

## Formulaire de participation au prix mining story awards

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Subject: Formulaire de participation au prix mining story awards

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Titre de l'oeuvre: How illegal Chinese mining destroys livelihoods, fuels conflicts in Cameroon

Lien en ligne avec l'article ou le clip: <https://cameroonnewsagency.com/how-illegal-chinese-mining-destroys-livelihoods-fuels-conflicts-in-cameroon/>

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Résumé de l'article: Taking advantage of the ambiguity in the process to grant mining licences and the laxity of the administration in Cameroon, some Chinese miners are illegally carrying out semi-mechanised artisanal mining, leading to destruction of the environment and causing many deaths.

This has also been fueling conflicts between the Chinese miners and locals in the East region of Cameroon. These conflicts have sometimes led to deadly clashes with people killed and others injured.

Because of this, China has been earning a bad reputation for its operations in Cameroon's extractive industries.

Some of the accusations include illegal mining, corruption, environmental degradation and poor working conditions overall.

A Cameroon-based NGO, Forest and Rural Development, FODER, in 2017 blamed Chinese miners for 43 mining-related deaths.

Anti-Chinese sentiments are therefore soaring in the East region of Cameroon and other mining areas.

Chinese mining companies have contributed significantly to the degradation of the environment through the diversion of rivers, the obstruction of rivers by mud, which have had a negative impact on agriculture and livestock. The miners have left behind huge holes which have been filled with water. Human beings and livestock have been falling into some of these holes.



The-Guardian-Post-N°-1574-of-Wednesday-January-24-2019.pdf

3.4MB



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 Africa Christian Health Associations Platform  
 • **Hosts:** CBC Health Services in Partnership with ACHAP  
 • **Venue:** Mont Fébé Hotel-Yaounde  
 • **Date:** February 25 – March 1, 2019  
 • **Theme:** Re-igniting primary Healthcare: The role of ACHAP  
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# The Guardian Post

*DAILY*

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

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# How illegal Chinese mining destroys livelihoods, fuels conflicts in Cameroon

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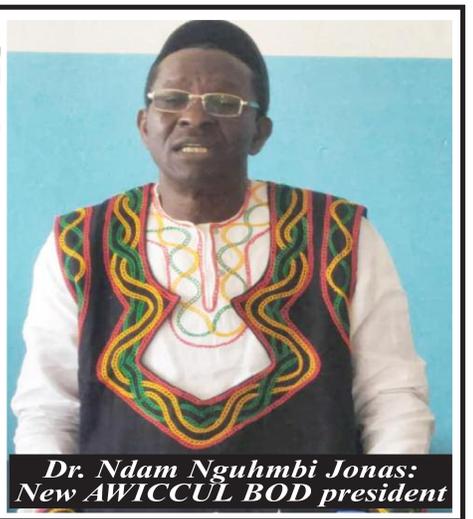


*Illegal Chinese miners in desparate search of gold, a few metres away from houses in Zirgene neighbourhood, Colomine in East region*

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## Issues of the moment

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui in Yaounde

### CDC: Those reaping where they did not sow

The distressed call made to the government by Franklin Njie, the General Manager of the Cameroon Development Corporation, CDC should worry well meaning Cameroonians, especially those from the South West region, which is home to a preponderant number of the agro-industrial estates.

While Njie is accusing separatist groups of taking advantage of the crisis situation and reaping where they did not sow, his workers are calling on the so called Ambazonia government to provide 15 billion francs CFA, to settle outstanding salary arrears due CDC workers.

The absurdity reminded me of the impression I had when I came face to face with a group of separatist fighters between Mbakpa Supe and Konye during my trip to and from Mamfe last November.

If the Amba government had that type of money, (15 billion francs CFA) their fighters will not be looking so malnourished, so poorly dressed and carrying cutlasses and Dane guns to confront the army of a modern state.

The abandonment and neglect of separatist fighters, obviously caused by poverty of secessionist advocates, could explain why their fighters have invaded CDC plantations and reaping what they can to keep body and soul together.

CDC is at the heart of Anglophones because over 90% of the present population came to meet those estates serving as their live wire, even though the profits went to the central government.

Many we are whose parents worked with the CDC and succeeded in educating our entire families. We are what we are today, thanks to the CDC.

Njie told reporters that he needed not less than 29 billion francs CFA to kick start activities that would revamp the over 3,000-hectre plantations. Seven billion will be needed in the palm oil fields alone; where produce processing mills need to be refurbished and abandoned plantations given the care they need.

Rubber plantations are in need of not less than 7.8 billion francs to be injected into; Banana plantations need an astronomical sum of 14 billion to revive them while arrears of outstanding salaries would gulp the rest.

Recurrent attacks by secessionist fighters have led to the killing, maiming and wounding of many CDC workers. The recent incident was an attack on some of them at the Sonne Likomba estate and camp near Tiko. Many plantation workers have had their fingers chopped off while industrial structures have been vandalized and totally destroyed calling for huge investment to replace many machines that have been idle for too long.

Management decries the near absence of state security forces in the estates, reason why the General Manager appealed to government to help safe life and property by beefing up security in estates. "Save us from people who do not want to see us succeed. Our plantations have been invaded by undesirable elements who are reaping where they did not sow"

All that management is asking to enable them resume production is for the government to beef up security. After all, many government establishments in the South West region that are held dear by the government are functioning because of strong security presence.

## Atanga Nji reiterates Biya's calls for separatist fighters to drop arms

By Dilian Welleng in Yaounde

The Minister of Territorial Administration, Paul Atanga Nji, has reiterated President Biya's calls for Ambazonian fighters in the North West and South West regions to drop arms, else face the wrath of the law and the security forces. He made the call Monday January 21 while receiving New Year wishes from the staff of his ministry.

Minister Atanga Nji emphasised that all elements stated in President Biya's end-of-year speech on December 31, 2018 will be the roadmap of his ministry in 2019. The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee, according to Atanga Nji, is a proper channel for all those causing havoc in the crisis-hit regions to integrate themselves back into the society.

"All those terrorists in the North West and South West regions should drop arms and move up to the Fai Yengo



Minister Atanga Nji at New Year wishes ceremony

commission. There, they will be recognised as citizens who have understood their mistakes and will therefore be welcomed," Atanga Nji said.

"Parents in the troubled regions should educate their children against the ills of war and tell them to drop arms," the Minister advised, threatening that, "they will be given no chance".

The minister did not forget the upcoming elections as he pointed out that just as they did to successfully handle the

2018 presidential poll, so will they magnificently organise all upcoming activities in peace and tranquility.

Minister Atanga Nji mentioned other crisis like that in Adamawa and the Far North, saying that he will do all within reach and with the help of his staff to ensure that all returns to normal.

"We will continue to preach peace, unity and dialogue," he noted.

It should be stated that the Minister at each point of his

speech said that Biya's directives on how all issues affecting the state should be managed remained the bedrock.

Speaking earlier, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Essomba Pierre, outlined the successes of Paul Atanga Nji since he took over at the helm ministry on March 2, 2018.

He highlighted the minister's endless efforts to maintain peace and security in all regions of the national territory. He also underlined the ministries contributions to ensure that the 2018 presidential poll went on smoothly and congratulated Minister Atanga's efforts at El Hajj 2018, when Cameroonians were going on pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Secretary General also applauded the minister's efforts in the demilitarisation process since he took over power. At the end, he promised that the staff of the ministry is prepared to support Minister Atanga Nji as the year unfolds.

## UN announces fresh assistance to Anglophone crisis victims

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui in Yaounde

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA will soon give fresh assistance to victims of the Anglophone crisis now rocking North West and South West regions of Cameroon. Dubbed the 2019 UN Humanitarian response plan on the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, officials at OCHA said the project is at its finishing point already.

This was one of the salient points that emerged from a report published on the crisis in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon by the world body. Apart from the Humanitarian Response Plan, the report also dwelled extensively on the impact the crisis has had on human populations both within the crisis zone and in other parts of Cameroon.

In this regard, the report produced in collaboration with other humanitarian partners like the World Food Programme, WFP; the United Nations Children Emergency Fund, UNICEF; the World

Health Organisation, WHO and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, UNHCR, reveals that at least four million people are affected by the Anglophone crisis. These are distributed as follows - , 1.3 million people in need, 160,000 people targeted, 437,500 internally displaced, IDPs, 500,000 people in need in host communities and 330,000 other people in need.

The OCHA report further adds that the proliferation of armed groups and deployment of defense forces, had transformed the crisis into an armed conflict.

It states that more than 1,200 cases of civilian protection rights violations have been registered, mainly involving physical abuse or threats, and lack of legal protection. The report recounts how insecurity and violence have forced more than 400,000 people to flee their homes, most of whom continue to have serious consequences on livelihoods and living conditions.

Regarding the health situation of those affected, the report indicates that many of the conflict-hit population are suffering

severe emotional stress. About 3,700 unaccompanied or separated children need urgent assistance and psycho-social care. It equally states that more than 40 per cent of clinics and health centres no longer provide vaccinations, less than 15 per cent of births are assisted by skilled attendants.

The report also reveals that aid and an emergency response plan was put in place by the Yaounde government in May 2018 targeting 160,000 people. Eight clusters had been activated as at October last year. By the end of 2018, the plan by government was only 40% per cent funded. Going by the report, planning workshops were held in Buea and Bamenda to ensure appropriate reflection on the crisis in the two English speaking regions in the plan made at the national level.

It would be recalled that last December, the WFP provided food for 29,000 Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs in Meme division in the South-West region, the first large-scale distribution since the crisis erupted.

## Yaounde II council gets new mayor

By Lizette Munchep in Yaounde

Yannick Martial Ayissi Eloundou has been elected as the new mayor of Yaounde II. He has replaced Luc Assambam who passed away on December 16, 2018. The election ceremony took place last Friday during an extraordinary session of the council. Before being elected as the Mayor of Yaounde II council last Friday, Yannick Ayissi was head of the operating budget department at the Ministry of Secondary Education.

Ayissi won by 21 votes against 16 from his only opponent, Achille Alphonse Atanga. The election was in the presence of the Senior Divisional Officer, SDO, of



Yannick Martial Ayissi Eloundou has been elected as the new mayor of Yaounde II.

Mfoundi division, Jean-Claude Tsila, and a Central committee member of CPDM, Seraphin Magloire Fouda. The local residents and the supporters of CPDM were equally present during the elections.

After the arrival of the SDO of Mfoundi, the negotiations that had been going on until then came to an end. Of the six prospective candidates, only two went through the end of the process. At the end of the

election process, an explosion of joy came from the crowd. The elected official received congratulations from the administrative authorities present.

Talking to press, the newly elected mayor promises that "I will strive to enhance the image of the council. We have deadlines within a few months. It is a question of restoring the popularity of our party to be able to overcome the next deadlines".

It would be noted that before becoming the mayor of Yaounde II council, Yannick Ayissi was a member of the YCPDM in 2010. He was elected councillor Yaounde II, where he was also as a member of the Social Committee, until his election as mayor on Friday.

## Briefs

Compiled by Mua Patrick

### Gov't clears external debts

Government is said to have cleared 100% of its external debt servicing over the first nine months of 2018, the State budget execution report from the ministry of finance has revealed.

In detail, the country dedicated 260 billion FCFA to repay its external debt, up 87% compared to the same period in 2017.

Indeed, with the launch of structuring projects as of 2012, Cameroon became heavily indebted, to the extent that the International Monetary Fund, IMF, said it was a country with a "high risk of excessive debt", in a report issued August 30, 2018.

The report said Cameroon's public debt has increased by 5% of GDP since 2016.

### Solar plant soon at Bangante hospital

A solar plant project will soon be realised at the Bagangté district hospital.

The project aims at making it possible for the hospital to be 80% power sufficient, we have learnt.

This investment is part of the "Women and Sustainable Energy" project which benefits from the technical and financial partnership of Association Internationale des Maires Francophones, Aimf, Veolia Foundation and Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie, Ademe.

Led in Cameroon by a network of women mayors headed by Célestine Keutcha Courtes, Mayor of Bagangté, who was recently appointed Minister of Housing and Urban Development, the "Women and Sustainable Energy" project also implements a solar electrification project in five Cameroonian municipalities run by women.

### Over 100 houses set ablaze in Far North

About 100 houses were razed over the weekend in the locality of Aschigachia, in Far North region, local sources have said.

Sources say the attack occurred on Friday night breaking Saturday morning but there was no loss of human life though seven persons sustained injuries.

The local population in Aschigachia, a border village with neighbouring Nigeria has since accused Boko Haram militants of carrying out the attack.

"We are very sad. It is difficult to see all our houses and property burnt down in one night and we don't know how we will lodge our families," a family head in the village said.

This is the second attack in the space of three weeks after the Boko Haram insurgents carried out a similar attack in Kolofata, still in the Far North region of Cameroon.

### Source du Pays workers kidnapped

The whereabouts of six female workers of Source du Pays, a company based in Muyuka sub of the South West region, is not known since Saturday.

They were reportedly kidnapped in Ekona on Saturday morning.

As at yesterday, no information on their whereabouts had filtered.

No demands have been made meanwhile the identities of their kidnappers has remained unknown.

### Gunmen kill man in Ndop

A man is said to have been pulled out of his family home in the town of Ndop Sunday and gunned to death.

The act was reported to have been at the instance of unknown gunmen.

It has remained unclear why he was shot dead.

## Bankruptcy of mother company threatens Makay hydroelectric dam project

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui  
in Yaounde

Reports about the probable bankruptcy of Morocco Platinum Power, is likely to stall the completion of the 400-MW Makay hydro electric dam project located in the central district of Nyong-Ekelle', in the Centre region.

According to a Business in Cameroon reporter, it has been widely reported in Morocco that the company which pioneered in the private renewable energy-based power production is about to close its doors due to its inability to raise investment capital.

Moroccan Platinum Power is "near bankruptcy due to delays in developing close financing and commence works,"

Apart from the Nyong-Ekelle project, the

Moroccan electricity suppliers are also handling a similar project in Ivory Coast. Like the one in Cameroon, that one too risks being abandoned, due to the company's bankruptcy.

"These two projects in Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire have significantly weighed on the company's cash flow. The financial issues now facing Platinum Power are such that salaries have not been paid for months and activities in Cameroonian and Ivorian units are almost at a standstill; and there is no stimulus package to date".

The only way out, sources said, is to seal a refinancing agreement with its major shareholder, the New-York-based US investment fund Brookstone Partners.

As a reminder, the framework agreement for the development; financing, building and

operation of the Makay hydro plant and related transport facilities was signed July, 1, 2018 in Yaoundé between the Cameroonian government and Platinum Power.

The project was supposed to have had its execution funds by the third quarter of 2018.

The company's official data indicates that the plant's commissioning was scheduled for the end of 2020, to bring electricity to additional 6 million people. Platinum Power had already concluded, since April 2017, a power sales agreement with the local power utility Eneo.

Equally worthy of note is that Platinum Power operates a pipeline of nearly 1,000 MW of hydroelectric, wind and solar projects in Morocco, Cameroon, Ivory Coast and Senegal.

## Greenpeace Africa, Cameroonian artistes combat land grabbing

From Esther Qui  
in Douala

Over the last couple of years, large-scale acquisition of farmland in Africa, Latin America and Asia have made headlines across the world. The rippling effects of this concept, land grabbing, on local communities cannot be ignored, as they have been reduced to a beggarly position.

It is therefore against this backdrop that Greenpeace Africa, in collaboration with some Cameroonian artistes in the likes of Nsang Dilong, Freddy Kristel and Alene Menget, launched a campaign against land grabbing using videos, an online and offline petition in Cameroon.

Last month's launch in Douala came after a feasibility study in Bitye, Edjom, Ndiabessong, Zoumeyo and Ekok villages. The fate of local and indigenous communities and unregulated land grabbing in Cameroon, were very much highlighted.

Eric Ini, in charge of the campaign for the forest at Greenpeace Africa, revealed that the campaign was also aimed at combating deforestation by some multinational companies.

"Greenpeace Africa is concerned about land grabbing activities by multinationals such as SUDCAM in South Cameroon. With the launch of this campaign, we call on SUDCAM to engage in a process of conflict resolution with local and indigenous communities, and put an end to deforestation," Ini said.

Eric Ini equally added that SUDCAM must give priority to land restitution and adequately compensate displaced communities.

"The company should also publicly disclose all documents relating to its ownership, the land acquisition process and the environmental and social impact assessment it has carried out," he added.



Participants during the campaign launch in Douala

Meantime, Nsang Dilong, an actress who has made several outings on Facebook through live broadcasts and short plays, reiterated their support for such a campaign:

"The socio-economic consequences of land grabbing in our local communities are far-reaching. We lend our voices to this Greenpeace Africa campaign as Cameroonians and committed artistes. We are using videos to support local communities in the fight against the misdeeds of rubber companies such as SUDCAM, a subsidiary of Halcyon Agri. We want the customary rights to the lands of these communities to be respected and the forest on which they depend for their livelihood to be protected," Nsang Dilong said.

The videos and humorous sketches are a means used by these actors to present the serious problem of land grabbing in a way that is understandable to all Cameroonians. Also, a call is made to all Cameroonians in particular and Africans in general, to take action against the problem of land grabbing by signing an

online petition against SUDCAM, a classic case of grabbing lands.

According to Thomas Mekoulou Ondo, indigene of Edjom community, "SUDCAM's activities deprive us of our livelihood and we have no reliable institutions to handle our grievances. We are working in partnership with Greenpeace and other artistes as part of this campaign against land grabbing because we know that the more people we have, the more chances we have to make our voices heard, thereby bringing the competent authorities to act. We call on our senators and parliamentarians to enact appropriate laws to protect us from SUDCAM's activities."

It should be noted that SUDCAM has, so far, cleared more than 10,000 hectares of forest to plant rubber. As a result, some local and indigenous communities in the Southern region have been displaced and are still to be adequately compensated for their lands. There is also irresponsible land acquisition and management for natural rubber cultivation and the disregard of customary land rights, which undermines the food supply of local and indigenous communities.

## Postponed humanitarian book exhibition rescheduled for February

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui  
in Yaounde

The 13th edition of the humanitarian book exhibition, known in the French language as Association Ecole sous L'Arbre Humanitaire Internationale, has been rescheduled for February.

According to Charles-Aurelien N'Tolla, the board chairman of the association, the postponement was due to technical reasons. He said after the 2018 edition which recorded tremendous success, the technical condition of the ship added to problems at sea made it difficult for them to choose a specific date on time to hold the 2019 edition.

He regretted that the exhibition was already seven months behind time, as the boat got ready seven weeks behind time when they had begun working far ahead of time. He said apart from the technical lapses on the boat, getting

the books onboard also suffered a delay of not less than two months.

"The exhibition was supposed to take place from January 21-26 but it has now been shifted to the first week of February," the Board Chairman disclosed.

He announced that the event will take place simultaneously in Yaounde and Douala from February 1-7, with specific institutions being given pride of place. In this regard he assured that the Bertoua Higher Teacher Training College in the East region will receive a substantial donation of books; as well as Government Primary School Ngambe, in the Sanaga Maritime division of the Littoral region.

During a press conference the Board Chair granted in Douala last week he said that the chief of sector for customs in the Littoral had assured him that when the boat arrives, it will not take more than four days for it to be given

customs clearance.

The board chair added that the association has in stock more than 60 million books in varied professions and study disciplines. He however stated that the donation that Bertoua Higher Teacher Training College will receive will be made up of mostly books in the legal profession.

He added that there will be specific gifts for schools, study centres and reading rooms as well as books for home use. He recalled that so far seven schools in Cameroon had benefitted from the largesse of his association, which this year will also make contribution towards the renovation of Government Primary School, GPS Ngambe in the form of building new classroom blocks.

"Our humanitarian work has always been appreciated by UNESCO, La Francophonie and the Cameroon government," the Board Chairman prided.

# Editorial

## AFCON shame: Need for investigation

With the humiliating withdrawal of the hosting rights of the AFCON 2019 tournament from Cameroon, it is becoming clear that the shock will not go away so soon especially with another game as to who would be host of the 2021 edition still being played.

The Social Democratic Front, SDF, had announced a demonstration in Douala tomorrow to highlight the scandal of the withdrawal and put pressure on the regime to sanction those who by commission, omission or corruption contributed to the humiliation of the country from hosting an event that more than any other, unites Cameroonians.

But being initiated by an opposition party, the proscription of the peaceful protest by the Douala I administration did not come as a surprise.

Initiated by SDF Littoral Regional Chairman and Member of Parliament, Hon. Jean Michel Nintcheu, the protest, as he explained, was to arm-twist the government to sanction those who contributed to the cancellation of the hosting right which has been handed over to Egypt.

He claimed that instead of punishing the suspected culprits, who he did not name, they were instead promoted in the last cabinet shake-up.

The administrator invoked "security concerns" to ban the event, claiming it could be infiltrated by unscrupulous persons to cause disorder in the city.

Hon. Nintcheu was not the first to call for heads to roll. *The Guardian Post* had set the trend before the SDF placed it on the agenda of its last Saturday National Executive Committee, NEC, meeting in Yaounde. The party's Secretary General, Jean Tsomelou, had asserted that the withdrawal of the 2019 AFCON hosting rights from Cameroon was "a scandal of the century."

He expressed regrets that billions of FCFA had been squandered in direct contracts which he claimed had remained unfinished.

"All those who pilfered from the AFCON till have rather been promoted to senior positions in the last cabinet reshuffle...But we

think it is time to sanction all these people who dragged the country into that humiliation; it is time to punish these white collar thieves", he urged.

Another SDF legislator, Hon. Joseph Mbah Ndam, who is leader of the SDF parliamentary group, had earlier requested the Speaker of the National Assembly, Cavaye Yeguie Djibril, on December 19 last year to set up a parliamentary commission of inquiry, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the constitution and the standing orders of the National Assembly, to probe into the AFCON withdrawal debacle. But his legitimate demand fell on deaf ears.

At *The Guardian Post* we hold that it is so serious a national and international issue to be pushed under the carpet. Government apologists, good at playing the blame game, would want to fault controversial CAF President, Ahmad Ahmad, for the ignominy. The decision was unanimous by all 20 CAF executive members and they grounded it on two issues – uncompleted infrastructure that had no guarantee would be ready in time and the insecurity in the two Anglophone regions, one of which was to provide one of the venues.

Why were the facilities not ready when the rights were awarded since 2014? Did the project manager of the Paul Biya stadium in Olembe not resign under suspicious allegation of pressure demanding for kickbacks? Have there not been reports that some of the workers on the projects have had to go on strike for unpaid wages? Why are the stadiums in Cameroon more expensive

like identical ones in other African countries? How transparent was the procedure used to award such important contracts?

Those are questions that should not be lost in the bureaucratic labyrinth of silence and untouchability.

However, in the opinion of experts, they are more expensive. As the *l'Economie* newspaper reported recently, the Olembe Stadium in Yaounde and Jakoma in Douala are "the most expensive in Africa" but certainly not the best in the continent. The Olembe stadium, named after President Biya, being built by an

Italian firm, will cost 163 billion FCFA. Experts say it has identical facilities and specifications like the "mars de Bamako", Mali which cost 18 billion FCFA. That of Ebimpe in Abidjan with a capacity of 50,000 cost 50 billion FCFA.

Perhaps if the stadiums and facilities were completed in time, there would have been no need for eagle-eye scrutiny. But the high cost and delay in the execution are reasons for any patriotic Cameroonian and advocate of good governance to raise eyebrows.

In his address to the nation on New Year eve, President Biya conceded that "our country was poised to host the great African football jamboree in 2019. Based on certain information, the African Football Confederation decided that the date should be shifted. We have taken note of the decision. As I have already said, all

investments relating to the organisation of AFCON will be carried out". That adds to why the allegations being made should be investigated.

The issue is not a dead-end which is why if not investigated and the culprits made to face the excruciating sword of justice, there is no assurance that another scandal could not just be looming. The country has been beaten. A country "once beaten should be twice shy" from more scandal around AFCON 2019 and the next if nothing is done to punish the perpetrators who gave false information that Cameroon was ready when it was not.



## Community Development, Peace & Social Transformer's Notebook

By Rosaline Akah Obah\*

### Stop the killings & consider peace...

As long as people will shed the blood of the innocent there can be no peace, no liberty, no harmony between people. Slaughter and justice cannot dwell together, Isaac Bashevis Singer says.

Until we have the courage to recognise cruelty for what it is--whether its victim is human or animal--we cannot expect things to be much better in this world... We cannot have peace among men whose hearts delight in killing any living creature. By every act that glorifies or even tolerates such moronic delight in killing and the setback is felt on the progress of humanity.

To be free, we must practice freeing others. To feel loved, we must practice loving others. To have true self-respect, we must respect others. The human cycle of violence will not stop until we stop the underlying violence, the remorseless violence we commit against fellow humans.

We need never look for universal peace on this earth until men stop killing each other. The

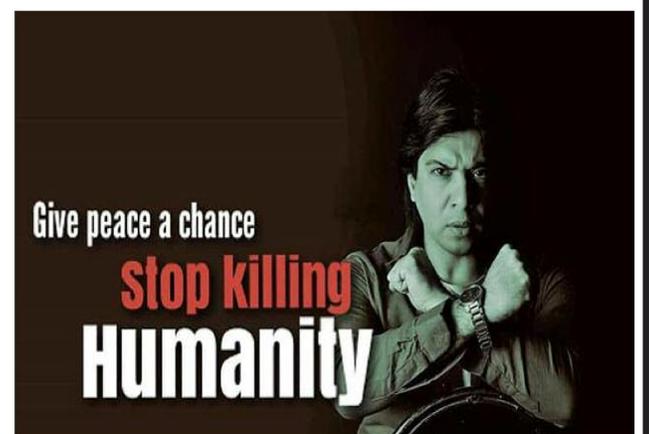
lust for blood has permeated the race thought and the destruction of life will continue to repeat its psychology, the world round, until men willingly observe the law in all phases of life, 'Thou shalt not kill.'

"We will not build a peaceful world by following a negative path. It is not enough to say we must not wage war. It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it. We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war but on the positive affirmation of peace. We must see that peace represents a sweeter music, a cosmic melody, that is far superior to the discords of war. Somehow, we must transform the dynamics of the world power struggle from the negative nuclear arms race, which no one can win, to a positive contest to harness humanity's creative genius for the purpose of making peace and prosperity a reality for all the nations of the world. In short, we must shift the arms race into a peace race. If we have a will – and determination – to mount such a peace offensive, we will unlock hitherto tightly sealed doors of hope and

transform our imminent cosmic elegy into a psalm of creative fulfilment,"- Martin Luther King, Jr.

It's high time we stopped the killings and take action for peace

#StopKilling #ConsiderPeace



\*Rosaline Akah Obah is a peace and community development journalist

## Briefs

Compiled by Mua Patrick

### Kamto-Muna coalition splits

The leader of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement, Maurice Kamto, has confirmed his coalition with Akere Muna was just for the October 7 Presidential election and both parties have since gone their separate ways.

Maurice Kamto confirmed last week during a press conference at his party's headquarter in Odza, Yaounde but did not dismiss the possibility of working with the leader of the "Now Movement" in future.

"Let it be clear, our coalition was struck in view of the Presidential election and Akere Muna himself told you this. I respect his decision (to split away after the election) but we are always ready to work with him," Maurice Kamto said.

"We don't know if he will create a political party and participate at the Municipal and Legislative elections but we remain open," Kamto added.

Kamto's outing comes weeks after Akere Muna had made clear that he entered a coalition with Kamto just for the Presidential election and distanced himself from any groups associating him with the "winning coalition" after the elections.

### Norwegian Group on refugee crisis in Cameroon

The Norwegian Refugee Council has called for Nigerian and Cameroonian authorities to provide immediate assistance to thousands of Nigerian civilians fleeing violence.

Last week, UNHCR reported that more than 9000 Nigerians had crossed to Cameroon where they were denied refuge following a deadly attack against the town of Rann, in northeast Nigeria.

The forced return of civilians to areas of violence, the Council has said, is a breach of international and regional agreements, such as the Tripartite Agreement, that guarantee the protection and human rights of forcibly displaced persons.

The authorities on both sides of the border should provide necessary assistance and safety for the displaced people and allow aid workers to assist, the Group has urged.

### Kenyans nail Biya over late condolence message to counterpart

President Paul Biya on Monday, January 21, extended his condolences to Kenya and President Uhuru Kenyatta over the recent terrorist attack at 14 Riverside but his message was not received kindly by some Kenyans.

Some slammed him for sending his message too late while others asked him to put his house in order first.

"I extend my heartfelt condolences to President Uhuru Kenyatta over the terrorist attack at the DusitD2 hotel and office complex in Nairobi.

"I wish strength and fortitude to the victims' families, loved ones and everyone affected, as well as health and speedy recovery to those injured," read a post on Biya's official Facebook page.

One denizen reminded him that it has been almost a week since the incident at dusitD2 and Kenyans have already gone back to work.

The attack at 14 Riverside claimed 21 lives but the number could have been higher were it not for the swift response by security personnel.

### Nigerian court adjourns case concerning 'Amba' leaders

The Federal High Court in Abuja, Nigeria has adjourned the case between the ten Ambazonia leaders and the Nigerian government to January 28.

The case was supposed to be opened Monday but was postponed following the absence of the sitting judge, the defense counsel said.

The case was adjourned to the disappointment of family members who had come from the various states in Nigeria to follow the hearing.

Other teachers' trade unions in Nigeria where the leaders were members were also present in court and have promised to mobilise for the next hearing.

Lawyers of the detained Ambazonia leaders seized the court to order their return to Nigeria where they were arrested a year ago and extradited to Cameroon.

The lawyers say their clients are not Cameroonians and should be returned to Nigeria, their place of residence where their matter can be heard in a civil court.

# SDF vows to disrupt future elections until Anglophone crisis resolved

By Dilian Welleng  
in Yaounde

The Social Democratic front, SDF, has vowed to vehemently disrupt any forthcoming elections until government resolves the ongoing crisis in the North West and South West regions.

The resolution was made in a statement signed by the national chairman of the party, Ni John Fru Ndi, on January 19.

The statement recalled that President Biya has in his recent speeches deliberately demonstrated total disdain for the aggrieved population of the affected regions, sticking instead to his resolve of "neutralising" the separatist fighters, against overwhelming calls for frank, broad-based and inclusive dialogue.

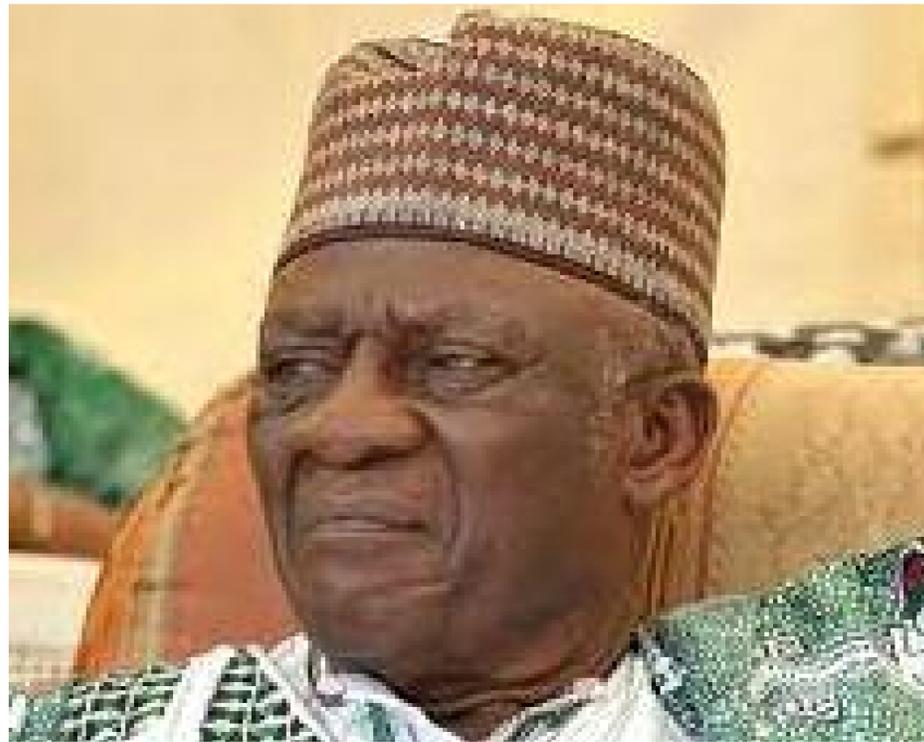
In the same statement, the opposition party chairman said the party's current stand should serve as an ultimatum to Biya if he ever wishes to organise any elections in the country.

It should be recalled that during the recent council of ministers meeting, President Paul Biya urged the Dion Ngute government to start preparing for municipal, legislative and regional elections expected to take place later this year.

The SDF chieftain, in reiterating his earlier call, urged President Biya to grant general amnesty to all those in prison, on exile or in hiding in connection to the socio-political unrest in the two Anglophone regions.

The chairman further called on the head of state to announce a ceasefire and convene dialogue with the relevant parties so as to find lasting solutions to the lingering crisis.

In the statement, the SDF went ahead to remind Biya that the crisis in



John Fru Ndi: SDF National Chairman

the North West and South West regions is unique and should not be compared to that of Boko Haram in the Far North.

"...Biya should create a national commission of truth, reconciliation, reconstruction and reintegration of victims of the crisis..." said Fru Ndi, before urging the president of the republic to "...put in place a constitutional commission to, among other things, determine the form of the state, a consensual electoral code, and an acceptable election organising body".

"Failure to do this, the SDF will vehemently oppose any attempt to organise further elections in this country under the present chaotic socio-political environment. This is because

the environment is deliberately created to facilitate election rigging", Fru Ndi charged.

Fru Ndi's statement concluded by recalling efforts so far made by the party in contributing to resolving the Anglophone crisis, but regretted that all such moves had been met with government's unbridled intransigence.

The statement cited some of the activities to include direct meetings with aggrieved Anglophones in the North West and South West as well as meetings with some relevant stakeholders which brought out a blue print on how the worsening humanitarian crisis in the two English-speaking regions can be brought to an end.

## Empty blood banks:

# Young Cameroonian introduces online donation to help hospitals

By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui  
in Yaounde

A 22-year-old Cameroonian by name Melissa Bime, has launched a project to encourage people donate blood through online contacts in an effort to address acute shortage of blood in hospitals around the country, which banks are said to be virtually empty.

Dr. Iddi Faisal, a general medical practitioner who works in Yaounde and has benefitted from Bime's service, disclosed that Cameroonians donate only 90,000 pints of blood every year whereas up to 400,000 pints are required to meet demand in hospitals across the country. The Medic also regretted that neither at the Ministry of Public Health nor in hospitals can one find data on blood stocks.

Bime recalled that as a nursing school student in Cameroon, she remembers watching helplessly as a mother struggled to find a blood match for her 5-year-old daughter, Rita. After three days of fruitless searching, Rita died. A week later, Bime discovered that a hospital 20 minutes away had had the right blood all along. "At the time I didn't think much of it," says Bime, 22. "I was too used to seeing people die."

Rita's death may be a tragic statistic, but thanks to Infuss — the online blood bank Bime started in December 2017 — there is now hope for residents of Cameroon's two largest cities. In the year since its launch, Infuss' motorbikes have delivered more than 2,300 bags of blood (sourced from three existing blood banks) to patients at 23 hospitals in Yaounde and Douala. In 2019, Bime hopes to "double or even triple" these numbers, while also expanding to other cities in Cameroon and leveraging Infuss' database of donors to establish a physical blood bank owned by Infuss.

"Access to blood before Infuss was a dilemma for both physicians and patients," says Dr. Iddi.

Bime is an unlikely hero. Growing up with her lawyer mom and an older sister in the regional capital of Bamenda, she was surrounded by female role models. Her mother worked hard to ensure her daughters received the best education possible, but the family was "never rich" due to the number of pro bono cases she took on. "Mom was really content to be paid with a bag of beans," says Bime, explaining that while her mother's efforts didn't make much of an impression at the time, the concept of social enterprise "must have got implanted in my head."

Blood banks in Cameroon will not release blood — no matter how dire the circumstances — until two or three replacement donors have been found, so Bime had to assemble a database of donors she could leverage (they're up over 800 blood donors and growing). Once she'd convinced a few hospitals to sign on, she turned to implementing the logistics (setting up databases, kitting out motorbikes, training drivers) and getting the word out to doctors throughout the city.

Raising the seed money was a family affair. In Cameroon, Bime explains, you can buy a motorcycle taxi and contract a driver who has to bring back an agreed amount of money at the end of each day. "In my case, it was about \$10. My sister bought two motorcycles, so I was making \$20 every day ... After about six months I had made about \$5,000 from the motorcycles, and that was the capital I used to start Infuss. I converted the motorcycles from serving as transportation and used them for blood delivery."

Infuss has cut the average time it takes for a patient to receive a transfusion from "about a week," according to Faisal, to one hour. Well worth the \$20 service fee they charge over and above the going rate of \$40/pint.

# How illegal Chinese mining destroys livelihoods, fuels conflicts in Cameroon

By Solomon Tembang  
in Yaounde

Nagbayanga Valentin, a widow in her late thirties, sits on the earth floor of her thatched two-roomed house she shares with her four young children in Haya Haya, a mining encampment with about 2,000 inhabitants in Longa Mali village of Betare Oya sub division, some 200 kilometres from Bertoua, headquarters of Cameroon's East region.

Dirty pots, pans and other old household paraphernalia are strewn all over the tiny house. Outside, the laughter and chatter of her children and those of other neighbours is audible enough as they play a local game, virtually ignorant of the weighty problems their mother, and the community, are going through.

Poverty is discernible in the community whose inhabitants live in thatch houses, but just metres away, Chinese machines are rumbling as they mine away millions of francs CFA in gold.

Conflicts had, over the years, been brewing between the local population and Chinese miners until it boiled over on November 15, 2017 when there was a confrontation and a Chinese pulled out a gun, shot and killed a local. The population rose up in anger and beat the Chinese to death. Since then, relations between the local community and the Chinese miners have been frosty as tension continues to simmer.

"My husband was shot and killed by a Chinese and now I am left with four children to fend for", Nagbayanga Valentin says. "Things are not easy as life is becoming very difficult in this community. The little money my husband made from artisanal mining is no longer there and so I wonder how I am going to feed these children or even send them to school".

Her husband, Issa Paul, was shot dead by a Chinese whom the locals simply knew as Bouboul.

Beleke Andre, brother to Issa Paul, was there when it all happened.

"We were seven of us digging in our hole. The Chinese also had their hole not far from ours. But later, the Chinese, maybe realising that our hole was producing more gold, insisted that they must dig where we were already working. As they continued to insist, we said they should wait since we had our 'stones' in the hole and when we take them out, they can go ahead," Beleke Andre says.

"They wanted to pay us money to take over where we had been digging. But we said since we were seven of us, they should wait until we agree among ourselves before we can strike any deal with them. That is how we continued digging to take out our 'stone'. But the Chinese, whom many villagers simply called Bouboul, we don't even know his real name, was insisting on closing the hole. When we did not allow him close the hole, he called the Chinese camp, which is close by, on the telephone".

"Three Chinese then arrived at



Locals carrying out artisanal mining in eastern Cameroon



Panning for gold poses little threat to the environment



Semi-mechanised mining posing threats to the environment



Deadly pools left behind by Chinese miners



Locals live in poverty while Chinese mine away billions in gold

the scene. At this moment, Bouboul went to one of their vehicles, took a gun and shot three times in the air. When he came close, I am the person he wanted to shot. As my pregnant wife was also at the scene, I went and stood behind her".

"Bouboul then fired another shot in the air and then shot at my elder brother, Issa Paul. As my brother died, we overpowered the Chinese and took the gun. All I remember is the population coming out in anger and beating the Chinese who later died".

The case has been dragging at the judiciary and the chances for them to find justice over the death of their loved one, Beleke says, are very slim. He says at the court, the Chinese maintain that if they have to pay for the death of the Issa Paul, the locals also have to pay for the death of the Chinese.

"But we are not the ones who started the conflict. He was the one who first shot and killed our brother," Beleke laments.

## 'This land is our livelihood'

Some of the locals have been mining in this area for decades after inheriting the land from their forefathers in accord with local traditional law (droit coutumier), only for them to get up one day and see Chinese brandishing a mining concession on their land.

This was the case with Doko Habraham in Colomine, some 100 kilometres from Betare Oya.

"This land is our livelihood. If taken away from us and given to the Chinese we won't have any other means of earning a living. My ancestors have been on this land for several decades. I went to where my mine was one day, and it was like I wasn't even on my own land anymore," Doko says.

"No one came to tell me that my land was going to be taken over by Chinese miners and if I was going to be compensated for the said land," he adds.

Doko Habraham says he later found out that the Chinese miners who were working with machines on his land had bought a concession from a Cameroonian who had secured exploration rights in the area. Doko has no land title and so he is no match to the Chinese miners, whom, he claims, "could easily buy their way around".

## How the Chinese miners came here

For years, the local people had been mining for gold on their ancestral lands, through artisanal means using spades, buckets and hard work until the Chinese companies arrived with excavators and powerful pumps and are now practicing semi-mechanised mining. The Chinese have been devastating the environment and the locals say they've received no compensation.

The Chinese are in brisk business, mining away hundreds of millions of francs CFA in gold. But those bearing the brunt of the mining bonanza are the native communities who continue to

live on the edge of the precipice.

But how did the Chinese come about carrying out semi-mechanised mining in this area? Justin Chekoua of Non Governmental Organisation, Forêt et Développement Rurale, FODER, working in the area, explains that semi-mechanised mining came to the East region of Cameroon in early 2000 when the Cameroon government was planning to build the Lom Panga hydroelectric dam. He says when the government realised that a lot of gold would be lost in the area that was going to be flooded by the dam, it set up what was christened "Programme to Save Gold in Lom Panga Dam Area".

Cameroon's mining code does not allow non-nationals to acquire mining authorisation for concession areas. Chekoua explains that because the artisanal miners would have been slow and not be able to save all the gold before the dam floods the area, the government allowed semi-mechanised mining to be carried out.

"But since the nationals carrying out artisanal mining did not have the expertise and finance to save the gold speedily through semi-mechanised mining, the government said Cameroonians could enter into technico-financial partnership with expatriates. That is how many Cameroonians brought in expatriates, majority of who are Chinese, to come into partnership," Chekoua discloses.

The authorities conceded the move would violate mining laws but said the situation was an emergency.

"However, instead of going into technico-financial partnership with expatriates for the semi-mechanised mining, Cameroonians are now instead getting the authorisation and selling to the Chinese. They are now selling mining space to Chinese," Chekoua regrets.

He elucidates that because the area around the Lom Panga Dam was going to be flooded, the semi-mechanised miners were not compelled to carry out any environmental impact assessment. They were also not forced to fill the holes their activities left behind.

"The mining code specified that each individual could have a maximum of four hectares to mine in...and instead of staying within the area where gold was to be saved, those who are acquiring authorisation and their Chinese 'partners' have gone beyond this zone," Chekoua adds.

## Environmental hazards

Since the Chinese miners went beyond the area to save the Lom Panga gold, the environment and local communities have continued to suffer.

"Previously when the locals were carrying out artisanal mining, there was little or no impact on the environment. But since the Chinese came in with semi-mechanised mining, the environment has been devastated," Chekoua says.

Many waterways have been

Continued on page 7

disrupted and streams silted.

"Because the Chinese need a lot of water to carry out the semi-mechanised mining, they have deviated almost all the streams or rivers into their mining camps and local communities downstream have no water for household and other uses," Justin Chekoua notes, adding: "In some areas such as Longa Mali and Ngoe Ngoe, mud from the activities of the Chinese miners has silted streams and rivers. The use of mercury by the Chinese miners has also polluted streams and rivers. Fish and other aquatic animals are dying. Oil and petrol from the Chinese machines are also polluting streams".

Pristine forest is also being cut down to make way for the Chinese mining activities. Loud, vibrating sounds of excavators accompany the back-breaking work of the mine workers, just a kilometre outside of Colomine. Covered in mud, they sway around in the mining pits as they pan for gold, dig more holes, or use the noisy machines on the edges of the mining pit to fill trucks with quantities of the gold-containing mud that will later be processed with mercury. At this exact spot, there used to be a forest, but many layers of vegetation have already been removed by miners.

There is no possible coexistence between mining and forests, says Justin Chekoua. "All lands dedicated to mining, and in particular to surface mining, will be a terrain where forests are sacrificed because it requires the removal of large amounts of land. This sacrifice of the forests represents an irreparable loss of natural capital."

### 'Misery is our potion'

Despite all the millions of francs CFA being mined away in gold, the inhabitants of these localities are living in abject poverty and lack the most basic of social amenities. Hamadgoulde Bouba, the traditional head of the Haya Haya settlement, is not a happy man.

"We don't have water. Where they throw their sand was where we used to fetch water. Now they have blocked it. Other places we have created to get water they have also destroyed them. Even the road is deplorable. Their trucks have completely destroyed the roads. In fact, all we know here is misery," he laments.

"They do very little for the population. And to worsen things sometimes, we go to our farm only to discover that the farms have disappeared, with the soil having been dug by the Chinese and taken away to their camp to wash and get gold. How do we live if our farms are being destroyed?"

Many inhabitants of Haya Haya refused to talk on record, saying they were afraid of being victimised by the Chinese. The Chinese have instilled fear in the inhabitants of Haya Haya. One simply said "the fear of the Chinese here is the beginning of wisdom".

### Deadly open tombs

The semi-mechanised mining activities of the Chinese have left behind deep holes which have been filled with water. The localities of Longa Mali, Colomine,

Ngoe Ngoe, Ngoura, Ngoyla, Batouri, Yokadouma are littered with such holes, some as deep as 50 metres, many of which have been filled with water.

People are said to have lost their lives in these deadly tombs. According to statistics from FODER, at least 47 persons died in 2017 on the former mining sites. About 250 mining sites opened between 2012 and 2014 have not been filled, the NGO added.

Cattle and other livestock have also been falling into these holes, locals say. "We cannot even rear livestock because they will all fall into the holes Chinese miners have dug everywhere. The situation is very pathetic", Hamadgoulde Bouba says.

### No compensation

According to Cameroonian law, the mining companies are supposed to pay compensation to local people who owned or were making a living on the land. But Pilo Michel, traditional ruler of Longa Mali, says there is nothing to write home about the activities of Chinese miners in the area.

"They have not done anything good for my village that they are exploiting. The state of the road to the village is bad. I don't know of what use the Chinese are here," he says. "Since the days of my parents before I took over as chief, the Chinese have done nothing here in terms of corporate social responsibility; not a school, not a health centre, not water supply, not even to repair the road they use to evacuate what they mine here. They have instead continued to destroy sources of livelihood in our village. They continue to exploit us. Longa Mali village is rich in minerals but has nothing to show for it," Pilo regrets.

"Even the holes they dug, they have not refilled. Water has filled these holes and they are posing real danger to the community. People have been dying in those holes". Pilo says the government of Cameroon must force the Chinese miners to construct schools, health centres, repair the road and provide potable water to the community and even build a market.

As for the open tombs they have left, Pilo says: "they should fill them. We insist on the Chinese closing these holes they have dug, if not, humans and livestock will continue falling into them".

### 'We may be rendered homeless'

Rajahu Alahji Oumarou, a 21-year-old mother of two children stands at the doorway of her three-room thatched house in the Zirgene neighbourhood of Colomine, lost in thought. Just 10 metres away, bulldozers belonging to Chinese miners are working in a huge hole. While the excavators continue to dig the over 70 metres deep hole, trucks stand by ready to be loaded with the soil which is carted away to the Chinese miners' camp to be washed for gold.

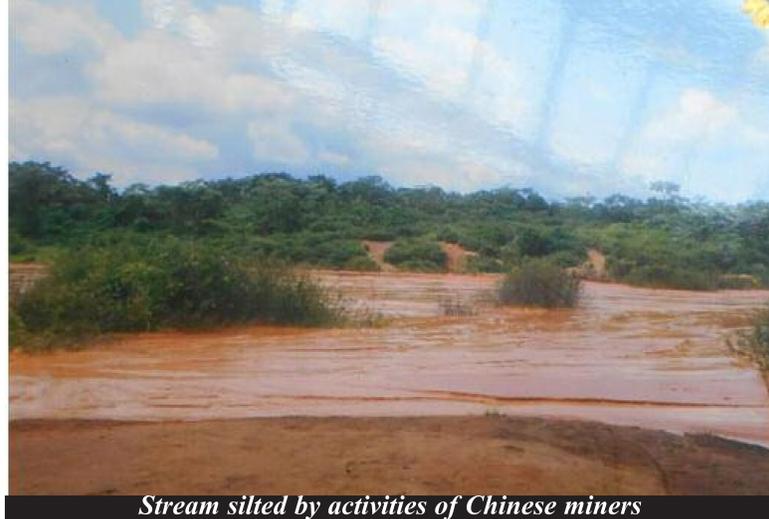
Like others who make up the 71 households in Zirgene, Rajahu's forefathers lived in the area for decades. But now she says they, mostly of the Mbororo minority ethnic group, are about to be rendered homeless. Their



Roads deteriorating in the mining areas



A community about to be rendered homeless by Chinese miners



Stream silted by activities of Chinese miners



Cow stock in one of the holes left by Chinese miners



Issa Paul shot dead by a Chinese miner

thatched houses, which now perch on the edge of the large hole, may end up falling in. To add to this, children and even adults run the risk of falling into the hole which may end up being

filled with water.

"I am not happy seeing this. My child almost fell into the hole the other day. If I was not vigilant to rush and hold him from behind, it would have been a different story," Rajahu recounts.

Oumoul Abdou, a 27-year-old mother of four laments; "we are living in fear as we stare death in the face on a daily bases. There are several of these holes surrounding where we live. We can no longer use our latrine because a hole dug by the Chinese miners has 'cut it off'. They destroyed our groundnut farm when they dug one of the holes".

### 'This hole belongs to us'

As I talked to Rajahu and Oumoul, I hear loud arguments coming from where the bulldozers were digging. When I got there, I found out that the machines have stopped working. A group of local youths have gathered around and are in a heated argument with the workers of the Chinese miners. Some of the youth had used logs of wood to block the loaded trucks from leaving and others from coming in.

Some of the youth were claiming that they have been carrying out artisanal mining here to earn a living and now, the Chinese have come with machines and want to take over the place. "If they want to continue their activity here, they must compensate us financially. This area belongs to us," some of the youths shouted.

The situation, which almost led to a brawl, was only brought under control when an elderly man from the Colomine community, after negotiation with the Chinese through their interpreter, assured the youth that they will be compensated the next day. But one of the youngsters told me such promises have been made severally but never kept.

Such clashes between the Chinese and the locals, Honore Sirgho, a local vigilante leader says, are the order of the day.

On the opposite end of the town, some pupils of Government Primary School Colomine are playing football behind one of the classrooms. But less than 60 metres away is a hole, about 30 metres deep, that has been dug by miners. Some of the pupils say they are aware of the danger the hole poses, but have learned to live with it. Officials of the school, which counts some 1,400 pupils, were not available for comment.

### Deathtraps

The mining activities have also left behind deathtraps in some areas like Ngoe Ngoe, a village in East Cameroon with about 2,600 inhabitants. In the night of January 1, 2017, nine people were killed in an abandoned mining site when they went in search of gold. The site collapsed and buried them in 33 feet of earth in the mine excavated by Lu and Lang, a Chinese mining company banned from operating in Cameroon in April because it lacked a license.

Yaya Moussa, head of Ngoe Ngoe village, recounts the tragedy.

"The Chinese arrived with [Cameroonian] law enforcement to drive the villagers out of the mine *Continued on page 8*

sites *Continued from page 7* to better exploit our resources," he explained. "So the villagers were forced to come in the night, in the absence of the Chinese, to extract gold and find food for their families. It was during one of these nocturnal outings that the earth fell on them."

However, the deaths in this particular gold mine in Ngoe Ngoe have not deterred locals from venturing into it. When I visited the area in October 2018, some young men could still be seen digging in the ill-fated pit in search of the precious stone.

Oumarou Haman, president of the Ngoe Ngoe vigilante group, says the lure for gold still attracts people to the mine site, which is yet to be rehabilitated.

"If nothing is done to refill this site, I fear that many will still die there," he says.

### Students drop school to chase gold

The lure of the gold is also having a toll on school attendance in the East region of Cameroon. Justin Chekoua says many students are dropping out of school to go to the sites that have not been refilled or closed by the Chinese miners to dig for gold. Women, some pregnant and others with babies on their backs, are also attracted to the mining sites.

Government authorities have told locals to stop digging in the abandoned sites. But the need for income is so high that many ignore the order, including kids who should be in school.

Yves Bertrand Awounfack, Senior Divisional Officer of the Lom and Djerem Division, sometime ago, launched a drive during which he went from village-to-village asking locals to leave gold mines alone and for parents to return their child miners to school.

Vincent Atangana, a Cameroonian official at Chinese mining firm EXXIL, blames parents for allowing their kids to work in the mines. He argues Chinese mining has helped develop the area.

He says many houses are being constructed with modern materials. Several years ago, fuel was sold in cans but today, says Atangana, there are fuel stations. He says these developments are coming when gold mining is still at a working stage - they will do even more when it reaches the industrial level.

### Billions of francs CFA in gold lost

Under Cameroonian law, minerals in the ground belong to the state. The state grants concessions to mining companies in return for 15 percent of the gold they extract.

This 15 percent is supposed to be paid to a state-owned institution known as Artisan Mining Support and Promotion Framework with French acronym CAPAM. But Justine Chekoua of FODER says some of the miners declare less than what they mine, causing the Cameroon government losses in billions of francs CFA. On January 8, 2018, CAPAM declared that in 2017, it channeled a little more than 255 kg of gold to Cameroon's Ministry of Finance.

### 'Sad situation'

Nyassi Tchakounte Lucain, Executive Director of Transparency International Cameroon says they have read several reports from NGOs in the area about the deadly holes left behind by the miners.

"It is a very sad situation. We hope that while undergoing a deep study on the situation especially on the issue of transparency, we would be able to come back with concrete information and results about what is actually going on and what we can propose as a civil society organisation," he says.

As to holes left behind by miners Nyassi says "if verified, I will call on the government of Cameroon to ensure that the laws are applied for these holes to be filled because the government is the guarantor of the security of humans and properties".

### 'We can't encourage destruction of environment'

Meanwhile, Ndouop Njikan Ibrahim of Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, EITI Cameroon Permanent Secretariat, says: "I have myself been to some of these areas where semi-mechanised mining is being carried out by the Chinese and I discovered that the activities are very harmful to the environment".

"EITI has the objective to better the lives of the population and we cannot do so by encouraging the destruction of the environment. So we persuade mining enterprises to respect the norms of environmental protection. We regret the fact that the local authorities in these areas, who should be acting like watchdogs, are not doing so," Ndouop says.

"It is also regrettable that most of the Chinese miners are not acting through formal and identifiable enterprises in a direct relationship with the state. Most of them have got the authorisation to act on the field after having bought the license that an individual happened to have acquired from the administration. Now that the license acquired by an individual has been sold to another person, who is responsible for the environmental destruction? That is the issue that should be handled by the state. EITI Cameroon can only act like a whistleblower to indicate that there is a problem here that should be resolved or it may deteriorate the living condition of the local populations".

On the losses the government suffers financially Ndouop says: "the only way the government can control quantities of gold mined is to go into commercial relationships with formal, identifiable companies on the field. The government should create and multiply control instances".

While some of the Chinese miners who were suspended by the government have continued in deviance, Ndouop blames this on "laxity" on the part of administrative authorities.

"The Chinese are doing this in complicity with Cameroonians," Ndouop states. "Something really has to be done in the semi-mechanised mining sector as it was done with the petroleum sector".

### Need for strict regulation

On her part, Evelyne Tsagué,

Africa Co-Director of Natural Resource Governance Institute,

says: "from the work that we have been doing, we know that the semi-mechanised mining sector in Cameroon has a lot of problems; the problem of impact, regulation, problem of effectiveness of the rule in place. There is the need to strictly regulate activities in the semi-mechanised mining sector".

"There is a huge gap between the mining rule and what is practiced. The government should ensure that if a regulation already exists to guide activities of people in the mining sector, this should be respected to the letter. Where there is no rule, the government should pass a law so that there is a kind of policy and regulation in this sector," Tsagué notes.

### Gov't moves to stem the tides

However, the government of Cameroon has not been lying on its laurels. It has taken several steps to stem the tides as far as the activities of the Chinese miners are concerned.

In April 2018, the Minister of Mines, Industries and Technological Development suspended the activities of three Chinese mining companies for non-compliance to regulations.

In a statement suspending Hong Kong, Peace Mining and Lu and Lang companies, the minister said they were no longer allowed to perform gold mining activities in the East region of Cameroon, and that their officials have been asked to pack their bags and leave.

It appeared from the statement that Hong Kong Company did not have documents authorising it to carry out mining activities while Peace Mining and Lu and Lang companies' suspension was linked to a series of conflicts recorded between their employees and local populations which resulted in deaths, in addition to the non-respect of the environment, according to the statement.

Cameroonian government mining officials said they are trying to address the situation by using drones to investigate claims of other illegal mines, according to two officials who asked to remain anonymous because they did not have permission to speak to the press. They also said most of the Chinese mining companies do not have permission to work in the country.

The divisional delegate of mines for Lom and Djerem division, East region of Cameroon, William Djoulde, says artisanal mining contributes significantly to the national economy. He says there are over 20 authorisations and with the measures being put in place, many clandestine miners will be flushed out.

"We want to professionalise this sector and send away clandestine miners who help neither the state nor the local populations. The measures are being implanted in the field," Djoulde adds.

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*(Pictures by Solomon Tembang and FODER)*



*Chinese who was lynched by the local population of Haya Haya after he shot and killed a local artisanal miner*



*Local youth blocking a truck belonging to Chinese miners after clash between the locals and the Chinese over a mining area*



*These women and children may lose their home due to mining activities*



*Pilo Michel, traditional ruler of Longa Mali says Chinese miners have devastated his community*



*Bodies of some of the nine who died after a mine collapsed in Ngoe Ngoe*



By Kiven Brenda

# Women and porn

This topic, “women and porn”, will make many of my sisters uncomfortable but we must look at it. Even as I write on this topic, I feel embarrassed but I must bring a sister to normal.

Whenever we talk about porn or pornography, some people would think that it is only meant for men. But that is not the case these days. Women watch porn as much as you can imagine. Every second, 372 people are typing the word “adult”, into search engines. One third of pornographic viewers are women. They might probably not have these naked videos of people having sex in their phones but cheap and accessible internet has made it possible for us to watch, whenever we want.

In couples, some mentors advise that they should watch porn together. This occurs when one partner is totally dormant in bed. My problem here, is not to chastise you all, following what the Bible says in Matthew 5:28. “But here is what I tell you. Do not

even look at a woman in the wrong way. Anyone who does, has already committed adultery with her in his heart”.

That’s what the Bible says but practically, how healthy is it to us women who watch porn? Most often, women are introduced to it by a boyfriend or their husbands. In your absence, she would watch these erotic scenes. What next do you think she would do when aroused? Masturbation and infidelity. Porn has increased marital infidelity by 300%. The most disturbing one is masturbation. Have you ever had that feeling that your woman is cheating on you but she doesn’t go out and she isn’t on social media? Sometimes she is just locked up in her room.

When a woman watches porn constantly, she will start masturbating. When she has gotten used to masturbation, she will pay little attention to your sexual desires. She becomes less emotionally attached. Sometimes, men can’t find the reasons for their wife’s sexual detachment from them;

little do they know that the porn they introduced her to, has led to this.

There’s this girl I know, who loved watching porn so much. She got married to this man and the guy, just within few months of their wedding, started seeing other girls. She complained about this but when her friends began asking questions, they realised she had a very dormant sexual life, due to the porn she was watching, which led to her masturbating at least five times a day. She rejected all her husband’s advances towards sex and when she actually gave in, she was just there, praying he wraps it up and go.

Sometimes, it is like a drug. You become so addicted to it that you would need a divine intervention to stop. My sisters, if you are that one who is already addicted to watching porn, get help. If you are that one who is masturbating five times a day, seek a divine intervention. The best way to get rid of your problems is by talking it out with an elder.



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Ref.CBC/DHS-L/19/0044  
January 3,2019

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Director of the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Service is pleased to announce to the general public that CBC Health Services will be hosting the 9th Africa Christian Health Associations Platform (ACHAP) Biennial International Conference at the Mont Febe Hotel in Yaounde, Cameroon from February 25 to March 1, 2019 under the theme “**Re-Igniting Primary Health Care: The Role of ACHAP.**”

ACHAP International Conferences are biennial events that bring together health care providers and stakeholders from African countries to reflect on regional and global health issues and priorities that have an impact on countries and communities served by Faith-Based Health Institutions. ACHAP conferences provide the opportunity for the health community to present posters, abstracts and to hold panel discussions around key health topics.

Participants are expected from 39 other African countries at this year’s conference which has four (4) sub-themes as follows:

1. Promoting Faith-Based Organizations-Government partnerships at country, sub-regional and regional levels
2. Strengthening Faith-based health systems of care that include Primary Health Care towards Universal Health Care
3. Exploring financing models for Primary Health Care
4. Increasing visibility and advocacy leverage.

Interested Faith-based, Private and Government Health Institutions are all encouraged to either submit abstracts, posters or to register for this Conference. The deadline for abstract submission is January 10, 2019.

For registration, submission of abstracts or any other information, you can reach the Organizing Committee through any of the following contacts:

Tel: (+237) 681 366 150 / 675 749 190 / 690 832 585 / 677 002 395

Email: achap2019@cbchealthservices.org or conference@africachap.org

Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, MPH, PHD  
Director of CBC Health Services



www.africachap.org

www.cbchealthservices.org



SOCIETE NATIONALE DE RAFFINAGE S.A.  
NATIONAL REFINING COMPANY LTD.

## OBITUARY



THE MANAGEMENT OF SONARA ANNOUNCES WITH DEEP REGRET, THE DEATH OF MR ABOUBAKAR MBARBE, OFFICE HEAD FOR NEW WORKS IN THE MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT. THE DEATH OCCURRED ON 13/01/2019, AFTER A PROTRACTED ILLNESS.

BORN ON 21 MARCH 1969 IN DSCHANG, MR ABOUBAKAR MBARBE WAS RECRUITED IN SONARA ON 9 MARCH 2000.

MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE.

*(Signature)*  
The General Manager  
Jean-Paul SIMO NJONOU



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# Nexttel crisis: Vietnamese's claim of 210 billion FCFA investment put to question

In a correspondence addressed to the Senate of Cameroon, the National Assembly, the Presidency of the Republic, the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, the Telecommunications Regulatory Agency, the Minister of External Relations, and published in *Jeune Afrique* and many other newspapers in November 2018 the company Viettel Global Investment JSC declared:

"The exhibitor has made the investment and the most important work, namely the technical installation and implementation of a reliable and costly telecommunications network throughout the Cameroonian territory under the license obtained. Thus, as of December 31, 2017, Viettel Global had invested in this partnership a staggering amount of FCFA two hundred and ten billion (210,000,000,000 FCFA) in the form of private equity, in addition to various other commercial and media expenses".

This unilateral and boisterous statement makes more than one Cameroonian smile because:

How do you understand that a partner buys the equipment, takes care to hide the purchase invoices and the places of supply from his partner, and comes to declare in the media a sum which he could not justify to his partner despite his multiple reminders for this purpose?

How do you understand that a serious partner refuses an amicable expertise of his purchases requested by his partner?

How do you understand that a serious associate is fiercely opposed to an expert measure ordered by the court to have the real value of the equip-

ment bought by him?

How do you understand that a partner, instead of talking to his partner about his investments, instead tells the media and the authorities in place, not his partner?

How do you understand that the Vietnamese partner of VIETTEL Cameroun SA took it upon itself to hide sources of supply and purchase invoices?

Do serious partners need the Judge's intervention to make an assessment of their contributions?

Do the 210 billion FCFA supposedly invested by Vietnamese correspond to the reality?

How do you understand that a serious partner charges his partner hundreds of tons of totally useless equipment?

A visit to the company's warehouses in Douala (fougerole) Yaoundé (manguier) and all the stores in all the chief places of regions to make it visible.

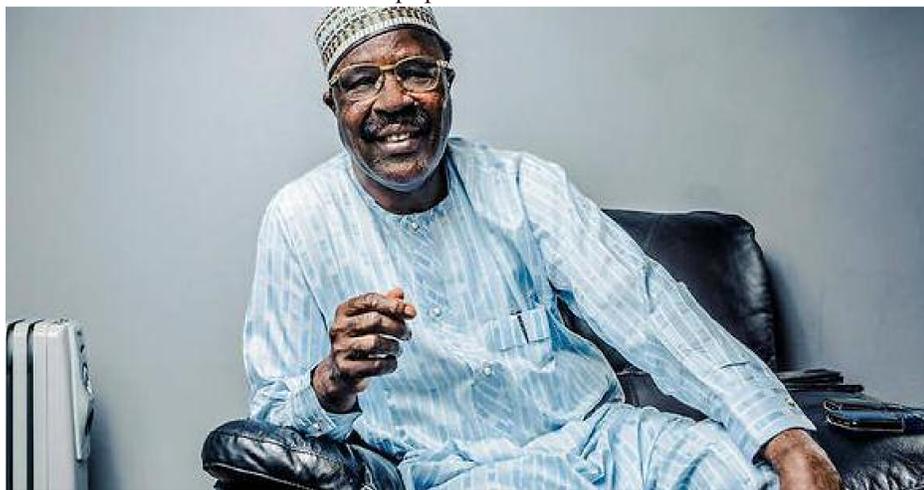
Instead of saying that they have invested 210 billion FCFA, it is appropriate for Vietnamese to recover this useless equipment billed to the company.

How do you understand that very old generators are delivered to the company by this so-called serious partner?

Only the expert report ordered by the President of the Douala Court of First Instance and entrusted to the audit firm of international reputation, KPMG, edify the many curious.

From a laymen's point of view, it will seem really curious that these investments amount to even 50 billion FCFA.

# Pictorial of over-costed & unused equipment by Nexttel Vietnamese partners



Baba Danpullo: Cameroonian Nexttel partner



Vietnamese generals & partners of Nexttel

# Pictorial of over-costed & unused equipment by Nexttel Vietnamese partners





# Awing Central Cooperative Credit Union gets new "Confidence-Building" Board of Directors



The Awing Central Cooperative Credit Union Limited, AWICCUL, has elected what it describes as a new "Confidence-Building" board of directors.

This was during the cooperative's 50th Annual General Meeting, AGM, that saw the ground-breaking participation of over 700 members on January 20, 2019 at Mankon, Bamenda. The meeting was held at the union's Tower Building at Fon's Street.

Following the election, described by members as transparent, Dr. Ndam Nguhmbi Jonas was voted new President of the union. He will be closely assisted by Tata Nchang Ngomande as Vice President.

Other members of the Board include; Ndepuh Emmanuel, Nkwewo Christian, Ngongeh Helen, Alangeh Leberatus, Ndah Justice Nkezi, and Frou Louis Alota, amongst others.

Sunday's Annual General Meeting brought together several stakeholders of the union who came from all the nooks and crannies of the country.

Apart from electing a new Board of Directors, challenges affecting the smooth functioning of the microfinance outfit since its creation 50 years ago, amongst other concerns, were at the centre of discussions.

The ongoing socio-political and economic crisis in the North West and South West regions, the members admitted, has been a big impediment to achieving the set goals of the union. False campaigns on social media against the union, high rate of delinquency amongst members, non harmonisation of budgetary lines, the non applicability of COBAC laws and CamCCUL advice, were amongst the other major concerns discussed.

Mindful of the need to break new grounds and carry AWICCUL to another level, the new man at the

helm of the institution, upon his election, vowed to adopt the virtues of humility, diligence and uprightness as the backbone of his mandate. He said he and his members will work to revamp, reinvigorate and rebuild lost confidence.

The Annual General Meeting unfolded in the presence of representatives of the Cameroon Cooperative Credit Union League, CAMCULL, an umbrella union that rallies most credit unions in Cameroon. They were there to ensure that deliberations went on smoothly.

His Royal Majesty Fon Fozo'o II of Awing, accompanied by his notables who graced the occasion, urged the freshly elected officials, especially branch managers, to identify and bring to book all recalcitrant debtors. This, according to the Fon, will help check some of the difficulties the union is facing at the moment.

The credit union, it should be said, is known by most of its customers as the people's bank, where they are advised to "save regularly, borrow wisely and repay promptly".



**Dr. Ndam Nguhmbi Jonas:**  
New AWICCUL BOD president



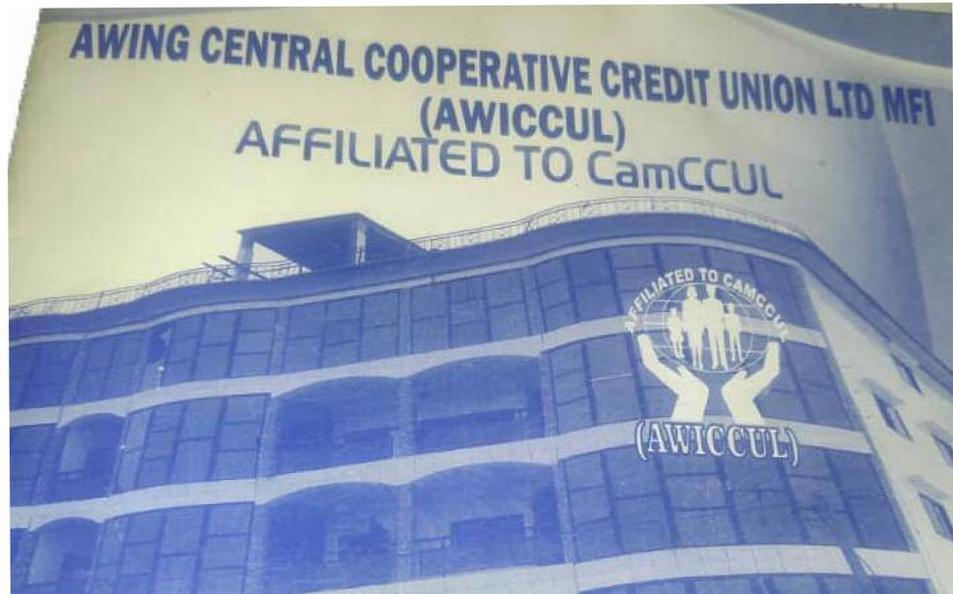
**Newly-elected AWICCUL Board Of Directors**



**Cross section of members at AWICCUL 50th AGM**



**AWICCUL members during voting of new Board Of Directors**



**AWICCUL tower building at Fon's Street-Mankon, Bamenda**



**New management board ready to be commissioned**