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Vol 2 No. 678 Monday April 13, 2026 Price 400FCFA.Auth. No.:G37/L9/1/Vol. 6/6425/SP

Cameroon, China commit to jointly combat illegal gold mining



Minister Calistus Gentry granting audience to Political Counsellor at Chinese Embassy

By Elise Animbom

The crackdown on illegal gold mining activities in country will be intensified in the days ahead, after the governments of Cameroon and the People's Republic of China reaffirmed their determination to jointly combat the menace.

This commitment was taken during an audience the Acting Minister of Mines, Industry and Technological Development, Professor Fuh Calistus Gentry granted the Political Counsellor at the Chinese Embassy in Cameroon, LI Jiang Hua.

During the April 10, 2026 audience, Jiang Hua reiterated his government's call for strict compliance with the mining code by the companies concerned, as well as its support for the efforts made by the government of Cameroon to sanitise the semi-mechanised artisanal mining sector.

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Marcel Niat Njifenji:
The one time technocrat, prisoner, politician...

Tributes have continued to pour in for the fallen pioneer Senate President who died on Saturday April 11, in Yaounde
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Konye Council: Mayor Barrister Musima George risk imprisonment!

- He, alongside the Municipal Treasurer and Stores Accountant are being held at the Special Criminal Court, TCS, in Yaounde over mismanagement of council funds
 - The mayor's aides rather see political undertones in the case against the municipal magistrate
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Lebialem: LECUDO-USA funded road project taking shape
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Ben Fominka: LECUDO USA CEO watch on as truck being loaded with gravel

Breaking the Sickle Cell Cycle: US-based organisation, Brightstar Wellness, engages students in Yaounde

A US-based Cameroonian clinical pharmacist, Dr Ojong Bate, through her organisation, Brightstar Wellness has educated students of Anglo-Saxon General Technical High School Yaounde on ways of preventing the sickle cell disease.

The educative session organised recently, was part of a broader Youth Health and Sickle Cell Awareness Programme, initiated by the organisation with headquarters in Texas, United States of America.

In her lecture, Dr Ojong emphasised the importance of talking about sickle cell disease, highlighting the stigma and misconceptions surrounding it.

"Sickle cell disease is very underspoken of," the pharmacist said. "I think a lot of people are still hiding and they're not comfortable sharing the demise of their kids or family members who have sickle cell disease because there's still a huge stigma about the disease condition and misunderstanding."

She pharmacist explained that even doctors sometimes struggle with managing the condition, emphasising the need to educate the next generation on how to avoid having children born with sickle cell disease. "We can break this sickle cell cycle," she said.

Addressing the question of a cure, the pharmacist mentioned that disease-modifying agents exist, but they only help manage the disease, not cure it.

She emphasised the six pillars of lifestyle medicine - nutrition, hydration, rest, stress management, exercise, and



Dr Ojong Bate speaking to the press after the educative session with students

mental health - which, when combined with medication, can help sickle cell patients live a complete life.

"High-protein meals, hydration, and rest are crucial for managing the disease," the pharmacist stressed, adding that "Sickle cell patients can have jobs, go to school, become doctors, engineers, or anything they want to be with the right support system."

Dr Ojong encouraged students to take ownership of their health, stressing on the importance of shifting the mindset from parents being responsible to the children taking charge.

"I am the one that has this disease. I'm the one responsible to take my medicine, go take my naps, and eat my food," she

said.

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



Cross section of students taking part in the lecture

Moncha Karik, one of the students who attended the educative session shared her understanding of the disease.

"I have learnt about the various symptoms of sickle cell, like them being tired, yellow eyes and having to drink a lot. We have also learnt about the way to avoid sickle cell like doing blood test in the hospital to also know your partner to know if your partner has sickle cells,"

The session aimed to empower students to break the stigma surrounding sickle cell disease and support those affected.

The pharmacist concluded with three key takeaways: food, exercise, and hydration, which, combined with medication can help patients reduce hospitalisations and live a complete life.

Pope Leo XIV's visit:

Dr Manaouda Malachie assures of effective health coverage

The Minister of Public Health, Dr Manaouda Malachie has assured that the country's health system is fully ready to cater for any eventualities during the period that the Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Leo XIV will be in Cameroon.

The pontiff is expected in Yaounde on Wednesday April 15, for a three-day working visit to the central African nation. He will make stops in Yaounde, Bamenda and Douala.

Prior to his arrival, preparations have intensified at various levels. With regards the health component, Minister Malachie has been firing up the health teams and ensuring that all is in place.

In the past week, the government official has been on the field, assessing the health coverage measures deployed for this major international event.

He made stops at the Yaounde Nsimalen International Airport and Douala International Airport, which are the two main air entry points into the country.

His first stop at Yaounde-Nsimalen International Airport, allowed him to conduct a thorough inspection of the Border Health Post. Here, he reviewed reception capacities, health monitoring systems, and rapid response mechanisms in case of emergencies.

At the Douala International Airport, another key entry point into the country, the minister equally conducted a comprehensive tour of the healthcare facilities, ensuring the availability of staff, the quality of equipment, and the coordination of services planned for the Pope's arrival and departure.

Major health facilities in Douala ready

On Friday April 10, Dr Manaouda visited the Douala General Hospital, St Paul Hospital Douala and the Douala Gynaecology, Obstetrics, and Paediatrics Hospital.

He met with healthcare teams to observe, understand, and adapt to the realities on the ground.

He also assessed the technical facilities,



Dr Manaouda Malachie inspecting Border Health Post at Y'de-Nisamalen Int'l Airport

patient capacity, and emergency response systems in place to ensure comprehensive and effective healthcare coverage.

The minister's visit reflected a clear commitment to ensure that every detail matters, that every department is ready, and that every patient will receive the best possible care.

Health teams in Bamenda also ready

While the country's health boss returns to Yaounde to continue the mobilisation of health teams, his collaborators in Bamenda, one of the cities to welcome Pope Leo XIV are also leaving no stone unturned.

The North West Regional Delegate of Health Dr, Dr Ambe Lionel at the close of last week, chaired the sixth preparatory meeting in view of the pontiff's arrival in Bamenda on April 16.

Attended by officials of the Incident Management System (IMS) and key emergency response stakeholders, the session focused on assessing progress made over recent weeks and accelerating readiness for what is expected to be a massive public gathering.

Deliberations underscored a critical transition from planning to action, with all sector leads instructed to fully operationalise their teams and immediately commence the

implementation of planned activities.

A major focus of the meeting was the strengthening of emergency response systems. Plans are underway to establish multiple hospital units, including specialised emergency facilities at the Bamenda Airport and the Regional Hospital.

These units are expected to handle potential mass casualty incidents, with capacity projected to accommodate up to 200 emergency cases.

Progress has also been recorded in the identification of sites for trauma and referral centres, though some infrastructural adjustments are still ongoing.

Meanwhile, the draft Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) plan has been developed and awaits final validation and operational detailing before submission to higher authorities.

Logistical preparedness remains a critical pillar. Efforts are ongoing to secure medical tents, ambulances, essential supplies, and protective gear. However, gaps persist, including the need for approximately 200 additional identification jackets for response personnel.

The North West IMS are also awaiting confirmation of support from partners such as the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC).

In addition, public health messaging has



Health Minister at Douala Gynaecology, Obstetrics & Paediatrics Hospital

been developed to sensitise communities ahead of the event, though wider dissemination through media channels is still pending.

Authorities emphasised the urgency of strengthening risk communication to ensure public awareness and safety during the visit.

Deployment plans for ambulances and medical teams across strategic locations in Bamenda, including the Cathedral, Commercial Avenue, and surrounding zones are being finalised to ensure rapid response coverage.

'All is in place'

The Papal visit, described by officials as a "mammoth event," is expected to draw thousands of faithful, placing significant demands on the region's health system.

In a move seen as enhancing mobilisation for a flawless visit, the Ministry of Public Health says the recent field visits by Dr Manaouda Malachie and the preparations at the level of Bamenda, reflect the government's commitment to guaranteeing optimal healthcare, both for the distinguished guest and for all those mobilised for this historic visit.

The minister has emphasised the rigor, vigilance, and responsiveness that must characterise the work of the healthcare personnel involved.

Cameroon, China commit to jointly combat illegal gold mining

Cont'd from page 1

He welcomed the decision by the government of the central African nation to close illegal mining sites in the East Region, a move he acknowledged wasn't limited to companies of Chinese origin.

With majority of those operating artisanal gold mining sites in Cameroon said to be nationals of the Asian nation, the decision by the Acting Mines minister to have an honest and open talk with the Chinese official was necessary.

The exchange was holding, weeks after the Cameroonian government through the Ministry of Mines had ordered a complete halt of all gold mining activities throughout the country, pending restructure of the sector.

Addressing his guest, Minister Fuh Calistus Gentry outlined the conditions required for the lifting of suspensions, notably strict adherence to the mining code.

While underscoring that that China remains a strategic partner for Cameroon, the government official stressed that such cooperation must be governed by strict compliance with the regulations in force to ensure a mutually beneficial partnership.

Both parties agreed that restructuring the semi-mechanised artisanal mining sector serves the interests of all stakeholders. In this regard, Professor Fuh Calistus Gentry granted an additional one week deadline to the Chinese authorities present to continue awareness efforts among their nationals operating illegally.

Restructuring of artisanal mining sector underway

The audience with the Political Counsellor at the Chinese Embassy, took place just a day after the minister announced a full-scale operation to dismantle gold processing units run by illegal companies in the East Region.

Professor Fuh Calistus Gentry made the pronouncement on Thursday April 10, as he chaired an awareness and consultation meeting with the Secretary General of the Embassy of China in Cameroon, alongside representatives of Chinese mining companies operating in the region.

At the heart of the discussions was the implementation of government measures to restructure the sector, as well as ensuring the compliance of the said companies.

The minister reiterated that the objective of the mission he will lead in the coming days is the complete and immediate dismantling of production units belonging to companies that refuse to comply with the prescribed corrective measures.

He insisted on the signing of a commitment to declare a minimum production threshold based on the number of processing bowls installed on-site and verified by the competent authorities, pending the establishment of a closed-circuit processing system.

The payment of a site rehabilitation bond amounting to 63 million FCFA (including 3 million FCFA per hectare) to ensure environmental protection after each excavation and the obligation to transition to a closed-circuit mining system within six months were also emphasised by Minister Fuh Calistus Gentry during the meeting.

According to the government, the obligation for new operators to conduct a preliminary site assessment is non-negotiable.

All these measures aim to improve gold mining activities in the East Region, restore order in the sector, and support the development of the Cameroonian economy through optimised state revenues.

What has been done so far

It should be recalled that from March 22 to 29, 2026, a joint mission from Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological



Minister Calistus Gentry chairing a meeting with Chinese semi-mechanised miners

Development, administrative authorities, and defense forces visited several localities in the East Region to verify the effective cessation of semi-mechanised mining operations.

This followed the withdrawal of permits and the implementation of a minimum production threshold, pending the establishment by these operators of a closed-loop mining system.

During the mission, operators in fraudulent sites located in Garoua Boulaii, Ngoura, Bétaré-Oya, Batouri, and Kette were all ordered to immediately cease all operations and remove their equipment from the sites.

In total, more than 100 sites were visited, and several dozen dump trucks, excavators, bulldozers, and loaders were impounded.

These measures aim to restructure the sector not only to control production and increase state reserves and revenue, but also to combat fraudulent mining, which causes significant losses to the Cameroonian economy through smuggling.

This initial phase, known as the field assessment, allowed the government to conduct a thorough analysis of the situation on the ground and to engage with sector operators to present these new reforms, which are governed by existing regulations.

Six Chinese artisanal miners arrested

French language tabloid,



L'économie reports that a recent joint operation by the national gendarmerie and members of the National Union of Promoters of Diamond, Gold and Artisanal Mining Offices in Cameroon, SYNAPROBADIOCAM led to the arrest of six Chinese nationals involved in illegal semi-mechanised gold mining in Tapara, Lom & Djerem Division of the East Region.

According to Elhadj Ousmanou Hamadou, "We raided five companies that have been illegally exploiting raw materials for more than a year, without

documents or authorisation,"

In the difficult-to-access area, eight makeshift camps housing Chinese nationals were identified, equipped with water facilities, washing platforms and electric generators.

While the arrested persons were taken to the East Legion Gendarmerie Company in Bertoua for questioning, SYNAPROBADIOCAM is expressing the wish to see the State of Cameroon take necessary steps to put an end to the current situation.

Brewery industry:

Telcar Cocoa CEO, Kate Fotso, to invest 17 billion FCFA

By Ndisi Larisa

Prominent Cameroonian businesswoman and Chief Executive Officer, CEO of Telcar Cocoa, Kate Fotso is expanding her business ventures into the brewing industry with a substantial investment of 17 billion FCFA.

The business magnate is said to have secured a 9 billion FCFA funding from BGFIBank Cameroon.

A financing agreement to this effect was formally signed on April 10, 2026, at the financial institution's headquarters in Douala.

This investment is allocated for the construction of a beverage production facility in Souza, in the Littoral Region.

The new industrial unit designed for beverage production will adhere to contemporary

environmental standards.

Upon becoming operational, the facility is projected to create 450 direct employment opportunities and approximately 3,000 indirect jobs across the logistics, supply, and distribution sectors.

This strategic move represents a significant diversification for Fotso, who has historically specialised in cocoa processing and export. Her entry into the brewing sector marks an expansion into a high-value, competitive market.

The timing of this investment is particularly noteworthy, as the Cameroonian brewing market is currently undergoing considerable transformation.

In 2024, national beer production reached an estimated 930 million litres, positioning Cameroon among Africa's top five producers. Over the past five years, exports of beer and soft drinks have generated 33.1 bil-

lion FCFA.

While the sector has been largely dominated by a long-standing player, which reported a turnover of 729 billion FCFA in 2023 and sold over 1.1 billion liters, the market landscape is evolving.

The emergence of competitors such as Groupe Kadji, alternative beverage options, local beers, and energy drinks is gradually eroding the market share of the incumbent. Kate Fotso's entry is expected to further intensify this competitive dynamic.

Concurrently, domestic demand for beverages remains robust, driven by rapid urbanisation and sustained population growth. The market is not yet saturated and continues to expand, presenting a strategic opportunity that Fotso has chosen to capitalise on.

Through this industrial project in Souza, Kate Fotso demon-



Kate Fotso(right) & BGFIBank Director General brandishing signed agreement

strates her ambition to build a diversified business empire beyond her established dominance in the cocoa sector.

The success of this new venture into beverages will be close-

ly observed in the coming years, with initial indications suggesting a positive outlook for success comparable to her cocoa operations.

Marcel Niat Njifenji:

The one time technocrat, prisoner, politician, philanthropist

By Njomo Mathias

Testimonies and tributes have continued to pour in following the death of Cameroon's pioneer Senate President, Marcel Niat Njifenji. He died in hospital in Yaounde on Saturday April 11, 2026.

His demise was confirmed in a release signed by the current Senate President, Aboubakary Abdoulaye.

The 91-year-old Niat Njifenji, born on 26 October 1934, steered the affairs of the country's Upper House of Parliament for 13 years. He died three weeks after he was replaced in that capacity on March 17, 2026.

He had been battling ill health and was regularly flown abroad for treatment.

He was last seen in public during the opening of the March session of the Senate on March 10.

His corpse was deposited at the mortuary of the Yaounde General Hospital pending burial arrangements.

The late native of Bangangte in Nde Division of the West Region is said to have lived a fulfilled life.

Niat is being remembered as a technocrat who occupied key positions in government, his imprisonment in 1984; a politician and frontline supporter of the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, CPDM, a philanthropist who created the Niat Foundation and a father figure.

Niat, the technocrat

He studied at the Higher School of Electricity in France, obtaining a degree in engineering as well as in Physical Sciences and Mathematics.

He began his career in the Cameroonian civil service in 1960 as civil engineer.

**PM Dion Ngute consoling wife of late Niat Njifenji**

He played a key role in the creation of the State-owned National Electricity Company, SONEL, responsible for electricity production and distribution - a structure he was appointed Director General in 1974.

He was named at the helm of the company at the time Cameroon's energy grid was fragmented and insufficient for industrial growth. Niat Njifenji approached the problem with the precision of a mathematician and ambition of a visionary.

He is today known to have been the primary driver behind the expansion of the Edea power complex and construction of the Song Loulou hydroelectric dam, projects which formed the bedrock of Cameroon's industrial sector.

He is said to have equally overseen the development of the Lagdo dam in the North Region, in order to reduce the energy gap in that part of the country.

He was Director General of SONEL between 1974 and 1984 as well as 1989 to 2001.

Eventually the company was privatised, and he was replaced in July 2001.

Niat Njifenji also served in the government as Minister of Planning and Territorial Administration from 7 September

1990 to 26 April 1991.

Subsequently, he was Deputy Prime Minister for Mines, Water, and Energy from 9 April 1992 to 27 November 1992.

The prisoner

Niat Njifenji was amongst those who were arrested and jailed, when rebellious soldiers attempted to overthrow President Paul Biya in an April 6, 1984 coup attempt.

Although it was considered doubtful that he had anything to do with the coup attempt, he was reportedly abused during his imprisonment.

He spent a few months in prison following his arrest after the failed coup d'état and was released in December same year.

The politician

The veteran politician, who became the first President of the country's Upper House of Parliament in 2013, was a staunch supporter of the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, CPDM. He equally a fervent supporter of President Paul Biya.

He militated in the CPDM for nearly four decades. He first aspired for an elected political position in 1992 and was elected Member of Parliament, MP that

**Late Niat Njifenji & son Mayor Eric Niat unveiling borehole drilling machine to Bangangte denizens**

year.

However, he did not serve his term as he chose to remain in his post as Director-General of SONEL.

When he was dropped from that role at SONEL in 2001, he returned to full time politics and contested for the post of mayor of Bangangte in 2002.

He was eventually elected and managed the council for one mandate (2002-2007). He's said to have played a major role in implanting the CPDM in Bangangte.

In 2013, when the Cameroon Senate went functional, he was appointed Senator by the Head of State, President Paul Biya. He was thus among the pioneer 100-member Senate.

He was reappointed Senator in 2018 and 2023 and for the 13 years he spent in the Senate, he held the highest position until March 17, 2026 when he was dropped in favour of Senator Aboubakary Abdoulaye.

The philanthropist

Niat was someone who had a deep commitment to grassroots development. Back in 1995, the late Statesman created Niat Foundation, a humanitarian and



philanthropic organisation.

In three decades of existence, the foundation has realised several projects and offered support to the vulnerable, with key activities in the domains of health, education and extending to the promotion of sustainable development. The foundation funded local schools and clinics.

The last humanitarian gesture of the patriarch through his foundation was the acquisition and installation of a brand-new drilling truck and machine in Bangangte to ease access to potable water.

He unveiled the machine to the Bangangte population last January 20, 2026.

The late Niat Njifenji was also a successful family man, married with children. Since his passing on, personalities and the common man have been condoling with the family.

Prime Minister, Head of Government, Chief Dr Joseph Dion Ngute and Senate President, Aboubakary Abdoulaye are some of the personalities who were at the Yaounde lakeside residence of the late pioneer Senate President to express their sympathy to the family.

Women in leadership excellence:

Clotilda Andiensa on honour roll again

Women and girls' rights advocate and founder of the Centre for Advocacy in Gender Equality and Action for Development, CAGEAD, Clotilda Andiensa has again been honoured for her key role in giving this group of persons a voice.

She was distinguished during the 2026 edition of the Cameroon Impact Heroes Award organised at Djeuga Palace Hotel in Yaounde on Friday April 10, receiving the Women in Leadership Excellence Award.

It was yet again another recognition for her decades-long service, which has continued to inspire change, empower others, and redefine what it means to lead with purpose and impact.

The organisers of the awards said they honouring Clotilda Andiensa, "In recognition of her outstanding leadership, influence, and unwavering commitment to excellence,"

"Through her remarkable journey..., her work stands as a powerful example of resilience, vision, and transformational leadership in Cameroon. This recognition celebrates not only her achievements, but also the path she is paving for future genera-



tions of women leaders," Cameroon Heroes Impact Award said in a statement.

The laureate said she was truly humbled to be receiving the award. "I would like to express my heart felt gratitude to the organisers, selection community and all those you have supported me in my leadership journey"

The CAGEAD founder and Chief Executive Officer, CEO dedicated the award to the "tireless efforts of all women and girls in the communities who are pushing for peace, equality and development", adding that "I am proud of this community"

She expressed gratitude to her team, the Centre for Advocacy in Gender Equality and Action for Development as well as South West/North West Women's Task Force and her family for their unwavering support

The award winner also acknowledged the support of her partners noting that it has been instrumental in giving her works visibility and huge positive impact.

The award comes to add to many recognitions she has received for championing girls' education, advocating for menstrual hygiene management sen-



sitation and spearheading peace initiatives in the crisis-hit North West Region.

Her work has empowered young girls to take control of their education and health while enhancing community cohesion in a region plagued by conflict.

Beyond advocacy, Andiensa Clotilda Waah has taken concrete steps to improve the lives of young girls by spearheading the construction and rehabilitation of toilets in schools to ensure they meet menstrual hygiene needs.

Through her leadership, thousands of menstrual hygiene kits have been distributed to girls,

helping to break the barriers of shame and exclusion associated with menstruation.

Her dedication continues to inspire many, and with this latest accolade, she remains even more committed to pushing for a future where young girls and women can thrive without barriers.

The Cameroon Heroes Impact Awards celebrate individuals and institutions driving positive change in Cameroon.

It honours excellence, leadership, and impact that unite communities, foster development, and inspire a prosperous, peaceful, and inclusive nation.

ZhoaCuDA presidency: US-based IT expert, Scott Meh, overwhelmingly elected

By Deng Eric

The Zhoa Cultural and Development Association, ZhoaCuDA in Fungom Subdivision, Menchum Division of the North West Region has elected a new leadership to pilot its affairs.

Scott Meh Bin, an IT expert based in the United State of America, USA was overwhelmingly elected as President of the cultural and development association over the weekend.

The ZhoaCuDA elective general assembly organised in Bonaberi, Douala on Saturday April 11, assembled more 300 sons and daughters of Zhoa origin unfolded in the presence of the Fon of Zhoa, His Royal Majesty, Martin Meh Nkwo Mvo.

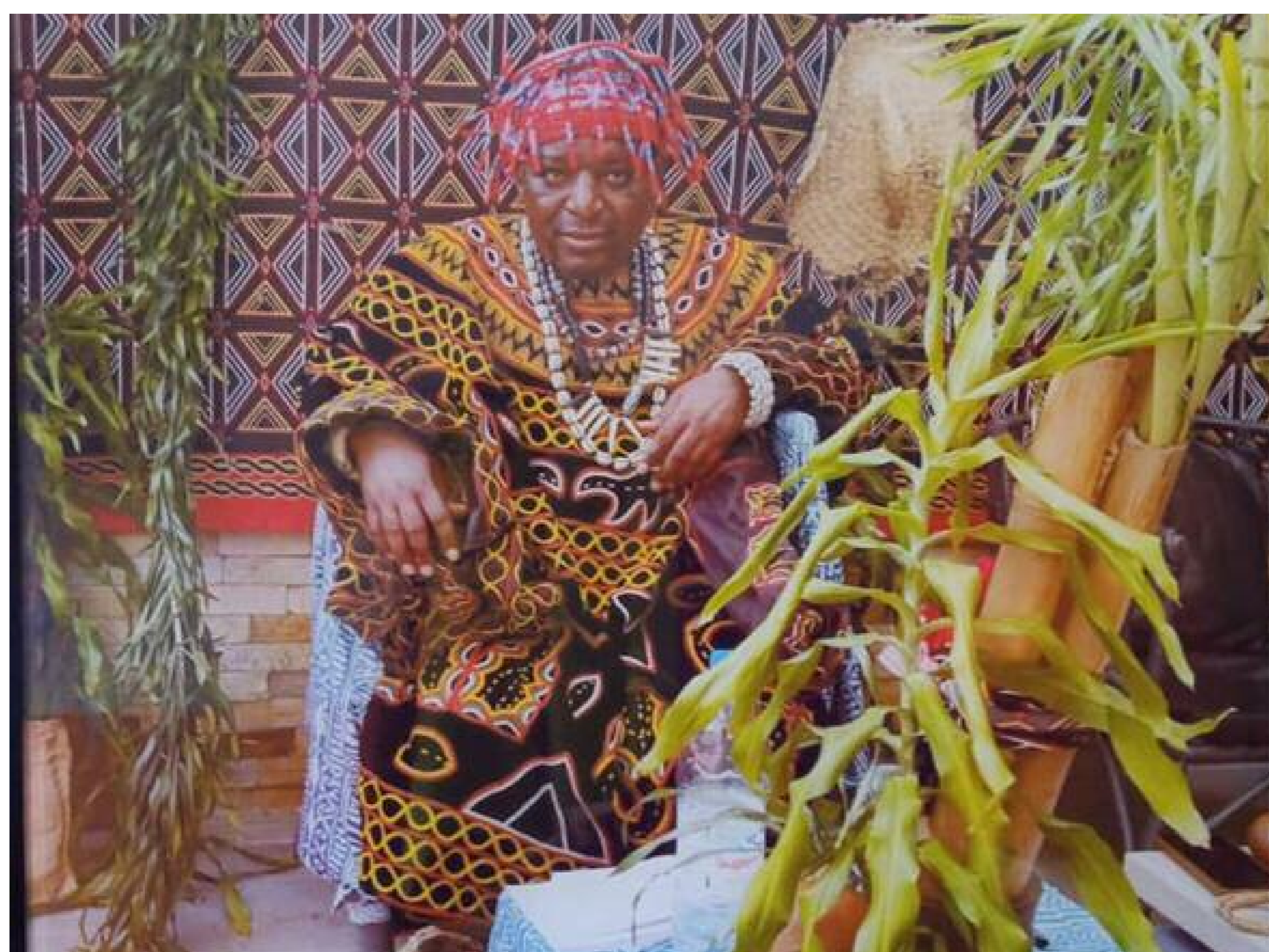
Challenged by one other candidate, Scott Meh who was tipped favourite even before the election, secured majority of the votes cast.

His victory wasn't therefore any surprise, at least to persons keen to the internal dynamics of ZhoaCuDA.

For the first time in the history of the development association, sons and daughters of Zhoa origin resident abroad, participated in the elective general assembly.

Scott Meh will be assisted by Ernest Tem who was elected Vice President. The Douala gathering was a moment for the sons and daughters of Zhoa to celebrate their culture in song and dance.

HRM Meh Nkwo Mvo praised the conduct of the election, hail-



Fon of Zhoa during elective meeting in Douala

ing his subjects for the show of maturity and sense of development. He called for unity, urging all to be ambassadors of the Zhoa culture.

Transforming Zhoa, boosting culture in view

While Scott Meh takes over the leadership of ZhoaCuDA, he's quite aware of the daunting task that lies ahead.

With the confidence bestowed in him by the people of Zhoa, the newly elected President has been speaking of his commitment to lead development initiatives that will transform the Fondom and sell their culture to the outside world.

"...I stand before you with a vision to revitalise our community, honor our heritage, and build a prosperous future. As your

President, I will bridge our divisions and lead Zhoa toward the following goals: Cultural heritage & traditional institutions... We will renovate our palace to reflect the true beauty of Zhoa culture and ensure our House of Notables receives the institutional respect it deserves" Scott had said in his message.

In the domain of education and youth development, Scott Meh has also pledged to work to revive GHS Zhoa.

He disclosed that his top priority will be the reopening and effective running of Government High School Zhoa, which has been impacted by the ongoing crisis rocking the Anglophone regions.

On mentorship, Meh disclosed that: "We will establish scholarship schemes and career orienta-



Scott Meh: Overwhelmingly elected ZhoaCuDA president

tion programs to guide our children toward professional success".

"We will celebrate the brilliance of our daughters by launching the Miss ZHOA competition, a platform to showcase the beauty, skills, and unique talents of our young women" he added.

"We will push for critical infrastructure that reflects Zhoa's status as the headquarters of Fungom" he said stating "Farming is our lifeblood; I will ensure major bridges are accessible—at minimum by bike—to ease the transportation of produce".

He also announced plans to establish a microfinance institution to provide local employment and offer essential loans for small businesses within two years in office.

According to the new ZhoaCuDA President, they also have in their plan of action, working tirelessly to restore

peace and create a safe, welcoming environment for all administrators and our people.

He pledged collaboration with the mayor of Zhoa Council and the administration to ensure every project allocated by the government for our village is executed effectively.

"Also, I will solicit NGO partnerships to assist in some of our projects" he added.

About Scott Meh

Scott Meh, it should be said, is the Chief Executive Officer, CEO, Scottish Estate, an agricultural investment.

Based in the United States, Scott Meh is a senior IT engineer, Database & Cybersecurity Specialist.

He is a dynamic and results-driven executive with a unique dual-career background in Agriculture management and Advanced Information Technology.

Limbe City Council: Fake authorities, councillors salute Mayor Efome Ngale's performance

By Nforbineh Zitanique Amah

The City Mayor of Limbe, Dr Paul Efome Mbole Ngale has been commended by the administration of Fako Division and Councillors of the Limbe City Council for his management of the institution in 2025.

The words of encouragement were echoed during the First Ordinary Session of the Limbe City Council that held on April 10, 2026.

Dr Efome Mbole Ngale who chaired discussions during the session, disclosed that the Limbe City Council collected a total revenue of 3,425,551,498 FCFA from a budget of 7 billion FCFA voted for the 2025 fiscal year.

Despite a 48.94 % of revenue collected, the mayor said it represented an increase by nearly 1 billion as compared to the 2024 financial year.

The significant increase recorded in the amount of revenue collected in 2025 was enough to draw applause from the First Assistant Senior Divisional Officer for Fako Division, Awa Dean, council-



Mayor Dr Paul Efome Mbole Ngale presenting his speech during session

lors and other development stakeholders in the city.

"There is an increase for this year and the City Mayor, the revenue collectors need a hand of applause," Awa Dean, sitting in for the SDO of Fako, Viang Mekala.

"We can record that in 2023, our revenue was only 1.5 billion FCFA; in 2024, our account moved up to 2.5 billion FCFA. And today, we have moved to 3.5 billion FCFA. This is the proof that all that we are doing, we are focusing on revenue, projects that can bring us revenue to the Council," said the Limbe City Mayor.

He pointed out that the long-drawn crisis, turned armed conflict in the North West and South West regions, the fire incident that caused the National Oil Refinery SONARA (major tax payer) to stop production in mid-2019 among other issues has had negative impact on the council revenue.

He said with the gradual return to peace and with measures initiated by the Limbe City Mayor to focus on revenue generating projects, the revenue collection of the city council has, for the past three years, been increasing significantly.



Councillors voting to adopt 2025 accounts

"I want to thank the City Councillors for the confidence bestowed in me and my team. We can say that the Limbe City Council is moving from one stage of stability to another, be it administratively, politically or financial..." Mayor Efome Mbole Ngale said.

Projects, other expenses

According to the accounts presented, out of the 3.425 billion FCFA raised, the council spent some 1.832 billion FCFA.

The City Mayor disclosed that, from the 1.832 billion

FCFA, besides the payment of salaries, taxes, debts servicing, cleaning of the city, water provision, street lighting and other expenditures, the City Council, "built several lockup stores within the markets in Limbe...rehabilitated earth roads...cleared our new fire-fighting truck from the Douala Port, dredged a portion of the Njengele River,"

During the period under review, the institution also updated the Limbe Master Plan...and paid FCFA 75 million to Limbe's three sub divisional councils

Lebialem: LECUDO-USA funded road project taking shape

By Deng Eric

The Chief Executive Officer, CEO of the Lebang Cultural and Development Association, LECUDO-USA, a grouping of sons and daughters of the Lebang Fandom in Fontem Subdivision, South West Region, resident in the United States of America has praised the progress of work on a road project which the association is currently funding back home.

The organisation had designed a project to reconstruct an all-season motorable road linking Fontem to the West Region from neighbouring Ngudeng through Azi to Ncho-Beyahi, where the road intersects with the main regional road No.P19 over the past 15 years.

Going by the CEO of LECUDO-USA Ntehmbo Ben Fominka, the ambitious road project running into hundreds of millions of FCFA will not only disenclave the area but also contribute in the transportation of persons and goods and enable access to other social services.

He was speaking to reporters, after making several stops along the stretch last month to evaluate the work carried out by the technicians.

At the time he visited the project, two dump trucks, a front head loader, a bulldozer, grader and pick up truck were busy on the stretch.

He said they were able to acquire the bulldozer, grader and pick up truck with funds from the association while the other equipment, including the two dump trucks and front head loader were rented.

According to Ben Fominka, they have so far invested around 200 million FCFA in this crucial infrastructure development initiative aimed at improving access to markets, healthcare, and education in the Lebialem Division

"It is the entire Lebang that is funding this project, not just LECUDO USA," Ben Fominka said, emphasising further that: "Sincerely, I am really, really satisfied. I am grateful for what I am seeing with my eyes."

He praised the efforts of the engineers and technicians working on the project.

"We are really satisfied up to now with the work that this crew is doing on this road. I am calling on everyone to see with me that our dollars are not being wasted," he said.

He also urged members of his executive and the Board of Trustees of LECUDO USA to take note of the progress made so far.

"Based on the work that is being done on this road, I will tell them that if they can trust me, they should know that we are doing a good project".

Appeal for more support

Ben Fominka expressed gratitude to the Lebang people for their support and urged them to continue to contribute to the project.

"We are calling on all sons and daughters of Lebang to come on board. If you have money for only one bag of cement or one litre of fuel, do not see it as too small. Do not minimize it. We need it because even three litres of fuel will permit this machine to work for some minutes."

To him, it is community-owned project and everyone should feel belonged.

"We are doing this for ourselves, and we will reap the benefits. We are calling on all sons and daughters of Lebang to come on board and support this project. Together, we can make a difference," he said.

Ben Fominka explained that the project is not just about building a road, but about empowering the community.

"We still have a lot to be done for this road to be a free access road for all of us. This is our main target. If we can complete

this road, we will be really grateful, and the entire Lebang will benefit from it."

The LECUDO USA CEO also highlighted the importance of self-reliant projects like this one.

"It's really great for us, and sometimes we feel anxious because we don't want to fail ourselves. When you come and see the quality of work that is being done, you are really satisfied."

Workers speak

Kemtedong Lucas, a proud pickup driver, and Abubeleh Victor, the bulldozer operator shared their experiences working on the road infrastructure.

"We've done a lot of work here, and I'm glad people can see the progress. Everyday. I have to pick up workers and drop them at various sites, go to Dschang to buy petrol..." Kemtedong said,

He expressed his happiness that community members were rallying around the project, and ensuring that the road is maintained.

"We're doing this for ourselves, and we'll reap the benefits. I'm grateful to everyone who's supporting us, and I urge everyone to keep being part of this."

On his part, the bulldozer operator said it's been a good experience but expressed the wish to see the project owners bring in more technicians, given the huge workload.

Residents, road users applaud the opening of the road

The people here are celebrating the progress of this transformative road project that has brought hope and connectivity to their community

Mbe Wetnda, Quarter Head of Nda-Lebang, expressed the community's heartfelt appreciation for the initiative.

"Only God alone can see the joy in our hearts. This road project has changed our lives. Travel time has reduced from almost a full day to just 45 minutes from Dschang to here".

He said the community is eager to see the project's completion and is committed to maintaining the road.

"Every Tuesday, we come together for community work, sometimes till 8pm. The entire population is behind this project, and we'll continue to work together to make it a success" Nda Wetnda said.

He extended his gratitude to LECUDO USA and partners for such a lofty project. "We thank God for their wisdom, power, and strength. May God guide and empower them to continue doing good."

On his part, Fonkeng Steven, a resident of Azi, who regularly travels to Dschang, said he is extremely grateful to LECUDO-USA for their efforts in developing the road.

"We have suffered on this road, and I can only say thank you to those people, who sent the caterpillar to fix the road," he said, noting that the road, which was previously in a deplorable state, has witnessed significant transformation.

"Before, it used to take me one hour thirty minutes from Dschang to Azi using my motorbike, but now it's just thirty minutes," Fonkeng Steven said, smiling. "This is a big win for our community".

He said the community will continue to come together to clear the drains and fix any potholes or problems that arise.

The road project is a testament to the power of community empowerment and the impact that collective efforts can have on transforming lives.

It should be noted the Lebang Cultural and Development Association, LECUDO-USA, is a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting the development of Fontem in Lebialem Division.

The organisation's efforts are focused on improving infrastructure, healthcare, education, and economic empowerment.



Ben Fominka at site where gravel for the road project is being exploited



Stretch of the road under construction



Abubeleh Victor: Operator of front bulldozer talking about his work challenges



LECUDO USA CEO pose with some of the road construction workers during visit



Mbe Wetnda: Quarter Head of Ndah-Lebang hailing the road project

Heritage University, Nico Halle Law Firm celebrate impactful collaboration

By Ndisi Larisa

Yaounde-based higher institution of learning, the Heritage Higher Institute of Peace and Development Studies, in partnership with the Nico Halle and Co. Law Firm, last weekend organised a high-level peacebuilding in Douala to mark the third anniversary of an impactful collaboration between the two institutions, headed respectively by Professor Willibroad Dze-Ngwa and Sir Dr Barrister Ntumfor Nico Halle.

The workshop brought together key stakeholders, including Catholic priests, Presbyterian and Baptist pastors, Muslim clerics, traditional rulers, university dons, journalists as well as youth and women leaders and civil society actors.

Also in attendance was Mwalimu George Ngwane, Member of the National Commission for Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, who made impactful contributions to the discussions.

These selected participants gathered to reflect on the theme: "Justice, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Cameroon."

In his keynote address, titled "Exploring Justice, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Cameroon," Sir Dr. Barrister Ntumfor Nico Halle emphasised that peace begins with the individual.



Sir Dr Barrister Ntumfor Nico Halle speaking during the workshop

He highlighted love, truth, integrity, and accountability as the foundation of justice, while warning that society is gradually drifting from value-based leadership toward self-centered governance.

On his part, Rev. Fr. Dr. Tata Humphrey Mbuy presented on "Traditional Rulers as Guarantors of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in Cameroon: The Reality in Contemporary Rural Cameroon."

He explored the role of traditional rulers in peacebuilding, explaining that beyond administration, they serve as spiritual and cultural custodians of justice and unity.

However, he noted that their influence has declined due to political interference, loss of autonomy, and financial challenges. He called for their restoration, proper recognition, and neutrality to enable

them to effectively contribute to peace at the grassroots.

The third presentation, delivered by Dr. Colonel (Magistrate) Didier Sipa, focused on "Mediation as an Alternative Mechanism for Justice and Peacebuilding in Cameroon."

He emphasised that when effectively applied, mediation remains one of the most practical solutions to conflict. While acknowledging that conflict is inevitable, he stressed that the approach to resolving it is crucial.

Mediation, he explained, promotes dialogue, mutual understanding, and the restoration of relationships, making it a more sustainable alternative to purely legal or force-based methods.

In the final presentation, Prof. Willibroad Dze-Ngwa spoke on the need for "a broad-based, inclusive and participatory engagement in



Cross section of participants during the workshop

peacebuilding."

He stressed that peacebuilding must involve all stakeholders, including local administrators, traditional and religious leaders, researchers, civil society organisations, youth and women leaders, and public communicators.

He underscored the importance of both vertical and horizontal accountability, noting that leaders must be answerable both to higher authorities and to the people. He concluded that without inclusiveness and accountability, peace efforts cannot be sustainable.

Each presentation was enriched by engaging and thought-provok-

ing question-and-answer sessions.

Another highlight of the workshop was the cutting of the third anniversary cake, symbolising the fruitful collaboration between the two institutions.

The workshop reinforced a clear message: sustainable peace in Cameroon requires inclusive participation and commitment from every individual.

The workshop concluded with a call for such get-togethers to be multiplied to every region of the country; and the distribution of certificates of participation, followed by refreshments.

Minister reschedules third term resumption for secondary schools

The resumption of classes in secondary and high schools across Cameroon for the third term of the current academic year, initially scheduled for Monday April 20, will be delayed by one week.

In an April 9 statement, Secondary Education Minister, Professor Nalova Lyonga announced that the term will now start on Monday, April 27, 2026.

The change is tied to the rescheduling of the national finals of the FENASSCO League A school games, now set to take place from April 19 to 26 in Bafoussam and Bangangte, in the West region.

The competitions were originally planned for April 8 to 15, 2026 but were postponed on government instructions, requiring an adjustment to the academic calendar.

Authorities say the decision is meant to balance school sports activities with academic continuity.

The FENASSCO League A Games, which bring together

thousands of students from across the country each year, are seen as a key platform for promoting school sports and identifying young talent.

However, the delay is expected to affect the organisation of teaching schedules. To address this, the minister has instructed regional education officials to organise catch-up classes in all secondary schools.

The aim is to preserve instructional hours and ensure that the 2025–2026 academic calendar remains on track, particularly as the final term is critical for national exams.

School administrators, teachers, students, and parents have been urged to strictly follow the revised schedule to ensure the smooth completion of the academic year.

The adjustment comes as the school year enters its final phase, under the framework set by the joint order issued in August 2025 by the ministries of Basic and Secondary Education.



Prof Nalova Lyonga, Minister of Secondary Education

Konye Council: Mayor Barrister Musima George risk imprisonment

By The Star guest writer

The Mayor of Konye Council in the South West Region, Dr Barrister Musima George Lobe, who is being investigated by the Special Criminal Court, TCS, in Yaounde risk imprisonment if he's found guilty of haven misappropriated public funds.

The elected council official and two of his collaborators, including the Municipal Treasurer, Muabe Richard Itoe and Stores Accountant, Sakwe James Ngimani who have been under the spyglass of the judicial authorities are said to be detained in Yaounde since Thursday April 9, 2026.

The Star gathered that the trio had been summoned to the South West Gendarmerie Legion that same day to answer for allegation of misappropriation of public funds brought against them. It was not the first time they were being summoned.

Unlike in the past, where they were grilled and allowed to return home, this time around, we gathered that the Attorney General of the South West Region referred their files to the Special Criminal Court.

They were then transferred to Yaounde where they are being questioned by investigators at the court.

A source at the Konye Council told this reporter that a complaint concerning the misappropriation of over 50 million FCFA was tabled against the

mayor, also implicating his two collaborators. This in addition to the fact that council workers have reportedly also gone for 19 months without pay.

We learnt that judicial authorities are said to be acting, based on a complaint from four persons, among them two former workers.

The complainants are said to be among other things having a different view of how allocations under the Additional Council Tax for 2023, 2024 and 2025, were managed by the mayor.

The Star has gathered that the mayor had between 2024 and 2025, been summoned to the South West Gendarmerie Legion.

During one of such summons, it is said, Musima was granted bail sometimes in September 2025.

His two collaborators, who are being detained with him in Yaounde, had also been summoned to the South West Gendarmerie Legion in September 2025.

Concerning the prolong delay in the payment of workers' salaries, when the press first highlighted the disturbing situation in 2024, Mayor Musima evoked challenges not connected to the prolonged crisis in the North West and South West.

He had argued that with a near inexistent local revenue base, the Council was left to handle the salary headache, whenever the Additional Council Tax allocation is paid to the municipality.

The Meme administration is also said to have held several meetings on the issue.



Dr Barrister Musima George Lobe: Embattled mayor of Konye

Political undertones in the case?

While investigations continue to unravel the truth relating to the repeated accusations against the Konye Council leadership, some individuals close to the elected official have qualified it as political witch-hunting.

"I sure everything will be under control, the whole thing has political undertones," a close aide to the mayor told The Star.

With twin polls expected early 2027, the developments in Konye are already being viewed by Musima's supporters as a new script to stop him from seeking a third mandate.

Musima has been heading the Konye municipality since 2013. He was re-elected following the February 9, 2020, legislative election, to stay on as mayor.

At Yaounde conclave:

Customs officials engage to develop tools to link customs information systems

The performance of African customs administrations will depend largely on their adaptation to information and communication technologies, data analysis, and the use of artificial intelligence.

This remark was made by the Director General of Cameroon Customs Edwin Nuvaga chaired the opening ceremony the 9th meeting of the Regional Working Group on Information Technology Development for the World Customs Organization for West and Central Africa (WCO-WCA) in Yaounde on April 8.

During the three-day working session, IT experts from the sub region, key players in the process of improving customs efficiency shared knowledge on the theme: "Information Systems for a Customs Service that Protects Society through Vigilance and Commitment."

On the occasion, Fongod Edwin Nuvaga said "the creation of a Regional IT Development Working Group is the concrete manifestation of the commitment to further modernise customs in Central Africa. Today's customs service must be intelligent, connected, resilient and service oriented."

He went on "It must be able to combine technological performance and operational efficiency to



Cameroon Customs DG(middle) during start of regional workshop

successfully carry out its core missions of revenue collection, trade facilitation and protection of society against trade.

Experts reviewed activities carried out by the WCO Secretariat regarding information and communication technologies, reflecting strategies on the effective adoption of data analytics and AI, and exchanging best practices to improve the performances of customs administrations and establish a framework for cooperation.

He went on to reaffirm the full availability and unwavering commitment of Cameroonian Customs to support the Vice-Presidency of the WCO-ACM Region in the successful completion of its important missions.

The Director General of

Customs of Cameroon, was accompanied by four other dignitaries, including Gatieng Pangob Tetanga, Regional Development Coordinator and representative of the WCO General Secretariat; Colonel Abdoulaye Maïga, Chief of Staff to the Vice-President of the WCO-ACM Region; Sylla Anzoumana, Chair of the WCO-ACM Regional Working Group on Information Technology Development; and Lemami Elsie, Acting Director of the WCO-ACM Regional Capacity Building Office.

Representatives from SGS, UNCTAD, Webb Fontaine, and CAMPASS, as well as directors of central services of the Cameroon Customs Administration and expert delegates from customs



Cross section of participants

administrations in the WCO-AOC region also sat through the discussions.

The Chair of the WCO-AOC Regional Working Group on Information Technology Development and the Chief of Staff to the Vice-President of the WCO-AOC Region expressed their gratitude to the Cameroonian authorities for their welcome, hospitality, and the excellent organization that ensured the smooth running and success of the meeting

The meeting followed one of the recommendations made at the conclusion of the 31st Conference of Directors General of Customs of the WCO-WCA region, which was held in May 2025 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo.

The missions of the WCO-

ACM Regional Working Group on Information Technology Development include amongst others; the interconnection of systems, developing tools to link the customs information systems of Member States, modernisation and digitalisation, raising awareness and supporting the full automation of customs procedures.

The working group is also out to develop strategic security plans, conduct audits, and raise awareness of information security, establish a framework for exchange and mutual administrative collaboration through ICT, develop IT tools for the daily management of administrations, promote the use of ICT and strengthen the capacity of human resources.

Pope Leo XIV's visit:

Coordinator General assures readiness as Swiss Guards touch down in B'da

The Coordinator General of the visit of Pope Leo XIV to Cameroon, Okie Johnson Ndoh says the city of Bamenda is more than ready to welcome the Head of the Roman Catholic Church.

He made the declaration in Bamenda on Sunday April 12, as he led high-level delegation, including the Vatican's elite Swiss Guards, to conduct a thorough inspection of the facilities ahead of the Pope's impending visit.

The delegation on board a Camair-Co flight from Yaounde was welcomed at the Bamenda Airport by the Archbishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Bamenda, His Grace Andrew Nkea and the Governor of the North West Region, Adophile Lele Lafrique.

The team went on to meticulously review of the airport's infrastructure and security arrangements underscores the importance of the occasion and the unwavering commitment to ensuring the Holy Father's safety.

The airport which will host the high level Pontifical Holy Mass to be celebrated by the Pope on Thursday April 16 has since witnessed a facelift.

Stands have been mounted and decorated and sitting arrangements reviewed for the over twenty-five thousand Catholic and non-Catholic Christians expected to attend the mass.

Technicians from the state broadcaster, CRTV have also been working on site, installing equipment to ensure smooth TV and audio signals.



Vatican's elite Swiss Guards touch down in Bamenda

Over at the Saint Joseph Metropolitan Cathedral, the surrounding has been cleaned, giant screens put up, an indication that Bamenda is ready.

The inspection tour, also included a visit to the cathedral premises, led by Archbishop Andrew Nkea, who personally guided the delegation through the sacred spaces that will soon play host to the Pontiff.

Also, BUNS construction is accelerating work on the road linking the airport to the cathedral.

Speaking to reporters, the Coordinator General said: "I am really, really satisfied, more than the world satisfied with what we have seen today. I want to congratulate all of us, administrative officials and religious leaders".

On his part, Archbishop Nkea spoke of the timeliness of the Holy Father's visit, especially coming at a time, Bamenda and the entire English-speaking regions of the country continue to grapple with the nearly a decade-

long socio-economic crisis.

"This is the biggest thing that could happen to us that while we are still in the difficulties, the Holy Father decides to come and share our pain and to console us and to preach peace," the Archbishop said,

Governor Adophile Lele Lafrique also echoed the readiness of the North West population and measures in place to ensure a very successful visit of the Pontiff.

He spoke of the commitment to implementing recommendations for sanitation, material organisation, and protocol

"As far as our general sanitation, material organisation and protocol are concerned, we are going to make sure we implement the instructions given us to the fullest before the Pope lands in Bamenda."

Bamenda residents are thus eagerly looking forward to receiving the Pope's blessing, hopeful that this visit will bring positive changes to the North



Coordinator General, Okie Johnson Ndoh talking to the press



Partial front view of B'da Metropolitan Cathedral ready to welcome the Pope

West Region and Cameroon.

As the countdown to the Pope's arrival continues, the North West regional capital city is bracing up for an unprecedented influx of dignitaries, pilgrims, and well-wishers.

Pope Leo XIV is due to arrive in Cameroon on Wednesday April 15, through the Nsimalen International Airport and will head to Bamenda the next day.

During his three-day stay in the country, he also expected to visit Douala. He will celebrate mass at the 101 Airbase in Yaounde on March 18 before his departure.

His visit promises to be a defining moment in the nation's history, with the Pope's message of peace and reconciliation expected to resonate deeply with the local population.



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ENTRÉE SIMBOCK



Yaoundé

SECUR

North West:

BIR inaugurates new camp in Batibo

By Ndisi Seraphine

The Rapid Intervention Battalion, BIR, an elite corps of the Cameroonian military has officially inaugurated its new camp in Batibo, Momo Division of the North West Region.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the modern infrastructure, consisting of an administrative block, dormitories of 30 beds each, a kitchen refectory and toilet was chaired by Brigadier General Francois Pelene, General Coordinator of the BIR.

The event held in the presence of top-ranking officers of the BIR as well as administrative and local officials of Batibo and Widikum Subdivisions.

In his speech, the General Coordinator of the BIR, reminded the people of the Batibo and Widikum that the camp is a major achievement for their safety, while stressing that ensuring security remains a shared responsibility.

He urged them to work closely with the defence forces, including by providing useful intelligence and denouncing any suspicious behaviour.

**aerial front view of camp & officials in group photo**

"We are here in Batibo to stay," said Brigadier General Pelene, adding that "We cannot bring peace to this Division and Subdivision only by security and defense forces. It's a mutual collaboration between all leaders, residents in Batibo, and neighboring Widikum".

He went on "this is a new chapter for Batibo and we'll work with the community to rebuild and restore hope".

Batibo recovering from havoc wreaked by separatist fighters

The town of Batibo, strategically located along the Trans-

African highway linking Cameroon to Nigeria, has been a hotspot in the country's anglo-phone conflict.

Separatist fighters have repeatedly targeted the area, causing widespread destruction and displacement

The first-ever kidnap of a government official by armed separatist fighters in the context of Anglophone crisis happened in Batibo in 2018. The then Divisional Officer, Marcel Namata Diteng was kidnapped as he prepared to chair Youth Day activities.

He was later declared to have been killed by his abductors though his remains were never

seen. Also, In November 2022, nine health workers were kidnapped.

The recent incident in the locality was eight months ago an explosive device ripped through the same structure killing one person and injuring more than ten others.

These, had forced many persons to flee Batibo and seek safety in other parts of Cameroon.

Local, administrative authorities welcome the BIR base

Mayor Acha Kennedy of Batibo municipality welcomed the setting up of the BIR camp, regretting the level of damage the armed conflict has caused in Batibo

"The damage done by the conflict on the population of Batibo is unimaginable kidnappings, killings, destruction in fact every segment of society was affected,"

"The conflict has touched us all. We need peace, and we need it now and this camp has come to reassure the population that when they come back, they shall carry out their activities normally,".

On his part, the Divisional Officer of Widikum, Chia Ivo Mungwa who called for increased military presence said: "Widikum is a vast and important subdivision, but it's vulnerable to attacks,".

"Some of these guys who have ran off from neighbouring Mamfe in Manyu are harbouring around the Menka in Widikum and still causing harm. We are calling on the powers that be to stretch the hand of construction and establish another camp in the area. The terrorists are feeling like they're in a conquered territory,".

In a spirit of solidarity and proximity, some food items to the people, illustrating the commitment of the BIR to strengthen the Army-Nation link.

The BIR camp in Batibo comes to add to others in Wum, Bamenda, Kumbo, Mbengwi and Bali.

According to Lt Colonel Toupo Djeukam Dieudonne Alban, Commander of the 3rd BIR, there are plans to create other camps in Ndop, Ndu and Nkambe as part of efforts to restore peace and stability across the North West Region.

Adamawa, East regions:

Customs officials strategise to curb fraudulent mineral exports

Heads of technical collection and control units from the Adamawa and East Customs Sectors have brainstormed on best possible strategies to curb the increasing fraudulent exportation of minerals, particularly gold and other precious stones from Cameroon.

This was during an important joint working session at the Adamawa Customs Sector meeting room on April 10, 2026.

The session was co-chaired by Jean Marie Toukam, Head of the Adamawa Customs Sector, and Palulin Bello, Head of the East Customs Sector focused on coordinating efforts to combat the fraudulent export of these minerals harvested from the country.

Most of Cameroon's mineral resources are being exploited in the East Region and also partly in the Adamawa, reason why the Customs administration is working to ensure that its officials in these two regions are on the alert.

Participants benefited from the technical expertise of Captain

Gabriel Ngha Nfir, Head of the Commercial Subdivision of Customs at Douala International Airport, and Denis Ntuba, Assistant Research Officer in the Legislation and Litigation Division.

Following the discussions and exchanges, important recommendations were adopted.

These include strengthening operational intelligence and collaboration with other stakeholders in the mining sector.

The brainstorming by the customs officials came at the time government, through the Ministry of Mines, Industry and Technological Development is tightening conditions for the exploitation of the country's minerals.

Government recently ordered the cessation of activities in all sites where semi-mechanised mining was taking place in the East and has rolled out new conditions to be met by those who intend to carryout mining activities henceforth.

**Officials in group photo after opening of joint working session****Douala-Bangui Economic Corridor Dev't Program: Public Works ministry, World Bank finalise preliminary assessment**

Ndiforchu McBright

The Minister of Public Works, Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi and a World Bank mission led by Alphonse Soh, Senior Transport Specialist have finalised the preliminary assessment of the Douala-Yaounde-Bangui Economic Corridor rehabilitation project.

This was at a meeting the Ministry of Public Works in Yaounde on Friday April 10, 2026.

During the discussions, the World Bank mission presented the preliminary findings of its assessment.

The project preparation it was revealed, is at a very advanced stage. The 165 km Yaounde-Edea section appears to be the most mature and should constitute the first phase of the works.

"We note that project preparation is well advanced, which is a credit to the government. The deadlines we're working towards, i.e. project approval before June 2026, will be met" the World Bank official told reporters.

According to the Ministry of Public Works, tender documents are being finalised, allowing work to start quickly once funds are available.

This progress was saluted by the World Bank Head of Mission, who said it is an "important step", adding that "This should enable the contract to be signed and work to start quickly once funds are available".

However, it was revealed during the meeting that securing financing remains a crucial challenge but at moment, Cameroon has already secured commitments from several partners, including the World Bank, the French Development Agency, the European Union, the European Investment Bank, and the Islamic

**Works minister chairing meeting with World Bank Mission**

Development Bank.

This pre-assessment mission, conducted from April 6 to 10, 2026, is therefore a crucial step before the project launch.

The Douala-Bangui Economic Corridor Development program is planned in several phases, based on four main complementary components, with the government working on investment sustainability.

The first concerns strengthening infrastructure and road safety, with the reconstruction of the Yaounde-Edea section and the continuation of maintenance work on the other sections of the corridor.

The second aims to establish a sustainable maintenance system, based on improved asset management and the modernisation of control mechanisms.

The third component focuses on inclusive economic development, through the improvement of rural and social infrastructure along the corridor.

The fourth component addresses facilitating transport and trade, particularly through the simplification of procedures and the modernisation of trade processes.

The project proposal will be submitted to the World Bank's governing bodies in June.

In parallel, the World Bank intends to support the ongoing maintenance operations on the Ayos-Garoua-Boulai section, pending major rehabilitation work.

The issue of road maintenance was also central to the discussions. With a road network of approximately 11,000 km, Cameroon faces a major sustainability challenge.

The Minister of Public Works emphasised the need to strengthen the State's role in this area by reinforcing MATGENIE, the public institution responsible for road maintenance, which is experiencing financial difficulties, by controlling axle loads, and by continuing the reform of the Road Fund.

In this context, a consultation workshop with the private sector is planned in the coming days to define a national road maintenance strategy and an operational roadmap.

"Road maintenance will be at the heart of the government's strategy in the coming years," Alphonse Soh said.

"We're ready to support the government in implementing this strategy once it's adopted" he concluded. The World Bank is considering a contribution of approximately \$400 million.

FIFA U17 Women's World Cup qualifiers:

Cameroon thrash Algeria in first leg

Cameroon's U17 women's team delivered a dominant performance, defeating Algeria 5-1 away in Blida on Sunday April 12, during the first leg of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers. The victory puts the baby Lionesses in a strong position ahead of the return fixture.

Clinical and well-organised, the young Cameroonian side, controlled proceedings and capitalised on their attacking opportunities to secure a convincing away victory.

The visitors felt in the early stages of the game, with the Algerians capitalising to take the lead. Coach Mike Ndoumou's girls restored the lead before recess time.

The central African nation made nonsense of their host during the last 45 minutes of the encounter, scoring four more goals.

Cameroon's five goals in the clash came from an inspired front-line, with Andrea Mimbama and Reine Nkenhoung each scoring twice, while Merveille Bikie also got on the scoresheet to complete the rout.

With this emphatic win on the road, Cameroon now head into the return leg scheduled for April 18 with a significant advantage.

A positive result in the second leg would secure their qualification for the next round of the competition.

A total of 15 African nations are currently competing in this first phase of the African zonal qualifiers, with the top 15 to qualify for the next round and join Nigeria that was exempted from this stage. It case Cameroon qualifies for the next round, they will face Kenya.

Cameroon is seeking a fourth



participation in the FIFA U17 Women's World Cup after previous participations in 2016, 2018 and 2024.

This year's U17 Women's World Cup will be hosted by Morocco with Africa to be represented by four teams.

Former Arsenal star denies two new counts of rape

Former Arsenal footballer has pleaded not guilty to two new allegations of rape.

Thomas Partey, 32, appeared at Southwark Crown Court, where he denied twice raping a woman in London in December 2020.

Partey, who left Arsenal for Villarreal last summer, was charged in July last year with five other counts of rape and one count of sexual assault, relating to allegations dating back to 2021 and 2022.

He has also pleaded not guilty to those charges. A trial, originally scheduled for November this year, may now be delayed until January 2027 because of the new allegations.

In total, the footballer has pleaded not guilty to seven counts of rape and one of sexual assault involving four women.

On Monday Judge Tony Baumgartner, the Recorder of Westminster, agreed for all the alle-

gations to be tried together.

Partey wore dark grey trousers, a black jumper over a white shirt, and smart black shoes to the court.

He spoke to confirm his name and enter the two not guilty pleas during the hearing.

Partey did not attend the previous hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court when the charges came before a judge for the first time, but his lawyer indicated that not guilty pleas would be entered.

He remains on bail during the legal proceedings, with the condition that he does not contact the alleged victims.

He joined Arsenal from Atletico Madrid in 2020 in a deal worth about £45m, before leaving the club last June and is expected to play for Ghana at the World Cup this summer.

Partey is next due in court for a pre-trial hearing on 14 May.



CAF president would welcome corruption investigation



Dr Patrice Motsepe: CAF President

Confederation of African Football president Patrice Motsepe says he would "encourage" an investigation into corruption at the organisation.

Senegal's government last month demanded such scrutiny after the national side was stripped of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations, AFCON title by a Confederation of African Football, CAF appeals board, with the trophy awarded to final opponents Morocco.

The West Africans are waiting on the outcome of an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, CAS.

Motsepe visited Senegal on Wednesday, meeting President Bassirou Diomaye Faye and leading officials from the country's football federation.

"I welcome any investigation [into corruption at Caf], whether it is by a government or an authority or anybody," Motsepe said at a news conference in Dakar.

"Because any corruption in Caf we want to know about it and we will take action ourselves, immediately.

"We have a duty to our people in Africa. If any government or institution [wants to], please go ahead, conduct the investigation.

"We will give you all the co-operation. In fact, I encourage you."

The CAF appeals board ruled Senegal forfeited the Afcon final in Rabat on 18 January after several members of the side

walked off the pitch in protest at a penalty awarded to Morocco in second-half stoppage time.

The Teranga Lions eventually returned and, after a delay of around 17 minutes, the resulting spot-kick taken by Brahim Diaz was saved and Senegal won 1-0 after extra time.

The decision by the CAF appeals board on 17 March has left African football's governing body facing a crisis of confidence, with Veron Mosengo-Omba stepping down as the organisation's general secretary on 29 March.

Motsepe says he has "zero tolerance" of corruption in any walk of life, describing it as "worse than Covid and cancer".

"Whilst I am president of Caf we will never conceal any corruption," he added.

"It is the biggest problem, not just in football. I have been told there have been lots of problems in the past [with corruption] and we intervened.

"We can't set a bad example in football, to give our children the perception that if you want to succeed in life, be corrupt.

"That's the best gift we can give football in Africa. Not just talking about corruption, but intervene, put the necessary laws [in place] and implement them," the CAF boss stated.

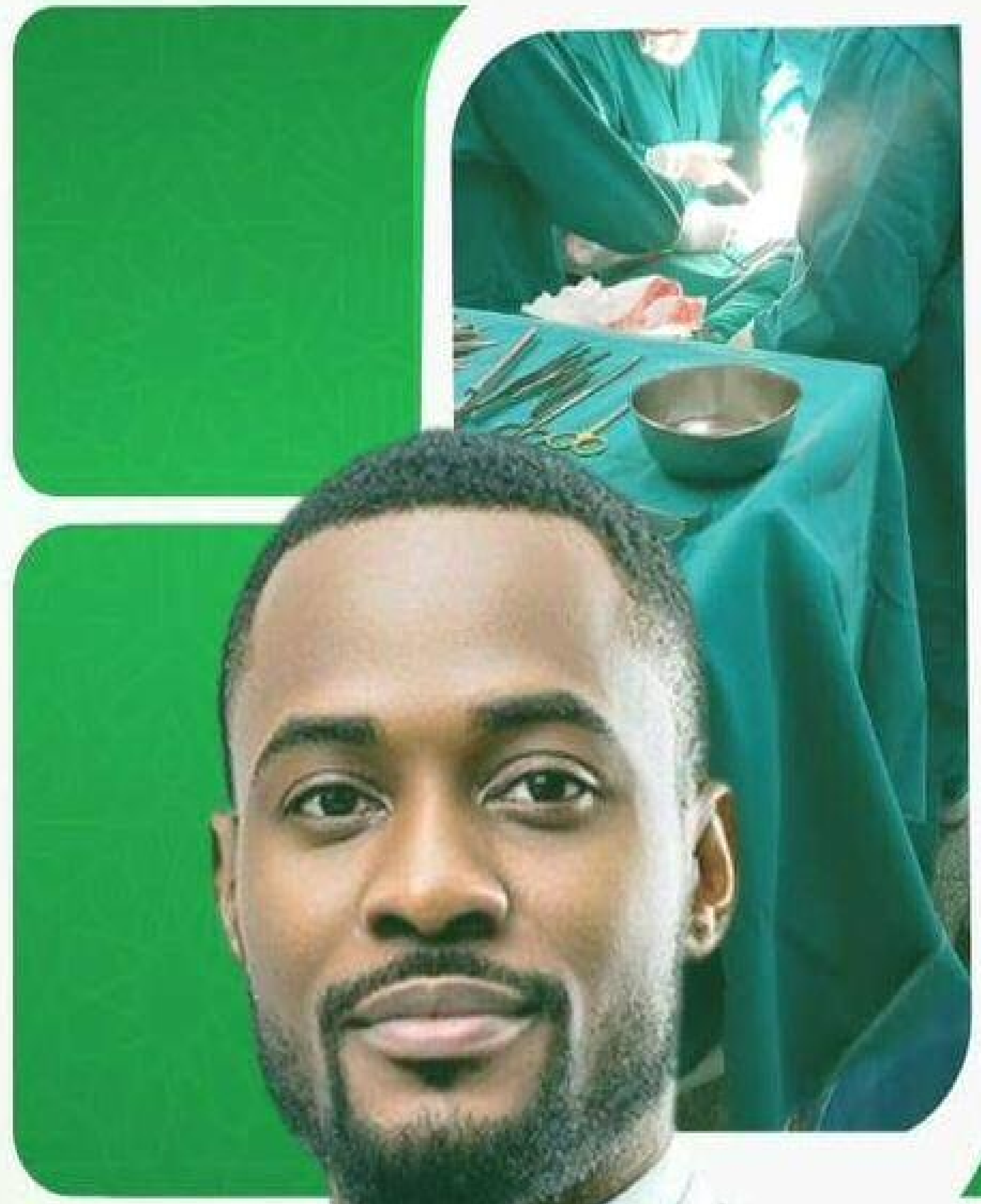


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