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CIMEC 2024:

Cameroon sets bold path to boost mining sector and economic growth!

Minister Fuh Calistus says with Yaounde Declaration transformation has moved from slogan to reality within OACPS

By Kuwan Chelsea

The Cameroon International Mining Convention and Exhibition, CIMEC which featured the meeting of Mines Ministers of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) in Cameroon has come to an end in Yaounde. After two days of exchange, sharing and consultation, the interim Minister of Mines, Industry and Technological development for Cameroon, Prof. Fuh Calistus Gentry, presided over the closing ceremony on 24 May at the Hilton Hotel in Yaoundé, in the presence of H.E. the Secretary General of the OACPS and around fifty Ministers of Mines and delegations from the said countries.

The results of these exchanges are visible. These include: the signing of a Joint Communiqué between Cameroon and the European Union on a critical minerals management strategy with a view to concluding a memorandum of understanding, the adoption of the “Yaoundé Declaration”, understood as the common position of the OACP member countries on the management of critical minerals needed for the energy transition, in collaboration with the European Union. Its aim is to ensure that the spin-offs from the exploitation of these critical minerals are beneficial and profitable for the countries that have them.

Minister Fuh Calistus stressed on the fact that Cameroon will not only serve as a producer of mineral resources but also an area for transformation.

“Our target is that the first shipment of iron ore will leave the port of Kribi soon. In the Yaoundé declaration which will not only be a physical document, it is a question for countries to transform minerals, address common issues posed to the environment and adjust the mining code so as to give Cameroon a better bargaining power in the market”, the Minister declared.

For his part, The Secretary General of the OACPS, H.E Georges Robelo Pinto Chikoti appreciated the potential of Cameroon and urged the member states to “Work in synergy and share experiences in mining for the benefit of all”.

It should also be noted that, emphasis was placed on accelerating the development and production of significant mining projects, such as the Mbalam, Kribi-Lobe, and Bipindi-Grand-Zambi iron mining projects, and the Colomine small gold mine, which are set to begin.

The convention underscored the importance of attracting foreign direct investment and involving financial institutions, stock exchanges, banks, insurers, and legal professionals in the mining industry.

This initiative aims to facilitate the funding and risk management necessary for the sector’s growth.

CIMEC 2024 aimed to position Yaoundé as a new center for mining negotiations and financing, drawing comparisons to other major international mining conventions. The event sought to showcase Cameroon as a prime location for mining investments due to its rich mineral resources and strategic position.



The introduction of the closed system carbon-in-leach (CIL) method for gold mining was highlighted as a way to improve tax collection, reduce environmental impact, and ensure fair distribution of mining revenues.

The meeting also included discussions with the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS) Council of Ministers.

These resolutions reflect a comprehensive approach to leveraging

Cameroon’s mineral wealth to foster economic growth, attract investment,

and ensure sustainable and transparent mining practices as a Partnership with China Harbour Engineering company was signed.

Commenting on the Yaounde Declaration, Minister Fuh Calistus told the press that OACPS countries have resolved to transform their minerals but warned that this should not be a slogan but backed by realities of transformation. That is why, he said common issues of energy, legislation, whereby mining codes should be harmonized so as to give them a better bargaining

power, as well as infrastructural policies were addressed.

The success of CIMEC 2024 has set the stage for future conferences, reinforcing Cameroon’s role as a critical platform for dialogue and collaboration in the mining sector.

Attendees left with a renewed sense of purpose and optimism about the future of mining in Cameroon as an appointment is taken for the next edition come 2025.

Buea:

PCC Christians bid Moderator farewell

Rt Rev Fonki Samuel inaugurates Presbyterian Diagnostic Hospital in Buea

By Sheron Tita

Christians of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, have expressed good wishes to their Moderator Rt Rev Fonki Samuel as his term of office nears its end.

Their wishes were expressed during an emotional farewell ceremony organized in honour of their Moderator at the esplanade of the Synod office in Buea, on Friday 24th of March 2024.

Receiving the farewell wishes from his Christians and pastors, a tearful Moderator Fonki appealed to the Christians to be each other's keeper through the virtue of unity.

After the service, Rt Rev Fonki Samuel urged his pastors to practise the virtue of collaboration and team spirit.

"I leave them with the collaboration of each other, team spirit and I pray that God will bless them as they continue to live their faith and that their faith should impact the world", he said

He went further to state that after his tenure of office as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, he shall continue with his works of evangelization by serving as a pastor within the PCC.

"Administration is continuous and we trust that God will select another leader that will bring even more than what I have done. And I will step down to a simple pastor within the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. I will like to have the joy to be led by



Rt Rev Fonki Samuel



Launching of the PCC Diagnostic Hospital by the Moderator



Launching of the PCC Diagnostic Hospital by the Moderator

others", he reiterated.

The ceremony equally witnessed the inauguration of the Presbyterian Diagnostic Hospital Buea by the Moderator of the PCC.

"A Diagnostic hospital because that is the immediate need of the health services department of our church. That Center will meet the medical needs of the patients within the city of Buea and beyond. Patients now will stop sending their specimens abroad for diagnosis," the Moderator shared his motivation behind the construction

of a diagnostic hospital.

Seeing the Diagnostic Hospital come to fruition is a dream come true to the Moderator of the PCC. As such, he will be leaving fulfilled.

The ceremony also witnessed the launching of a more than 400 pages memoir (book) of the

PCC Moderator Rt Rev Fonki Samuel, with chief launcher Chief Dr. Blessed Okole, representing the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Chief Dr. Joseph Dion Ngute. Amongst

other religious leaders present at the ceremony was the Bishop of the Diocese of Buea, Bishop Michael Bibi.

It is worth noting that the Moderator of PCC has been serving as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon for about ten years now.

The Rt Rev Fonki Samuel, born on November 23, 1965 in Akwaya Subdivision in Manyu, is married to Rev. Dr. Pepetua Fonki.

At Denis and Lenora Foretia Foundation stakeholder meeting: Low internet connectivity identified as hindering Business Performance in Cameroon



In 2009, Cameroon National Institute of Statistics estimated the penetration rate of Information and Communication Technologies in Small and Medium-sized enterprises at less than 50%.

Several incentives have since been introduced over the years, including a five year exemption from all taxes, duties, fees, and levies, with the exception of social security contributions, for innovative start-ups in the field of Information and Communication Technologies during the incubation phase.

The objective of the 5th stakeholders meeting is therefore to analyze the contribution of ICT development to business performance in Cameroon. Specifically, the meeting aimed at analyzing and assessing the progress made by Cameroon in the field of ICT since 2010, understand the factors hindering SME access to digital technology in Cameroon, and the opportunities for ICT sector development for SMEs, discuss ways to improve SME access to ICT in order to strengthen the development of the manufacturing sector in Cameroon, gather stakeholder input for policy or



strategy change in the ICT sector in Cameroon.

The event comprised of teachings from the leaders of Denis and Lenora Foretia Foundation and a round table discussion, talking on the contributions of technological development of SMEs to the economic growth of Cameroon.

ICT is supposed to be the catalyst for economic growth and the vector for the growth of the national GDP of the country, Desmond Kum, Denis and Lenora Foretia Foundation Assistant, said.

"Digital transformation is at the very

heart of the growth of the country, it's at the very heart of the sustainability of the state if one is going by the National strategic plan for 2030. There is still a lot of challenge for enterprises in terms of accessibility to the internet which is still very low though Cameroon is at improving level, compared to other countries in Central Africa," he said.

The expected outcome of the event was to increase awareness among all stakeholders of the importance of ICTs in the development of SMEs and the evolution Cameroon's manufacturing sector.

Hon. Nourane Foster threatens to withdraw from politics amid intimidation claims



Hon. Nourane Foster

YAOUNDE, Cameroon (CNA) — Businesswoman and Member of Parliament for the Cameroon Party for National Reconciliation (PCRN), Hon. Nourane Foster, has threatened to withdraw from the political scene, citing intimidation by the Minister of Territorial Administration, Paul Atanga Nji.

In a comment under a Facebook post written on her official handle, Hon. Foster expressed her concerns over recent actions and warnings issued by the MINAT boss, particularly targeting fellow MP and her party. “The preamble of our Constitution clearly states that national sovereignty belongs to the Cameroonian people, who exercise it through the President of the Republic and the members of Parliament,” she stated. “A Member of Parliament represents the Nation

and has the right to address Cameroonians. Why this warning?”

Foster emphasized her frustration with the current political climate, suggesting that the actions of some individuals within the government are obstructing the democratic process. “What is being prepared with the complicity of certain individuals is beyond my comprehension,” she said. “Due to these intimidations, starting today, I do not exclude the possibility of withdrawing from the Cameroonian political scene.”

This announcement follows recent accusations by the Minister of Territorial Administration against MP Cabral Libii, who was warned to cease making disrespectful remarks about the Head of State. Additionally, Maurice Kamto has also been threatened by the same minister. Atanga Nji specified that the phrase “Cameroonians, my dear compatriots” is reserved exclusively for the President of the Republic, warning that “those who violate this should beware.”

Hon. Nourane Foster’s potential withdrawal from politics could signal a significant shift in the PCRN’s approach and influence within the Cameroonian political landscape. The situation remains tense as observers await further developments. She is popularly called MP 2.0

Culled from Cameroonnewsagency

Bandit beaten to death after robbery attempt at traditional wedding ceremony

Bamenda, North West Region, Cameroon — According to an unnamed resident, an enraged mob caught and lynched an armed robber who attempted to disrupt a traditional wedding behind FONAP Polytechnic in Bamenda last Friday.

The incident occurred during a traditional wedding ceremony held in a blackout, MMI has learned. Two bandits arrived at the event, seizing phones from attendees. The bike rider who reportedly accompanied the main bandit, also described as a kidnapper managed to escape with the stolen phones, while the main perpetrator entered rooms, collecting valuables and even demanding a ransom of 30 million CFA francs.

Informed youths at the event acted swiftly, apprehending the main kid-

napper before he could escape. The mob then took matters into their own hands, burning the kidnapper to death. As of this report, the kidnapper’s charred remains are still lying at the scene.

This brutal act of vigilante justice highlights the ongoing security challenges in the North West Region, where instances of kidnapping and violence have become distressingly common. The community’s response, while extreme, underscores the frustration and fear that residents face daily.

Local authorities have yet to comment on the incident, but this event raises urgent questions about the effectiveness of security measures and the rule of law in the region.

Mimi Mefo Info

Security threats halted development projects in Galim in 2023, Council Authorities say

GALIM, Cameroon (CNA) — Security threats in the localities of Bamenyam, Bamendjing, Bati, and Bagam in Galim Subdivision of the West Region have negatively impacted development projects in the area in 2023, council authorities said.

Development projects funded by the public investment budget were only 60.61% executed, despite an increase of FCFA 10.6 million in the budget compared to 2022.

This information was disclosed during the council’s ordinary session held at the council premises on Wednesday, May 22, under the supervision of David DadorDibango, Senior Divisional Officer for Bamboutos. The session, chaired by Mayor Tsouongang Elie Saker and attended by all 23 councilors, included several deliberations, one of which authorized the Mayor to obtain a loan for constructing a modern council building.

“Despite the security threats, notable achievements include the rehabilitation of the bridge at Haussa Quarter, the rehabilitation of Mbeve II, Menfoung, and several other secondary roads, and the construction and equipping of two classrooms, including the Headteacher’s office,” Saker said.

To overcome these security challenges, the population was urged to intensify collaboration with security forces to advance the locality’s development.

The area, which borders the crisis-hit North West Region, has suffered from separatist incursions, including an attack that resulted in the deaths of nine people at the Bamenyam market square.

Additionally, road infrastructure problems have been a significant challenge for the population, who primarily depend on agriculture for subsistence. However, local authorities have been progressively improving the roads.

Senator rejects position in state structure

Senator Françoise Puene, alias MamyNyanga, has refused an appointment as president of the management committee of l’Écoled’Agriculture et d’Élevage de Kouoptama in the Wt region.

Reacting to the position proposed by the President of the Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry (CAPEF), Martin Paul Mindjos, Many Nyanga in a letter dated 22 May invoked her numerous roles, wondering if she would be able to live up to the billing. She however expressed the hope



Senator Puene

that this rejection will not alter her collaboration with the President of CAPEF.

After threats from Atanga Nji:

Kamto hits back!

Regrets MINAT has 'sunk into vulgarity and excesses' under his tenure

Last Friday's threats by Minister Atanga Nji against the opposition and antecedents has provoked a weighty response from MRC leader, Prof. Maurice Kamto.

In a write-up on X titled: "CAMEROON DOES NOT NEED A MINISTRY OF AGITATION, INSULT AND BLUSTERING", Kamto expressed regret that the once discreet power wielded by those at the helm of the Ministry of Territorial Administration, coupled with a good understanding of the law have now yielded place to ignorance of the texts governing its missions and permanent abuse of power under Atanga Nji. Following is the statement in its entirety:

2) CAMEROON DOES NOT NEED A MINISTRY OF AGITATION, INSULT AND BLUSTERING

There was a time when the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT) was considered one of the most important in the country, using few words, with quiet habits, discreet power and all the more respected. It was the convenient symbol of a competent administration with a good understanding of the law. It has now sunk into vulgarity and excesses, ignorance of the texts governing its missions and permanent abuse of power.

On 23 May 2024, while we were still discussing the confiscation of the celebration of our country's National Day by the regime acting under cover of the Minister of Territorial



Atanga Nji and Kamto

Administration and the excesses committed against the CRM members having participated in the parade, with the approval of the competent DOs, in certain areas of the country, the Minister of Territorial Administration made public a press release demonstrating ignorance.

As every time a leader of an opposition political party expresses himself in a way that does not meet his expectations, he criticizes, in expressions that are similar from one press release to another: after having treated the leaders some political parties of the opposition, who are making efforts to get Cameroonians massively registered on the electoral lists, as "adventurers in need of notoriety", in his Communiqué of the 23rd of May, he belittled (railed) against what he calls "certain opposition political actors in need of notoriety". In fact he is talking

about himself, he who is chasing a notoriety which he sorely lacks, because there is no basis his notoriety could rely upon.

Regarding the organization of public meetings and manifestations, it is appalling to note that the Minister in charge of the protection of public liberties, who controls political parties, writes that he "reminds the leaders of political parties that only the DOs (...) can AUTHORIZE the organization of political activities (congresses, rallies, meetings)", thus displaying his incompetence undoubtedly based on a superficial knowledge of the appropriate legislation. Indeed, these activities of political parties are regulated by Law No. 90/055 of 19 December 1990 governing public meetings and manifestations in the Republic of Cameroon, section 3 of which provides: "(1) Public meetings, whatever

the reason, ARE FREE (2) However, they must be first DECLARED. Section 6 sub 1 of the same law provides for its part: "All processions, parades, marches and gatherings of people and, in general, ALL MANIFESTATIONS ON THE ROAD are subject to the obligation of prior DECLARATION". In other words, the scheme of meetings and public manifestations is, in the Republic of Cameroon, that of DECLARATION AND NOT OF AUTHORIZATION!

The Minister of Territorial Administration claims that "only the DOs" carry out this mission which would, according to him, be to authorize or prohibit public meetings and manifestations, "under the supervision of the SDOs and the coordination of governors." Should I remind you that it is on the basis of Fax-Message no. 003134/MFX/MINAT/CAB of 14 September 2020 from this Minister that hundreds of peaceful protestors from our party were arbitrarily and illegally arrested on the occasion of a demonstration duly declared and not prohibited by any DO; that they were tortured, then meted out heavy prison sentences with the complicity of magistrates who had renounced their oath for a long time.

The said Minister barely surpasses himself when, through ridiculous threats, he believes he can prohibit anyone, without any legal basis, from using this or that expression, or take control of political parties through illegal acts and through his liege men and other straw men. (1/2)

Court suspends Maroua Congress of PCRN, recognizes Cabral Libii as national president



Cabral Libii and Robert Kona

The civil and commercial chamber of the Maroua Court of First Instance has suspended the Maroua Congress of the PCRN billed for 25 and 26 May 2024. The judgement delivered on 21 May by the judge, Zizamle Essaya, implies that Cabral has been confirmed as national president while the capacity of Robert Kona who summoned the Maroua convention has been put to question.

The PCRN since 2019 witnessed a power tussle between Cabral and Kona at the Guidiguis Congress. The latter eventually surrendered the chairmanship to Cabral but later reneged on this decision, going the Kaele Court of First Instance to challenge Cabral's leadership on grounds that he was mandated by a meeting and not a congress.

Zizamle Essaya's decision to suspend the Maroua congress was based on the

statutes of the PCRN which in its Article 7 states that the congress can be summoned by the president or two thirds of the members of the steering committee can convene an extraordinary session. The judge underlined that the party's statutes do not give Robert Kona the right to summon a congress. The suspension of the Maroua congress has been welcomed by Cabral and his partisans. Cabral expressed his satisfaction on his Facebook page. Kona and his supporters have remained silent. Minister Atanga Nji who supports Kona's faction, has nor also reacted.

Meanwhile the power tussle between the two continues with the verdict of the case at the Kaele Court of First Instance still awaited.

Atanga Nji threatens Kamto and Cabral Libii

The dust was yet to settle over the controversial ban of opposition alliances by the Minister of territorial administration, Paul Atanga Nji, than the same minister again issued threats against the opposition for making derogatory statements against President Paul Biya and 'usurping' his style of address.

In an outing last Friday that has raised concern about the freedom of

political expression in the run-up to the 2025 presidential elections, the MINAT boss, without citing names, accused the opposition of making "inflammatory statements" and "disparaging remarks" against Biya.

In a threat clearly directed at PCRN President, Cabral Libii, Atanga Nji threatened severe sanctions under the law, reminding him that parliamentary immunity does not grant him licence to defy state authority. "This must stop

before it is too late for this MP," warned the MINAT. He said the PCRN President was no longer in charge of the party because it belonged to the founder, Robert Kona.

He then warned the opposition leaders against inciting rebellion or agitating when their activities are not authorized, noting that even the ruling CPDM has suffered 26 rejections from the administration since the start of 2024.

Addressing MRC leader specifically,

the MINAT boss warned him against appropriating the phrase "Cameroonians, my dear compatriots" reserved exclusively for the Head of State. "Those who violate this should beware," concluded Paul Atanga Nji.

By publicly threatening opposition leaders and putting restrictions on their language, the MINAT boss seems to be reinforcing authoritarian control on political debate.

Yaoundé Hosts 7th African Economic Intelligence Days with AI in the spotlight



(Business in Cameroon) - Yaoundé will host the 7th edition of the African Economic Intelligence Days (JAIE) from May 30 to 31, 2024. Organized by the African Center for Monitoring and Economic Intelligence (Cavie), this year's event will focus on "the Contribution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to the Performance of African Public and Private Actors".

"This is a great chance for African public and private entities to become familiar with the latest advancements in AI and to learn how this technology can enhance their performance and competitiveness," said Guy Gweth, Cavie's Executive President, during a press conference on May 23 in Yaoundé.

To bring this theme to life, 32 local and international experts will gather in seven panels to "explore the potential of AI" for African public and private sectors. Topics include strategic

issues of AI in Africa, AI's contributions to public and private sectors, legal, ethical, and security aspects of AI in Africa, and AI education and careers. Two panels will also discuss AI's challenges and opportunities, and highlight digital and AI innovations in Africa.

The importance of this event is underscored by AI being a "civilizational revolution" that will lead to a "massive destruction of jobs, but also create many new ones," Gweth explained. He emphasized that "we have reached a decisive phase in the world of work," and that AI will bring "disruptions we must actively engage with."

At the conclusion of the conference, experts will present their findings and recommendations on AI's impact on African public and private sector performance in a "White Paper," which will be officially published.

Cameroon: Machine and equipment imports surge by CFA 136bn in 2023

(Business in Cameroon) - Cameroon's imports of mechanical and electrical machines and equipment reached CFA 656 billion in 2023, up CFA 136 billion (26%) from the CFA 520 billion spent in 2022. The figures were reported by the National Institute of Statistics (INS).

The INS report on Cameroon's foreign trade highlights that imports

of these goods accounted for 13.2% of total import expenditures in 2023. This rise underscores Cameroon's commitment to bolstering its technological and industrial capacities.

Let's however note that the report does not specify the reasons behind the surge in equipment imports or the countries of origin for these machines and devices.

France quadrupled imports from Cameroon over five years, boosted by hydrocarbons

(Business in Cameroon) - French imports from Cameroon have quadrupled over the past five years, driven largely by hydrocarbons. Data from French customs shows imports surged from €225.6 million (about 148 billion FCFA) in 2019 to €915.2 million (about 599.4 billion FCFA) in 2023. In 2022, imports even hit a record high of just over €1 billion, equivalent to more than 655 billion FCFA.

This significant increase began in 2022, coinciding with the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which led to an embargo on Russian hydrocarbons. Europe, including France, previously reliant on Russian supplies, sought new sources of hydrocarbons.

Both French customs data and statistics from Cameroon's National Institute of Statistics (INS) suggest Cameroon has become one of France's new hydrocarbon suppliers. Hydrocarbon exports from Cameroon to France were only 65.6 million FCFA in 2020 but jumped to 26.8 billion FCFA in 2021 and soared to 495.9 billion FCFA in 2022. This included crude oil (299.7 billion FCFA) and liquefied natural gas (196.2 billion FCFA). Hydrocarbons alone accounted for 96.5% of the increase in export value (+487.4 billion FCFA) in 2022. This upward trend is also seen across the CEMAC region.

Agricultural Products and Wood Exports

A report from the French Treasury indicates that hydrocarbon purchases accounted for over three-quarters of French imports from the CEMAC region in H1 2023. The increase in hydrocarbon imports (crude oil, LNG, and gas condensates) is mainly due to higher LNG imports from Cameroon, totaling €463.8 million (304.2 billion FCFA).

Throughout 2023, according to INS's external trade report, LNG exports made up 47.6% of Cameroon's goods and other product exports to France. French customs data further reveals that imports of "natural hydrocarbons and other extractive industry products" from Cameroon reached €675 million (around 442 billion FCFA) in 2023, representing 73.8% of France's total imports from Cameroon.

In addition to extractive sector products, France imported agro-food products worth €87.3 million (about 57.2 billion FCFA) from Cameroon in 2023. Imports of agricultural, livestock, and fishery products reached €79.7 million (52.2 billion FCFA), while wood and paper product imports amounted to €35.8 million (23.5 billion FCFA). However, these non-hydrocarbon imports are relatively minor, making up only 9.5%, 8.7%, and 3.9% of France's total imports from Cameroon in 2023, respectively.



Cameroon's Aluminum Export Revenues Rise 11% in 2023

(Business in Cameroon) - The revenues from Cameroon's aluminum exports, managed by the Cameroon Aluminum Company (Alucam), reached CFA 54.2 billion in 2023, marking an 11% increase from CFA 48.9 billion in 2022, according to the National Institute of Statistics (INS).

Despite the revenue increase, the volume of aluminum exports remained nearly stagnant. Cameroon exported 43,916 tons of raw aluminum in 2023, a slight rise of just

CFA 36.7 tons compared to 43,879 tons in 2022.

This boost in revenue is a positive development for Alucam, which has faced financial difficulties since 2014 after the withdrawal of Canadian firm Rio Tinto, which held a 46.7% stake. Since becoming fully state-owned in 2015, Alucam has struggled with cash flow issues and remains the largest debtor to Cameroon's electricity provider.

HfC NGO empowers IDPs on financial independence, entrepreneurship

By Lasha Kingsly and Elizabeth Banyl Tabi



The Chinese adage of teaching to catch fish rather than giving fish on a platter of gold has been so well appropriated by Hope for Cameroon, HfC, an international apolitical non-profit organization registered in Montreal, Canada, and Douala, in its dealings with IDPs of the anglophone crisis.

The NGO, organised a three-day capacity building workshop, during which internally displaced persons were empowered to become financially independent through entrepreneurship.

The workshop which took place between the 23rd and 25th May 2024, falls within HfC's Seeding hope entrepreneurship project agenda which had initially begun on the 27th of December, 2023. Though the implementation phase elapsed on February 17th, the HfC leaders completed the seed disbursement with the

training program in Bonaberi - Douala.

It was held under the theme: "empowering IDPs for financial independence through entrepreneurship and vocational skills". The organizers said they had received financial support from "MasterCard Foundation Transitions Fund at MCGILL University".

Created in 2019, Hope for Cameroon has been committed to empowering vulnerable internally displaced communities, with a focus on women and children who have been significantly affected by the ongoing armed conflict in Cameroon.

Through various initiatives, they provide access to educational opportunities, community development and entrepreneurship training programs, and essential resources to foster positive change and sustainable development in affected vulnerable communi-

ties.

Sonia Buma, Co-founder and President of Hope for Cameroon, commenting on the Douala IDP self-reliant activity, noted that, they have come to point where, they intend to teach selected beneficiaries on how to "fish" for themselves rather than being dependent on the benevolence of international organizations and or persons of goodwill.

"Through our project we are here to see how together we can find sustainable livelihood solutions to these displaced persons. We are training them on vocational skills that can help either start a business or scale up their business. In so doing our expectation is that, they can be able to fend for themselves and families without

depending on NGOs for help", Sonia Buma said.

For three days, the IDPs were trained on how to produce cosmetic products, do poultry farming, fish farming, amongst others. Participants with innovative projects, Buma revealed, will receive micro funding to implement their projects.

Buma went on to invite all and sundry not to stay behind but bring in their quota just as the Master Card foundation has done to support IDPs. She said that, by so doing, it would help the crisis-affected persons, not to feel abandoned but get them to understand they have not been forgotten.

Kumba man dies after wife chops off penis

By Ashu Manfred

A man in his middle 30's, whose identity we have been unable to obtain, is reported to have died in Kosala Kumba II Subdivision, on Thursday 23rd May 2024, barely four months after the wife cut off his penis with a pair of scissors.

The wife, whose identity we obtained as Susan, is reported to have accused the husband of cheating on her.

We gathered that when the man on that fateful day returned home after sharing drinks with friends, the wife accused him of coming from one his girlfriends' house, an allegation the man denied

After the denial, the man thought the matter was over and settled with the wife.

The husband of Susan did not know the wife was still holding grudges against him.

We further gathered that while the man was asleep, the wife used a pair of scissors to cut off his private part, suggesting he was sleeping naked. Some people say Susan cut off the husband's penis in the course of a fight.

One thing is clear. He was then rushed to the hospital for treatment, but died barely four months after. When the death of the man was announced the population rushed to the house of the couple to lynch Susan, but she managed to escape.

Susan and the husband have a six-year-old child.

Teboh George wins Tiko SDF Electoral District elections re-run

By Ashu Manfred

The popularity of Teboh George among SDF militants has been confirmed following his victory in last Saturday's rerun of the Tiko SDF Electoral District election.

The elections that took place at Government Primary school Upper Costains on Saturday 25th May 2024, followed the cancellation of the same Election by NEC as a result of a petition filed by Joseph Bah Anib, the lone candidate who contested the elections against Tebo George.

The elections took place in the four polling stations in GS Upper Costains in six transparent boxes.

The elections were supervised by NEC leader, Dr Fornjindam Emmanuel Ndi, and the South West SDF organising secretary, Chia Promise, from Kumba

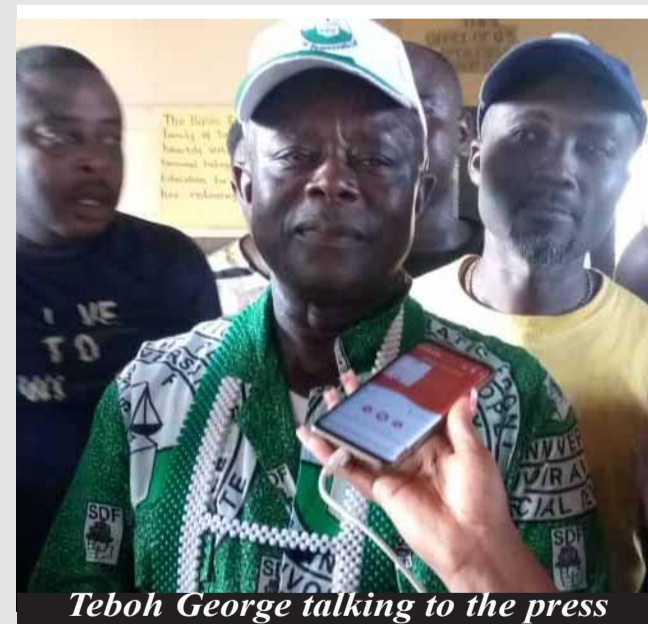
At the end of the voting exercise that took over eight hours the votes were then counted.

Tebo George scored 346 votes as against 189 for Joseph Bah Anib.

Speaking later to the press, Tebo George expressed satisfaction at the outcome of the results.

He further stated that his landslide victory is an indication that he is very popular and a man of the people, adding that his victory is not personal but for the SDF in Tiko as a whole.

While calling upon those who did not vote for him to join hands to rebuild the SDF, Tebo prayed that this time around there would be no protest against his victory. The Horizon observes that the Saturday election is the fourth time the Tiko SDF Electoral District elections have been held.



Teboh George talking to the press

Dr Fornjindam Emmanuel and Chia Promise, also hailed the calm and serene atmosphere that characterised the elections, appealing to the losers to embrace each other for the good of the party in Tiko.

They also appealed to Tebo and his exco and to all SDF militants in general to work to win the council and the parliamentary seats come the 2025 elections.

After talking the oath of office, Tebo George and his executive were later installed by Chia Promise.

Former member of Parliament, Honourable Fritz Etoke, is a member of the Tebo George executive.

Mysterious disappearance of Priest from Obala Diocese raises alarm



Father Ignace Julien Assiga Mvondo

The Obala Diocese in the Centre Region is in a state of disbelief and worry as they grapple with the sudden and alarming disappearance of Father Ignace Julien Assiga Mvondo. The priest who previously served as the vicar at Marie Mère Admirable Parish in Nkomotou and was the pastor of Sainte Brigitte Parish in Emana has been declared missing since 15 May.

Speculation is swirling that he may have been taken against his will by nefarious individuals. Father Assiga Mvondo is widely recognised for his religious service as well as his impressive range of talents and achievements. Aside from his reli-

gious responsibilities, he also has expertise in civil engineering, specifically in the construction of buildings and public infrastructure. His extensive knowledge and commitment led to his appointment as Vice-Dean of Students at the Grand Seminary of Saints Apostles in Otele.

The news of his disappearance has quickly circulated among parishioners and the broader community. There is growing alarm and a desperate call for assistance in finding him. The diocese is calling on the public to come forward with any information regarding Father Assiga Mvondo's disappearance, in hope of assisting the search efforts and ensuring his safe return.

It is not yet clear whether Cameroonian authorities are currently conducting an investigation into the circumstances surrounding his disappearance. This won't be surprising given that there is hardly a week that goes by without reports of missing persons. And in most of these cases, it is the family alone and their community who strive to find out what happened. Meanwhile, the Christian community continues to hold onto hope for positive updates regarding Father Assiga. During this challenging period, the diocese of Obala is requesting prayers and unity.

Culled from Mimi Mefo Info

Anglophone Crisis:

Nigerian army says it burst syndicate supplying fuel to Amba fighters



Troops of Nigerian Army have intercepted and arrested eight members of a syndicate smuggling fuel from Nigeria to the Ambazonian rebels in the Republic of Cameroon to facilitate terrorists' activities.

A statement by the Nigerian Army on its official X handle (formerly Twitter) said the suspects were arrested during a sting operation on Friday May 24, 2024 along the Abong-Kurmi Baissa Road in Taraba State, between Nigeria and Cameroon border.

The suspects identified as Jafaru Adamu, 32; Auwal Haruna, 34; Umar Dahiru; Mubarak Abdullahi, 20; Saidu Musa, 26; Bashiru Ibrahim, 18; Danlami Yahuaza, 19, and 19-year-old Abubakar Abdullahi were caught on their way to the border with large quantity of fuel.

The Army also revealed that the culprits confessed to smuggling and selling fuel to the Cameroonian Ambazonian rebels who are prohibited from entering Nigeria to purchase the product directly following preliminary investigation.

"The suspects revealed that they have previously bought fuel from Gassol and Bali local government areas at the rate of ₦950 per litre.

"However, they discovered that in Takum LGA the fuel was sold at ₦800 per liter, prompting them to source for the product in Takum.

"At the time of their arrest, the suspects were traveling in three J5 vehicles, carrying 605 jerry cans, each with a capacity of 40 liters, totaling 24,200 liters of fuel. The fuel, valued at ₦800 per liter, amounts to a total worth of Nineteen Million Three Hundred and Sixty Thousand Naira (₦19,360,000) only," the Army said.

It said further investigation led to the identification of other members of the smuggling syndicate, including Alhaji Abdulmumini, Jafaru Adamu, Babilu Zubairu, Sule Abong, and Mark Akawu, who is reportedly the chairman of the syndicate based in Abong, a border community between Kurmi LGA of Taraba State and the Republic of Cameroon.

Culled from Cameroon Intelligence Report

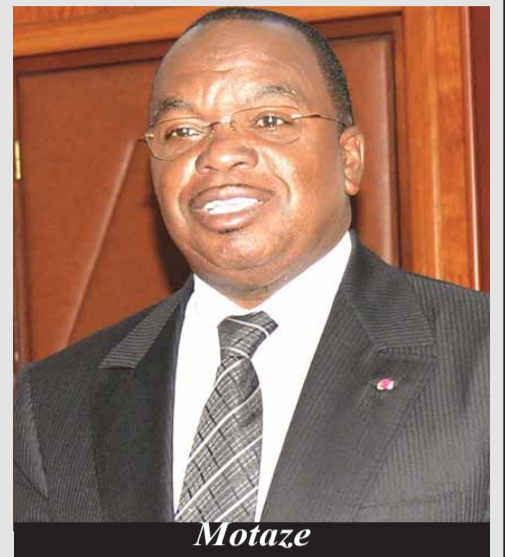
Cameroon's Finance Minister urges 38 companies to submit overdue tax declarations

(Business in Cameroon) - Finance Minister Louis Paul Motaze has publicly called on 38 taxpayers to submit their Financial Statements and Tax Returns (DSF) for FY2023. The deadline expired on March 26, 2024. He urged these companies to file their declarations immediately to avoid penalties such as automatic taxation.

The DSF is a key accounting document that summarizes a company's activities over the fiscal year. It helps the tax authorities ensure compliance with tax regulations and assists the National Institute of Statistics in producing economic data. According to the General Tax Code, the DSF must be submitted by March 15 each year, though this deadline can be extended by the Finance Minister.

The list includes notable companies such as Aéroports du Cameroun (ADC), Bocom Petroleum SA, Bestway Finance, and BTP Bofas. ADC, a public enterprise managing the country's airports, conducted operations in 2023 and is slated for listing on the Central African Stock Exchange (Bvmac). Bocom Petroleum SA, part of the Bougne group led by Cameroonian businessman Dieudonné Bougne, specializes in petroleum product distribution with 68 service stations. In June 2022, it secured a CFA 33 billion loan from the International Finance Corporation to enhance domestic gas distribution.

Bestway Finance, based in Hong Kong, is involved in developing the Mbalam-Nabeba iron ore project between Cameroon and Congo. This company leads a consortium that signed



Motaze

a 50-year public-private partnership with Cameroon on February 25, 2022, to build and operate the Kribi port mineral terminal and a 500 km railway line for iron ore exploitation. BTP Bofas, a Cameroonian construction company, was active in 2023 but lost two contracts in November 2023 and February 2024.

The inclusion of the Chantier naval et industriel du Cameroun (CNIC), in crisis for several years, is less surprising.

Companies on this list face increased fiscal charges. Article L 99 of the General Tax Code stipulates a non-negotiable fine for late DSF submission, ranging from CFA 250,000 to CFA 5 million depending on the company's size. Article L 103 specifies that non-submission of a declaration leading to automatic taxation results in losing VAT deduction rights and previous period VAT credits. For income tax, it means losing the right to carry forward prior deficits and tax credits.

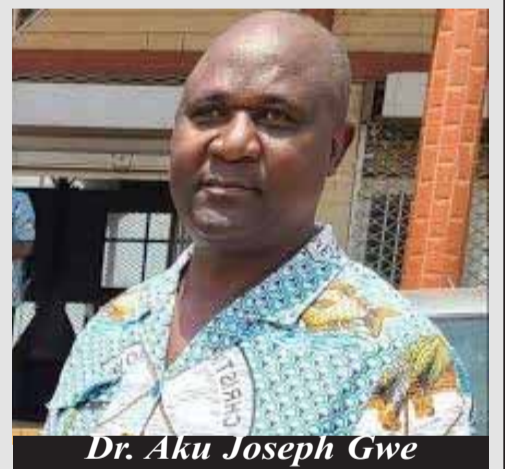
Abducted veterinary doctor found dead in Bamenda

Dr. Aku Joseph Gwe, the National President of the KedjomKeku Cultural and Development Association (KEKCU-DA), has tragically passed away. He was reportedly abducted from his home at Mile 3 Nkwen, Bamenda III subdivision by armed men at about 7 PM on May 22, 2024.

Regrettably, the lifeless body of Dr. Gwe was discovered last Friday morning in an area called "Nkemnkem" in Comprehensive High School, CHS, Bambui, Tubah Subdivision, North West Region of Cameroon. The mortal remains have been transported to St. Blaise Mortuary by the Divisional Officer (DO) of Tubah and the family members.

Dr. Gwe, a veterinary doctor by profession, hails from Big Babanki (KejomKeku). The sudden and tragic passing of this individual has caused immense shock and grief among both the local community and those further afield.

No group has stepped forward to accept responsibility for the murder. Nevertheless, separatist groups in the region have been accused of involvement. It is however, too soon to tell, given that there have been a large



Dr. Aku Joseph Gwe

number of high-profile assassinations in the Anglophone regions recently, raising suspicions that the conflict is now being used to settle personal scores. An investigation is currently underway to identify and apprehend the individuals behind this reprehensible act.

The passing of Dr. Aku Joseph Gwe is a profound loss for the KedjomKeku community and the wider endeavours of cultural and developmental advocacy in the region. His contributions as a leader and a professional were deeply valued, and his passing leaves a void that will be keenly felt by many.

Adapted from Mimi Mefo Info

Yaoundé:

Students use Biya's 20th May appearance to protest

By Sheron Tita

Students in Cameroon used a rare public appearance of Paul Biya, the 91-year-old president, during the country's 52nd National Day celebrations, to protest about the poor state of the higher education sector and to call for reforms.

Unable to channel their grievances to the head of state because of administrative blockages and his reduced mobility and public visibility, they used the festivities in Yaoundé to march past him with placards conveying their views about higher education.

Messages included: 'We want improved, quality teaching', 'Yes to inclusive higher education and no to discrimination', 'No tribalism and favouritism in the appointment of university officials'.

'We need reopening of admission in PhD programmes', '[We] need broadband high-speed internet connectivity on campuses' and 'Scholarships should be based on merit, not favouritism' were some of the other messages.

Students who protested in Buea, Douala, Bamenda and Dschang expressed the same grievances.

University World News reported in 2023 on the government suspension of PhD admission programmes in all state universities, blaming the decision on questions about the financial management of the programmes.

Ongoing protests

Students and lecturers have continued to air their voices against poor services and an absence of enabling higher education infrastructure, among other chal-



Biya and Chantal on 20 May

lenges, that hinder quality training in all of the 11 state universities in the country.

The students said they hoped their messages hit the mark. "We are sure the head of state, who is the highest authority of the country, got our messages. The [president's] wife, who was with him, also got our messages and we are hopeful," Magerate Abeng, a second-year student in the University of Yaoundé 1, who took part in the march, told University World News.

The students said several complaints and calls for reforms to promote social justice and better study environments had been channelled to the higher education authorities, but no action had been taken so far to address them.

"Our student unions have sent complaints to the minister of higher education and even the presidency but [have received] no reactions or feedback. We

know this information doesn't get to him because of administrative bottlenecks.

"That is why we used this national ceremony to pass on our messages," Nkumbe Felix, a third-year law student from the University of Yaoundé II told University World News.

Unity under attack?

The date of 20 May is important in Cameroon's history. Cameroonians voted in a 1972 national referendum for a unitary state as opposed to a federal state which existed at the time.

But critics have said the unity of the state has been sacrificed at the altar of corruption, tribalism and bad governance that have affected the development of all sectors in the country, including university institutions.

Reports by Project House Net show that students in state universities in the country, in particular, face major chal-

lenges that need to be dealt with to improve the quality of learning.

"Many universities in Cameroon lack effective mentorship and career guidance programmes for students," the report said.

It also cites "frequent power outages and blackouts as well as political instability, especially in the North-west and South-west, which have triggered high insecurity for students studying in the two crisis regions".

Human Rights Watch has said in a report that the government has not been able to find lasting solutions to the anglophone crisis that started in 2016 and which has affected teaching and learning in many schools, including higher education, in the two English-speaking regions of South-west and North-west.

But some pro-government academics argue that reforms are a gradual process and the fight against bad governance is a collective responsibility and efforts.

"The fight for better management of state institutions, including universities, is a collective effort. Students, lecturers and school authorities have to contribute towards improving discipline and academic standards in our higher education institutions,"

Professor Manassé Aboya Endong, a senior political science lecturer at the University of Douala and member of the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, or CPDM, told University World News.

Culled from University World News

Bamenda: Young girl who dumped child at former orphanage uncovered

The identity of the young woman who abandoned a toddler in front of a former orphanage building on Foncha Street, Bamenda, has been revealed.

Bala Dian, a native of Nso residing in Bamenda's Old Town, is the individual responsible for this heart-wrenching act.

The incident occurred on Tuesday, May 21, when Dian's daughter was found abandoned at the gate of a building that previously served as an orphanage.

Witnesses reported seeing Dian around the premises with the child shortly before the abandonment.

Ngala Elvis, a Good Samaritan, discovered the toddler around 2 pm. In a video that has

since gone viral, Elvis said he was initially confused upon encountering the young girl alone on the street.

"I met this little girl walking down the street alone. I was kind of confused because she is too small to be walking alone," he narrated.

"There is a primary school up here which made me think that she is one of them who walked out of the gate. I met a woman there who told me that she saw a lady standing in front of this building with this child and that the lady just left," he went on.

The building, which once housed an orphanage, now stands empty. Elvis' suspicions of abandonment were confirmed when

he noticed a sack filled with baby clothing and nappies in front of the building.

"This sac was here. Something pushed me to check the content. The content made of baby's clothings and nappies made me notice that it was a case of abandonment," he explained.

Elvis concluded that Dian had likely mistaken the building for an active orphanage, hoping her child would be taken in and cared for.

He then pledged to take the child to the nearest public authority for proper care and attention.

As the news of the abandonment spread, the identity of the mother, Bala Dian, was uncovered. On Wednesday, May 22, she was

reportedly seen at a party in Bambili. Neighbors revealed that Dian had been planning to attend this party for some time.

The current whereabouts of the child remain unknown, and the fate of Bala Dian is also uncertain at this time.

The community is left in shock and concern, pondering the circumstances that led to such a desperate act and hoping for the child's well-being.

Cases of young mothers abandoning their babies are regular in Cameroon, with newborns often left in front of orphanages, hospitals or out in plastic bags and dumped at garbage collection points.

Culled from Mimimefoinfos

As GCE begins tomorrow:

Littoral tops candidate enrolment for 2024!

The Littoral region which has welcomed hordes of internally displaced persons from the North West and South West Region and where some schools in these regions have relocated has topped candidate enrolment for the GCE exams whose written part begins tomorrow.

According to statistics from the GCE Board, while the Littoral tops the chart, there is an improvement in enrolment in the two Anglophone regions this year, an indication that normalcy is gradually returning to these regions and more of them are going back to sit exams in their regions of origin.

The South West region, for example will have some 44337 candidates sitting the exam, representing an increase of some 2000 candidates compared to 2023.

Even the North West which still had low enrolment, accounting for just over 30000 candidates, witnessed an increase of some 3000 candidates.

Talking about the preparedness for the exams, Bernardette Ndi, interim GCE Board Registrar told Cameroon calling yesterday that all is set for a hitch-free and successful organization of the exams.

The head of the transition management team of the GCE Board expressed regret that the cost of marking a script has not changed because the budget too has not changed. She could not say with precision whether the exams would be marked only in the South West like last year for security reasons.

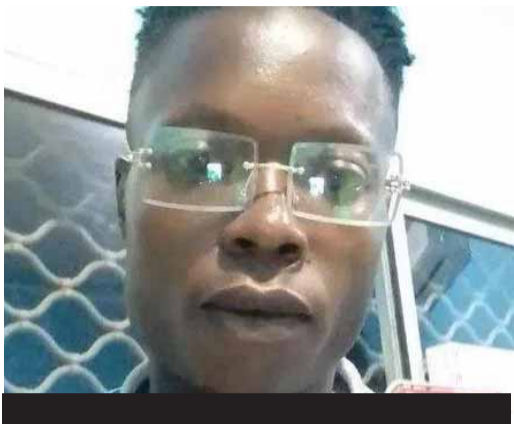
On modalities put in place to improve on supervision, she said there would be one invigilator to supervise 30 candidates.

She promised the progressive use of surveillance cameras to track down exam malpractices.



Bernadette Ndi

Thrown in jail despite services to 'La Republique': Bamenda ex-combatant, 'GrandPa', apologises for betraying Amba revolution!



Ex-fighters who integrate the DDR centres to begin the 'healing' process that will culminate in their integration into society are instead used by the army to detect the camps of their Ambazonian fighters and help in hunting them down. This diversion of objective has led to a barrage of criticisms from observers over the relevance of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission headed by former governor, Fai Yengo Francis.

The Commission was recently on the news for another wrong reason. The social media was awash with information that Agwe Joel, a former Ambazonia separatist fighter who surrendered and joined the Bamenda Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Center, has been sent to jail.

A source from Kondengui maximum security prison in Yaounde confirmed to MMI which first broke the news quoted a source Kondengui maximum security prison in Yaounde as confirming that "he is here with us".

Joel was identified as one of those appearing on pro-government social media platforms running propaganda messages to lure separatist fighters to drop their weapons.

He also accompanied the military in assaulting the hideouts of fighters, killing many of them.

He then disappeared from social media until recently that a video emerged showing him crying out that he has been thrown in jail after being used by the government "against my brothers and sisters".

Looking frail, the ex-fighter landed an apology to his former colleagues of the Ambazonia struggle for playing the spanner-in-the-wheel role.

"I joined the DDR in 2020. My Fellow

Anglophones who have been seeing me on the media doing sensitization against the Ambazonia struggle, I come to you today April 24, 2024, to apologize to my brothers and sisters of the Ambazonia revolution for the atrocities the government of 'La Republique' has caused me to commit against my people," said Joel.

The ex-combatant, who was known in the separatists' ranks as "Grandpa", regretted what has become of him despite heavy promises made by the government. "I can't believe that those who promised me life and comfort ended throwing me in jail," he went on.

Joel had, together with other ex-fighters on several social media outings, preached on targeting unrepentant fighters, their relatives and civilians who refused to collaborate with the military.

He now says he was misled in doing the 'dirty job', cautioning his former colleagues not to allow themselves to be used like him.

"To those fighting for the independence of our country Ambazonia, I say do not be misled," he said, adding that, "I apologize for misleading some of you into joining the DDR."

"There is nothing that can benefit you from DDR. It is a distraction from our fight for independence."

The DDR was set up by the government as an amnesty to those who had picked up arms against the State in the English-speaking Regions and the Far North Region.

Thousands of ex-Ambazonia and Boko Haram fighters have been recruited into the disarmament project since 2018, when the centers were created.

Joel, the disgruntled ex-combatant who is now languishing in jail, says he joined the outfit based on promises made by the government which were never fulfilled.

"I joined DDR based on the promises made that they will give us jobs, freedom and money but see where I am today," he lamented.

Most of the combatants, he said, "have been used to kill many innocent fighters and used innocent civilians to give us information about their hideout."

"I took part in some of the missions," he revealed.

Girl disappears with boy friend's car!

By Ashu Manfred

The police in Limbe, South West Region of Cameroon, are currently on the tracks of a girl of about 26 years old, who Saturday 18th 2024 disappeared with the RAV 4 car of her 60-year-old boyfriend.

The girl and the man, whose identifies we have been unable to obtain reportedly travelled from Douala to Limbe on Friday 17th to go enjoy themselves there.

The two love birds, described by sources in Limbe as a grandfather and his grand daughter, decided to book a room in one of the posh hotels in the OPEC City, we later gathered.

On Saturday morning, while the man was still deep asleep, the girl collected the keys of the car, and drove the car away to

an unknown destination.

We further gathered that when the man later got up from sleep and could not find the keys of his car, he walked to the hotel car park but could not find his vehicle.

Upon enquiry, the hotel security guard told him " your wife drove the car away some hours ago".

The man, whom we gathered was initially hesitant to contact the police later swallowed his shame and disgrace, hired a taxi to the nearest police station to lodge a complaint.

Up to the time of writing several days after, the girl and the car are still at large.

We have been informed that the stolen RAV4 car is the latest model in the market.

Tiko is SW region's host for Civil Engineering Hydraulic Machinery Pool

The Tiko municipality has been selected to serve as park for all Civil Engineering and Hydraulic Machinery Equipment in the South West Region of Cameroon, The Horizon has been informed.

The signing ceremony, The Horizon gathered, took place in Yaounde on Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at the Amphi 300 of the Ministry of Economy and Planning and Regional Development, and was attended by the Ministers of Finance, Decentralization and Local Development, Economy and Planning and Regional Development, the British High Commissioner and the

American ambassador to Cameroon.

The five billion (5bn) project sponsored by the US government we further gathered is aimed at strengthening Councils in Cameroon in the domains of roads and other infrastructures.

The Mayor of the Tiko Council, Chief Peter Ikome Mesoso 111, we also gathered, took part in the signing ceremony of the Loan Agreement for the financing of the project to create an Inter Communal Civil Engineering and Hydraulic Machinery park, between the Government of Cameroon and Standard Chartered Bank Private Export Funding Corporation and EXIM Bank.

Written phase of GCE begins today May 27

The 2024 edition of the written phase of Cameroon General Certificate of Education GCE, organised by the Cameroon General Certificate Examination Board , will kick off on Tuesday the 28th of June 2024 , The Horizon has learnt.

According to a release from the GCE Board, many candidates, especially in the war-torn North West and South West Regions of Cameroon, have registered for the GCE this year.

The release further stated that the board has already started distributing materials to the various centres in the country.

Since the beginning of the Anglophone crisis, most of the GCE centres in the suburbs had been moved to the towns believed to be relatively free from separatists attacks.

Even the towns the candidates write the exam amidst tight security.

The G CE is annual Examination taken by form five students, who have come to the end of five years in Secondary School and Upper sixth students, who have completed two years in High school.

The exams always begin with a practical session.

Estelle Johnson engaged to longtime boyfriend



Cameroon female international, Estelle Johnson, has accepted to marry her longtime boyfriend, Jonathan Mason.

The centre-back who is expecting a baby boy as she announced in February, shared photos of the proposal which took place during her baby shower a week ago.

She has described her fiancé as the best thing that has ever happened in her life. "I can't lose when I'm with you...and I'm so ready to spend the rest of our lives proving that to one another" she wrote on Instagram.

The 35-year-old said she and her partner have made it a priority to raise their child, instilling in him the values of "self-advocacy" and "dialogue". She said the values got her to where

she is today. "I go into this parenting phase of my life fully confident that I will be a pretty good example of how to create dialogue around the things that matter, speak when things feel uncomfortable", she said.

Estelle, currently signed to National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) club North Carolina Courage, was born in Maroua, in the Far North region of Cameroon to an American father and a Malian mother. Despite leaving Cameroon to several other countries and ending up in the US due to the nature of his father's job, she decided to play with the Indomitable Lionesses. She joined the national team in 2019.

Culled from Cameroonnewsagency

The Colbert Factor

Women's History Month and Menstrual Hygiene Management as the Most Neglected Issue in the Current Conflict

Colbert Gwain

Nena Helen (not her real name), is an 18-year-old Muteff school child. When the military stormed the village in October 2019 fright made villagers scatter in various directions, especially into the Muteff Ijim Mountain forest. Nena Helen who was approaching her menstrual period was among the unfortunate villagers who would spend over 48 hours in the forest until they were assured the military had returned to their base in Fundong, the Divisional headquarters of the Boyo Division of the North West Region of Cameroon. Since the incident was unforeseen and unexpected, Helen didn't take along any sanitary pads; that is if she even had. For the time she was in the bush, she had no option but to use pieces of old clothes to manage her menstruation.

Nena Helen might have been lucky to have access to old pieces of clothes. Not the same fate for Rosemary Ayuk, 21, (again not her real name), who was kidnapped sometime in 2021 and held in captivity by separatist fighters for a week in one of the villages in Mamfe in the Manyu Division of the South West Region of Cameroon for attempting to go to school against their orders. Given the dire conditions in the bush, Rosemary had to make do with tree leaves to manage her menses during the time she was held in captivity with all the attendant consequences.

Helen and Rosemary might have faced serious challenges because their periods came when they were far removed from their natural environments. Fien Hilda, 18, although living in a relatively calm environment in Tinifoinbi in the Njinikom Subdivision of the Boyo Division of the North West Region had to contend with pieces of toilet paper because she could not afford the 1000 FCFA needed to purchase a sanitary pad in that community. The travails of Helen, Rosemary, and Hilda may seem isolated incidents but in reality, they are the microcosm of the macrocosm of the challenges girls and women in Cameroon have been going through since the outbreak of the raging deadly conflict that has claimed over 10000 lives and displaced thousands more in the last seven years.

Information from the Cameroon National Coalition of Adolescent Girls and Young Women holds that despite the role menstrual products play in maintaining hygiene and good health, 'many women in Cameroon are unable to afford or otherwise lack access to this basic necessity, and as a result, some women and adolescent girls who menstruate have resorted to unsafe or unsanitary options, including the usage of clothes, dust, toilet paper, paper towels, socks, used paper bags, old newspapers or a single sanitary pad used for a longer period than recommended'.

This unaffordability according to AGYW, 'has devastating medical consequences and may result in urinary tract infections, cervical cancer, vulvar contact dermatitis, yeast infections, bacteria vaginosis, and more'. This situation has been more prevalent in the war-torn North West, South West and Northern Regions. It is therefore lamentable, the National Coalition of Adolescent Girls and Young Women continues, that despite these challenges, 'women and girls have continued to bear the brunt with indiscriminate increases in the prices of sanitary products as if menstruation was a luxury rather than a natural basic occurrence ascribed to females within the natural age which permits the process'.

The statistics are mind-boggling. A packet of the most basic disposable sanitary pads in Cameroon costs as high as 600 FRS cfa and over 1000 frs CFA in some conflict-ridden rural communities of the two English-speaking regions of the country. Given that

the minimum wage is as low as 41,875 frs CFA, which is grossly insufficient to meet basic needs and even more dire in rural communities, women and girls in those communities continue to bear the brunt of the conflict in disproportionate ways. Available research points to the fact that the average woman who menstruates has their period for a cumulative 3-7 days per month and their lifetime, uses between 10-35 pads a year and up to 16800 sanitary products in the course of their lifetime at a cost of roughly CFA 5 million. Research holds that limited access to menstrual hygiene management products and facilities is the 5th biggest killer of females in our society today.

In a spirited attempt to quickly reverse this trend and especially its disproportionate impact on young women and schoolgirls in the conflict-ridden North West and South West regions of the country, the Bamenda-based non-governmental organization, Center for Advocacy in Gender Equality and Action for Development, CAGEAD, has been shining the spot on the fact that since periods don't stop for conflict, a lot more attention needs to be paid in addressing the thorny issue of menstrual hygiene management (MHM). The organization is functioning with the understanding that even though the conflict has put a lot of pressure and stress on the originally scarce resources, adolescent girls and young women's needs have been largely overlooked. As part of its humanitarian response to the raging deadly conflict in the two English-speaking regions, and given the fact that adolescent school-going girls face numerous difficulties in managing their periods (as well as experiencing increased feelings of shame and discomfort), CAGEAD since partnered with UNFPA to begin addressing such concerns in especially hard-to-reach and under-served conflict-ridden communities of Boyo, Mezam, and Donga Mantung Divisions of the North West of Cameroon.

The CAGEAD initiative has been emphasizing key menstrual health issues in the concerned schools and communities: access to safe spaces, sexual and reproductive health education and services, and strategies that mitigate the stigma and shame surrounding menstrual health. Ensuring that adolescent schoolgirls have access to culturally appropriate menstrual products they would be comfortable using as well as having access to safe toilets and bathing spaces (WASH), the female students are also being trained on how to produce reusable and affordable sanitary pads. It is the belief of the Center for Advocacy in Gender Equality and Action in Development, CAGEAD, that integrating menstrual health into the humanitarian response to the conflict ravaging the once peaceful regions of the North West and South West, enables female students to decide whether to spend the limited resources on menstrual products or other necessities. This also improves the educational attainment of female students.

Beyond the isolated efforts of individual NGOs and other service delivery agencies working in the conflict zones of the North West and South West regions, the government of Cameroon has the responsibility to preserve the dignity and humanity of all people and to uphold human rights, including the right to menstrual health. For this reason, and to make sure what happened to Helen, Rosemary, and Hilda cited above does not become the new common, menstrual hygiene management products should be included in relief packages to make sure everyone can manage their periods comfortably, safely, and with dignity. This should be done with the understanding that internally displaced persons (IDPs), especially young women



and adolescent girls, often flee with few belongings and lack appropriate menstrual hygiene infrastructure in an environment that is unfamiliar to them.

A more appropriate way for the government of Cameroon to claim to understand and begin to implement this year's International Women's Day theme of "Investing in Women and Accelerating Progress", would be to quickly implement the recommendations contained in an earlier petition curated by the National Coalition for Adolescent Girls and Young Women to the effect that government's taxing of sanitary pads is a plain, simple tax on womanhood. Full stop. It argued that waiving the high taxes on sanitary products was imperative in accelerating the actualization of some of the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, especially Goal 3, which speaks to quality education, and where according to available research, 1 in every 3 girls miss school every week because of unaffordability of sanitary pads. Increasing taxes on sanitary pads as the government of Cameroon has done, is exacerbating period poverty and negatively impacting the lives of women and girls. Beyond the fact that menstruation is not a luxury that needs to be taxed as obtains today in Cameroon, society rather spends more on treating infections caused by poor menstrual hygiene management like urinary tract infections, Cervical Cancer, Vulvar contact dermatitis, Yeast infections, bacterial vaginosis, etc.

In such perilous times as we live in, communities need access to news that reflects their diverse lives and values and is responsive to their priorities and feedback. As part of our trusting news engagement, we are committed to comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comforted who are holding back social change.

But, this is not an easy, cheap, or profitable job. The Colbert Factor is a solution-oriented, independent non-profit content creation medium. It serves as the 'first draft' for newspapers, radio and TV stations, online news outlets, and blogs. We don't have ads and we are independent of corporate and government interests.

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Mayor Greg Mewanu charts bold future for Kumba City Football Club

By Joy Dedeh Bikom

On Friday, May 24, the Mayor of the Kumba City Council, Greg Mewanu, led an important meeting with key administrative staff from the Kumba City Football Club.

The main focus of the meeting was to identify existing issues and develop strategies to enhance the club's performance and operations.

As the President of Kumba City Football Club, Mayor Mewanu praised the technical team for their efforts and achievements in the first part of the season.

He expressed his gratitude for their dedication and hard work, highlighting the substantial support the team has received worldwide. According to the Mayor, this global fan base should serve as an inspiration for the team to aim higher.

In his address, Mayor Mewanu stressed the importance of persistence



Cross section of meeting

and effort in reaching their goals. "I see this year as our year. This is our year," he declared, motivating everyone involved with the club to stay positive and committed.

The Mayor also emphasized the need

for discipline within the team. He stated, "The star is the team, and what makes the team the star is discipline."

A significant announcement at the meeting was the planned construction of a modern stadium, with an estimated cost

of about 250 million FCFA. Mayor Mewanu assured the attendees that all necessary preparations have been made to ensure the completion of this multi-faceted facility.

The new stadium is expected to provide a comfortable venue for the team's matches and improve their overall performance.

Additionally, Mayor Mewana disclosed collaborative plans with Samuel Eto'o Fils, President of the Cameroon Football Federation, to establish a Football Academy in Kumba.

This initiative aims to nurture young talent, providing aspiring footballers with the training and resources they need to develop their skills and pursue professional careers.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the club's commitment to excellence and growth.

Northwest:

Fecafoot President Voted in Bamenda II Mayor's Office

Region expected to produce interpools representative within 2 weeks

By George Etoh-Anzah in Bamenda.

Jephter Pase is the new president of FECAFOOT for the North West region. He obtained 18 votes from delegates in an election with no contender at the office of the Bamenda 1 mayor cum predecessor. Following a resignation by former 4th national vice president, Henry Njalla Quan, Mbigha Felix was unanimously adopted to fill in the available seat. By this, the role of FA president for the region was eventually declared void. This gave birth to 3 applications from which officials say 1 candidate was retained, an alleged protégé of the outgoing president. The elections, 25th May came amidst heightened worries concerning the evolution of football in the region. The lack of pitches to either serve as training ground for elite clubs or host league matches, late issuance of licenses, alleged match fixing amongst many others.

Despite works on the announced proximity stadium at the village (Bamendakwe) of the outgoing president, doubts persist as to whether or not the pitch shall be completed before the start of the new season.

Jephtar however thinks his experience and longevity in affairs of football dating as far back as 1986 give him the much needed ingredients to manage football, void of discrepancies. "I am going to do my best to push forth for the much known worries plaguing our football. I am not coming in for any tussle or battle, however I want to push the ideals of sportsmanship, not forgetting the cry for a pitch as a major stake".

He further hinted: "I am somebody who likes to say white when I see it. Let's keep backbiting behind us and work together as a team".



New wine, Jephter Pase shaking hands with predecessor



New FA President with administration



Cross section of delegates

The spirit of the electoral process which was conducted in camera in the office of the Bamenda 1 Council mayor has been coined successful though worries has been posed as to why an event of such magnitude has been reduced to a council office.

The new president takes over office on the eve of the launching of the regional league. It is expected to see 20 teams in 4 pools of 5

teams to battle out for 2 weeks. This is however another worry as to the fitness and health of players considering that the national interpools begins on 15th June as per a FECAFOOT communiqué, which some stakeholders fear may affect the output of players. They advance fears on the inability of the winning team to right their wrongs after emerging winner at the regional level.

Man Utd beat Man City to win 2023/24 FA Cup

Manchester United have won the 2023/24 FA Cup with a huge 2-1 win over Manchester City at Wembley.

In a repeat of last season's final, City were expected to seal back-to-back doubles but failed to add to their Premier League crown as Erik ten Hag's side roared to a huge victory.

City were sloppy to start the game and ultimately handed Alejandro Garnacho the opening goal on a plate as a mix-up between Josko Gvardiol and Stefan Ortega gifted the Argentine a free shot on an empty net.

After Marcus Rashford saw a goal ruled out for offside, Kobbie Mainoo added a second

before the first half was over, setting up a second half which saw United sit back and defend their hard-fought lead.

City had their moments after the break and Erling Haaland rattled the crossbar early on, but United's deep back line and resolute defending ensured Jeremy Doku's late strike was little more than a consolation when the final whistle blew.

The trophy win - the second piece of silverware of Ten Hag's tenure at United - also hands the Red Devils a spot in next season's Europa League.

Having sealed their lowest-ever Premier

League finish of eighth, United had thought they had missed out on any form of European competition, but their huge win at Wembley hands them a route into the Europa League and ensures the season ends on a high note.

Next for those in charge at United will be a final decision on the future of Ten Hag. Reports before the final suggested the Dutchman would be sacked regardless of the result at Wembley, but that theory will now be put to the test.

United famously dismissed manager Louis van Gaal after their win over Crystal Palace in the 2016 FA Cup final.

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