo'ntai Forest Area and Ejagham Forest Reserve), rattan and bamboo transformation still has difficulties breaking through the artisanal barrier in this part of the country. This observation seems to coincide with conclusions

based on empirical evidence that the people of Manyu Division do not regard rattan and bamboo as important NWFPs of commercial value.

Further investigation, however, has shown that this conclusion is hasty and wrong. Like most forest-dependent people, the people of Manyu Division have a long tradition of exploiting rattan and bamboo. They use rattan as ropes for house construction, for producing household utensils such as baskets of various types, cassava flour (tapioca)

sieves and as protective decoration for palm wine receptacles such as calabashes and glass jars, amongst others. They equally use bamboo as poles and rafters in furniture and house construction. In fact, there are rattan and bam-



boo furniture and utensil makers in big towns such as Mamfe and Kembong, but these craftsmen are not skilled, the tools they use are rudimentary and their end products are of low quality and usually considered inferior by prospective buyers.

Other NWFPs apart from rattan and bamboo appear to be economically relevant only because they are mostly harvested, transformed and traded by women. There are two main reasons for this. First, women prefer to get in-

involved in products that could also be used for home consumption. Secondly and more importantly, women have the necessary skills and knowledge in NWFP management, and are aided in the task by elaborate and flexible networks of *bayam sellams* (female middlepersons) handling modest quantities of specific products for immediate disposal, to distribute to other parts of the country or for export to Nigeria, a neighbouring country with insatiable demand for these NWFPs.

Harvesting rattan and bamboo is a tricky and tedious exercise not fit for women. Transporting huge bundles of cane on the head from the forest to the village demands strength and endurance that only few men can muster. Unless there are ample financial incentives associated with this activity, few men will want to get involved. Manyu Division that is linked to the coast by over 400 km of bad roads offers very little, if any, of such incentives.

But there can be bright prospects for rattan and bamboo harvesters and furniture and utensil makers in Manyu Division. By its geographical location, Manyu Division is open to an unexploited local market for both raw cane and bamboo, and finished products. It is also open to a vast foreign market - Nigeria - for finished products essentially, and a prospective national market for raw materials and finished products in spite of difficulty of access. To take advantage of these multiple opportunities, there is urgent need for community, local, national and regional development organizations to show some interest in the rattan and bamboo sectors. Until now, only a few research oriented structures have delved into the sector, producing rich data and recommendations meant essentially for workshop participants.

CEHDev Launches FGM Project

By WALTER WILSON NANA

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is practiced in many parts of Cameroon, but CEHDev's current action targets the Ejagham tribe of the South West Region, where FGM as a cultural practice marginalizes women and subordinates them into prescribed roles under the men within the family and the



community. It is linked to the unequal status of women in the political, social and economic structure of society. FGM is a gross violation of the human rights of women and is harmful to their health. At policy level very little is done on FGM in Cameroon despite the various UN International Human Rights Conventions that Cameroon has signed.

It is within this bleak backdrop that CEHDev initiated the civic education project on the eradication of FGM, targeting 10 accessible village communities in the afore-mentioned tribe. The goal of the project is to protect the human rights of women by lobbying law makers and the government to adopt legislation against FGM in Cameroon. The overall objective is to empower women socially, economically and politically, thereby increasing their self esteem and promoting equality with men in the community.

In preparation for the circumcision rite, girls are deprived of schooling and kept in fattening homes for 1 year (3 years in the past), to prepare them for marriage (how to take care of their husbands). Girls in this community are exclusively meant for marriage and often to very old men with several wives. Most are not given the opportunity to have basic primary school education while the boys are sent to school and given opportunities to grow and have independent lives.

The project that began in June 2012 comprises advocacy and livelihoods components and is expected to end in December 2013

LEGAL NOTICE

In the High Court Of Fako Division
Holden At Buea

Suit No. HCF/080MC/1m/11

BETWEEN

Nche George Ndifor Angwafor

PETITIONER

AND

Njinjoh Margaret Nkonkimi

RESPONDENT

SUBSTITUTED SERVICE RESPONDENT

TAKE NOTICE that a matrimonial cause has been commenced in the High Court of Fako Division against the Respondent. The Hon. Court in suit No. HCF/080MC/1m/11 delivered on the 09/12/2012, ordered for substituted service on the respondent via this medium.

Further take notice, that the matter will be heard on the 12th day August 2013 on which date the respondent is expected to appear and defend the suit against her. If the Respondent fails to so appear on the said return date, the Court will proceed to the cause as undefended and the judgment given will be binding on the Respondent.

Done at Mutengene this 22nd day of July 2013.

Ade Wamucho Job
Counsel for the Petitioner