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The Guardian Post

DAILY

Cherished by many, haunted by some, read by them all

Akwaya:

Military raid leaves six Amba fighters dead, camp destroyed

By Njingang Godwin

At least six separatist fighters, including a pseudo-General, have been killed in Obonyi III village in Akwaya Subdivision of the restive South West

Region.

The community was raided by soldiers from the Sixth Rapid Intervention Battalion, BIR. It was carried out on the night of Saturday October 7, breaking Sunday October 8.

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As heavy rains intensify: Gov't sounds alarm on imminent floods, landslides...in six regions

By Doh Bertrand Nua

Government, has through the Ministry of Transport, sounded alarm on dangers of imminent natural disasters like

floods, landslides, erosion and pollution of potable water sources, which may trigger destruction of road infrastructure and houses in six Regions of the country.

The warning is contained in a release issued October 11, by the Minister of Transport, Jean Ernest Massena Ngalle Bibehé.

In the release, the member of government cautioned the popu-

lation of the Far North, North, Adamawa, North West, West and East Regions as well as those along the coast, to be on the watch out.

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File photo: Bewildered population battling to rescue victims at Mbankolo landslide scene

After Mbankolo landslide:

PM, ministers concert to prevent similar catastrophes

By Doh Bertrand Nua

The Prime Minister, Head of Government, Chief Dr Joseph Dion Ngute, has concerted with members of govern-

ment to explore ways to prevent natural catastrophes across the national territory.

This was the main focus of a meeting the Star Building occupant chaired Wednesday October 11.

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Personality Of The Week Awa Fonka Augustine: West Region Governor

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Issues of the moment

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui

Israel under attack

“Israel under attack” is the title of an opinion sent to The Guardian Post daily newspaper, by the Israeli Embassy in Yaounde. The write-up that was carried in the Wednesday October 11 edition of the newspaper was signed by Mrs Noga Lewenstein, who is the Charge d’affaires at that Embassy.

She announced that on Saturday 7 October, the Israeli traditional holiday of Simchat Torah began with desecration as massive rocket fire from the Gaza Strip were being fired into Israeli territory, as Hamas terrorists infiltrated Israel from a number of different points.

We are unable to lay hands on any official reaction from the Palestinian side. What is true is that Palestine is presently under the government of Hamas, which the world recognises as a religious extremist organisation.

The organisation does not only operate in the Gaza Strip, but has its origin from other Arab countries even beyond the Middle East.

Like Israel, Hamas has sidelined the middle-of-the-way leadership of Mahmoud Abbas, who has been powerless, on the one hand, to stop Israeli settlement expansion, settler violence, home demolitions or the unraveling of longstanding arrangements around a sensitive Jerusalem holy site; and reducing Hamas extremism and violent posture on the other.

Many observers say Mahmoud Abbas has consistently been sidelined during every Gaza war – including this one – as the Palestinian Authority is widely seen by Hamas as a corrupt accomplice to Israeli occupation.

Mohamed Mustafa, of the Crisis Monitoring Group is quoted to have told Israel that, with Abbas, Israel had one of the most level-headed leaderships in Palestine with which to broker a sustainable peace deal.

“Palestinians have tried everything from elections to boycotts to the (International Criminal Court) to engaging in a supposed peace process,” said Mustafa.

“You’ve had one of the most conciliatory leaderships in the entire history of the Palestinian national movement, and that still hasn’t been enough,” he once told the Israeli leadership.

Human heart human nature problem!

The religious undertones of the Palestine-Israeli conflict are often downplayed by a world that considers religion as something atavistic, obsolete and having no place in modern governance.

Whereas evidence and actual manifestations show that the hatred between Jews and Palestinians dates back to biblical times in the Old Testament. Being offshoots of the three religions that have their roots in the Bible – Christianity, Judaism and Islam – all of which preach forgiveness and repentance from past sins, one wonders why the two groups from the same family tree refuse to forgive and accept to live together in peace and harmony.

African countries in particular that were arbitrarily carved out by European powers sitting in Berlin in 1884, are more ethnically plural than Israel and Palestine combined.

But for the sake of peace and sustainable development, African countries have learnt to live with their multiculturalism, multinationalism and multiethnicity.

But Palestinian extremists like members of Hamas keep swearing heaven and earth that they must exterminate all Jews and make sure that the nation of Israel does not exist.

On the other hand, President Netanyahu continues to provoke even moderate Palestinians by continuing to construct Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

Uncertain future

As we are writing and talking, Hamas is still firing rockets indiscriminately into Israeli cities and villages despite the danger and possibility of hitting civilian populations.

Israel is also bombarding Hamas targets, causing civilian casualties, despite warning by the United States and some European nations calling on Israel to respect international norms of warfare, by sparing and avoiding civilian targets.

There are fears that if the ongoing retaliatory Israeli offensive prolongs, with the large-scale demolition of settlements that is pushing many Palestinians to flee and seek refuge in other Arab countries continues for long, some Arab countries like Iran and Lebanon, home to Hezbollah could join to protect Palestinians.

At World Teachers Day 2023 celebration:

Teachers in Boyo Division denounce attack on peers

By Deng Eric

Teachers serving in Boyo Division of the troubled North West Region have raised their voices, condemning in strong terms attacks on men and women of the teaching profession.

They made their voices heard during the 2023 edition of World Teachers Day which was celebrated on October 5.

An event to mark the celebration was organised in Fundong and chaired by the Senior Divisional Officer for Boyo, Tegni Fidele.

Several speakers at the ceremony highlighted the very important role teachers play in shaping the society but regretted that those in the profession have become targets for simply doing their job. This, they said, has been fate of teachers since the outbreak of the Anglophone crisis in 2016, which later morphed into an armed conflict.

Teachers in the Division have been under attack by separatists who declared school boycott. In the last six years, teachers have been kidnapped and released on ransom while some have simply been killed by armed separatists.

The most recent attack on teachers in Boyo Division came on the eve of the 2023/2024 academic year,



Boyo SDO (middle) joined teachers in marking World Teachers Day in Fundong

when two head teachers who were serving in Mbessa, Belo Subdivision were killed around the Ijim forest.

They were killed by suspected Ambazonia fighters while returning from a Sub-divisional sector conference to prepare for the school year.

According to the teachers, even if authors of these atrocious acts are not brought to book by the laws of the country, natural justice will catch up with them. The teachers also used the occasion to reflect on the best approaches to build the skills of learners.

Responding to the cry of the teachers, the Senior Divisional Officer, SDO, of Boyo, Tegni Fidele, reassured them that the administration is doing everything possible to make sure their safety is guaranteed, in order to enable a good and safe learning envi-

ronment for pupils and students in the Division.

“...We have taken note of all the preoccupations raised by the teachers and we’re working to ensure that they are secured in school and even out of school. We in the process of continuously dialoguing and channeling the problems of teachers to hierarchy so that solutions can be provided,” the SDO said.

It was the first time that the World Teachers Day was celebrated in Boyo after several years due to the Anglophone crisis. The celebration featured an academic discourse on the theme of this year’s celebration: “The teachers we need for the education we want: the global imperative to reverse the teachers’ shortage”. It ended with march past.

Y’de Archbishop commits to enhance Universal Health Coverage scheme

By Morine Tanyi

The Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Yaounde, His Grace Jean Mbarga, has reiterated his commitment to support government in enhancing the implementation of the Universal Health Coverage scheme.

The spiritual leader announced the commitment Tuesday October 10. This was during an audience granted him by the Minister of Public Health, Dr Manaouda Malachie.

According to His Grace Jean Mbarga, the harmonisation of the health map of the Archdiocese of Yaounde through the creation, transformation and obtaining of administrative approval for the opening of more Catholic health facilities will improve of healthcare delivery.

The Archbishop equally requested government to seek ways to provide special medical equipment to the health facilities in the Archdiocese of Yaounde.

He promised to regularise situation of health facilities



Monsignor Jean Mbarga after meeting with Minister Manaouda

across the Yaounde Archdiocese in line with provisions of law no. 92/252/PM of July 06, 1992, laying down the conditions and modalities for the creation, opening and operation of private health facilities.

The decision to set up these structures at diocesan level, he added, also helps to build the capacity of multi-sectoral players involved in cross-cutting, interdisciplinary healthcare missions.

Commenting on the issues raised by the spiritual leader,

Dr Manaouda instructed his close collaborators, to examine the list of health facilities to be harmonised, as well as the list of medical equipment requested.

The member of government equally pointed out some of adjustments government has made in the interest of denominational health facilities in the country. He also reassured the Archbishop of his availability to assist in the move to expand the health map of Yaounde Archdiocese.

Gov't sounds alarm on imminent floods, landslides...in six regions

Cont'd from page 1

Minister Ngalle Bibehe disclosed that according to forecasts contained in the seasonal forecast and rainy season monitoring bulletin for this period, elaborated by the National Meteorological Directorate, these heavy rains will be in excess in the areas concerned.

He also warned that the regular heavy rains forecast in the said Regions will sometimes be "accompanied by violent winds" throughout the months of September, October and November 2023.

"They could lead to erosion, pollution of drinking water, flooding in low-lying areas, landslides in accident-prone zones and destruction of road infrastructure and housing in the aforementioned areas," warned Minister Ngalle Bibehe in the release.

The rest of the country, the proactive member of government noted, "is likely to experience more or less normal rainfall, with no major risks for the population".

Minister Ngalle Bibehe urged the population of the concerned Regions to "remain vigilant, clear flood risk areas".

He also appealed to them to "regularly consult the weather forecasts elaborated by the National Meteorological Directorate and broadcast on CRTV, on Facebook accounts ([www.facebook.com/Météorologie Nationale du Cameroun](https://www.facebook.com/Météorologie_Nationale_du_Cameroun)) and Twitter accounts (@DMN_CM), on the website (www.meteocameroun.gov.cm) of the National Meteorological Directorate and on the mobile application (Meteo Cameroon), available on Play store".

The warning of the Minister of Transport, many have said, means government must get to work without delay, to avoid a situation that could result to further deaths as has been recorded in parts of the country.

The warning of the member of government comes barely days after over 30 people were killed and over 20 others, including newborns, injured, after a dam constructed in the colonial area collapsed, Sunday October 9, provoking a landslide in the Mbankolo neighbourhood in Yaounde.

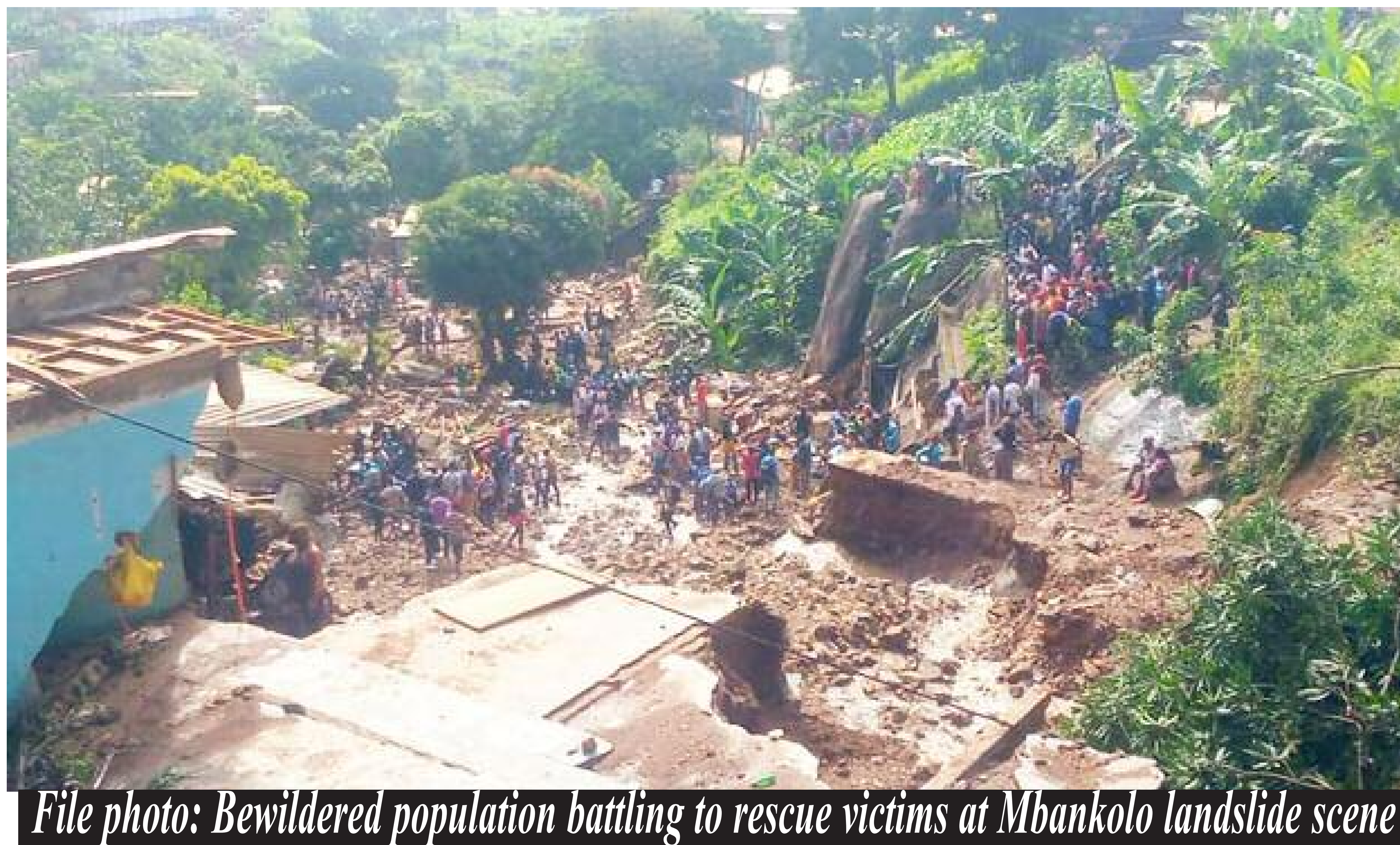
The dam collapsed after prolonged hours of rainfall. The water from the dam and the rain destroyed about 50 homes at the neighbourhood.

Mfoundi SDO orders population to evacuate risk zone

In a bid to prevent another case of natural disaster in his area of command, the Senior Divisional Officer, SDO, of Mfoundi Division in the Centre Region, Emmanuel Mariel Djikdent, has issued fresh warning for those in risk zones to vacate the said areas.

In a release issued October 11, the civil administrator ordered the population of the Ngousso around Ebama vicinity, living behind the former Eiforces headquarters, of serious cracks that have been observed on a slope supporting dwellings in the area.

Djikdent, in view of averting another landslide that could engulfed houses below, urged all those resident in the concern area to evacuate without delay, under the supervision of forces of law and order, without panic. The SDO said his release is the final warning to the population of the area who have



File photo: Bewildered population battling to rescue victims at Mbankolo landslide scene



File photo of flood that destroyed property in Kousseri in the Far North Region

been hesitant to leave the said area.

Worth recalling that in recent years, similar incidents not unconnected to climate change and other environmental constraints have been witnessed

across parts of the country.

Weather experts have increasingly linked such natural occurrences to poor construction as well as the non-respect of drainage routes.

PM, ministers concert to prevent similar catastrophes

Cont'd from page 1

The meeting also focused on reviewing the implementation of the directives of the Head of State, Paul Biya, contained in his condolence message to victims of the Sunday October 9 landslide that occurred at the Mbankolo neighbourhood in Yaounde.

The cabinet members and close aides of the Star Building occupant began by observing a minute of silence in honour of the memories of victims of the Mbankolo landslide.

It was attended by the Ministers of Territorial Administration, Atanga Nji; Housing and Urban Development, Celestine Ketcha Courtes; Communication, Rene Emmanuel Sadi; Public Health, Dr Manaouda Malachie; State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure; Henri Ayebe Ayissi, and others.

Also present were close aides of the Prime Minister, Chief Dr Joseph Dion Ngute.

The Head of Government and ministers summoned examined steps so far taken to ensure proper healthcare, protection of victims and the provision of emergency assistance to victims of the Mbankolo landslide.

"We have taken care of all the fami-



PM Dion Ngute, members of gov't observing minute of silence at start of meeting

lies...they have had relief materials. Those who were in hospitals have been taken care," Territorial Administration minister, Atanga Nji, told reporters at the end of the meeting.

The MINAT boss said the moment, officials are "trying to put in place a team to accompany the bereaved families and give them assistance".

He clarified that the landslide left 28 people dead, three missing with 17 injured receiving treatment in hospitals and 57 families affected.

On measures discussed to prevent

similar catastrophes from occurring in the near future, Minister Atanga Nji, regional governors have been tasked to sensitise and order persons in risk zones to evacuate such areas.

"...the Governors will come out with an official document where the population will be sensitised that henceforth, you can longer construct in an area which is considered a risk zone," Atanga Nji said.

Echoing her colleague of Territorial Administration, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Celestine

Ketcha Courtes, said: "We are looking out for an area where we can build some housing where we can take out people building in these swampy zones and put them out of this situation".

Reports hold that the Prime Minister and the cabinet ministers also envisaged tougher measures to reduce the risk of such occurrence in the future.

The Head of Government is also used the meeting to appeal to the population to heed the call of state authorities and evacuate all risk zones.

Editorial

When Biya softens tone on separatist fighters

For government apologists, those who have been standing up in battle with the defence and security forces are "terrorists". Some moderates, often within the opposition and international community, refer to them as separatist fighters or "non-state armed groups," fondly called Amba Boys or Boys in the bushes.

But when President Paul Biya addressed the United Nations' 78th General Assembly through the Minister of External Relations, Mbella Mbella, late last month, he avoided to call 'the Boys in the bushes' as terrorists.

As experts in diplomacy say: "The typical characteristics of diplomatic language is a certain subdued tone, some kind of understatement. It is correct to say that the real weight of words and terms in diplomatic professional jargon is much stronger than those same words in normal everyday speech".

The softening of the language on Amba fighters is however understandable, especially given that the United Nations does not recognise them as such, though in Cameroon politicians like Senator Mbella Moki have even recommended that the population should "terrorise the terrorists"! Can two wrongs be right? Certainly not.

President Biya, in the speech, delivered through his Minister of External Relations, did not as much as mention that there was a conflict, a crisis or "situation" in the North West and South West Regions.

He reiterated that the sour rhetoric of "peace and stability are returning progressively; thanks to the diligent actions of government, following the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue, despite sporadic cases of separatist-orchestrated violence or hostage-taking with demands for ransom".

Government's effective implementation of the Presidential Reconstruction and

Development Plan as well as the going operation of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Centres, he said, "augur well for a return of sustainable peace and stability, and the revival of economic and development activities in the two English-speaking Regions. These efforts will definitely not be futile".

"I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to once again thank our bilateral and multilateral partners who continue to contribute towards improving the situation, through their support for the various plans adopted by government. Their invaluable assistance in combating the financing of destabilising activities in these two Regions is also appreciated by government, which continues to appeal to those who have taken up arms to lay them down," he said.

Back home, 'the Boys in the bushes' have not surrendered and have been engaged in sporadic attacks. As the President said in New York "against a backdrop of heightening tensions and geopolitical rivalry that are threatening peace and economic, social and cultural development in multiple countries in Africa", the solution is that: "We must resolve conflicts through dialogue and consultation".

But is that being practiced in Cameroon after the failure of the Major National Dialogue to

bring peace and security in the two Anglophone Regions?

With regards to the United Nations management, he said: "In order to ensure a permanent and fair representation of the countries of the South and, in particular, Africa", it is "worth noting the fact that Africa is not only under-represented on the Security Council but is also the only continent without a permanent presence in the body...Truth be told, this is an injustice that should be corrected".

Isn't it the same "injustice" the people of the North West and South West Regions, have been complaining of with regards to top government appointments, void in national character in admission to professional schools and inequilibrium in parliamentary seat allocations and developmental infrastructure?

The Guardian Post is pleased that the Head of State complained at the United Nations that injustice at the global level was at variance with development and peace.

It was inconsistency with the theme of the session which was: "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all".

For the Head of State, the global solution, which should also be applicable at national level in his words, is that "we must take collective action to reform...in order to ensure a permanent and fair representation".

In Cameroon that "fair representation" should be in government, parliament, state corporations, professional schools etc, which because of the political will to implement the laudable policies in Cameroon, led to the radicalisation of the 'boys in the bushes', who initially advocated federalism.

Littoral Region:

Helen Keller Intl evaluates response to River Blindness, Neglected Tropical Disease

By Elizabeth Banyitabi

Measures taken to curb River Blindness and Neglected Tropical Diseases, NTDs, particularly lymphatic filariasis in the Littoral Region, have come under review.

The evaluation meeting coordinated by Helen Keller International, HKI Cameroon, a non-profit organisation that provides considerable support for the effectiveness of eye health and the fight against malnutrition in Cameroon held in Douala recently.

The session had in attendance health officials from the various health districts in the six Divisions of the Littoral Region.

They explored solution tracks to address the identified difficulties, plan the activities of the massive processing in 2024 of ongoing treatment for River Blindness also known as onchocerciasis – a parasitic tropical disease that affects the skin and eyes.

The disease is spread by repeated bites from infected black flies and is most common in those who live in remote coastal African villages.

Helen Keller International offers technical and financial support to government to treat about 9 million Cameroonians each year against onchocerciasis at the national level, of which 500,000 are in the coastal area.

Going by the Program Officer at Helen Keller International, Sharon Tonye, by 2024 all endemic communities to River Blindness must reach a therapeutic coverage of 80%.

Neglected tropical diseases are a group of 20 diseases, some of which includes Buruli ulcer, guinea worm disease, echinococcosis, African human trypanosomiasis, leishmaniose, leprosy, lymphatic filariasis.

They cause immense suffering by weakening the immune system and can be fatal. They most often affect the



Cross section of health workers at evaluation meeting in Douala

most vulnerable people in the world, those living in isolated communities and generate annual poverty cycles in developing countries.

The World Health Organisation, WHO, believes that more than 1.7 billion people need interventions for at least one NTDs, each year.

WHO has recommended five main basic strategic interventions to combat NTDs, including chemo-prevention, individual care, fight against vectors, water, sanitation and hygiene, veterinary public health.

Despite the efforts by the ministries of health in most endemic countries and partners, these neglected tropical diseases persist while they are preventable and could be easily treated.

It was for this reason and many more that has been an active fight against the proliferation of tropical diseases in Cameroon, with a network between actors in place.

In Cameroon since 1992, Helen Keller International has continuously strengthened the capacities of government, civil society and the private sector. The organisation promotes the development of medium and long-term preventive and curative programs.

These services are integrated into ongoing programs and initiatives, and are applied cost-effectively and practically. They also take into account the real needs of health and local realities in a bit to provide strong leadership for local mobilization in the fight against NTDs

Personality of The Week: Awa Fonka Augustine: West Region Governor

One of the reasons some names are engraved in the hearts of men and the history of nations for the right reasons across generations is because those being talked about dared to be different.

Such men always have a higher understanding of life. They are usually people who possess a rare approach to handling the ups and downs that sometimes produce memorable and never-to-be-remembered stories in life.

As a nation, Cameroon has lived in the past such moments and is currently navigating different bends with authorities focused on keeping its integrity and rich diversity intact. This, is a product being pursued with the goal of enhancing peace, living together and national development.

It comes within the frames of a Presidential resolve of the Head of State, Paul Biya, who has repeatedly appealed for compatriots within and outside the country to make their voices count.

Steadying Cameroon on that path has remained daunting in a world of many forces that cut across different value systems and dynamics.

In the case of the African continent, it is no secret that the Diaspora of most of its countries have in recent times been hostile to their leadership back home and reluctant in contributing to national development.

Perhaps, it is with this understanding that the millions of the citizens who view Cameroon through the pages of The Guardian Post daily across the globe, have shown unprecedented interest in the recent European tour of the Governor of the West Region, the results-oriented, pragmatic and level-headed Awa Fonka Augustine.

The interest is not because he is the first high profile public servant to sojourn outside Cameroon. His, our readers say, is quite interesting and make for positive multi-sectoral analysis; given the issues addressed and the audience of his message for peace, investment back home and the context of contemporary Cameroon.

In the spread of their arguments and rating, Governor Awa Fonka's recent tour of France and Germany, crusading in the interest of Cameroon, put him in the firmaments of respect and national standing ovation.

Exceptionally, our readers, who have also attested repeatedly that your favourite newspaper, The Guardian Post, remains atop the business of journalism in the Economic Community of Central African States, ECCAS, say, in their rating, Governor Awa Fonka is the undisputed Cameroon's star of this week.

This, they say, makes him a perfect fit and rightly so, for Cameroon's Personality of The Week.

Having found common ground with Esperanza-Cade and Espace Culturel Gacha associations, your Personality of The Week has been engaged in ear-to-ear discussions with the Cameroonian Diaspora in France and Germany in particular.

Unlike others who use such opportunities for personal aggrandisement, Governor Awa Fonka, a time-tested administrator and patriot, spared no effort in talking Cameroon and its huge potentials with compatriots based in the Diaspora.

Being a man with a message about Cameroon's reality, Awa Fonka was clear when he told reporters that, certain misunderstandings had been cleared.

In a unique show of his long admired administrative savoir-faire, down-to-earth, hospitable and appealing manner, Cameroon, he told the Diaspora, belongs to all her children.

"Cameroon belongs to them. They are supposed to be interested in their country. It is an assignment. It is a responsibility to return home and invest in Cameroon because there are so many opportunities back home," Governor Awa Fonka told the media.

Your Personality of The Week was also pure on the need for clear communication, dialogue and rapprochement to move the nation forward. Millions of our readers say they are happy that the award-winning senior civil administrator of exceptional class, took out time to situate the challenges facing the nation before justifying the need for Cameroonians to unite and build motherland. This alone, many say, shows Awa Fonka is a man of truth who fears God and abhors evil.

For being frank, open and knowing the place the Diaspora has in driving development back home, Awa Fonka, most of those who took extra interest in his activities across Europe say, falls in the category



of Senior Statesmen who are futuristic about Cameroon's emergence in 2035.

His honesty and interpretation of things, others are saying, have more than attracted them to believe in the Cameroonian project. His focus on the need for clear communication and dialogue on certain concerns, admirers say, show your Personality of The Week is a paragon of hope who has established a mutual respect between the Diaspora and the country.

His successes as an administrator, others concur, have further assumed golden colours because through the recent European outing, he is focused on building Cameroon and raising other leaders.

The celebrated Governor Awa Fonka, many have submitted and exceptionally so, is a distinguished leader, especially given that the rainbow communion with compatriots in Europe, through a focus on building Cameroon, inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become better citizens.

Others rate him in the realms of one of the best civil administrators of this generation, for having the gumption and charisma to calm a Diaspora that until now had become restive and misinformed about developments back home.

Awa Fonka's selfless engagements with the Cameroonian Diaspora in Europe recently, others aver, shows he is a true leader who has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions and the compassion to listen to the needs of others.

Beyond the title of a Governor, the nexus between Awa Fonka and the population of the West Region, within Cameroon and those in the Diaspora, many say in admiration, shows he is a man of the people.

Unlocking the potential of Cameroon's Diaspora for the good of fatherland, Your Personality of The Week, in the opinion of many, has just reconfirmed his desire and commitment to play a role in helping the country develop.

For daring the Diaspora equation and solving it without stress to the point of being able to convince many, among them businesspersons, to choose to invest in Cameroon, Awa Fonka is not just a mover and shaker but a matchless patriot.

In the rating of many, Governor Awa Fonka deserves encouragement for rallying the Cameroonian Diaspora in Europe to rekindle their link with motherland and make the best of what it offers.

He sees further than others. He has earned authority through understanding and trust. Awa Fonka has the supreme quality of leadership which is integrity.

Millions of our readers say Awa Fonka has, with his put Cameroon first project this season, set very high standards for patriotism, development, peace and living together. The people of the West Region, where he is Governor, say they are following him voluntarily because of the immense harvest from his leadership options.

Others have not stopped hailing the Governor for his rare leadership ability to douse the Diaspora agitations before they become an emergency in future.

In this light, enthusiasts say while others are celebrated for being able to use a stone to kill two birds, Awa Fonka is different because he uses one stone to kill 10 birds.

While others lead from above, Awa Fonka is also saluted for leading from within. He has the personality and the X-factor of leadership which is humility. This, they say, accounts for his inspiring career.

For those who know him, the recent Europe exploits are normal but for others just discovering Your Personality of The Week, he is one of a kind for inspiring the Cameroonian Diaspora to raise its bar higher.

In this century, leadership gets its real value in empowering others and for our readers, this is where Governor Awa Fonka, the man with a golden aura, fits.

While other leaders are known for being rude and arrogant, Awa Fonka is strong, kind but not weak. He is a thoughtful and workaholic public servant.

He has a rare capacity to translate projects and visions into reality. For those who don't know that the growth and development of a people is the apex calling of leadership, the moves of your Personality of The Week in the Diaspora this season, analysts say, comes in golden frames.

Others see him through the prism of one who influences the energy that can contribute to redouble Cameroon's gains on all fronts.

His never-ending innovative leadership has put him on the spotlight for decades as a meaningful national asset with the trappings of an acclaimed way maker.

Much-admired South African anti-apartheid hero and former Head of State, the late Nelson Mandela, once opined that the best way to address fear is to face it head on.

Many, looking at the rare trappings of Governor Awa Fonka, say he is a sequential problem solver who matches Mandela's thoughts.

From another perspective, our readers argue that Your Personality of The Week knows so well that the Cameroonian Diaspora may have faltered but it needed the strength and counsel of an erudite nation builder and patriot like him to retrace the path of glory.

While others see leadership as being in charge, Awa Fonka has his style that has continued to earn him admiration. He has a history of taking care of those under his charge.

He is a man who has embarked on a crusade, which benefits are more than his personal wants and needs. He is a servant setting the foundation for a nation that will benefit generations yet unborn.

In the gathering of the nation's civil administrators, Governor Awa Fonka stands out because often-times and for years on record, he always acts from a pivot of passion and not emotion. That unique passion is what has synched the Cameroonian Diaspora in Europe today back to the realities back home.

This comes in the vestments of a level-headed administrator whom Governor Awa has been in his decades of selfless service to the nation. He is not a stranger to the project of keeping Cameroon one and indivisible in its diversity.

The native of Akum, Santa Subdivision, in Mezam Division of the North West Region, was born on April 11, 1959, in Akwa-Douala.

After a brilliant academic course, he studied civil administration at the National School of Administration and Magistracy, ENAM. He is of the batch of 1996.

His first duty post as administrator was Mundemba in N'dian Division where he served as First Assistant Senior Divisional Officer, SDO.

He was later raised to the rank of Divisional Officer, DO. In this capacity, he served in: Nwa, Donga Mantung Division, Wum Central, Menchum Division; Oku and Jakiri Subdivisions in Bui Division and Babessi, Ngokentunjia Division; all in the North West Region.

He also served as DO of Poli Subdivision in the North Region and Tiko Subdivision in the South West Region. President Paul Biya later raised him to the rank of SDO of Mbam and Kim Division of the Centre Region in 2010 from where he was appointed Governor of the Far North Region on March 12, 2012.

After the Far North Region, Awa Fonka was posted to the West Region as Governor in 2014. He has been serving here since then and producing matchless results.

The national compass of his manifold, many say, show Your Personality of The Week, is a national champion with inborn and distinctive qualities worth every form of respect.

To fight unemployment: National Employment Fund, BUNS partner to train young graduates

By Morine Tanyi

The National Employment Fund, NEF, and the road and building construction company, BUNS, have sealed a deal to ensure the training of some 56 graduates. The youngsters will be trained within the Citizen Graduate Employment Programme, PED-Ci of the National Employment Fund.

The agreement was signed at the head office of NEF in Yaounde yesterday. The General Manager of NEF, Camille Moute à Bidias, signed for his institution while the Founder and Managing Director of BUNS, Njong Eric, put pen on paper for his road construction company.

The Minister of Employment and Vocational Training, Issa Tchiroma Bakary, chaired the event. Other officials of NEF and BUNS attended the event. Both institutions, going by the agreement, will redouble efforts to promote youth employment and the development of human capital.

BUNS' commitments to boost youth employment

At the individual level, BUNS agreed to collaborate with the NEF on any programme that approves and promotes employment and improvement of human resources through the programmes such as the Citizen Graduate Employment Programme, PED-Ci; the Support Programme for the Reintegration of Cameroonian Immigrants, PARIC; the Youth Employment Retirement Programme, PREJ just to name but this.

NEF's part of the deal

NEF on its part, agreed to make available its database of jobseekers and the profile of candidates; respect BUNS' choice of final candidates selected; inform BUNS of any programme likely to be of interest and undertaken by NEF as part of activities for the promotion of employment.

Minister lauds NEF's fight against unemployment

Speaking at the event, Minister Issa



L-R: NEF Director General, Camille Moute à Bidias & BUNS boss, Njong Eric, signing agreement booklet as Vocational Training Minister, Issa Tchiroma, watches



NEF & BUNS officials pose with Minister Issa Tchiroma while brandishing signed agreement

Tchiroma lauded NEF's relentless fight against unemployment and the socio-professional integration of young graduates. NEF, he added, remains the pillar in the fight against unemployment in the country.

BUNS, the member of government added, should be applauded for its role in the development of the nation.

BUNS founder on need for skills-based training

The Managing Director of BUNS, Njong Eric, stated that it is important to train youth whom he said, are the future of the nation.

Most young people, he said, have formal education but lack the skills that tie with the needs of the job market.

Njong said BUNS will train the youth in area such as mechanics, driving, geo-technicality among others.

"For continuity and the building of our country, we need to train the young ones. By partnering with the NEF through this programme, together with government we have to see how we can get young people into the our company and train them for a period of 24 months to do a trade and then we can put them out in the market," Njong

told reporters. He urged other companies to copy the example of BUNS.

NEF Director General situates project

According to the General Manager of NEF, Camille Moute à Bidias, the time has come to stop the situation of youth spending several years with certificates but can't boast of any employment. He disclosed that 1261

He said NEF came up with the program to address the perennial issue of unemployment. Moute à Bidias disclosed that, there are over 225000 companies in the country based on figures from the National Institute of Statistics, NIS.

He said if all the companies absurd just five youths each, 500,000 persons will get employed.

NEF in brief

NEF was created by the government to fight against unemployment. It seeks to ensure transparency between job providers and jobseekers.

It has as main mission to match job supply and demand; enable the acquisition of skills corresponding to the need of the employment market; promotion off self-employment and micro-enterprises.

About BUNS

BUNS was created in 1993 by Njong Eric as a construction company. In over 10 year of service, BUNS has constructed over 250km of bituminous road including the 8km Djoum-Miintom road towards the Cameroon-Congo boarder.

The company started with a turnover of 10 million FCFA in 1993, having just one architect, one engineer and a secretary. Today, the turnover of BUNS stands at 25 billion FCFA.

The company boasts of over 644 permanent workers among them 30 engineers and about 856 temporary workers. This brings its workforce to 1500 staff.

Meme:

Legend Football Academy, B7 Foundation donate didactics to children in Mambanda

By Njingang Godwin

Pupils of a community primary school in Bombanda, Mbonge Subdivision of Meme Division in the South West Region have benefited from didactic materials to enable them better carry on with their studies.

The donation is an initiative of United States of America-based non-governmental organisation, B7 Foundation, piloted by Amanda and Joben in partnership with Football Academy Legend Football Academy with base in Kumba.

The didactics comprising exercise

books, pens, pencils and school bags to were handed to the children on Tuesday October 10.

According to the President of Legend Football Club, Etok Anzah Kingsley, the donation is just a way of giving back to the community, particularly children who have been finding it difficult to acquire education.

"Only getting to Bombanda and seeing children attending school is a great relief for me and I think that we as an academy should assist the suffering parents even with this small materials maybe next year we can start thinking of something big..."

Etok said.

He encouraged the pupils to take their education seriously. He said the organisation will go in search of more partners to be able to provide them with necessary support.

On his part, the Head Teacher of the school, thanked B7 Foundation for thinking about education of rural children and especially Legend Football Academy officials for thinking of Bombanda for their first-ever donation in Mbonge Subdivision.

The Head Teacher promised to, in consultation with parents, encourage children with interest in football to join the academy

and develop their skills so that they will be shining examples in the society.

The officials of the two organisations promised to take their humanitarian activities to other parts of the South West Region.

Worthy of note is that Legend Football Academy based in Kumba grooms young talents various categories; including Under 15, Under 17, women's football team and a senior team playing in the Southwest Regional championship.

Its president Etok Anzah Kingsley says their objective is to nurture young Cameroonians to become great footballers in the future.



Legend president symbolically hands over books to teachers



Pupils of Bombanda Community School brandish their gifts after the donation

On World Mental Health Day: Health minister calls for awareness raising, end to stigmatisation

By Morine Tanyi



Dr Manaouda Malachie, Minister of Public Health

The Minister of Public Health, Dr Manaouda Malachie, has underscored the need for more awareness on mental health and the need to end stigmatisation against people affected by the condition.

He made the appeal in a message he released in prelude to the celebration of this year's World Mental Health Day. The day is celebrated annually on October 10.

It was celebrated this year under the theme: "Mental Health is a Universal Human Right".

According to the health minister, there is need to raise awareness on the promotion of mental health within families, schools, professional and social milieus to assuage the suffering of those affected by mental health. He called on citizens to show compassion for those affected by mental health.

As part of activities to mark the celebration in Cameroon, the Ministry of Public Health, has through the Department of Health Promotion, alongside other stakeholders, been spearheading a series of activities.

The campaign is expected to last October 31. The campaign is dubbed: "October of Love". Experts are working in partnership with the media, communities and schools. They are also making use of the social media.

Yesterday, there was an official launch of activities at the mental health department of the Jamot Hospital in Yaounde.

According to the World Health Organisation, WHO, the World Mental Health Day is a day set aside to raise awareness on mental issues around the world as well as mobilise efforts in support of those affected by the situation.

The WHO says at least one in every eight persons globally is living with a mental health condition which can either impact their physical health or wellbeing.

The most affected group of persons the global health body says are adolescents and young people. A good mental health is vital to ones overall health and wellbeing

West Region: Organisation offers free diabetes screening, medication to population

By Mboh Promise

Over 200 persons in Foubot, Noun Division of the West Region have received free diabetes screening and medications.

This was during an event organised by the Global Diabetes Initiatives, GDI.

It was organised in collaboration with the Foubot District Hospital with the support of the Ministry of Public Health.

The event, which took place in Foubot was aimed at raising awareness in the community on how to prevent diabetes and also how to easily detect it at the early stage.

It was chaired by the Founder of Global Diabetes Initiatives, Matilda Chongwa.

The over 200 persons present during the event were screened, while free medications were offered to those living with diabetes.

During the community campaigns and educational workshop, the Founder of GDI, Matilda Chongwa, called on the population of Foubot to come together, raise awareness and support all diabetes patients by health personnel from the Foubot District Hospital.

She said the initiative is due to her concern over diabetes patients in the community, adding that her aim is to completely eradicate diabetes in communities.

"The diabetes-free awareness, screening and educational initiative in Foubot is a comprehensive program dedicated to eradicating diabetes and promoting a healthy lifestyle within the community. The campaign aimed to raise local awareness about diabetes risk factors, symptoms, and prevention strategies," Matilda Chongwa said.



Founder of GDI, Matilda Chongwa handing medication to patients



Founder & volunteers brandishing certificates

The event ended with the award of certificates of participation to volunteers. Those who benefited from the initiative also thanked the organisation for coming to their rescue.

GDI has also been assisting children from poor diabetes families in the domain of education for years now. The organization also have upcoming projects in Buea and Yaounde.

How the initiative came about

Growing up in a family profoundly affected by diabetes, Matilda

Chongwa, experienced several challenges with her family.

The Founder of GDI said she came to realise that diabetes does not only need medication, but also emotional support and understanding.

It was on this note that she started in her own little way with what later on gave birth to the Global Diabetes Initiatives, GDI, in 2014. The organisation has been assisting diabetes patients in the United Kingdom and Cameroon.

Nigerian parliament opens probe into imminent ceding of territory to Cameroon

By Mua Patrick

Members of Nigeria's House of Representatives Ad-hoc Committee on International Boundary Dispute have visited Yola to investigate moves to cede Sina Kamale Area in Michika Local Government Area to Cameroon.

According to Leadership Newspaper, the visit took place Wednesday October 11.

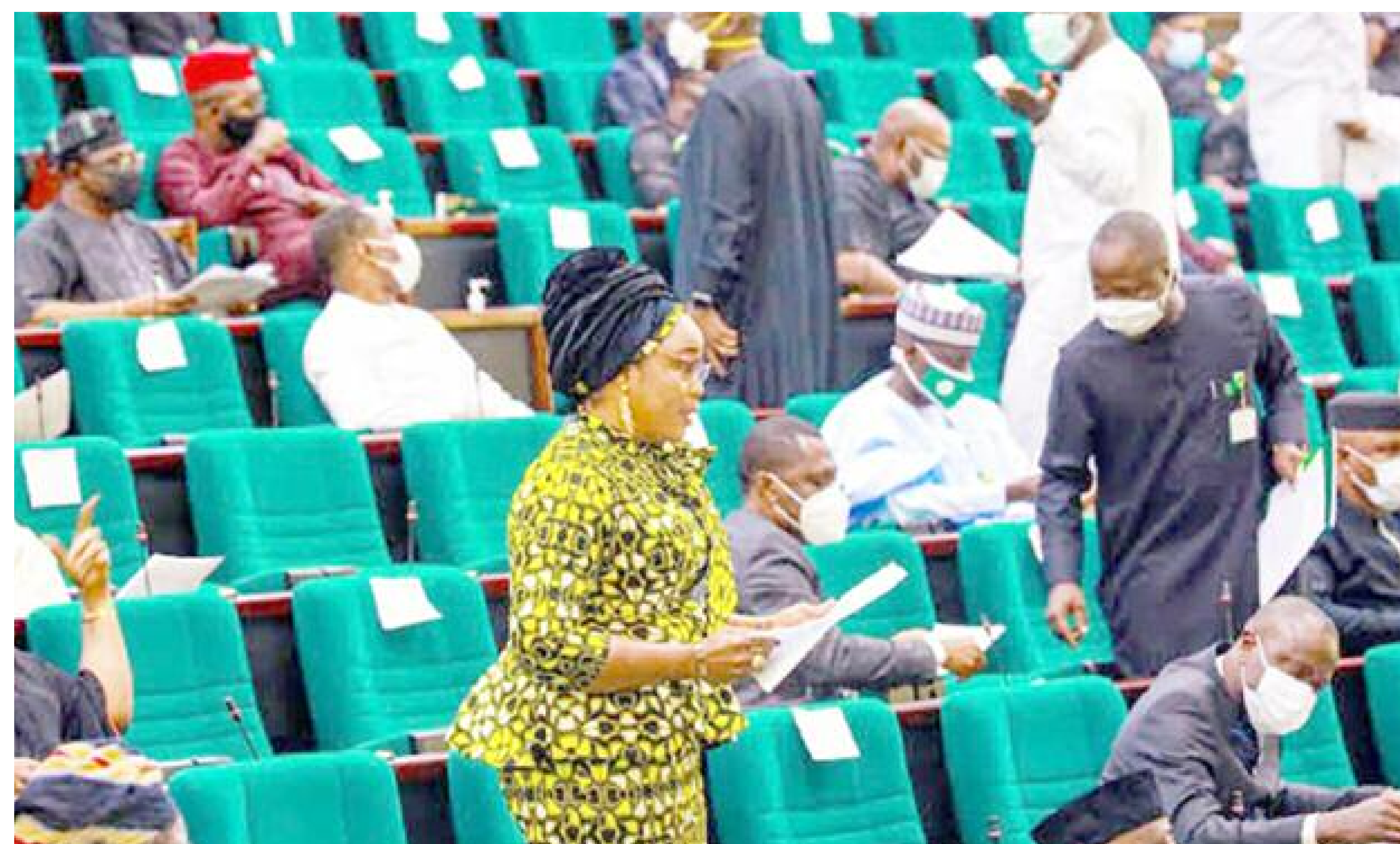
Briefing Nigeria's Adamawa State Governor, Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri, at the Government House in Yola, the Chairperson of the Ad hoc Committee, Hon Beni Lar, said they were in the state on fact-finding mission about the border issue between Cameroon and Nigeria.

Lar, who also chairs the House Committee on Human Rights added that her team may visit the disputed boundary communities to conduct fact-finding verification and public hearings.

She said the committee will assess the case with a mandate to ensure thorough understanding and proffer solution to the disputes and report to the House, in two weeks.

Responding, Governor Umaru Fintiri said nine Local Government Areas, LGAs, of the Adamawa State that include Toungo, Fufere, Ganye, Jada, Maiha Mubi North, Mubi South, Michika and Madagali, share boundary with Cameroon.

The governor who went down



File photo: Nigerian lawmakers during a session

memory lane to narrate the disputes between border communities of Nigeria and Cameroon over land encroachment, reeled out possible measures to address the problem.

He disclosed that following the ruling of International Court of Justice, ICJ, the ceding of some communities to Cameroon has faced stiff resistance and protests particularly in Madagali, Michika, Mubi North and South and Maiha.

He therefore advocated that the National Boundary Commission and Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission should provide Adamawa state government with modus operandi of their activities along the state boundaries with a

view to review where necessary.

He also called for the provision of social amenities and infrastructure by federal and state governments in the affected areas and to ensure the wishes of the communities along the borderline are fulfilled in line with ICJ judgement.

"Our stand as state government is that all relevant stakeholders should go back to our former traditional boundaries where both parties already have their areas of jurisdiction," he said.

It would be recalled that Hon Zakaria Dauda Nyampa, representing Michika and Madagali, had requested for thorough investigation on the matter.

At Int'l Day of the Girl Child commemoration in B'da: Adolescent girls, young women advocate inclusion in leadership

By Tantan Patience

A group of adolescent girls and young women have begun pushing for their inclusion in issues of leadership in the country.

The issue was raised during a one-day workshop in Bamenda in the North West Region.

The workshop held in Bamenda October 5, as part of activities to mark the commemoration of this year's International Day of the Girl Child.

The event was organised by the National Coalition of Adolescent girls and young women in Cameroon in partnership with Global Actions for Community Development, 'She for Peace', D2R Transformers and a host of other organisations.

It was aimed at raising awareness on the need to include girls in leadership as well as enabling spaces for girls to be heard. The event brought together over 130 young girls.

Discussions were centered around comprehensive sexuality education, menstrual hygiene management, breaking limits and stereotype, career, health and business.

In line with this year's theme: "Invest in Girls' Rights: Our Leadership, Our Wellbeing", which aims to highlight the difficulties that girls experience in all sectors of society, Ndum Charlotte, Team Lead of the National Coalition of Adolescent



Cross section of participants and experts at the workshop in Bamenda



Participants following discussions during workshop

Girls and Young Women, argued that encouraging the girl child comes with benefits such as increase productivity.

"The theme of this year is very timely...it's very important that we have everyone engaged. We have women and girls who are empowered to lead and it will go a long way to increase productivity, enhance collaboration and inspire change and transformation," Ndum said.

For her part, Chi Magret, a participant at the workshop stated that togetherness was essential in breaking stereotypes.

"I learnt from this session that there is power in

togetherness and it is time for us as women to hold each other's hand. Our dreams are valid and that through hard work and determination, we can attain any high position of leadership we want to. We are calling for collaboration from all angles including the boys," he said.

The International Day of the Girl, observed annually on October 11, is a global platform to advocate for the full spectrum of girls' rights. It equally aims to address the difficulties faced by girls around the world in areas such as access to education, gender based violence and child marriages amongst others.

Yaounde transport fluidity project to be delivered in 36 months

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui

Officials handling the Yaounde Transport Fluidity Project have assured residence of the political capital city that if funds they are expecting from the French government are made available before the end of the current financial year, implementation will kick off in 2024 and will be delivered in 36 months.

According to the Project Coordinator, Arnaud Philippe Bdzana, "Yaounde Coeur de Ville", as the project is also known in the French language, is estimated to cost a total of 54.7 billion FCFA.

Out of the said amount, 46.2 billion FCFA will come from the Debt Relief and Development Contract, C2D Programme, put in place by the French government while government of Yaounde will contribute the remaining 8.5 billion FCFA.

The Project Coordinator told reporters in Yaounde that during the 36 months of implementation, his team will redesign and reconfigure the three most congested intersections within the capital city which he identified as Mvan, Elig-Effa, and Elig-Edzoa neighbourhoods.

He said they also carry out other decongestion works along the Awae escalier, Emombo, and Sous-manguiers junctions.

In addition, the project will involve the demolition and reconstruction of the Mvan, Messa and Mokolo bus stations, as well as the reconstruction of two mini-bus and taxi terminals at Avenue Mvog-Fouda in Elig-Essono and Marcel Jezouin Street.

They will also upgrade the pedestrian hiking trails on Mount Messa and rehabilitate the main access road in that neighbourhood.

Even more, the project Coordinator said, apart from the primary goal of improving and easing urban transportation, the project is expected to create

800 jobs, enhance access to sustainable urban transport with a target of 430,000 people by 2035.

The project will also reduce travel time, and increase pedestrian walkway surfaces by 19,000 square meters. Of the anticipated 800 jobs, he said, at least 150 will be reserved for women.

Ndzana, who also serves as the Chief Technical Advisor at the Yaounde City Council, indicated that "this new mobility system will enhance the quality of life in the city, with safer roads, fewer accidents, and reduced air pollution".

He and his team of officials anticipate that the project will impact more than 1,000 individuals, including businesses, residences, travel agencies, gas stations, among other institutions, communities and individuals during the execution phase.

Meanwhile, Ndzana quoted the Yaounde City Council as assuring that nearly 1 billion FCFA has been allocated to compensate those to be affected.

The compensation will ensure their relocation and the restoration of their livelihoods that would be affected in the course of the project execution.

He has disclosed that the "Yaounde Coeur de Ville" project is a component of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, PMUS, developed and adopted by the Yaounde City Council in 2019.

Government and the French Development Agency, AFD, had signed the financing agreement on February 4, 2022. At that time, construction was expected to commence in 2022.

However, the project experienced delays due to lengthy bureaucratic procedures.

He quoted sources at C2D as assuring that, "studies have commenced, along with consultations. The plans are ready. We are hopeful that by the end of the year, or at the latest, in the first quarter of 2024, we will have completed the market process to expedite the work".



Mvan neighbourhood in Y'de where project implementation is ongoing

Military raid leaves six Amba fighters dead, camp destroyed

Cont'd from page 1

It was code-named "Operation over river Munaya". Going by military sources, the operation targeted separatist leaders operating in the area and wreaking havoc on the innocent population.

A separatist camp in Obonyi III vil-

lage, is reported to have been destroyed while six separatist fighters were killed.

We gathered that 15 weapons were collected from the separatist hideout. Meanwhile, more than 2,300 ammunitions were also seized.

More than 60 Improvised Explosive Devices, IED, and over 20 electric det-

onators and cables, were equally confiscated.

Following Sunday's raid, the population of Akwaya Subdivision, has been expressing gratitude to the defence and security forces for their bravery.

The Divisional Officer, DO, of

Akwaya, Augustine Mbua, has hailed the defence and security forces for their relentless efforts to protect the population and their property.

The administrator has called on the population to continue to collaborate with the forces of law and order in the Subdivision for normalcy to return.



Soldiers after the mission in Obonyi III



some of the seized items

Buea: NDES Foundation launches institute to empower underprivileged girls

By Mua Patrick

The Nde Zachariah's Descendants Foundation, NDES, has flagged off an institute which seeks to empower local girls through education and innovation, rooted in community collaboration.

The Buea-based institute dubbed NDES Institute of Technology, NIT, was launched last week in the South West Regional chief town.

NDES Institute of Technology officially opened its doors to the public on October 7. Authorities said the initiative, driven by the NDES Foundation, is a game-changer for girls in the community.

"Thanks to PriVida Limited, a company based in the UK for its continues support to the NDES Foundation," the foundation said in a statement.

It was disclosed that the core mission of the NDES Institute of Technology is to bridge the gender gap in technology by empowering young girls with essential digital literacy skills.

With an audience of 10 eager young minds, two dedicated guardians, and seven enthusiastic staff members, the atmosphere was charged with excitement and anticipation.

Meanwhile, speaking at the



Students of the institute during day one

start of the activities last week, the Vice President of the NDES Foundation, Sakwe Ruth, stated the pivotal role that technology plays in shaping the future.

"It's a message that resonates locally and globally: technology is the great equalizer," she said.

A captivating lecture by Nji Florence introduced the kids to the world of computers. Her engaging teaching style made the information accessible.

They learned about the significance of computer literacy in the modern age, opening doors of opportunity for young girls.

Speakers at the opening ceremony, officials confirmed that it will take the community and the

concept of "we" to grow.

"It's a reminder that together, we can achieve great things, especially in empowering young girls through digital literacy," they said.

"The NDES Foundation is seeking contributions, technical skills, and individual donations. Every bit counts in bringing the promise of technology to even more young minds," a statement then added.

"NDES Foundation is also eager to partner with and learn from like-minded organisations with a commitment to community development and empowering girls. This collaborative spirit is the driving force behind



Learners taking lessons

positive change" continued the statement which immediately mentioned that The NDES Institute of Technology official opening marked the start of a journey to empower young girls through digital literacy. This initiative recognises that the future is digital, and girls deserve every opportunity to shape it," it added.

The Nde Zachariah's Descendants Foundation, NDES, it should be said, was established in 2019 by the surviving family of Ma Nde Elizabeth and Pa Nde Zachariah, who resided in Buea, in the South West Region.

Their legacy continues to inspire the Foundation's mis-

sion. In their memory, the family is dedicated to assisting some of Cameroon's most overlooked rural communities.

The primary focus of the foundation is on empowering the communities to achieve self-reliance and long-term sustainability.

From its inception, the NDES Foundation has held true to the values of community, inclusion, and transparency.

The Foundation believes that by working closely with these communities, respecting their unique needs and strengths, and maintaining open and honest communication.

Scoreboard

Up score: Philippe Camille Akoa: FEICOM General Manager

The advantages of inclusive education are legion. Inclusive education means different and diverse students or pupils learning side by side in the same classroom.

It values diversity and the unique contributions each pupil or student brings to the classroom. In a truly inclusive setting, every child feels safe and has a sense of belonging.

Experts say it provides better opportunities for learning. Children with varying abilities are often better motivated when they learn in classes surrounded by other children.

The experts indicate that inclusive systems provide a better quality education for all children and are instrumental in changing discriminatory attitudes. Schools provide the context for a child's first relationship with the world outside their families, enabling the development of social relationships and interactions.

Respect and understanding grow when students of diverse abilities and backgrounds play, socialize, and learn together.

It is definitely on these bases that the General Manager of the Special Council Support Fund for Mutual Assistance, FEICOM, Philippe Camille Akoa, has reiterated his institution's commitment to promote inclusive education nationwide.

He made the disclosure recently while speaking during the first meeting of the Local Education Group, LEG, of FEICOM.

LEG, it should be noted, is a taskforce charged with advancing the vision of inclusive, quality education in the country. The meeting took place in the presence of officials of the United Nations International Children's

Emergency Fund, UNICEF, as well as close collaborators of FEICOM. Camille Akoa expressed delight that FEICOM was chosen to host the meeting.

The meeting brought together national



and international stakeholders involved in the implementation of inclusive education in Cameroon.

The come together, Camille Akoa stated, shows the strong commitment of partners in improving access to education and the quality of learning across the country.

He also restated his position as UNICEF Champion of Children's Rights, to work for more initiatives to promote the School of My Dreams project and the Education and Technology, EDTECH FEICOM UNICEF programme for every child.

The ED-TECH FEICOM UNICEF programme is at its pilot phase. It seeks to reach out to some 10,000 pupils and 100 teachers in 15 primary schools in the localities of Garoua Boulai, Ngoura, Bertoua I, Bertoua II and Mandjou.

The programme, according to officials, equally aims at improving the quality of leaning and enhancing access to quality education in vulnerable regions. For his relentless efforts in promoting inclusive education and commitment to go further in giving every child the opportunity to go to school, Philippe Camille Akoa gets a score of **10/10**.

Down score: Alissa McCommon: Teacher who raped 12-year-old student

Rape is a serious crime in every society. It even gets worse when it is perpetrated on a minor by a teacher who is expected to protect the pupil or student and not preying on him or her.

Child sexual abuse has been associated with a range of trauma symptoms including depression, anxiety, anger, intrusive experiences and sexual concerns after controlling for age, sex, race and income and history of physical abuse.

Experts say children and young people who have been sexually abused can suffer a range of psychological and behavioural problems, from mild to severe, in both the short and long time.

They say the short term effects of child sexual abuse include increased illness, body aches or other physical complaints; poor attendance or performance at school; difficulty concentrating or memory loss; mood changes; regressive behaviours; sleeping and eating disorders; lack of self-esteem; nightmares; self-harm or suicidal thoughts; self-hatred or reduced self-esteem; disinhibited behavior and zoning out or not listening.

The experts add that long term effects include suicidal ideation; post-traumatic stress; sexual difficulties; inability to form lasting relationships; identity difficulties; relationship problems; parenting difficulties; alcohol and substance misuse; development of violent behavior and development of criminal behavior.

A 38-year-old teacher in Covington, Tennessee, United States of America, Alissa McCommon, was recently arrested for raping a 12-year-old boy in 2021, when he allegedly woke up to McCommon sexually assaulting him while he was spending the night at her

home, according to an affidavit.

A Tipton County judge ordered McCommon to undergo a mental health evaluation, which Mason hopes will be completed in short order.

McCommon was initially arrested on September 8 and released on \$250,000 bail bond until she was rearrested on September 28, when authorities charged her with coercing, harassing and stalking the victim.

The judge revoked a second bail bond for McCommon after authorities said she violated the terms of her release when she contacted the victim using a previously unknown phone number after she initially bonded out of jail.

In a recording of a phone call from the phone number played aloud in court last week, a person whom prosecutors are alleging to be McCommon suggests she is pregnant.

"I'm going to raise this baby. I can do this," McCommon can allegedly be heard saying in a phone call with the victim that was played aloud in court on October 3, according to FOX 13 Memphis.

For perpetrating rape on a minor under her tutelage and whom she was supposed to protect, Alissa McCommon gets a score of **0/10**.



To strengthen SMEs sector amidst health pandemics: Japanese-funded project drills, donates equipment to Cameroonian entrepreneurs

By Macwalter Njapteh Refor

Some Cameroonian entrepreneurs have received a consignment of equipment from the Japanese government in order to strengthen the resilience of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, SMEs, amidst pandemics like COVID-19.

The medical accessories were donated during a recent ceremony marking the close of a project funded by Japan.

Implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, UNIDO-Cameroon, the project seeks to promote public health by improving the capacity of the national supply chain of medical products for increased resilience against COVID-19.

Assessing the projects, the UNIDO Resident Representative to Cameroon, Raymond Taraves, expressed his satisfaction with the outcomes of the project that will help in boosting the health sector through the production of medical accessories.

"I am satisfied because we have trained those companies and provided



Officials, some beneficiary entrepreneurs in group photo

them with equipment funded by Japan government with the collaboration of its Cameroonian counterpart," Taraves said.

The Resident Representative also explained that the project comes as a result of the desires expressed by the government of Cameroon to have a technical assistance on strengthening the capacities of the local company making materials to overcome problems of accessories and materials to fight against COVID-19.

The Japanese Ambassador to Cameroon, Nozomu Takaoka, said the just ended project signifies a lot to the both Japanese and the Cameroonian people as they seek to replicate in Cameroon a successful model in Japan.

"I am very happy with this project," the Ambassador said, giving his evaluation of the project.

"Through this project, we are replicating the model in Japan, because there too, small and medium-sized

companies employ about 60-70% of the workforce in Japan. So it is a major employment entity in Japan. I hope this success will be replicated in Cameroon," he continued.

Meanwhile, the representative of the Minister of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts, said the project signifies a magnified international cooperation between both governments.

"...we greatly thank the technical cooperation of UNIDO and financial support from Japan to have supported these adherences to continue in the dynamics of which they have been engaged in since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic," the minister's representative said.

She then urged beneficiaries to make good use of the skills and equipment acquired for the betterment of the country's health sector.

The project is also said to reflect the policy of import-substitution inspired by the Head of State as the entrepreneurs now have a challenge of producing materials that meets local demands but also capable of exporting to the sub-regional market and even beyond.

Vulnerable women, IDPs lectured on gender-based violence, climate Justice

By Njingang Godwin

A group of vulnerable women and others who have been rendered as Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs, have been schooled on issues related to Gender-based Violence, GBV, and climate justice.

This was the focus of a one-day capacity-building workshop. It was held October 11.

It was organised by the Global Action for Education and Rehabilitation, GAERE, in partnership with Kumba Nfon's Palace, Friends of the Nfon's Palace, African Voices for African Forest, BOUGHOU GZEGH, amongst others.

Participants who were mostly vulnerable women and IDPs came from across Meme Division.

According to Environment and Climate Justice Advocate, Ewi Stephany Lamma, who doubles as UN Global Climate Action Ambassador, climate justice is social justice. She said climate change affects the way "our food grows".

"It was imperative that these

women from across Meme Division be reminded of their rights as a woman," she said.

The UN Global Action Ambassador also used the opportunity to call on the women to denounce all forms of violence they are subjected to.

"...this workshop was necessary to educate the women on climate Justice and how they can mitigate it without necessarily endangering themselves in the process," she added.

On her part, Christy Atong Mbonji Esemé, an IDP from Konye who participated at the workshop, said the gathering was timely.

"It was very timely and necessary for such a workshop to take place in order to enlighten some of us who have been subjected to such abuses for ages," she said.

She thanked the Kumba-based non-governmental organisation, Global Action for Education and Rehabilitation, GAERE, for coming up with the lofty initiative to enlighten them on GBV and climate justice issues.



Some of the women who participated at the workshop



Some inhabitants fleeing their homes as floods ravage village (Credit: OCHA)

Chadians flee into Cameroon as floods hit home country

By Macwalter Njapteh Refor

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA, says over 3,400 Chadians have fled into the Far North Region of Cameroon after floods struck villages in their home country.

In a post published yesterday, OCHA said recent heavy downpours leading to flood is responsible for the new humanitarian crisis in the Far North region.

"More than 3,400 people have fled from Chad following flooding in their localities," OCHA wrote.

It further mentioned that "the humanitarian community, in support of the authorities, is providing them with emergency assistance in terms of health, food, shelter and water".

In a report the UN agency release on October 5, it disclosed that between August 11 and 13 alone, 2,400 people from around 340 households fleeing flooding in Chad moved into the locality of Mourla, Maga Subdivision of the Mayo-Danay Division of the Far North Region.

These people, the report mentioned, come from the Chadian villages of Makaroua, Mouskon, Mirviding and Mala in the Katawa district of Lemié following floods caused the breach of a dyke between Bongor and Gamsai in

Chad.

Meanwhile, humanitarian partners and local administrative authorities are said to have been busy trying to provide multi-sectoral assistance to the affected people.

Besides Chad, the northern part of Cameroon has had its share water disaster with more than 1,700 hectares of crops have been flooded by high water and rain in Mayo-Danay and Logone and Chari divisions between July and September 2023.

According to estimates by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 337 hectares of rice fields were destroyed in 12 villages in the Maga subdivision, Mayo-Danay division, and 1,340 hectares of rice, sorghum, maize and okra fields affected in the Zina Subdivision in the Logone and Chari Division.

Still in Mayo-Danay, the OCHA report cited local sources as reporting damage to homes and crops following heavy rains between September 15 and 21 in the locality of Grand Gabaraye, in the Vélé Subdivision.

More than 90 houses were partially or completely destroyed, and around 25 households were left homeless and are staying with relatives, according to OCHA. However, it said no deaths or injuries directly linked to the flooding were reported.

Cultural Dossier

Compiled by Morine Tanyi

Mr Leo changes record label's name to Lionz Muzik



Mr Leo, CEO of Lionz Muzik

Popular musician, Mr Leo, has changed the name of his record label from Lionn Production to Lionz Muzik.

The announcement is contained in a recent release issued by the Managing Director of the label, Divine Verkijika.

According to the release, the mission of the label remains "to become a space where creativity thrives and a brand that people can trust for quality music and a sense of community".

Divine Verkijika, in the note promised exciting projects in the days ahead. He stated that, the team is looking forward to sharing the new chapter of their journey and to build a record label worthy of its name.

He invited fans, supporters, and partners to visit the website of the label www.lionzmuzik.com and social media handles (@LionzMuzikCM to stay updated on their activities.

According to him, the change of name is a "new step in our journey together. We remain open to collaborations of all forms and nature to make this dream a reality".

Lionn Productions, now Lionz Muzik, it should be said, was founded in 2019 by Mr Leo. Till date, it has signed several artists among them top names like: Kameni, Gomez and Mr. Sympa.

Though they have all left the house, the label remains what brought them to the limelight. The label today can boast of artists like Askia and Mr Leo himself.

9th edition of Msem Todjom Festival gets underway November 4

The 9th edition of Msem Todjom Festival of the Bandjoun people in the Koung-Khi Division of the West Region has been announced for November 9 to 11.

The date was unveiled by members of the organising committee during an audience granted them by the Minister of Arts and Culture, Bidoung Mkpatt. The audience took place at the National Museum, Wednesday October 11.

The biennial festival, according to a programme handed to the minister, will hold under the theme: "One language, one culture for sustainable development".

The festival's chief organiser is the King of Bandjoun, His Majesty Djomo Kamga Honoré. It is expected to bring together sons and daughters of the land as well as visitors.

Speaking during the audience, the head of the delegation, Minister Plenipotentiary Kamga Jules Raymond, hailed the Minister of Arts and Culture for his constant support towards the success of the cultural showpiece.

Kamga used Wednesday's audience to invite the minister for the culture. He also requested for technical support from the Ministry of Arts and Culture.

The ambition of His Majesty Djomo Kamga Honoré, the head of the delegation said, is to get the festival registered on the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The festival, is an opportunity for Bandjoun people to showcase their culture and pass it to the younger generation.

The festival, he added, will rich in sound colour. Kamga said they



Minister Bidoung Mkpatt speaking during audience



Minister & officials after audience

will use the festival to promote peaceful co-existence and living together as propounded by the Head of State, President Paul Biya.

"Though interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the special feature this year at the cultural festival will be the walk of our ancestors; the closing ceremony dance by His Majesty and his notables," he explained.

Msem Todjom, means finesse, the beauty of the children of Bandjoun. Through the festival, the people of

Bandjoun also target making their land a touristic attraction of choice.

Speaking during the audience, Minister Bidoung Mkpatt reiterated his commitment to support the Bandjoun people valorise their culture.

He told the delegation that: "What you do is precious and important for the Ministry's action in the field. You can be rest assured of the ministry's availability for a fruitful festival".

Renowned rapper, Drake, puts music career on hold

The renowned Canadian rapper, Drake, has announced a pause in his music career. He made the announcement during an interview granted a radio station.

This decision according to the artiste is to help him focus on his health condition. This recent announcement comes just after he released his eighth album, titled For All the Dogs on Friday October 6, 2023.

According to him, "I probably won't be making music for a while. I will be honest. I need to focus on my health and getting back on my feet".

In a bid to reassure listeners and his fans on his decision, Drake explained that "it is nothing serious" adding that he has had problems with his stomach for several years and thus needs time to address the challenge.

He also disclosed that he has other engagements to respect for people he had made promises to. "I am going to close the studio



Drake

door for a little while. This could last a year, or a little longer," he said.

The 36-year-old Toronto native was due to perform in the United States but shortly after his outing, the date and time for the concert has not been made public.

Drake, it should be said, is the first rapper in history to surpass 80 million monthly listeners on the

platform, Sportify. With his new album For All The Dogs, the Canadian rapper has scored a real hit on the platform.

The track Slime You Out, produced in collaboration with SZA, has already been streamed over sixty-eight million times on Spotify leaving him at the top position on this number one streaming site.

Ahead of Int'l Disaster Risk Reduction Day today:

MINAT leads dev't stakeholders to brainstorm on existing laws, best practices

By Dewah Fabrice Teh

The Ministry of Territorial Administration, MINAT, and its development partners have brainstormed on improving existing laws designed to guide the field of disaster risk reduction in the housing sector.

This was during a one-day roundtable organised by MINAT in Yaoundé yesterday. It was in preparation for the 2023 International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction to be celebrated today Friday October 13.

The roundtable was in bid to reshape a sector recently hit by multiple crises including landslides, floods and building collapses.

The event was attended among others by officials of the Ministries of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development, the Yaounde City Council.

Participants at the gathering, led by the Secretary General of MINAT, Edoa Yves Christian, refreshed their skills on existing laws in disaster management in the housing sector notably procedures for the obtention of land certificates, building permits and certificates of conformity.

The representative of the Yaoundé City Council, Didier Manga, made certifications needed in the construction process to avoid going against administrative norms while also contributing to reducing disaster risks notably the obtention of building permits and certificate of conformity.

According to the Yaounde City Council expert, 60% of building construction in Yaoundé are carried out illegally without meeting the laid down norms. This, he said, opens the floodgate for deadly incidents.

Manga emphasised the need for the government to ensure the documents are not only acquired but proper follow-up done to ensure the buildings are erected in respect of laid down construction norms.

"Contractors should better control architects in the course of construction to ensure smooth respect of guidelines notably the quantity and quality of materials used. For instance, the quantity of sand, cement and many others used," he stated.

An expert from the Ministry of Housing



MINAT SG, Edoa Yves Christian, chairing roundtable yesterday



Authorities during session in Yaounde

and Urban Development,

François Ossama, among others, talked about existing laws on the evaluation of topography of environments before construction and the need for more follow-ups.

The representative of the firefighters' unit said several legislative adjustments are needed to give the company more powers to effectively carry out its job which has been one of the most solicited in recent

years. He said an estimated total of at least 2,000 fire outbreaks have been recorded annually in the last decade.

The firefighting official urged companies like the Cameroon Water Utilities Corporation, CAMWATER, Energy Company, ENEO, and Telecommunications Regulatory Board, ART, to all join efforts in stepping up their fight in accompanying the company in

reducing the dangers.

Timely initiative

Cameroon has been hit by multiple disasters in recent years with multiple fire outbreaks, building collapses and landslides including the most recent Mbankolo landslide caused at least 30 deaths.

Most of the incidents, per authorities, have been blamed on the non-respect of standards during building construction and other guidelines.

In an interview at the end of Thursday's meeting, the Director of Civil Protection at MINAT, Ntsama Angele, said the gathering is aimed at not only refreshing the brain of authorities on existing laws to reduce such dangers but also to school them on the need for these laws to be respected effectively through effective follow-up.

"As a country, we have the laws already existing on all the various domains that make up this sector. MINAT initiated this platform so authorities can be better exposed to them to promote efficiency," she said in part.

"We have individuals presenting all the needed paperwork before they start work on their projects but after that phase, a lot of them intentionally fail to respect the preceding steps in the works leading to chaos. We want that stopped. We want to go beyond proper certification and ensure real follow-up," Ntsama detailed.

The initiative of the roundtable was also saluted by Fon Julius, Country Director of Christian Blind Mission, CBM, an international Christian development organisation which caters to persons living with disabilities.

He said the initiative which is supported by CBM Cameroon, creates a more suitable environment area for persons living with disabilities during crises from disasters.

Yesterday's meeting was organized in prelude to the 2023 edition of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction to be celebrated today Friday, October 13.

The 2023 edition will be held under the theme: "Fighting Inequality for A Resilient Future".

Organisations unveil project to boost health security accountability

By Morine Tanyi

Two civil society organisations have unveiled a project dubbed: "Health Security Accountability", to improve financial accountability in health security by helping to locally mobilise resources to ensure equal access to vaccines.

The project was presented Tuesday October 10 during a press briefing in Yaounde. The project is being implemented in Cameroon by Actions for Development and Empowerment, ADE, and Positive-Generation, PG consortium.

This is with financial assistance from the Africa Health Budget Network, AHBN, based in Nigeria. The project which has been on since August 1 will last 18 months. It is expected to end on January 1, 2025.

According to the Founder and Executive Director of the ADE, Ndi Nancy Saiboh, the media and the general public is expected to play a key role in the realisation of the project.

"This is an advocacy activity that seeks to help Cameroon to mobilise its resources because we noticed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, we focused on receiving grants from international communities and development partners," Saiboh said. She stressed the need to start mobilising resources nationally to address public health concerns but reiterating the commitment of ADE and partners to work with everyone to achieve success.

The goal, she added, is to engage the media, civil society, religious leaders and influencers to send the right information to the population. Stakeholders were also explained the details of the project to boost their participation in its implementation.

Officials said, they will also engage decision makers to strengthen financial responsibility for health safety by mobilising resources locally to guarantee equal vaccine access.

Enhancing prevention, detection and response to health emergencies are key components of the project. The population is also expected to play a role in pushing for financial accountability in the health domain.

The Health Security Accountability project is being carried out in several sub-Saharan African countries viz: Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

These are countries that took a commitment during the Abuja Declaration of 2001 to allocate at least 15% of their annual budgets to health.

But in Cameroon, officials said the portion of the state budget allocated for the health sector is fluctuating between 3.7% and 7.07%.

In 2022, they said it dropped to 3.7% in 2022. To reverse the trend, officials of the organisations implementing the project said there is need for collective effort.



Panel presenting project during presser



Organisers, participants at project presentation