

Pope's visit, 54th National Day:

## Defence, security chiefs fine-tune strategies for serenity

By Doh Bertrand

Defence and security chiefs have assessed the security situation of the nation and fine-tuned strategies to ensure the visit of the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, and the celebration of the 54th National Day, unfold in total serenity.

This was the focus of a security meeting held in Yaounde on Thursday, April 2, 2026.



Joseph Beti Assomo: Defence minister

National Assembly:

## Number of deceased MPs rises to 21

By Macwalter Njapteh

The Member of Parliament, MP, for the Upper Nkam

Constituency in the West Region, Hon Claude Juimo Siewe Monthé, has passed on. The lawmaker, The Guardian Post gathered, died on Saturday, April 4, in Yaounde.



The late Hon Juimo Monthé

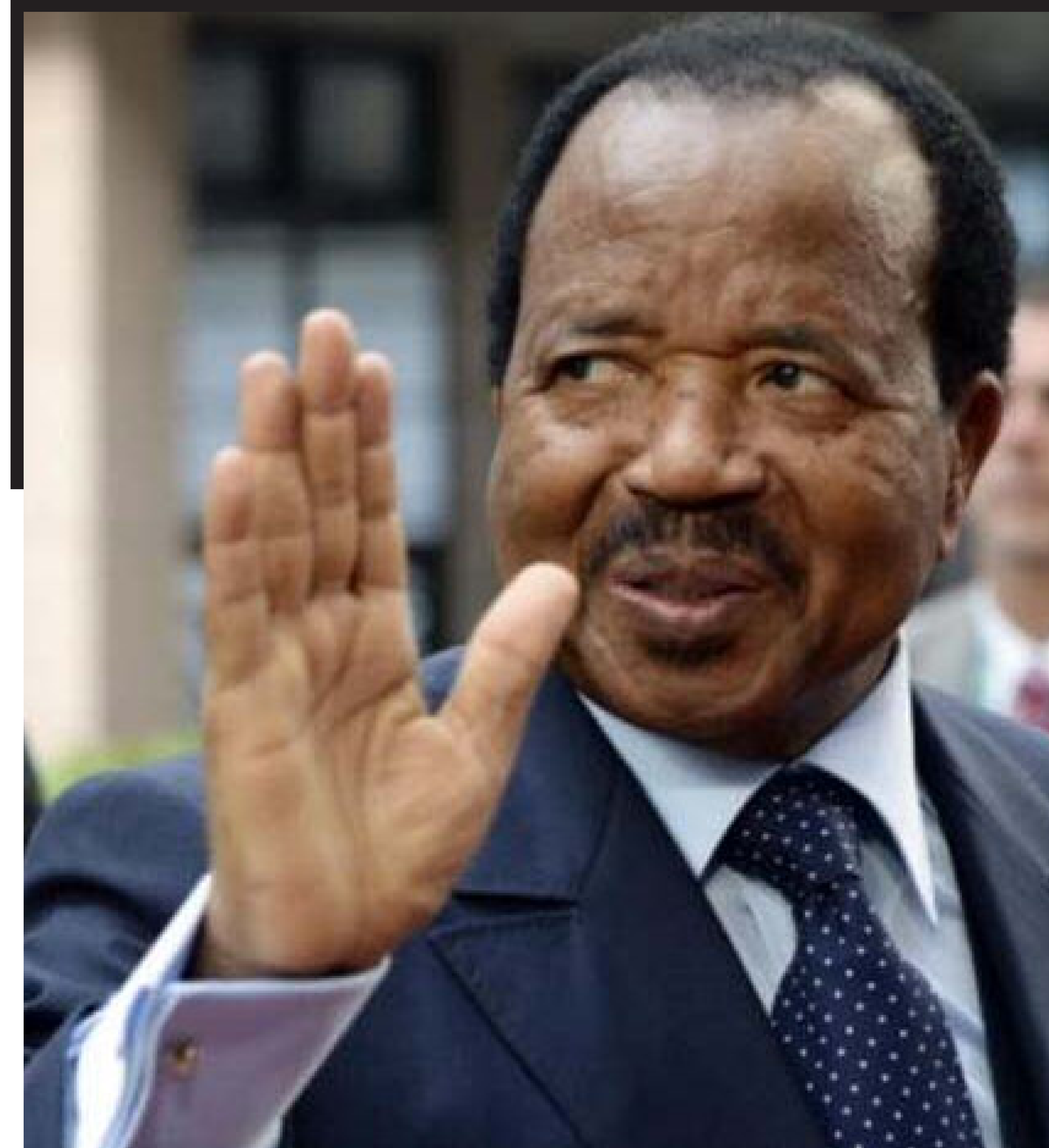


Cherished by many, haunted by some, read by them all

## Constitutional amendment:

# Anglophones cheated again!

● In what has been seen as sustaining a glaring pattern of marginalisation, the bill adopted in Parliament last Saturday, does not stipulate that in the case where the President is Francophone, the Vice President must be Anglophone & vice versa



President Paul Biya: What legacy for Cameroon?

By Maxcel Fokwen

The sixth Congress of Parliament ended Saturday April 4, 2026, with 200 lawmakers voting to amend certain provisions of the 1996 Constitution, reintroducing the post of Vice President of the Republic.

While what is left now is for the Head of State, Paul Biya, to sign the modified Constitution into law, constitutional experts are screaming for the records that Anglophones have been cheated again.

They are arguing that what has happened is a constitutional coup d'Etat against

Anglophones, in the most brutal of political maneuvers in history.

With President Biya now having been empowered to appoint whosoever he chooses to, as Vice President, analysts are saying that Anglophones have been robbed of any iota of belonging to the Cameroonian project.

### Editorial

## Separatist agenda will gather steam if Anglophone not Vice President

When the State of West Cameroon "joined" that of La Republique du Cameroun, following the 1961 plebiscite that was consolidated at the Fouban Reunification

conference, there was no treaty.

However, the Constitution that emerged thereafter stipulated unequivocally that for the interest of unity, peace and equity, the President and

Vice President of the Federal Republic "shall be elected together on the same list and both candidates shall not come from the same Federated State".

Constitutional amendment:

# Condemnation galore

- Suspicious, not necessary – Senator Rene Ze Nguele
- Erodes legitimacy of presidential office – Bâtonnier Mbah Eric
- Constitutional, institutional coup – Prof Kamto
- Ignores major historical grievance – Hon Osih Joshua
- Undemocratic, drift towards monarchy – Tchiroma
- Anti-republican, disloyal towards institutions - Tomaino Ndam Njoya
- Fails to balance fragile national unity – Agbor Balla
- Erasing history, instituting monarchy - Hon Njong Evaristus

# BEAC reports drop in growth, rise in inflation

By Maxcel Fokwen

The Bank of Central African States, BEAC, has reported a decline in growth across the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, CEMAC, from 3.6 percent in 2025 to 2.9 percent in 2026.

The drop in growth was made public at the end of the First Ordinary Session of the Monetary Policy Committee, MPC, of BEAC, on Thursday, April 2 in Yaounde.

The Governor of BEAC, Yvon Sana Bangui, chaired deliberations. The Committee indicated that inflationary pressure has increased to 2.3 percent compared to 2.1 percent in 2025.

In a release which sanctioned

the meeting, the MPC indicated that budgetary deficit of the Public Investment Budget, BIP, outside gifts of 4.8 percent in 2025 now at 2.2 percent.

In terms of current account, the Committee reported that, the situation is at 5.2 percent of Public Investment Budget in 2026 compared to 2.9 percent of Public Investment Budget, PIB as at the close of 2025.

The Committee also projected that by the close of 2026, there will be increase in foreign reserve of 11.1 percent.

Foreign exchange reserves, in terms of covering importation of good and services, it said, would cover 4.52 months in 2026 as against 4.22 months last year.

In the Sana Bangui-signed release, the CPM noted that, the

cost of covering external trade will stabilise at 68.0 percent this year as against 64.9 percent in 2025.

On the global scene, the CPM referenced the global economic outlook released by the International Monetary Fund, IMF. The IMF projections released in January this year had global economic growth at 3.3 percent just like in 2025.

The projections, the CPM noted, is based on the uncertain global trends of the time especially the United States-Israeli war against Iran.

Based on the sub regional economic and global outlook, the MPC decided to maintain key interest rates unchanged.

The Tender Interest Rate which was changed from 4.50 percent to 4.75 percent as at the



Yvan Sana Bangui: BEAC Governor

close of 2025 was maintained.

The Marginal Lending Rate remains at 6.25 percent. This is the minimum below which a bank is not permitted to lend money.

The Deposit Rate which is the interest financial institutions pay on cash deposit of account

holders stands at zero percent.

The Compulsory Reserve Coefficients, the Committee also said, will stay at 7.00% on sight liabilities and 4.50% on Term Liabilities was also maintained. This is the percentage of a bank's deposit that must be kept as reserve.

# Number of deceased MPs rises to 21!

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The lawmaker under the banner of the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, CPDM party, reportedly died in a hospital in Yaounde after suffering from an illness. His death has brought the number of MPs who have died under the current legislature to 21.

Hon Juimo Monthe became a Parliamentarian in 2013. He served as a member of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Planning, and Regional Development at the National Assembly. He was also a member of the CPDM Central Committee.

Born in Douala on December 18, 1961, Claude Juimo Monthe was the eldest son of Luc Monthe, a former Deputy Mayor of Douala, who died in 1986.

After completing studies in France and Canada, he returned home to head the family business in 1987. He contributed to the restructuring of the Monthe group, which is now managed by his brother Emmanuel Monthe

Siewe and his sister Gisèle Monthe Noutong.

In 1998, Claude Monthe was appointed to head the Cameroon Chamber of Commerce and Industry, CCIMA, by presidential decree. He held the position till 2008.

He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Bolloré Group, and Chairman of the board of SOCAPALM, PRODICAM SA, Hôtel Parfait Garden SA, SFC SA, Palmraff SA and Konte SA until June 2012.

The deceased MP was father of several children. He died on the same day the Congress of Parliament adopted a bill amending some provisions of the January 18, 1996 Constitution, reintroducing the post of Vice President of the Republic. The National Assembly is yet to issue a statement on his demise.

He is the first MP to die since Hon Datou Theodore was elected last month to succeed Hon Cavaye Yeguie Djribil as Speaker of the National Assembly.



The late Hon Juimo Monthe

# Gov't intensifies drive to boost sales of locally produced rice

By Mercy Fosoh

Government has through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, intensified efforts to boost the distribution and commercial appeal of locally produced rice across the national territory.

This was during a lunch debate held recently at the Chamber of Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock and Forestry in Yaounde.

The event, organised under the Agricultural Value Chain Development Support Project Phase II, PADFA II, was chaired by agriculture minister Gabriel Mbaïrobe.

It brought together producers, traders, consumers and public officials to identify concrete solutions to longstanding barriers preventing Cameroonian-grown rice from competing effectively with imported varieties on the domestic market.

It emerged from the meeting that despite the existence of a distribution network, including around 60 sales points in Yaounde alone, imported rice continues to dominate the market, mainly from Asian countries.

This persists even as stakeholders report that consumers recognise the quality and reputation of locally grown rice.

According to stakeholders, the country produced more than 52,000 tonnes of paddy rice, yet spent about 320 billion CFA francs on rice imports in 2024.

Average annual consumption stands at roughly 25 kilogrammes per person. Participants at the Yaounde meeting sampled locally produced varieties from Ndog, Yagoua, Tonga and



Cross-section of stakeholders at the gathering

Faro, as discussions centred on increasing domestic consumption and improving market penetration.

Speaking at the event, Minister Mbaïrobe stressed the importance of strengthening production at the beginning of the value chain as supply constraints remain a key issue.

"The projects implemented by the government over several years have already absorbed 1,000 billion CFA francs for an increase in production of less than 100,000 tonnes of milled rice," Minister Mbaïrobe said.

He added that current output remains far below national demand and ambitions. The minister called on all stakeholders to work together to reverse the trend of import dependency.

## Raising local awareness

Data presented during the meeting showed that in 2020, local rice supply stood at 140,710 tonnes against a demand of approximately 577,000 tonnes. According to stakeholders, national targets aim for production of 460,000 tonnes by 2027 and 750,000 tonnes by 2030.

On her part, PADFA II coordinator Hélène Marigoh outlined key constraints affecting the sector, including weak promotion of local rice, limited distribu-

tion networks and relatively high prices. She said the Yaounde discussions were expected to result in clear action points to improve competitiveness and strengthen communication strategies across the value chain.

For the President of the Chamber of Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock and Forestry, Martin Paul Mindjos Noumeni, the country has strong production potential across all regions but lacks sufficient value addition and market visibility.

"The rice produced locally is not sufficiently valued. We must find solutions so that local rice is better promoted and more widely consumed," he said.

Producers also highlighted operational and environmental challenges affecting output, particularly in northern regions. Julienne Djakao, a rice producer and processor, pointed to climate-related constraints such as irregular rainfall, high temperatures and water management difficulties.

"The challenges are linked to the scarcity of rain, the heat and water management. We also have the responsibility to encourage Cameroonians to consume local products. It is encouraging to see that awareness efforts are beginning to bear fruit," she said.

## At end of working visit: Benin official hails NEF's strides in fighting youth unemployment

By Morine Tanyi

The Director General of Benin's National Agency for the Promotion of Employment, ANPE, Ide Oumarou Abdou, has commended Cameroon's National Employment Fund, NEF, for its innovative approach to tackling youth unemployment, describing the institution's efforts as both strategic and inspiring.

His remarks came at the close of a working visit to Cameroon on Thursday, April 2, at the NEF headquarters in Yaounde.

The closing ceremony, chaired by the Director General of the NEF, Moute à Bidias Camille, brought together key stakeholders. The visit was aimed at fostering knowledge exchange and drawing lessons from Cameroon's experience in managing employment data through modern digital systems.

At the heart of the discussions was the National Employment Fund Information System, commonly known as NEFISYS, a digital platform that has become a cornerstone in the modernisation of the country's labour market.

Officials said the system represents a shift from traditional employment services to a more integrated, data-driven approach.

Speaking to journalists, Ide Oumarou Abdou described his visit as both strategic and invaluable, noting that Cameroon was deliberately chosen as his first destination following his recent appointment.

"I will make a revelation to you. As

I said at the start of our meeting, I was newly appointed to head the ANPE, and my first trip was to Cameroon. I am here to draw from the rich experience of the Honourable Director General of the NEF," he said.

He further expressed satisfaction with the insights gained during the visit, highlighting the extensive impact of NEF's initiatives.

"The added value is truly transversal. We have seen many things in such a short time, and we really intend to implement them back home. It is a rich experience that we have lived here," he added.

The NEFISYS platform, according to experts, is much more than a simple employment database. It provides centralised management of job offers and applications, offers an online recruitment portal for employers, and ensures interoperability with other institutions within the National Statistical System. It generates dashboards and key indicators that support policymakers in making informed decisions.

For the visiting officials, the platform's technical architecture and governance structure stood out as critical elements behind its success. The delegation paid particular attention to data collection and processing mechanisms, as well as the institutional framework that enabled seamless integration into Cameroon's broader employment ecosystem.

In his address, Moute à Bidias Camille emphasised on the importance of regional cooperation in addressing unemployment challenges across Africa. He noted that such exchanges are facilitated through continental and global networks of public employment



L-R: Moute à Bidias and Ide Oumarou Abdou during meeting



Officials immortalise moment in group picture

services.

"We have an African association of public employment services created in 1999, and a world association where I hold the honorary presidency. Within these frameworks, we exchange experiences. One country can learn from another to improve or find inspiration," he explained.

He added that such collaborations are mutually beneficial.

"It is not a one-way exchange. They see what we are doing and take what works best for them, just as we also learn from their experiences," he said, recalling similar visits from other African counterparts in the past.

The visit also highlighted a shared

ambition between Cameroon and Benin to improve transparency and efficiency in their respective labour markets.

In Cameroon, NEF plays a pivotal role in employment promotion through job intermediation, vocational training, and support for entrepreneurship. Initiatives such as employment fairs held during major economic events have enabled thousands of job seekers to connect with potential employers.

In Benin, ANPE serves as the leading institution for employment promotion and is seeking to modernise its systems to better respond to the needs of job seekers and employers.

## Yaounde: US-based organisation, Brightstar Wellness, engages students in Sickle Cell campaign

By Mua Patrick

United States-based non-profit organisation, Brightstar Wellness Inc., has lectured students in Yaounde on ways of preventing sickle cell disease.

The educative session held Wednesday April 1, was organised as part of a broader Youth Health and Sickle Cell Awareness Programme, initiated by the Texas headquartered organisation.

The awareness campaign was staged on the campus of the Anglo-Saxon General and Technical group of Schools, AGE-TEGS, Etoug Ebe, Yaounde.

It was the founder of Brightstar Wellness, Dr Ojong Bate who led the discussions with the students.

The clinical pharmacist, during the interactive session, journeyed the inquisitive students through issues such as understanding sickle cell disease, importance of genotype testing, health nutrition and lifestyle habits and preven-

tive health practices.

"Sickle cell disease is actually under spoken of. A lot of people are still hiding; they are not comfortable discussing about it because there is a huge stigma about the disease condition...it is not a death sentence," the pharmacist told reporters at the close of the training.

She explained that: "We are talking to these students who are the next generation, to make sure that they are aware on how to avoid having children being born with sickle cell, so we can

break this sickle cell cycle. More importantly, the students asked if there is a cure for it... medicines exist but there just help you to stay out of hospital, there don't cure the disease".

Dr Ojong Bate told reporters that during the session, she lectured the students on some six pillars on sickle cell with nutrition being the most important.

She said others include "high protein meals and hydration. We also talked about rest. Rest is so important. Another is managing stress, reducing anxiety. It is important because

sickle cell is a disease of oxygen demand and supply. So, if your demand is high and your supply is low, you are going to be in pain. And lastly, the one that is dear to my heart is exercise".

Quizzed why the campaign is targeting students, the health expert explained that children are the future.

"We want to start with the future generation which is the children. We are shifting ownership to the kids and the youth because even when you take the children to hospital, we know that in Cameroon, most at times, Doctors talk to the parents. We want to shift that mindset; Doctors talk to the kids because they are the ones living with the disease. The children can no longer hide behind the parents. The patients

have to take responsibility and ownership to help their parents and caregivers to spend less money by not being in the hospital all the time," Ojong Bate said.

One of the students who participated in the lectures, Moncha-Karick Malon, has expressed gratitude to the organisers. The Form IV student described the training as being of great importance.

"I have learned a lot from what pharmacist who taught us today. We learned about the various symptoms of sickle cell patients like them being tired, yellow eyes...we have also learned about the ways to avoid sickle cell like doing blood test in hospital...we have been told that sickle cell weakens the immune system and affects people of all gender," he said.



Dr Ojong Bate speaking to newsmen at the close of the session



Students during the educative session Wednesday

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# Editorial

## Separatist agenda will gather steam if Anglophone not Vice President!

That arrangement, at least, placed a politician from the North West or South West Region on the second rung of State power, with the legal possibility of becoming Head of State in case of a vacancy.

But under the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, CPDM regime, Anglophones have been relegated to the fourth position, which is one of the triggers escalating the blood-spilling conflict pitting separatist fighters and government forces for the past nine years and counting, in the two Anglophone Regions of the country.

On the eve of last October presidential election, there were calls that an Anglophone should be the presidential candidate of the ruling party.

In that school of thought, *The Guardian Post* persistently encapsulated the aspiration and vision of the people of the North West and South West Regions for a united, peaceful and judicious Cameroon; with an equilibrium of power sharing.

Historically and legally, what is today known as the Republic of Cameroon, is an amalgamation of two separate States of Southern Cameroons and *La Republique du Cameroun*, which had its independence on January 1, 1960, while the former had its own on October 1, a year later.

There has never been a dispute that "two States" came together. There were some conditions, but we are concentrating on one: "If a citizen of East Cameroon is President, his compatriot of West Cameroon shall be Vice and vice versa."

Patriotic Cameroonians of mettle across the board, expressed the need for an Anglophone to be the next President of the country before last year's Presidential poll.

Senior Associate and Regional Director for West and Central Africa at the Washington-based National Democratic Institute, NDI, Dr Christopher Fomunyoh, had argued that it was time for an Anglophone to become Cameroon's next Head of State.

Why? His answer was that an Anglophone as Head of State, will "be able to address the grievances of Cameroonians across the board and be able to give citizens a sense of belonging. It is that lack of sense of belonging that is stirring up the conflict in the North West and South West Regions".

Having an indigene of either the North West or South West Region as Head of State, Dr Fomunyoh had added,

will be another major way of sending a message across to citizens that all Cameroonians are equal.

"It is a way of showing that every Cameroonian is a hundred percent a citizen of Cameroon...there is no second-class citizen. If that is the case, then let's show it now. If the taste of the pudding is in the eating, as it is commonly said, then let's see it happen in Cameroon," he had stated.

On September 28 last year, he was echoed by Prof Nkou Mvondo, President of Party Universe party, who, at a political event in Yaounde, advocated that an Anglophone will usher in hope for a new Cameroon.

He was supported by the President of UPC, Habiba Issa, who declared that it was time to "give power to Anglophones, who must also feel like Cameroonians..."

"We, the citizens, have the final word. We can decide our own destiny. If we don't decide our destiny, politics will..." she had said.

She explained further that: "We are bringing shame to African people. After 63 years, Cameroonians are living in misery. Let us choose a peaceful transition, free and transparent, for an Anglophone candidate, because two Francophone mandates are enough".

The ruling party, which has the knife and the yam, even in electoral matters, as expected, did not heed the genuine and patriotic calls from patriotic Cameroonians.

There were speculations that a Constitutional revision was being prepared in secret, under the leadership of the Minister of State, Secretary General at the Presidency, Ferdinand Ngoh Ngoh, to introduce the post of Vice President.

It left nationalists and patriotic Cameroonians pointing out that the post of Vice President should be

reserved for Anglophones, who have for years been complaining of marginalisation in all facets of public life and infrastructure.

But as it emerged last Saturday, to the chagrin of Anglophone nationalists and alacrity of separatist fighters, President Biya has been given a blank cheque to appoint a Vice President, without specifying that he or she should be an Anglophone.

Members of the National Assembly and the Senate, meeting in Congress on Saturday April 4, 2024, adopted Bill No. 2094/PJL/P, establishing the post of Vice President.

Going by the bill, in the event of a vacancy at the Presidency, the Vice President will assume power, unlike the current constitution, which grants power to the President of the Senate to act in the interim and organise elections within a maximum period of 90 days.

President Paul Biya is expected to promulgate the bill establishing the post of Vice President into law, in the coming days and proceed, in accordance with the text, to appoint a Vice President.

*The Guardian Post* understands that the succession issue has been the motivation to panel-beat the Constitution to guarantee "continuity" and "stability".

At *The Guardian Post*, history will bear us witness that appointing a Vice President among those who have been involved in a "clan war of succession" in which Anglophones were not involved, would amount to opening up an internal competition and beefing up the separatist resistance.

Senators and parliamentarians have prioritised CPDM party hierarchy's "continuity", but will it guarantee unity, justice and peace?

Will it not give a bandwagon momentum to separatist warlords, given that force cannot end the fighting in the two Anglophone Regions, which is bleeding the entire national economy?

As Jean-Jacques Rousseau should remind the Head of State, an avid reader and apostle of peace: "The strongest is never strong enough to be always the master, unless he transforms his strength into right".

*The Guardian Post's* position is clear and unshakable: it is the right of the people of the former West Cameroon State to occupy the post of the highly-awaited country's Vice President!

Anything short of this, we must warn, will be tantamount to emboldening the argument of separatists that Anglophones are treated as slaves and second-class citizens in a country they call theirs.



### Outlook

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui

# Pandemic of willful killing

Many of us still alive today have witnessed at least one pandemic in our life time: The COVID-19. So, only the five-year olds, who are also too young to appreciate and be concerned with the challenges of the times, can claim their ignorance of what a pandemic means.

At the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020, the world teamed up and rallied humanity as one man. We confronted the threat. The damage that the COVID-19 pandemic was expected to cause, was effectively mitigated.

Barely six years down memory lane, the concept of humanity has been lost. We can no longer speak with one voice, talk less of teaming up to fight a common enemy.

Who could have expected that normal human beings could be watching the devastation currently going on around the world, worse than the threat of COVID-19, and all that we can do is to keep watching the news and telling stories?

With all the killings and threats to human life, with all the havoc and destruction of property worldwide, people are contented with following and reading the headlines from popular media, not caring about who is or should do something concrete to normalize the situation and end human suffering.

At no time in Cameroon, and never before has the country been so hostile and violent to our women and children. In recent times, no day passes without a woman, girl, or child being killed in this country.

Schools are increasingly becoming danger zones for women, girls, and children. Just as homes are no longer safe havens for children and women. Even though in a few cases, men have also been victims of domestic violence.

In the wider world, wars and rumours of wars that used to provoke indignation and fear in people some years back, no longer worry anybody.

Such threats are instead seeking acceptance and given a permanent place, so that they waging war anywhere any time becomes a new world order.

Time there was when the world teams up to fight any nation that threatens, talk less of invaded the territory of a neighboring nation.

Can we see how a change in leadership in a big nation like the United States and Russia can bring to the world?

Presently, we are witnessing Armageddon playing out in the Middle East, and the rest of the world is merely recounting and relaying the number of bombardments that have been inflicted by Israel and the United States on Iran. And how many missiles Iran had fired either on Israel, or on which Arab neighbour, Iran considers to be a friend of the United States or Israel?

It takes one heartless leader; with a war mongering spirit to rise up anywhere in the world and things will fall apart, just as we are witnessing in this triangular era of Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu and Vladimir Putin.

Because of them, humanity has lost its abhorrence of blood, its sensitivity to the suffering that war and violence bring to victims, especially women, children and other vulnerable groups.

It is bad leaders in what is supposed to be the developed world who set the blue print for other bad leaders in other parts of the world to follow and thrive.

### The evil-- that men do...

What is playing out in the Middle East could be used to

justify why some social scientists described and continue to categorize religion as the opium of society.

The dogmatism with which some religious faithful defend their faith, blinds and skews their mentality to a point where they never care to know anything different from what they believe.

This assertion is relevant in this context because, if not for religious differences, what could justify the intense hatred between Muslim extremists and Jews, that they eternally refuse to accept and forgive one another?

How can people whose religious roots stem from the same patriarch hate themselves so much that they are ready to exterminate one another from the face of the globe? And they do not accept that such intense hatred for another human being is sin.

Even without the Holy Bible, what is unfolding in the Middle East is poignant reminder of the consequences of unbridled sexual relations and promiscuity.

From the innocent desire to make meaning out of marriage by having a child and a heir for Abraham, Sarah gave her maid to her husband to produce a child.

See where we are today with descendants of children from the same father but different mothers causing destruction and counter destruction that cuts beyond their boundaries.

The same casual sex, resulting in broken relationships accounts for the growing incidents of femicide, infanticide and generalized violence in Cameroon.

When sin accumulates, it results to hardness of heart. People start treating lack of compassion as a mark of strength. Where human empathy is derided, self-destruction holds sway. That is where man is today, whether as individual nations or as a global community.

Constitutional amendment:

# Anglophones cheated again!

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They are lamenting that instead of correcting the misnomers, which Anglophones have been decrying for decades, Bill No. 2094/PJL/P, to amend the January 18, 1996, is yet another slap on the face of indigenes of the North West and South West Regions.

What many say remains most vexing and potentially sowing seeds of future problems is that the amendment approved in Congress last Saturday refuses to inscribe that when the President is a Francophone as is the case, the Vice President should be of Anglophone extraction and vice versa.

Article 10 of the amended Constitution simply empowers the Head of State to appoint a Vice President!

Observers are analysing that Yaounde has continued to walk on the same path of deception, and battling to ensure that Anglophones don't rise to the highest office of the land, or come close to shaping the country's future.

The window in the same amendment for the Head of State to hire and fire a Vice President, many are saying, could be used to throw dust in the eyes of Anglophones.

They are positing that even if Biya offers himself the luxury of appointing an Anglophone as Vice President, for a start, he could decide and fire such a person whenever he wishes to retire from politics and appoints a Francophone.

Those who worded the amendments are said to have carefully crafted it to ensure that Anglophones are technically kept a distance from where power really lies.

They argue that if the intention of the amendment was genuine, it would have been clearly stated that where the President is a Francophone, the Vice President should be an Anglophone and Vice Versa.

This, political analysts posit, should

have, at least given Anglophones hope and a sense of belonging.

Given that President Paul Biya is of Francophone extraction, critics are lampooning the executive for forcing through amendments which are silent on the country's reality of two countries that came together to form today's Cameroon.

President Biya, observers are saying, has been handed a blank cheque to appoint any person of his choice; who could probably be another Francophone, further burying Anglophone presence in the country's power structure.

## Pattern of cheating Anglophones

Unlike the 1961 Federal Constitution, which had guaranteed Anglophone and Francophone presence at the top of the State, many are recalling that what happened at the Paul Biya's Glass House last Saturday April 4, 2026, rather solidified a pattern that has been working against the interest of Anglophones; generally considered as second class citizens in a country they call theirs.

Article 9 (1) of the 1961 Constitution was clear that: "The President and Vice President of the Federal Republic shall be elected together on the same list, both candidates, on which may not come from the same Federated State, by universal suffrage and direct and secret ballot".

Still in line with readings of keeping Anglophones millions of miles away from occupying the country's top job, observers say the real intention of the May 20, 1972, referendum, that ended the Federal Republic of Cameroon, was to keep Anglophones at bay.

Though the Constitution clearly stated that the Speaker of the National Assembly was the Constitutional successor of the Head of State, the rules of the game immediately changed, when an Anglophone, the late Solomon Tandeng Muna, became Speaker!



Biya now ready handpick successor?

The agenda, they are now saying, played out in 1975, when the post of Prime Minister saw the light of day, with perfections fashioned out in 1979, shifting the succession rule from an Anglophone, Tandeng Muna to Paul Biya, a Francophone then serving as Prime Minister.

The changes to the Constitution in 2026, many Anglophones are saying, have pushed them to recall the technical knockouts they have suffered across decades in the country's succession equation.

Changes like what happened last Saturday, historians are saying, is what gave Biya, a Francophone, the easy right to power, which he has continued to enjoy for the past 43 years.

After taking power on November 6, 1982, Biya instituted changes, stripping the Prime Minister's Office occupant of the powers of succession. The rule now left back to the legislative chamber, where an Anglophone was no longer at the helm.

History now holds that since 1992, Biya has consecutively appointed Anglophones as Prime Ministers.

Critics argue that if the laws in place were still like those that catapulted him to the Presidency, the Head of State might not have entrusted the Star Building to Anglophones, from 1992 till date.

## Anglophone, Francophone not about administrative units

To perpetuate what those who refuse

to reason with the Biya regime say is a wrong narrative, analysts say those trying to drown the Anglophone feeling of having been cheated again are simply being dishonest.

They are recalling that in Cameroon's unique and volatile history, it is about the former East and West Cameroons that reunited and not 10 Regions and 58 Divisions existing in one country as is the case now.

To those holding strong to the country's history, say any power sharing arrangement which fails to balance the Anglophone-Francophone equation is being erected on shaky grounds; and is destined for doomsday.

## We've learnt nothing from crisis in NW, SW

The new-old Constitution in place as fixed last Saturday, some are now insisting, carries with it a clear message that Yaounde has learnt nothing from the bloodletting in the English-speaking Regions, nine years on.

To them, any quest to guarantee continuity at the helm of State without also positioning Anglophones in line of succession is provocation of the first order.

Those who say the only reading they have made of the Constitutional amendment is daylight robbery of Anglophones, are quipping that it rather sustains the strong belief of marginalisation and a deliberate attempt to continuously subjugate the aborigines of the former West Cameroon in an abusive marriage.

# Bar Council questions timing, motive of reintroducing Vice President post

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui

The Cameroon Bar Association has picked holes in the bill reintroducing the post of Vice President of the Republic, as per the Constitutional amendment, voted by the Congress of Parliament on Saturday, April 4, 2026.

In a statement issued April 2, 2026, by Bar President, Bâtonnier Mbah Eric, he said, Bill No.2094/PJL/P, to amend the 1996 Constitution, should have been driven by the quest to address and respond to the aspirations of the governed.

According to the Cameroon Bar Association, the amendment of Article 66 was acclaimed for its goal to combat corruption and illicit enrichment, but hitherto subjected to a text of application, as amended renders it directly enforceable.

On behalf of the Bar, he reiterated that the office of the Vice President is not alien or inconsistent with principles of good governance.

He expressed reservation about the mode of designation into the said office, insisting that it raises fierce concerns.

Given that the amendment makes clear that the Vice President shall be appointed by the President, who can sack and appoint another person as Vice President, he stated that it undermines the principle of the election of

the President of the Republic by universal suffrage.

This, the Bar Association said, erodes the democratic legitimacy upon which the Presidential office was founded and undermines the very essence of Article 64 of the Constitution.

The release added that the functions attributed to the office of the Vice President, as outlined in the amendment, appear largely peripheral.

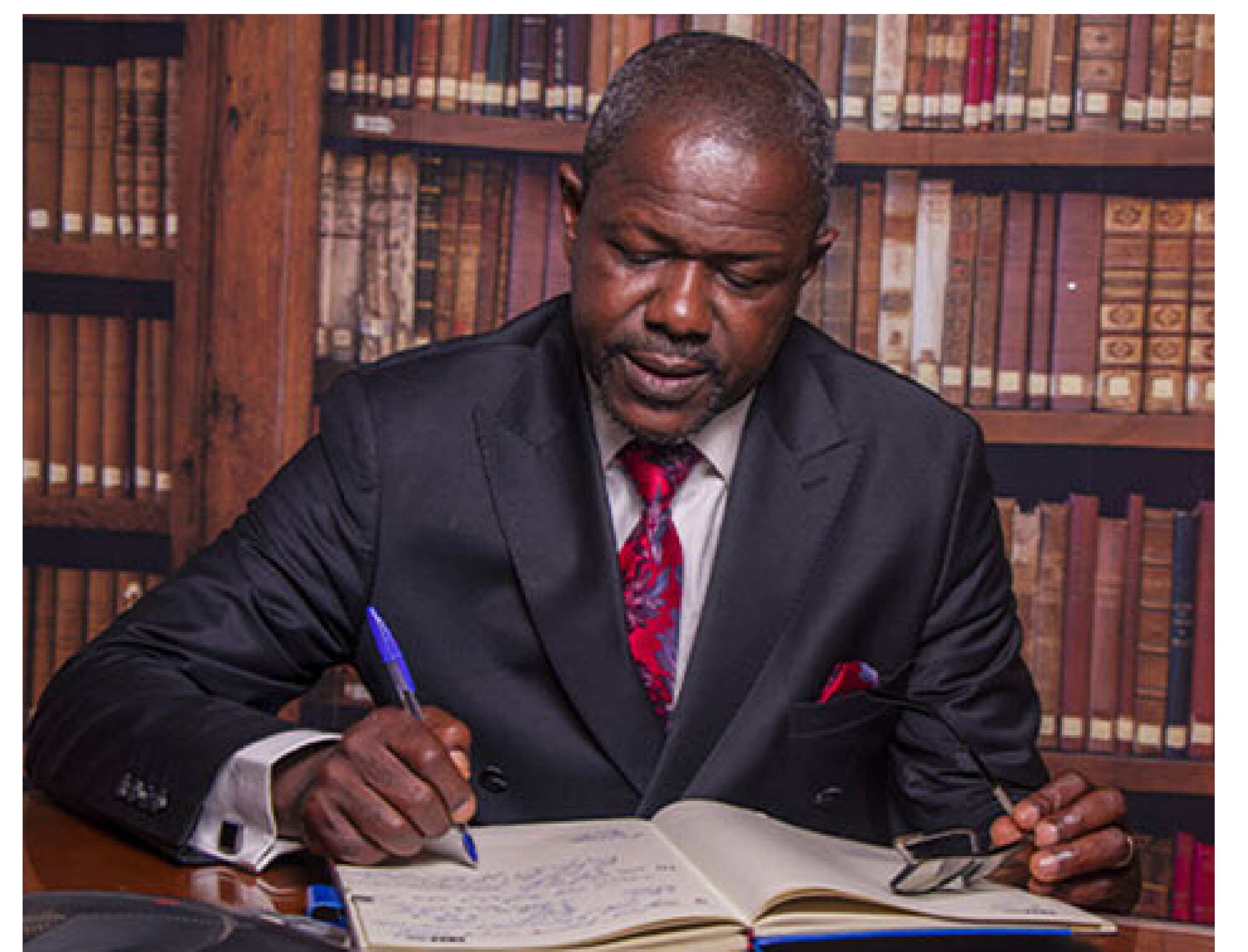
The arrangement, Barrister Mbah noted, puts to question the *raison d'être* of reintroducing the office of the Vice President.

In terms of financial burden, the Bar Association pointed out that after citing financial constraints to table a bill to empower the Head of State to extend the mandate of municipal councillors, one is tempted to question the timeliness of the creation of office of the Vice President while maintaining the post of Prime Minister.

The Bar Association recalled that the 2019 Major National Dialogue resolved, among other things, the granting of a Special Status to the English-speaking Regions, in recognition of their specificities.

Such fundamental recognition and its attendant attributes, the Bar said, can only be effectively safeguarded through Constitutional entrenchment.

The release added that similarly, Law Number 2017/014 of 12 July 2017, to amend and supplement some provisions of Law Number 2006/16 of 29



Mbah Eric Mbah, Esq. Bar President

December 2006, to lay down the organisation and functioning of the Supreme Court, particularly its Article 8 (new) establishing a Common Law Division within the Supreme Court, constitutes an interim measure.

Barrister Mbah said it was adopted in lieu of the creation of a Common Law Bench, which is the preserve of Constitutional reform.

Since the amendment was silent on many other pressing national issues, the statement said it fell short. The Bar Association reminded Members of Parliament, MPs, on the importance of the separation of powers.

# Senator Rene Ze Nguele says meant to suit interests of few

By Doh Bertrand

Outspoken politician and lawmaker on the ticket of the ruling CPDM party, Senator Rene Ze Nguele, has criticised the bill to modify certain provisions of the Constitution and re-introduce the post of Vice President, adopted on Saturday April 4, 2026.

The diehard CPDM bigwig was unequivocal that the said bill raises serious concerns and is designed to suit the interests of a group of individuals.

Senator Ze Nguele, 89, raised the concerns during a general debate on the bill during the Congress of Parliament at the National Assembly, last Saturday.

The fearless lawmaker, who is eldest Senator, also questioned the timing of the review. He asked whether the decision to review the fundamental law of the land is necessary on the eve of major local elections.

“...this bill raises a number of questions for me. The first is: Is this the right time to amend the Constitution? Is this amendment to the Constitution appropriate? Is it necessary,” he questioned.

The former member of government and eldest member of the upper House of Parliament, said the “Constitutional amendment is neither timely nor necessary”.

He told his colleagues and members of government at the Congress of Parliament that the move to amend the Constitution is “suspicious”.

“The manner in which we are rushing over the reform is suspicious. It is suspicious because it comes just a few months before major elections in our country,” he stated.

He said if the Head of State wants a Vice President, he should open up on why he wants one and outline the duties of the person.

Ze Nguele also condemned the provision that the Head of State can appoint a Vice President and fire when he wants.

“No! It cannot go like that. It means there are certain things which are hidden. Let the text be put on hold and brought back to us when we have rested enough and gone through it,” he said.

Senator Ze Nguele said: “When the Constitution is amended on the eve of elections, it is generally for political reasons to gain an advantage”.

He warned government against amending the Constitution to “suit the interests of the moment or the interests of a particular group of people”.

He insisted that a Constitutional amendment should rather be for “public interest, and in the best interests of the nation”.

Ze Nguele, who once challenged President Biya to the post of CPDM National President, went further to state that the current Constitutional amendment has failed to “serve the best interests of the nation”.

The lawmaker was categorical that the Constitutional amendment “risks undermining our institutions; it risks creating unnecessary tensions in our country, which already has so many problems to resolve”.

To further buttress his point on the many problems the country is facing, the lawmaker cited the conflict in the North West and South West Regions, the fight against Boko Haram in the Far North Regions, the high cost of living, and youth unemployment”.

He said the focus of the government should be on addressing the “real problems facing Cameroonians” and “not amending the Constitution”.

“That is why, Mr President [President of Congress of Parliament], I will not be voting in favour of this bill. I urge my colleagues to do the same, for the sake of history, for our country, and for future genera-



“Constitutional amendment is neither timely nor necessary”

tions,” he stated.

He concluded that as lawmakers, they are at the service of the country and not otherwise. “The manipulation of institutions, polls, are illnesses that are killing African countries...,” he stated.

Senator Rene Ze Nguele, it should be recalled, had during the CPDM Congress in September 2011, ahead of that year’s presidential election, nominated himself to challenge Biya as CPDM party National President.

The politician had said the office of President of the Republic and National President of the CPDM, are too heavy for one man to manage. The elite of the East Region, once served as Minister of National Education and Minister of Public Service.

# SDF says bill weakens legitimacy, ignores major historical grievance

By Mua Patrick

One of Cameroon’s leading opposition political parties, the Social Democratic Front, SDF, has expressed deep concerns over the Constitutional amendment bill, adopted in Congress over the weekend.

In a press statement issued Friday, April 3, following a press conference held in Yaounde, the opposition party denounced what it described as a rushed legislative process, before rejecting the Constitutional amendment, which introduces the post of the Vice President in the country.

According to the SDF, the creation of the Vice President position, appointed without popular legitimacy, constitutes an autocratic drift that undermines national unity and Republican pact.

## Two hours to examine bill

Speaking at the Yaounde press conference, SDF National Chairman, Osih Joshua, who is also a Member of Parliament, MP, told reporters that: “I address you today following the work of the Special Committee of the Congress of Parliament, of which I had the honour to be a member, and which has just adopted, at committee level, the Constitutional reform bill, without amendment”.

Hon Osih disclosed at the presser that: “We were given less than two hours to examine a text that nonetheless shapes the institutional future of our country. Less than two hours to read, to understand, to analyse... and to propose”.

He said despite this, the SDF assumed its responsibility by making proposals, which he noted were ignored.

Osih revealed that: “On behalf of the Social Democratic Front, we put forward an amendment simple in its wording, but fundamental in its significance an amendment grounded in truth and responsibility: That the President of the Republic and the Vice President be elected jointly on a single ticket, and that this ticket reflects the historical reality of our country, with one candidate originating from the former West Cameroon, and the other from the former East Cameroon”.

Osih explained that even in the absence of such joint election, the SDF had proposed at the very least that the historical reality be recognised in the composition of the executive.

He insisted that: “It is a matter of historical justice. The balance that defined the Federal Republic was not a concession. It was a pact. A pact of respect. A pact of recognition and a pact of unity”.

Osih regretted that the said pact has been progressively weakened, giving rise today to a sense of exclusion, a deep crisis of confidence, and a national fracture that no one can seriously deny.

He mentioned that the said constitutional reform could have been a moment of political courage but added that it is nothing less than a missed historical opportunity.

Osih said by rejecting all improvements and closing the door to meaningful dialogue, the majority has chosen to turn away from a historic opportunity for national reconciliation.

But beyond the said missed opportu-



Hon Osih Joshua

nity, the SDF Chieftain said there is something even more concerning.

“The adopted text provides for a Vice President, who is: appointed by the President, and can be dismissed at his sole discretion. This raises a fundamental issue- in a democracy, power is not given. It is received from the people,” he said.

Osih was blunt that: “This is not a democratic progress. It is further concentration of power. What is being put in place is not a framework for democratic alternation. It is a system organising succession, under the exclusive control of the incumbent power”.

He added that “it is, in reality, a weird form of autocratic alternation”.

## SDF not against reform

Speaking further during Friday’s press conference, Hon Osih told journalists that the SDF wasn’t opposed to reform.

He clarified that: “We are opposed to a reform that weakens democracy, ins-

stead of strengthening it. We simply proposed greater legitimacy, greater balance and greater national cohesion”.

He was categorical that what has been adopted does exactly the opposite.

“This text weakens legitimacy, reinforces centralisation, and ignores a major historical grievance. Cameroon deserves better than a rushed reform,” he noted.

Osih was explicit that Cameroon deserves a reform that is consistent with its history, responsive to its fractures and worthy of its aspirations.

He said: “...our amendment was a simple proposal to unite through law, reconcile through institutions, and build unity through justice”.

Osih was clear that: “...the debate does not end here. We will continue, with consistency and determination, to stand for a Cameroon built on justice, democracy, and genuine unity not proclaimed, but constructed”.

# Tchiroma says move monarchical drift, violates democratic principles

By Doh Bertrand

The self-exiled runner-up of the October 12, 2025, presidential election, Issa Tchiroma Bakary, has described the just adopted bill, amending some provisions of the Constitution and re-introducing the post of Vice President, as “unconstitutional maneuvers”.

According to the fearless opposition politician and former Biya regime ally-turned opponent, the bill is “...a violation of democratic principles” and the “monarchical drift of an illegitimate regime”.

Going by the leader of the Cameroon National Salvation Front, FSNC, the illegitimacy of the regime is further manifested “through the appointment of a Vice President of the Republic”.

Issa Tchiroma, who still contests the results of the October 12, 2025, presidential election, upholding claims he was winner, told his supporters that such a move engaged by the regime “must not divert us from what truly matters”.

He urged his supporters and followers not to be distracted but to be

“unequivocal” in their “mobilisation for the restoration of the popular will on October 12, 2025, when a large majority of Cameroonians expressed their votes in my favour”.

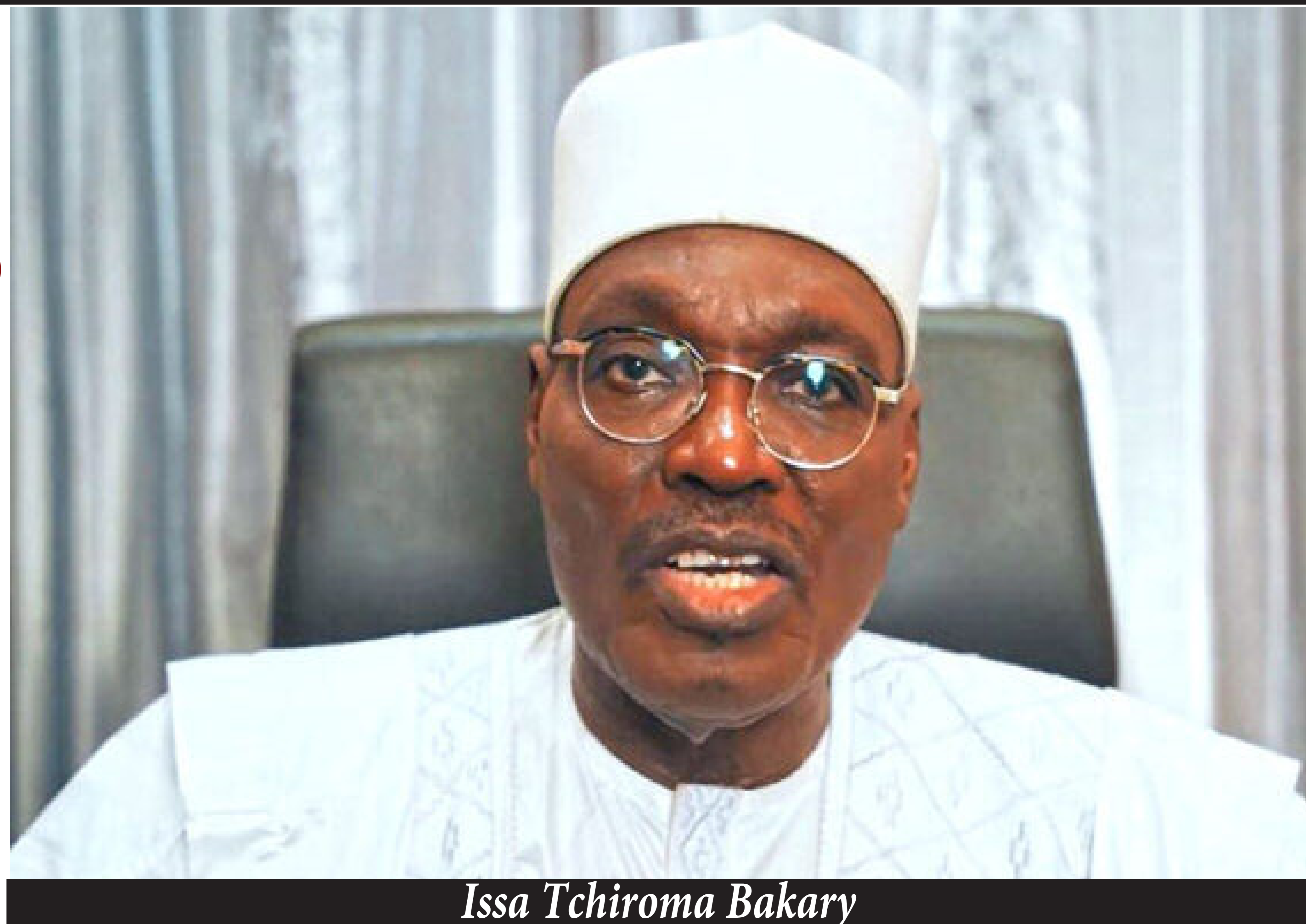
Tchiroma, who still arrogates to himself the title of President-elect, added that: “No to forfeitures! Yes, to the integrity of ballot boxes!”.

The elite of the North Region and former Government Spokesperson, now on exile in The Gambia, recently announced that he is preparing to return home, to continue the battle to get rid of the Biya regime.

He broke the silence in an outing on Sunday, March 15, 2026, in the course of an online broadcast, which was staged to honour the memory of Georges Anicet Ekane, who died on December 1, 2025, in detention.

“...the fight continues, and we are winning because I am alive and I have my freedom,” he had indicated, likening his battle against the regime as Divine.

Tchiroma had said he is actively preparing to return to Cameroon, to continue with the duties for which he was voted to exercise in the



Issa Tchiroma Bakary

country.

“...I consider that I am already in Cameroon,” he had said, before declaring that: “There is something we have not understood for long that individually, we are the masters of our collective destinies”.

Tchiroma had told his supporters that “...I was not voted to be where I am today. I am where I am today to protect my life” before returning home to exercise my “responsibility”.

He recalled that in the heat of the post-election tension, he received threats “...right in my house and they put snipers at a neighbours

house”.

Tchiroma had boasted his team is “working daily and monthly to see that something is done to ensure the will of the people is respected. I have to organise to concretise the will of the people...”.

He also expressed gratitude to the Diaspora for supporting him, singling out those who voted for him but urged compatriots leaving abroad to tighten their belts.

The FSNC leader claimed that if he didn't flee the country, the Biya regime would have eliminated him, if they succeeded in laying hands on him.

# CDU denounces hasty, non-transparency surrounding Vice Presidency bill

By Macwalter Njapteh Refor

The Cameroon Democratic Union, CDU, has denounced the hastiness and non-transparency surrounding the bill to reintroduce the position of Vice President of the Republic.

The reintroduction of post of Vice President of the Republic, as contained in Bill No.2094/PJL/, amending and supplementing certain provisions of the Constitution of June 2, 1972, as amended and supplemented by law No.96/06 of January 18, 1996, and law No. 2008/001 of April 14, 2008, was adopted by Members of Parliament, MPs, during the sixth Congress of Parliament last Saturday.

The draft law, which is set to be enacted in the days ahead by the President of the Republic, Paul Biya, was tabled on Thursday, April 2, 2026.

The bill has sparked widespread condemnation from all and sundry, especially from the political class, with the CDU party taking a queue.

In a statement issued last Saturday, CDU National President, Tomaino Ndam Njoya, condemned the haste and lack of transparency surrounding the bill, submitted with serious flaws and notably omissions, likely to make the Constitution even more complex than it currently is.

According to her, the authorities responsible for governing the State derive their powers from the people via elections by direct or indirect universal suffrage, unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution.

The CDU leader noted that without consulting the major stakeholders like politicians, civil society, the media, and in short, the sovereign

Cameroonian people, puts the country on the path of non-democratic and forced power devolution.

She also said the bill exposes the malicious intention of the regime to retaining members of Parliament, whose term, which expired over a year ago, was recently extended again for nine months.

As much as the advent of the Vice President position poses a problem, Tomaino questioned the “timing”, immediately after a Presidential election, rather than before.

“Ideally, however, the President and Vice President would have been elected on the same ticket,” she stated.

Another point of curiosity for the politician, who doubles as Mayor of Foumban, is the narrow amendment of the Constitution, when there are several outdated provisions as well as legal gaps in the Constitution, especially given the current context.

Given the will expressed by the vast majority of Cameroonians, during the consultations during the Major National Dialogue in 2018, she said there has since been discussion of amending the Constitution, primarily to lower the voting age to 18, reduce the term and number of terms of the President of the Republic to five years, renewable only once and establishing a two-round voting system for the presidential election.

Another priority aspect that required amendment in the Constitution according to the CDU party, is the need to make all 100 Senate seats elective, explicitly make the offices of President of the Republic and President of a political party incompatible and increasing the number of MPs and establishing a formula for allocating seats



Tomaino Ndam Njoya:  
CDU National President

based on population per constituency, amongst others.

Going by the CDU, all bills, especially those concerning the Constitution and the Electoral Code passed by the Parliament are in extreme disloyalty toward Cameroonian institutions and the people it incarnated.

“The anti-republican nature of the “injection” of an unknown third party during the elections, appointed as Head of State, a figure who is nevertheless called upon to replace the President of the Republic in the event of a vacancy,” she emphasised.

To avoid exacerbating the risks of political tensions, loss of public trust, and rejection of institutions, the UDC has called on the forces of change within the Republican Pact to put an end to arbitrariness and to ensure the triumph of the Republic, where everyone's contribution is essential.

# Constitutional, institutional coup- Prof Maurice Kamto

By Mua Patrick

One of the country's vocal opposition leaders, Prof Maurice Kamto, has described the adoption of the bill, introducing the post of Vice President, as a Constitutional and institutional coup.

The leader of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement, MRC party, made the bold remark in a statement, issued Friday April 3, 2026.

The statement came in the wake of the bill, tabled before Congress for the revision of the country's Constitution.

The bill, which was subsequently voted on Saturday April 4, 2026, paves the way for the creation of the post of Vice President in the country.

In his Friday statement, Prof Maurice Kamto, who ran for office of President in 2018, regretted that as per the revision, the Vice President will not be elected, but appointed by President Biya at his discretion.

Kamto recalled that during his inauguration ceremony on November 6, 2025, President Biya had sworn to protect the Constitution.

He said in less than six months, "he is brutally trampling upon this same Constitution, thus demonstrating once again his contempt for the Cameroonian people, whom he has always regarded as nothing more than a collection of subjects subservient to the monarch he is".

Kamto bemoaned the fact that no debate was organised by govern-

ment to inform the public about the ongoing upheavals.

The veteran politician regretted that there has been no explanation, nor the slightest consultation or involvement of the country's political forces, not even those represented in Parliament.

Kamto claimed that: "Two profound truths lie behind the current maneuvers, which are being given a legal veneer. The first point is that the CPDM has always had a visceral fear of elections because, by virtue of its political heritage and the context of its rise to power, it carries the DNA of the single-party system it inherited".

He said for decades, the CPDM has boasted of being a "steamrolle".

"The relentless political work of the opposition, particularly over the last decade, has shown that it only survives thanks to a sophisticated system of electoral fraud, refined over the years, and the complicity of administrative authorities and security forces at all levels. Now, this is compounded by the dismantling of the laws of the Republic and a level of political and judicial brutality worthy of fascist regimes. It is this paralysing fear of elections that gives rise to the idea of transferring power through backroom deals," he continued.

## Preparing handpicked successor

Prof Kamto had in his Friday outing, accused President Biya of reinstating the same Constitutional mechanism, by which the 1979 Constitutional revision, under



Prof Maurice Kamto

President Ahmadou Ahidjo, had allowed him, as Prime Minister at the time, to become President of the Republic.

"This time, it will be an appointed Vice President, not a Prime Minister. But the logic and the results are the same. It is a Constitutional loophole that will allow even an individual who has never held a position in the administration or an elected office, to eventually become President of the Republic, Head of State, and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, in the event of vacancy, without having gone through an election," he regretted.

"One might say that history is repeating itself. But it's even worse, because the Vice President, having become an unelected President, will himself be able to appoint another (unelected) Vice President! This is the meaning of the draft Constitutional revision of April 2, 2026. It is not a regression; it is a Constitutional and political shipwreck," Kamto added.

The opposition figure said his political party was denouncing the institutional power grab, which he

says has disguised as legality.

The consequences of the seemingly minor Constitutional revision, he said, are such that the Cameroonian people should have been consulted through a referendum.

"The CPDM regime believes it has entrenched itself forever, but it is mistaken. It will understand that in a Republic, power comes from the people. And Cameroonians now know this," he insisted.

"Generally, a government that has just won a presidential election takes advantage of the momentum of its victory to immediately organise legislative and even local elections. This is observed worldwide. It is because the CPDM is certain of its defeat that it is avoiding elections at all costs, even though it claims to have won the presidential election, five months ago," he continued.

Kamto was blunt that: "We must prevent the political misfortune afflicting our country from flourishing. We must all, together, clearly and loudly express our rejection of the Constitutional and institutional coup".

# Bill fails to balance our fragile national unity – Agbor Balla



Agbor Balla

By Mua Patrick

Cameroon's foremost human rights lawyer and President of the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa,

CHRDA, Barrister Nkongho Felix Agbor Agbor Balla, has picked holes in the recently adopted bill to create the post of Vice President.

The senior advocate, in an outing last Friday, expressed the hope that the bill, which was subsequently voted last Saturday, should be able to shape, not only the country's institutions, but the fragile balance of Cameroon's national unity.

The award-winning rights activist, noted that the proposal to create the position of Vice President is, in principle, a welcome step toward ensuring continuity in governance and clarity in presidential succession.

However, he said, beyond institutional design lies a deeper and unavoidable question: what kind of balance will this new office represent?

Agbor Balla noted that Cameroon is not a homogenous State, but a country built on a delicate coexistence of linguistic,

legal, and historical identities.

He insisted that: "Any reform of the executive structure must therefore reflect this reality".

He said for decades, the Anglophone community has raised concerns about marginalisation within State institutions.

The said concerns, he was blunt, are not abstract, not rooted in lived experiences and have contributed to tensions that continue to challenge national cohesion.

"It is in this context that the creation of the post of Vice President must be approached, not merely as an administrative adjustment, but as a Constitutional opportunity to restore confidence and reinforce unity," he maintained.

Agbor Balla was clear that: "If the President of the Republic is Francophone, the Vice President should, as a matter of Constitutional principle and national equilibrium, be Anglophone and vice versa".

"This is not about division. It is about inclusion. This is not about politics. It is about stability. This is not about symbolism. It is about trust. Such an approach would: reflect the bilingual and bi-jural nature of the State; strengthen national cohesion; provide a meaningful response to long-standing grievances and reinforce legitimacy at the highest level of executive power," he argued.

He then warned that creating a Vice Presidency without addressing the question of national balance risks deepening perceptions of exclusion and undermining the very stability the reform seeks to promote.

"If, for any reason, this principle is not adopted, then the Constitution must clearly guarantee that the line of succession reflects this same balance, including the explicit recognition of an Anglophone as Constitutional successor," he said, stating that "Cameroon deserves a Constitutional order that reflects all its identities, protects its unity, and inspires confidence in its future."

# Defence, security chiefs fine-tune strategies for serenity

Cont'd from page 1

The Minister Delegate at the Presidency in charge of Defence, Joseph Beti Assomo, chaired the deliberations on the instructions of the Head of State, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Paul Biya.

It was attended by top brass of the country's defence and security apparatus led by the Chief of Defence Staff, Lieutenant-General Rene Claude Meka.

Also present were the Minister of Territorial Administration, Paul Atanga Nji, and the Delegate General of National Security, Martin Mbarga Nguete, the Secretaries of State to the Minister of Defence in charge of the National Gendarmerie and that of Ex-Servicemen and War Victims among others.

Minister Beti Assomo told participants that the security meeting is of "exceptional importance" as it holds 14 days to the arrival of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, and 49 days before the 54th National Day.

He said the overall security situation of the country is under control despite threats in certain parts of the country. On the global stage, he said persisting conflicts are generating security, diplomatic and socio-economic repercussions already being felt in the country.

Such dicey security environment, the minister said, requires defence and security forces to maintain heightened vigilance and a constant capacity to adapt to new forms of threat.

## Prescribes utmost care, precision during Papal visit

Minister Beti Assomo said the visit of Pope Leo XIV to the country with stops in Yaounde, Bamenda and Douala from April 15 to 18, carries "significant and considerable spiritual, diplomatic and pastoral importance, not only for the millions of Cameroonian Catholics, but also for the Nation as a whole".

He said the mobilisation of large crowds in open spaces, the securing of the movements of the Supreme Pontiff and his entourage, and coordination with Vatican security services and international partners are all aspects that defence and security forces must address with the "utmost care and precision".

Minister Beti Assomo said the Bamenda lap of the visit "deserves particular attention", as it is within the specific security context linked to the armed conflict in the Anglophone regions.

"Our forces must ensure that the Papal visit in this city proceeds in a calm and fully secure manner," he stated, prescribing that they "maintain the highest level of vigilance and preparedness, with no room for complacency or failure".

The celebration of the 54th edition of National Day on 20 May 2026, the minister said, is another annual event that affirms and consolidates national unity, and mobilises the entirety of the defence and security apparatus across the national territory.

He used the opportunity to commend defence and security forces for the successful coverage of the 14th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization.

He said the success of the global-scale demonstrates Cameroon's capability and expertise in securing major global events and should inspire and serve as a benchmark for future similar challenges.

## Reviews national security situation

The minister said the current security situation in the country is under control though with hitches in some regions.

In the Far North Region, he said Boko Haram terrorist attacks are real and persistent, through kidnappings for ransom and use of Improvised Explosive Devices on major road axes, and the increasing use of drones by the terrorist group.

In the restive North West and South West Regions, he said separatist threat is increasingly being contained, with gradual return to peace as attested by holding major national events in the two regions.

He commended the courage, bravery and professionalism of the forces who conduct targeted operations and regular raids against terrorist strongholds, leading to the neutralisation of several so-called "generals".

The minister, however, cautioned that attempts by some separatist groups to regroup have been observed in Donga Mantung, Bui and Ngoketunjia Divisions.

He cited the barbaric attack in Guidado on January 14, 2026, against



Minister Beti Assomo chairing security meeting



Defence & security officials immortalize meeting

the Mbororo community by armed separatists as a reminder that the residual capacity for harm remains, and that vigilance must be maintained.

Hostage-taking and cattle theft, he said, remain serious concerns in the Adamawa and North Regions, added to violent incidents at gold mining sites as well as trafficking in high-value strategic minerals.

In the Littoral Region, he said the post-electoral period necessitated reinforced deployment of forces, due to its population density and the volatility of the security climate

## Land, maritime borders under watch

Beti Assomo disclosed that the activities of Central African rebel groups in the Eastern border, along with a resurgence of kidnappings, continue to exert constant security pressure, with security forces maintaining close monitoring along the extensive land border with the Central African Republic.

The security network along the maritime façade, he said, remains robust and generally under control, while at the borders with Congo-Brazzaville and Equatorial Guinea, the situation is calm and stable.

He said at the border with Nigeria, the situation remains volatile with intelligence indicating an intensification of ISWAP movements on Nigerian territory.

He said at the border with Chad, the

situation has somewhat deteriorated due to the spillover effects of the civil war in Sudan.

## Strengthening civilo-military bond

The minister said the meeting was also an opportunity to carefully examine the issue of strengthening the bond between the defence and security forces and the nation in the context of the post-electoral crisis.

He admitted that isolated incidents stemming from regrettable and uncivil individual behaviour somewhat strained the relationship of trust between defence forces and citizens.

"It is our collective responsibility to draw lessons from this and further strengthen this invaluable bond. It is well known that Cameroonians trust their defence and security forces. This trust is a precious asset, built over time through the steadfast dedication and exemplary professionalism of our personnel. It must be continuously preserved and strengthened. Every citizen must feel fully reassured at the sight of a beret worn by our forces, whether green, red, blue or black," he stated.

Suggestions made at the in camera meeting, it should be said, are transmitted to the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces for appropriate action.

# IRAD study showcases solo papaya farming as profitable for rural communities

By Mercy Fosoh

A study conducted at the Multipurpose Agricultural Research Station, SPRA, of the Institute of Agricultural Research for Development, IRAD, in Njombe, in the Littoral region, has confirmed that cultivating the Solo No. 8 papaya variety on one hectare of land is both financially viable and socio-economically beneficial.

According to IRAD, findings from the study reveal that the crop is a viable agro-entrepreneurial opportunity for rural development across the country.

IRAD explained that researchers collected data from IRAD scientists and local markets, analysing findings using Microsoft Excel. According to the insti-

tution, the total initial investment for a one-hectare Solo papaya farm stood at 4,422,025 FCFA, with an annual depreciation cost of 109,417 FCFA.

In the first year of production, the farm generated a turnover of 3,000,000 FCFA, recording a net loss of 740,267 FCFA, a result said to be consistent with the start-up costs typically associated with agricultural ventures. From the second year onwards, however, annual turnover rose sharply to 7,200,000 FCFA, delivering a net profit of 2,587,983 FCFA per year.

Over a four-year period, IRAD revealed that the project achieved a return on investment, ROI, of 48 per cent, an average of 12 per cent annually. Researchers described the yield as moderate but viable, noting that risks including price volatility, theft, fruit rot,



Cross-section of a papaya farm

and pest infestations remain factors producers must contend with.

Beyond the financial returns, the study highlighted a range of socio-economic benefits linked to Solo papaya cultivation. These include job creation, stimulation of local markets, improved food security, and support for sustainable rural development.

The study put forward several recommendations to strengthen the sector. These included government-backed

market access schemes to reduce post-harvest losses, input subsidies, and low-interest loan facilities to lower barriers to entry for new producers.

The IRAD research concluded that Solo papaya production represents a financially sound and socially beneficial enterprise, well-suited to the country's broader public policy push to boost both the quantity and quality of locally grown produce in order to meet domestic demand.

# Castel Beer unveils Pan-African comedy platform to spotlight emerging talents

By Elizabeth Banyitabi

African comedy enthusiasts have been opened to a new platform with the official launch of 'La Relève Afrique All Stars', a flagship initiative powered by Castel Beer, aimed at promoting the next generation of stand-up comedians across the continent.

Unveiled during a press conference on Monday, March 30, the 2026 edition marks a significant evolution of the 'Mon Premier Montreux Afrique' concept, which has, over the years, brought together hundreds of young comedians and attracted millions of viewers across Africa.

This new "All Stars" format, organisers said, seeks to consolidate past successes while offering fresh opportunities to emerging talents.

Speaking at the launch, Regional Director for Centre-South-East at Boissons du Cameroun, Famboy Merlin Doungue Kengue, described the initiative as more than just a competition.

"Today, we are not simply launching an activity, we are opening a space of opportunity," he stated.

"Through this initiative, we reaffirm our commitment to accompany talented African youth who use creativity to shape a new generation," Famboy added.

He underscored the role of major brands in supporting cultural expres-



Organisers at press conference

sion, noting that 'La Relève Afrique' is "a Pan-African platform of expression, opportunities and resources," designed to celebrate passion, creativity, and ambition.

The 2026 All Stars edition will feature 16 comedians, drawn from across Francophone Africa. Fourteen of these are standout performers from the past five seasons, while two additional participants — dubbed "Rookies" — will be selected through an online casting process open from March 20 to April 7.

According to Eric Voufo, Product Manager for Castel Beer, the casting phase is already underway, with aspiring comedians encouraged to submit video sketches online.

"We are looking for two more candidates to join the 14 All-Stars already selected. The level of talent seen so far

is impressive, and we invite internet users to follow updates on Castel Beer platforms," he said.

The competition will unfold in several stages, including online selections across 10 African countries, auditions and masterclasses in Cotonou, Togo, semi-finals, battles, and a grand finale scheduled from June 12 to 13, 2026.

Participants will benefit from high-level coaching and masterclasses led by renowned figures in African comedy, focusing on career management, content creation, and stage performance.

## A launchpad to global recognition

The ultimate winner, it was said, will receive a cash prize of 5 million FCFA and a prestigious opportunity to per-

form at the globally renowned Montreux Comedy Festival, alongside appearances on the Jokenation festival circuit.

Project representative, Bertille Abega, highlighted the broader vision behind the initiative, describing it as "a Pan-African project dedicated to the new generation of African humour," with a strong emphasis on nurturing high-potential young talents.

Beyond the competition, organisers also plan post-event tours across participating countries, offering contestants increased visibility and reinforcing Castel Beer's commitment to supporting creative industries.

Among the contestants, Cameroonian finalist, Joyce Aladé, expressed determination to make her mark while challenging stereotypes in the comedy space.

"I want to represent Cameroon proudly and show that humour is not only for men. We can be beautiful and funny too," she said.

Her message resonated with the broader objective of the programme to amplify diverse voices and redefine the African comedy landscape.

Stakeholders remain confident that the initiative will not only entertain but also empower a new generation of African creatives, positioning humour as a powerful tool for cultural expression and social connection across the continent.

# IMF warns Middle East war dimming outlook for many economies

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi

The International Monetary Fund, IMF, is warning that the protracted war in the Middle East is dimming the outlook for many economies, not only in the Gulf states, but beyond.

The IMF reiterates that because of the war, world economies are facing shocks, lives and livelihoods are being ruined in the region and beyond, particularly for many economies that had only just shown signs of a sustained recovery from previous crises.

"The shock is global, yet asymmetric. Energy importers are more exposed than exporters, poorer countries more than richer ones, and those with meager buffers more than those with ample reserves," IMF experts stated.

They alerted further that beyond its painful human toll, the war has caused serious disruption to the economies of the most directly affected countries, including damage to their infrastructure and industries that could become long-lasting; and although these countries are resilient, their short-term

growth prospects will be negatively affected.

Meanwhile, large energy importers in Asia and Europe are bearing the brunt of higher fuel and input costs: about 25 to 30 percent of global oil and 20 percent of liquefied natural gas pass through the Strait of Hormuz, feeding demand not only in Asia but also in parts of Europe. Whereas economies heavily dependent on oil imports in Africa and Asia are finding it increasingly hard to access the supplies they need, even at inflated prices.

According to the IMF, parts of the Middle East, Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America face the added strain of higher food and fertilizer prices and tighter financial conditions. With low-income countries more at risk of food insecurity, some may need more external support—even as such assistance has been declining of late.

Although the war could shape the global economy in different ways, the experts insist that all roads lead to higher prices and slower growth. While a short conflict might send oil and gas prices soaring before markets adjust, a

long one could keep energy expensive and strain countries that rely on imports.

Or the world may settle somewhere in between—tensions linger, energy stays costly, and inflation proves hard to tame—with ongoing uncertainty and geopolitical risk. Much depends on how long the conflict lasts, how far it spreads, and how much damage it inflicts on infrastructure and supply chains, the IMF states.

Alerting that energy is the main transmission channel, as the de facto closure of the Strait of Hormuz and damage to regional infrastructure have produced the largest disruption to the global oil market in its history.

A view that the IMF says is shared by the International Energy Agency. For fuel-importing economies, the effect is that of a large, sudden tax on income.

"The multi-regional impact is apparent. Energy-importing economies in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America are feeling the strain from higher import bills on top of already limited fiscal space and external buffers," IMF noted.

## Inflation & investment flows

According to the IMF, if elevated energy and food prices persist, they will fuel inflation worldwide. Historically, the experts stated that sustained oil-price spikes have tended to push inflation higher and growth lower.

Over time, higher transport and input costs work their way into the prices of manufactured goods and services. For many countries that had only just brought inflation closer to target, and even more so those with stickier inflation, this risks a renewed period of uncomfortable price pressures.

For the IMF, the war has unsettled financial markets. Global stock prices have declined, bond yields have risen across major advanced economies and many emerging markets, and volatility has increased.

The market sell-off has so far been contained compared with past global shocks. Nonetheless, these moves have tightened financial conditions worldwide, the IMF discloses.



Trade blockages at sea and land around the famous Strait of Hormuz

MTN Elite Two:

# Ngoketunja United beats FAP, begins round two in style

By Dewah Fabrice Teh

Ngoketunja United Football Academy outsmarted FAP of Yaounde over the weekend.

The team secured the promising return after finding the back of the net twice at the Bamenda One Proximity Stadium.

Max Brandon Tamukong's eighth minute opener and Ngah Suarez Dunamis' 52nd minute penalty goal did the magic.

Following the win which added to the club's two previous victories over Eding Sport of the Lekie and Sable of Batie, the Academicians moved up from the seventh to the fifth position on the classification table of the eight-team Group A of the second-tier showpiece.

The club is ranked a disturbing total of seven points behind pool leaders Atlantic of Kribi after eight matches.

But with 10points, outfit managed by newly-appointed famed trainer Franklin Anumewa sits within the reach of the pool's Elite One-promotion bound top

three bracket on the standing where Sable of Batie and Astres of Douala hold the second and third spots with 13 and 12points respectively.

Speaking at the end of the game against FAP, coach Franklin Anumewa said he was pleased with the performance that the team demonstrated against the Yaounde team.

The trainer who marked his return at the helm of the club's technical bench during the FAP fixture, years after leaving the team shortly after helping the club to qualify for the Elite Two championship in 2019, said he is looking forward to build on the result as it faces the rest of the season.

**Atlantic, Astres shine...**

Pool leaders, Atlantic of Kribi, Sable of Batie and Astres of Douala all secured brilliant victories on Saturday in their opening fixtures of the second round in Group A.

Atlantic claimed a decisive 3-2 win over host Eding Sport of the Lekie at the FECAFOOT

Technical Center in Yaounde to consolidate its four points lead at the top with 17points.

Sable of Batie did the basics in bagging a 1nil home win over Apejes of Mfou to jump from the third to the second position while third-placed Astres of Douala humiliated Union of Douala 5-2 to climb up to the third spot, up from fifth.

**Bafmeng Utd shares spoils with Kumba City**

Bafmeng United Football Academy and Kumba City Football Club played out a 1-1 draw at the Bamenda One Proximity Stadium in an all-Anglophone cracker in Group B on Saturday.

The visitors took a deserved lead courtesy of Wirkom Michael's goal at the 37th minute.

But the host's consistent push to secure an equalizer before the close of the opening segment yielded fruits just three minutes to the end of the half when Kumba City's Fabrice Tappa forced the ball into his own nets.



Afeseh

Following the draw, Bafmeng United increased its points count to 10 and climbed to the fourth position on the standing, up from the fifth spot.

But the North West Region team's sister club, Kumba City dropped from the top to the second position despite harvesting as many as 16points in the competition thus far.

The South West Region ambassadors who are without a victory in their last three matches in sharp contrast to the promising start that they registered when they won all their five opening matches in the league, sit behind Avion Academy of Nkam on head-to-head consideration and goal difference.

Avion Academy which played out a 1-1 draw with host Bamboutos Football Club at the Mbouda Municipal Stadium to

take its point counts to 16, defeated Kumba City 1nil during the first round.

The Littoral Region team has a plus nine goals difference after scoring 12 times and conceding just three times, as against Kumba City which has a plus one goal difference after scoring nine times and conceding eight goals.

**Other results**

In other Group B fixtures, Union Sportive Abong Mbang held strong to the third position in the pool after hammering Tonnerre of Yaounde 3-1 at home to climb to join Avion and Kumba City on 16points.

Racing of Bafoussam remains rock-bottom eighth despite beating host Yaounde II FC 1-0 to claim its second victory of the season.

Guinness Super League:

# Ita Mbong extends winless streak to five matches

By Dewah Fabrice Teh

Ita Mbong Football Club has broadened its run without a victory in the ongoing women's first division championship campaign to five matches.

The side further expanded the already disturbing streak following its 1-1 draw in Douala on Saturday. The club lost to host, Cyclone Football Club.

Team captain, Aseh Slyvie found the bag of the net for the Zionists.

But the solitary goal was not enough to help the North West Region outfit to claim what would have been a historic victory at the Annex II of the Japoma Stadium.

Ita Mbong last won a game in the championship on February 21 when it outsmarted host Authentic Ladies of Douala at the Mbappe Leppe Stadium on matchday three.

The team has since then suffered three defeats and played out two draws in its five subsequent matches.

The club immediately followed up the win over Authentic Ladies with a humiliating 5-1 loss to Louves MINPROFF of Yaounde.

It further went down with a 2-1 defeat to Vision Foot Academy on matchday five before sharing the spoils in a 1-1 draw with Dja Sports Academy on day six in what was its

first home fixture of the campaign.

Before travelling to hold Cyclone to the 1-1 draw this weekend, the Bamenda-based team earlier went down with a 3nil beating at home at the Bamenda One Proximity Stadium. This was in the hands of league leaders, FC Ebolowa.

The disturbing run of form has left the club sitting on a disturbing spot on the league's standing.

The club which has a delayed game to play is presently ranked 10th in the 12-team competition.

It sits two points above the relegation-bound bottom two bracket and 14points behind leaders FC Ebolowa which totals 20points.

Elsewhere, leaders FC Ebolowa dropped points for the second time this season following its 2-2 draw with Éclair Football Filles.

The result opened the doors for defending champions, Lekie Football Filles to close up the three-point gap that is presently separating both teams at the top of the standing.

AS Dibamba bagged its second win of the season with a 2-1 victory over Vision Foot.

FAP suffered a shocking 1-0 loss at home to Authentic Ladies in Yaounde while Louves MINPROFF travelled to the North Region to hand Agai Football Academy a 2-1 beating in Garoua.



European leagues:

# Onana, Ebimbe shine in weekend of mixed fortunes for Cameroonians

By Beng Emmanuel Kum

Cameroonian footballers returned to their clubs after the international break with some providing standout performances over the weekend.

In the Turkish Super Lig, Trabzonspor of Andre Onana cut the gap to the top to one point following a vital 2-1 win over leaders Galatasaray during matchday 28.

Although Onana could not keep a third consecutive clean sheet, he was pivotal for his team in the game with two crucial saves during the electric encounter.

The former Ajax and Inter Milan goalkeeper has managed six clean sheets this season and is among the top 10 of goalkeepers with the most clean sheets this season.

Saturday's win over Galatasaray was the sixth successive win for Onana's Trabzonspor this season and puts them in firm contention for the title and a UEFA Champions League ticket.

Quizzed about the title race after the game, Onana said: "(...) The title race? The only thing is that we won today. It was very important for us and I am very happy with the victory".

In the French Ligue 1, Cameroon international midfielder, Eric Dina Ebimbe scored a brace but it was not enough for his team Stade Brestois as they suffered a 4-3 home defeat to Stade Rennais.

This was during match day 28 of the championship. It was a highly contested game which ended with an unsatisfying result for Ebimbe's Stade Brestois.



Ebimbe was the most prolific Cameroonian footballer this weekend

They came back from behind twice but failed and suffered from defensive frailties which cost the team a lot 14 minutes to stoppage time.

The goals were the third and fourth goal of the season for the 25-year-old Cameroonian midfielder. He is currently the club's fifth top goal scorer of the season.

Ebimbe's compatriot, Aboubakar Nagida, came off the bench for Stade Rennais at the 81st minute and helped his team maintain their slim lead.

Still in France, Frank Magri was reportedly withdrawn from the Toulouse squad as the team lost 3-1to Paris Saint Germain. The defeat complicates Toulouse chances of playing European football next season.

In the French second tier league, Samuel Kotto's Stade Reims shared the spoils in a goalless draw against US Boulogne of Cameroonian goalkeeper, Blondy Noukeu.

This was during matchday 29 of the Ligue 2.

The Indomitable Lions duo had the best ratings of the game according to Sofascore following an impressive display.

The result means Reims fai-

led to boost their chances of qualifying for the promotion playoffs to the first division. They are only two points from dropping out of the playoff standings while US Boulogne remained 12th.

In Germany, Christian Kofane, extended his goal drought to five games although his club secured a convincing 6-3 win over Wolfsburg in the Bundesliga during a one-sided matchday 28.

In Spain, Karl Etta Eyong was an unused substitute for his club Levante UD for the second consecutive team in their 2-0 defeat at Real Sociedad.

Following the defeat on matchday 30, Etta Eyong and his club remain in the relegation zone and are five points from safety.

The Cameroon international has had a difficult time with his club and limited play time.

He has now gone 20 matches without scoring for his club. Reports say Etta Eyong has fallen out of favour with the club's hierarchy after turning down a move to Russia.

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