

BUSINESS IN CAMEROON

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FANAF 37th G.A.

P 22-23

“We challenge members to honor the claims of victims, our major role”

SOUTH-WEST REGION

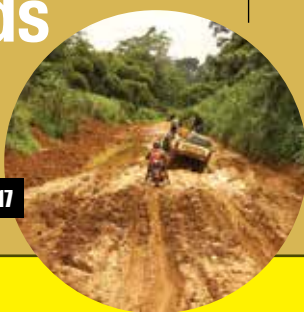
P 6-8

“Rich in fishery, forestry and wildlife resources, the region is an ecological paradise”



Roads: towards the end of the nightmare?

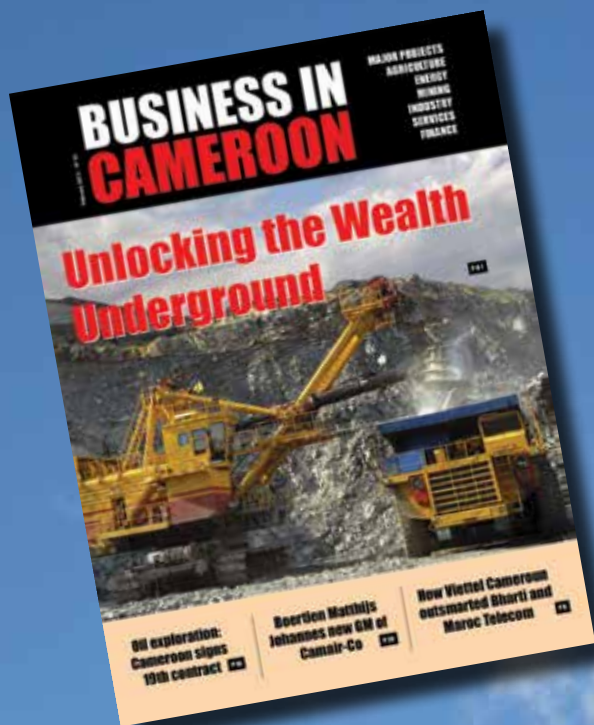
P 16-17



“200,000 formal sector jobs will be created in the year 2013”

P 18

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Colonial to contemporary



President Paul Biya's visit to France between January 27 and February 7, 2013, at the request of the influential MEDEF federation, the nation's largest union of employers, opens a new page in the economic relations between our two countries.

Until proven otherwise, France remains the first investor in Cameroon but is restricted to specific areas historically linked to colonial time. France has remained present mostly in areas it had invested in while colonial master or just after the independence of our country. It is time for France to adventure into other sectors and modernize existing investments. If there is a time for everything, then now is the time to give an opportunity to enterprises born in the new millennium to invest in Cameroon, land of promise and glory.

Consequently, it was of outmost importance for President Biya to converse with and convince French industrial tycoons that Cameroonian economy has never been in a better state, despite a difficult international environment.

French tycoons jumped on this once-in-a-blue-moon opportunity to deliberate and propose their offers to the president himself. A queue of investors in *Le Meurice* hotel, where President Biya granted audiences, a sign of confidence in Cameroon's economy.

Cameroon, a developing country, cannot compare with an economic giant like France, but can

size up inputs the French can offer in the modernization process of its economy. Employment for young qualified and ambitious Cameroonians, for instance, remains a perennial problem that investment can resolve. But in drafting agreements, selfish interest must be dumped, because otherwise new investments by French business persons will benefit only a few in Cameroon.

Years of tears and sacrifice, when Cameroon was placed under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), are now over. And, regardless of the bad publicity from individuals and organizations armed only with arrogance and untruths, Cameroon remains a manageable risk, a country with which investors that are already present want to reconnect and discover the plethora of available business opportunities.

Opportunities exist in the infrastructure, manufacturing, education, health and governance sectors, without forgetting the new agricultural policy as elaborated in the GESP (Growth and Employment Strategy Paper).

The business environment has improved in Cameroon, thanks to reforms in favor of good governance and the fight against corruption. Furthermore, reflections in communion with the private sector are underway to develop a new system of more attractive tax incentives.

Jude Viban

BUSINESS IN CAMEROON

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Dr Ernest Lytia Molua:

“There Is Huge Untapped Potential in the Agricultural Sector in the South-West Region of Cameroon”

The South-West region of Cameroon has historically been attractive to investors, from colonial explorers to modern day nationals seeking profitable investments. Dr Ernest L. Molua, an Agricultural Economist and Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine of the University of Buea, examines existing investment opportunities in the region.

Business in Cameroon: Dr Molua as a seasoned economist and someone who hails from the South West region, if you were asked to advertise the region to someone who has never been here, what would you say to leave a lasting impression?

Dr Ernest L. Molua (ELM): The South-West region represents Cameroon in miniature, with a complete package of Cameroon's ethnic and cultural diversity, and ecological riches. Home to academic institutions and colleges of colonial heritage, this region trains high quality



Dr Ernest L. Molua, an Agricultural Economist and Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine of the University of Buea

manpower. The climate is attractive to diverse agricultural commodities. The human capital and richness of the earth, coupled with abundant land resources, makes this region attractive to both large-scale and small-scale intensive agricultural businesses. Rich in fishery, forestry and wildlife resources, the region is an ecological paradise. Only a fort-minute drive from the sea and the airports of Douala, it is an ideal location for export-oriented investments, particularly in the manufacturing sector. The

near-temperate climate at the foot of Mount Cameroon and the tropical climate along its coastline make the region conducive for locating business endeavours.

BIC: It would appear that the region is rich in all sectors of the economy; can you please examine sector by sector, the benefits therein for an investor?

ELM: From the fertile volcanic soils in Fako to the rich clayey soils in Manyu division, the region is conducive to the exploitation of diverse agricultural commodities and plantation crops. The abundant rocky materials churned out from the active volcano of mount Cameroon provide abundant potential for quarry enterprises and the production of building materials and cement. The rich flora and fauna make this region a heaven for ecotourism and for anyone wishing to invest in the tourism subsector. The growing population, at a rate of more than two percent per annum, means the consumer pop-



Mountain view from Buéa.

ulation is growing steadily, as also the demand for services provided by education related enterprises, as well as in health, real-estate and leisure sectors. More importantly, the region borders the 150 million-man market of Nigeria, the strong purchasing power markets in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, and hence offers huge incentives for investors wishing to produce in-situ, yet exploit the African regional market. The training of young men and women in more than a thousand schools and colleges provides an army of quality personnel for any ICT enterprise, and the proximity to the undersea IT cable along the Atlantic Coast brings with it huge potential for IT related-businesses.

BIC: Agriculture seems to be the flag bearer of the region. The sector already has major investments in the palm, rubber banana, cocoa farms, etc. It looks like the sector is already saturated: do you share this opinion?

ELM: No, no, no. On the contrary,

there is huge untapped potential in the agricultural sector. The Germans never optimized the exploitation of land resources in the region. The state of Cameroon, through its agro-allied parastatal of the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC), has yet to maximize its full potential. Even the commercial farms in the other divisions of the region are all operating below maximum capacity. There is abundant land. The biogeographical features are excellent. There is still room for expansion. And the increased urbanization of the larger towns and satellite peri-urban localities implies potentials for the expansion of existing enterprises and room for daring entrepreneurs wishing to invest in the region.

BIC: More to the point, is there any chance of growing other crops aside from the traditional crops now being grown in region such as flowers, for example?

ELM: The climatic features of the region, from its hills and valleys,

mountain tops and marine estuaries, constitute excellent ecological conditions for horticulture, whether it is fruiticulture or floriculture. Given the proximity to the Douala Airport, flower-based enterprises would be better placed to exploit the export market and the ever-surging demands of the European market. The recent Economic Partnership agreement between Cameroon and its European partners (EPAs), and even the opportunities offered by the United States' African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA), mean that there is tacit authorization for Cameroonian exporters to exploit these lucrative markets. And no region in the country is better placed than the South-Western to exploit the huge potential for new and emerging commodities in our trade market, such as flowers.

BIC: The South-West region is a naturally blessed region, but it takes more than this to attract an investor especially available human resources. Can the region boost its labour potential?

ELM: The accessibility of the region from the other neighbouring regions, offers an impetus for the geographical mobility of labour. Some colonial enterprises already tapped into this ability to move

Rich in fishery, forestry and wildlife resources, the region is an ecological paradise.

labour. The modern Cameroonian state, further encourages this mobility, with an improved road network linking the region with other parts of the country. The teeming population and the increased scholarization in a blossoming of quality-conscious schools, colleges and professional institutions across the region translate into a sustained production of manpower. Colleges which are more than fifty years old

are getting better at training Cameroonians in the region. Any investor will be inundated with quality applicants to fill positions in their enterprises.

BIC: In order to attract investors, governments as well as local authorities play a key role. In your opinion, what are some of those commitments these authorities need to show proof of, in order to encourage the entry of investors into the South-West region?

ELM: The regular maintenance of the Limbe - Douala Highway, and the tarring of the Buea-Kum-

force. There is a surge in banking institutions in the region, some foreign-owned commercial banks, others new branches of indigenous commercial banks and microfinance institutions at the service of entrepreneurs with lucrative projects. Their presence has been facilitated by the renewed commitment by the government and the local authorities to create a favorable atmosphere for the financing of business ventures.

BIC: Before we take leave of you, the Douala seaport is an important entry-and exit-point of goods to

mendous benefit to national income, if the government amassed courage and brought to fruition the Limbe deep-sea port project. The Limbe seaport would complement the Kribi seaport, in the sense that bulky commodities exploited from the south-west, north-west and western regions could be shipped at a faster rate and a lower cost, compared to the Douala Port, which furthermore requires annual expenses for its drainage. The Limbe seaport would also supplement the Douala seaport, in that larger cargo ships could dock in Limbe, and the proximity of Limbe to Douala



ba highway are a testimony to the government's efforts to facilitate the movement of goods and people. The sustained efforts to crack down on crime and to protect lives and property through an ever vigilant police force and the rapid interventions of the military brigade headquartered at Man-o-War Bay near Limbe, show the government's resolve for the reign of peace and order. The expansion of the University of Buea, with new professionally-oriented faculties and colleges training younger citizens, means a sustained renewal of the labour

and from the South-West region, but importers and exporters could cut transport costs if the Limbe deep-sea port was developed. To this effect, the construction of this port and other infrastructure of the same nature could woe investments: what do you think?

ELM: In the past, Limbe's coastal asset was appreciated by colonialists, who shipped raw materials and imported consumer goods through this port and the satellite Tiko and Idenau wharfs. These assets in their rudimentary state still serve local communities, but could be of tre-

Limbe's coastal asset is key to the future of the south-west region

would mean an inherent synergy between these two coastal cities. The development of this asset would attract large manufacturing and ship-building enterprises. Realizing Cameroon's vision of an emerging economy by 2035, will require the construction of these seaports and wharfs, which should be allowed to operate in tandem for optimal development and to facilitate trade-assets which were the bedrock of the Asian tigers.

Interview by Jude Viban

140 Cocoa Ovens Refurbished in the South-West Region



Handed to farmers during a ceremony in Bafia, a locality in Muyuka, on February the 5th, 2013, this is part of a hands-on effort by the Cameroonian authorities to raise the awareness of and to support farmers, in a bid to help them to “adopt better farming methods,” according to the Minister of commerce, Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana.

“These rehabilitated ovens are proof of

the government’s determination to boost cocoa production, and to put cocoa of excellent quality, at the disposal of the international market,” the Minister observed.

These new ovens will absorb smoke while the cocoa is being dried. The minister also added that the move should be considered as a first step. Of the 2500 existing ovens in the South West, only 140 were refurbished. In Bafia alone, 50

ovens were renovated.

Recently, 2000 tons of cocoa from Cameroon were shipped back from European ports because of quality concerns.

The refurbishing operation constitutes a collaboration with the National Coffee and Cocoa Board.

JV

Italian Company Announces Chocolate Company in Limbe This Year



The Director General of IMSOFER SA, Giovanni Schettino, the local company of the Italian Ferrero Group, fourth cocoa buyer in the world, made the announcement after an audience with Prime Minister and Head of Government, Philemon Yang, on February the 7th, 2013.

The company’s current undertakes in Yaoundé employ approximately 200 personnel since 2005, the DG disclosed.

M. Schettino also disclosed that the group is committed to improving the living conditions of the people in the areas where it operates. The Ferrero Group has factories in South Africa, Cameroon and India. JM

IMSOFAR Plans Transformation of Tea and Coffee in Cameroon



IMSOFAR, the local unit of the Italian chocolate manufacturer, FERRERO says it has plans to transform Cameroonian coffee and tea in Cameroon. This information was contained in a press release published in the *Cameroon Tribune* on February the 20th, 2013.

Besides, there are also plans to transform Cameroon cocoa here, and the company will reinforce cooperation with cocoa farmers to secure the needed amount for their planned factory, said Giovanni Schettino, the General Manager.

Opened in Yaoundé in 2005, IMSOFAR produces Kinder, Tic Tac and Ferrero Rocher, products found in local stores and appreciated by Cameroonians, according to the press release. AE

AfDB Offers CFAF 314 Million to IRAD for Seed Production



The objective of the African Development Bank (AfDB)'s package is to enable the Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD) to boost the production of maize, cassava, yam, Irish potato, cocoa, palm oil, and fingerlings.

Expected to boost agricultural production and productivity, to reduce the cost of seeds and to alleviate poverty, the funding was raised thanks to the support of the bank's major stakeholder, Nigeria also Cameroon's leading trade partner.

In 2004, AfDB funded part of the rehabilitation and equipping of IRAD's soil laboratory and computer centre.

Meanwhile, 10 executive directors are expected in Cameroon as from March the 10th, 2013, to inspect projects the bank has sponsored in the country, AfDB's executive for the Central Africa Group Emmanuel Ngoy-tha told *Cameroon Tribune*. **JM**

Price of Irish Potatoes Soars



Potatoes on display at the Mfoundi market

In markets around Yaoundé, the price of a 120-kg bag of Irish potatoes, now sells for between CFAF 32,000 and 34,000, a sharp increment from the 24,000 francs CFA of last November. Meanwhile, buckets of 5L and 10L sell at CFAF 1,500 and 2,500 respectively, instead of 1000 and 2000 francs CFA. Worse, the heap costing CFAF 200 no longer exists.

"It's a seasonal problem: Irish potatoes are farmed mostly during the rainy season," explains the Coordinator of the government-run Irish Potatoes support programme, Eveline Ouokam, thus linking the price increase to a cut in supplies. *"Consumers should not expect an immediate drop in prices,"* she warns.

Vendors also blame the increase on transports costs. *"Farmers have difficulties due to lack of water, plants are also attacked by diseases and insects, and this reduces production,"* according to Honore B. a vendor in the Mfoundi market. *"April, May and June are the months of optimal production, because of the heavy rains,"* he adds.

Irish potatoes are farmed in the North-West and Western regions of the country.

JV

Over CFAF 3 Billion to Save Mangroves in Cameroon



Authorities want a sustainable management and conservation of the mangrove ecosystem. Of the 3 billion francs CFA, the World Environment Fund, grouping 182 countries, will give 800 million francs CFA to the project dubbed, “*Community sustainable management and conservation of the mangrove ecosystem in Cameroon.*” The government of Cameroon will give 700 million francs CFA. Cameroon Wildlife and Cameroon Ecology will donate 445 and 350 million francs CFA respectively. Meanwhile, the United Nations Food Agricultural Organization (FAO) will give 200 million francs CFA, while FAO-Cameroon will finance preliminary studies.

2500 hectares of mangrove have disappeared annually during the last two decades. Cameroon has preserved 195,000 hectares of its mangrove ecosystems.

According to a 2009 study by Ulrich Waffo of Yaoundé I University, 5000 tons of fish is fished in the mangroves – bossu, bar, mullet, machoiron are some of the types most sought after by consumers.

Regrettably, local inhabitants use the mangroves as fuel, thereby degrading the resource.

AE

Climate Change Impacts Water Availability in Cameroon

The Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development, Pierre Hele says that climate change, a nagging problem for the government, has a negative effect on the conservation of water. He made the statement in Yaoundé, as he chaired commemorative activities ahead of the 2013 World Wetlands day in February, on the theme, “*Wetlands: Protect our waters wet.*”

A challenge facing Cameroon and other countries, according to him, is the worldwide phenomenon of climate change, which is affecting all spheres of life, including water resources. “*This means that as we are struggling to conserve our current resources, climate change comes in to reduce the volumes of water that we have around the world,*” the Minister said.

To combat this, efforts are ongoing to make water adequately available in dry and wet regions. “*In the north, we have a Green Sahel Project for the planting of*



The Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development, Pierre Hele

trees, which is a good step in managing water. It seeks to stop the desert from advancing, but also to retain some water in the soil by covering the surface,” the Secretary General at the Ministry, Akwa Patrick Kum Bong revealed.

“*The challenges are there, the initiatives are also there, but we don’t have the means to act as we would have wanted,*” he added.

Water is a determinant factor in the country’s fragile ecosystem and must be constantly protected for posterity, according to the Focal Point of the Ramsar Convention in Cameroon, Serge Ondoua. Local councils need to integrate water management in their communal plans in order to curb the ravaging effects of climate change, advised Mr Ondoua.

JV

ART Rejects MTN and Orange Interconnection Tariffs

In the catalogue presented by MTN to the Telecommunications Regulatory Board (ART), the company proposes the following rates: 32 F/min during normal time and 30 F/min during the night and 10 F for an SMS, the same as Orange.

But ART fixed the cost for a voicemail at 25 F and a significant upper limit for the cost of SMS. ART also wanted the upper limit of the cost to be at 27 F, in comparison to the international rates. Rates that the mobile telephone operators failed to respect, hence the rejection by the regulatory authority on telecommunications. **AE**



Canal Sat Connects to Orange Money



Canal Sat subscribers in Cameroon can now pay their bills through their mobile phones, a revelation made at a press conference at Akwa Palace Hotel in Douala on January the 29th, 2013.

Through Orange Money, clients of the two structures will be able to dial a simple code, #150*35# from any location, thus saving significant time compared to the visiting of various Canal sat

sales points to pay their bills.

The two general managers of Orange Cameroun and Canal Sat Cameroun, Jean Bardet and Jackson Njike were present at the ceremony.

Orange Money is a service launched in September 2011, and has about 700,000 clients spread across the country, served by 400 agencies and licensed partners.

JV

MTN Backs Professional League with CFAF 654 Million

On Wednesday, January the 30th, 2013, MTN, a mobile telephone company in Cameroon, and the National Professional Football League, signed a conven-



tion on the sponsorship of football clubs. The convention, which concerns D1 and D2 clubs, will see these clubs receive a total of 654 million francs CFA.

Each club of the MTN Elite One will receive CFAF 24 million, while clubs of MTN Elite Two will be given CFAF 14 million francs each. Part of the sponsorship agreement concerns sports equipment that clubs will receive from MTN. Karl Toriola, the Director General of MTN signed the convention on behalf of his company, while General Pierre Semengue, President of the National Football League, signed on behalf of his institution.

Among other things, the convention stipulates the attribution of three excellence prizes to be awarded to clubs that will have distinguished themselves in the area of sports performance and professional organization during the football season.

JV

Katsina Ala Dam Project Enters Second Phase

After pre-feasibility studies that ended in 2012, the project's executor, Joule Africa Ltd, is about to enter the second phase of the project, following an agreement of development recently signed with the government. The dam is to be built over the river Katsina Ala, located in the Furu-Awa sub division, Menchum division of the North-West region.

The project's development agreement follows a memorandum of understanding signed in January 2012, and the completion of "sat-isfactory pre-feasibility studies," according to a joint press note from the Ministry of Water and Energy and Joule Africa Ltd.

The river which runs near the Kpep village has a total capacity which is estimated at 850MW, with 450MW expected after the first phase of the project, according to pre-feasibility studies, and would cover out as much as 40% of the present national needs. The second phase of

of construction work." states Mark Green, President of Joule Africa Ltd and Director of operations.

Although the development agreement is already in place, the major challenge facing the various parties is the access road to the project. This catch could soon become a nightmare for the completion of feasibility and bankable studies.

For the building of infrastructure, Joule Africa Ltd, an international company with offices in London, Yaoundé and Freetown, would work in partnership with the Cameroon government (represented by the Ministry of water and energy, MINEE), and its technical consultant in hydraulic engineering, Lahmeyer International (GMBH), to carry out these new studies.

During the last 12 months, Joule Africa Ltd has carried out several field trips to the project site. The enterprise intends to evaluate the



The dam will be constructed by Joule Africa over the Katsina Ala river in northwestern Cameroon

Likewise, the company is also concerned with the project's benefits to the local community. "Consultations were carried out with the local communities of the Furu-Awa and Fungom divisions (areas to be affected by construction) in order to establish a social programme," reads the communiqué.

Authorities are confident that this project would resolve the energy shortage equation currently facing the country. At the moment, industries function under capacity, the country fails to attract large investors, and many households are without electricity. "We are happy with the rapid progress made by Joule Africa this far, and this new agreement would establish a solid base for the next phase of the project ... we are confident that this new project (the Katsina Ala hydroelectric dam) would be a major drive for the production of electricity for the nation," Dr Basile Atangana Kouna, the country's Minister of Water and Energy said in a statement about the project.

Joule Africa Ltd specialises in the development of renewable energy projects. Working in Sub-Saharan Africa, the enterprise is also presently working on a 200MW extension of the Bumbuna hydroelectric project in Sierra Leone. **JV**

The River found near the Kpep village has a total capacity of 850MW with an additional 450MW expected after the first phase of the project.

the project is expected to end this year, and if the situation remains unchanged the project could be completed by 2017.

"We will subsequently start finalizing the legal and financial instruments with the government of Cameroon in order to allow for the start

needs of the population affected by the project. A recent evaluation of the zone's needs helped the contractor to "identify social activities which offer additional advantages in terms of development of project area surrounding supported by the enterprise," the communiqué further states.

A 20 MW Modulation Plant in Douala is Imminent

Basile Atangana Kouna, Minister of Energy and Water, made the announcement during a New Year ceremony on Tuesday, February the 19th, 2013 in Yaoundé.

Although the project is still in the pilot phase, the Douala plant will ensure the rational use of scarce energy, and will be extended to other cities in the country, based on the model “Build,

Own and Operate”, declared the Minister, if the project in the economic capital yields the desired results.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Energy and Water will undertake a project to reduce the use of electricity in public buildings, distribute 9.6 low consumption bulbs and 3.2 million solar lanterns to Cameroon households in 2013. **JM**



Basile Atangana Kouna,
Minister of Energy and
Water

300,000 Liters of Gasoil to Kick Start 72 Generators of Yaoundé-Ahala Thermal Plant

Tradex trucks carrying gasoil crossed the threshold of the thermal plant, on Wednesday February the 12th, 2013 in late afternoon, the *Cameroon Tribune* said quoting, Issac Minyee, the manager of the plant. Bringing an additional 60 megawatts to the table, “*this plant will be operational by this evening*,” he confirmed. “*After this supply, Tradex will continue to produce the needed gasoil*,” he added.

The Ahala plant, which stopped functioning by December 2012, will no longer function only from 4 to 10pm, but will run during the whole day, until the Kribi gas-powered plant becomes operational this year, the newspaper stated.

Since 2011, when the plant was first put into use, it has already consumed eight million liters of gasoil. **AE**



A Tradex gas station in Cameroon

Adulteration of Fuel in Yaoundé Drops by 58 Percent in Two Years



In 2010, a Non-Governmental Organization, *Bonne Nouvelle*, carried out a study in 12 neighbourhoods suggesting that fuel sold in Yaoundé was adulterated. But in 2012, through efforts by government, civil and the anti-graft commission (CO-NAC), the percentage dropped to about 22 in 2012, the State media indicates.

After the publication of the 2010 *Bonne Nouvelle* report, CO-NAC went to the field to verify the allegations, and according to the state radio, found evidence of heavy fuel adulteration.

Fuel manipulation is carried out mostly during the nighttime by truck drivers in complicity with operators of petrol stations, who reap about 5 million francs CFA weekly with these illegal activities. **JM**

WAICO Ltd Wants to Build an Oil Pipeline to Inter-Connect Cameroon's Cities

The West African partner of the Petroleum products transportation investors, grouped under Petroleum Product Pipeline S.A, wants to connect Limbe-Douala-Edea-Kribi-Yaounde-Bafoussam and Bamenda with an oil pipeline.

Authorities from these companies, accompanied by the Honorary Consul of Korea to Cameroon, Mohamadou Dabo, briefed the Prime minister, Philemon Yang about the project on Monday February the 18th, 2013.



Sayyu Dantata, Chairman of WAICO Ltd with prime minister of Cameroon Philemon Yang

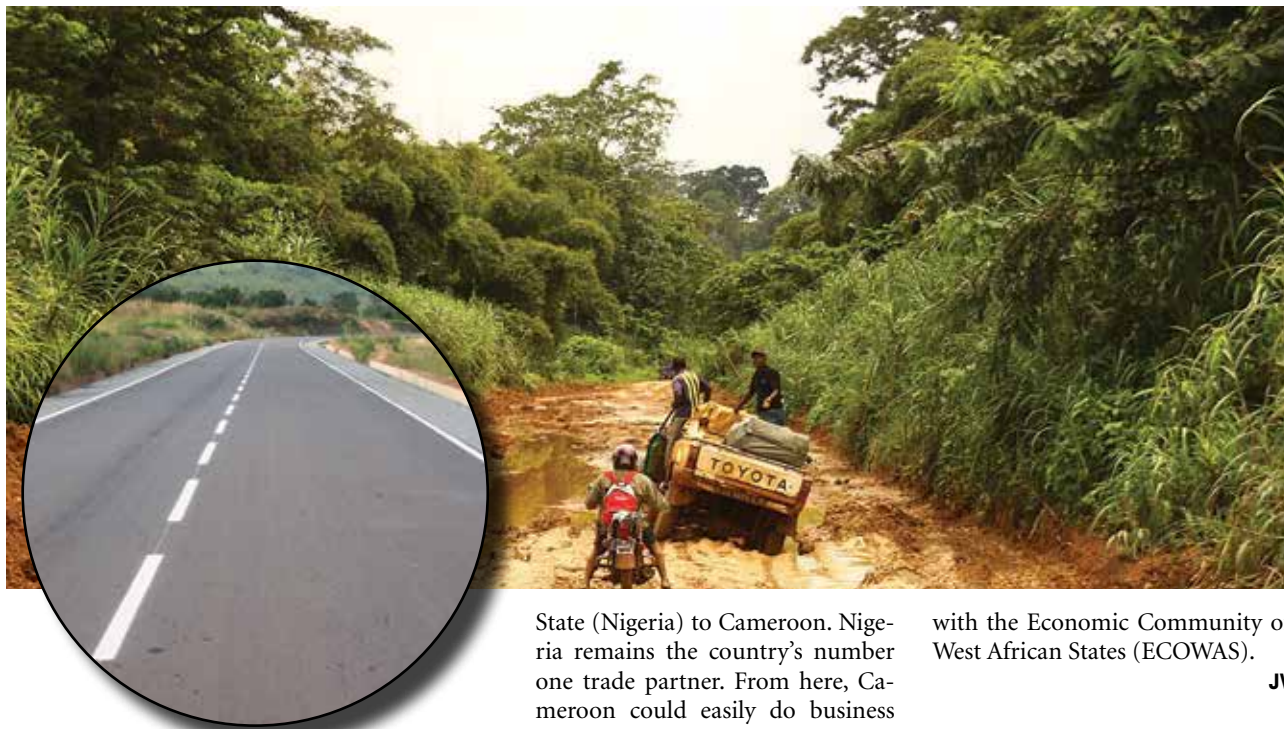
fed the Prime minister, Philemon Yang about the project on Monday February the 18th, 2013.

Sayyu Dantata, Chairman of WAICO Ltd, said the project would cost between 200 and 300 million dollars, depending on geographical features.

This project will “*make life more meaningful and reduce accidents involving trucks on roads,*” explains Mr Dantata.

When the project becomes operational, Cameroon will save more than CFAF 300 billion per annum, according to the consortium. **JV**

CFAF 85.75 Billion to Build Kumba - Mamfe Road



State (Nigeria) to Cameroon. Nigeria remains the country's number one trade partner. From here, Cameroon could easily do business

with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

JV

A loan to Cameroon by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Central African Development Bank (BDEAC), will be used to tar the road in the South-West region of the country. The Minister of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development, Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi, signed two financial agreements with the institutions on February the 8th, 2013 in Mamfe, according to the *Cameroon Tribune*.

Work is expected to begin on the 150km stretch of road by the second quarter of the year, and tender documents for the contract are being prepared by the competent authorities.

The new road will end a nightmare situation for the 1,500,000 million inhabitants, and will facilitate access to the area.

The Kumba-Mamfe road will link the South-West to the economic capital, Douala, and the Cross River

CFAF 500 Million to Repair Flood Damages in Northern Cameroon

Named "emergency works", part of the repair will be carried out by the civil engineering service of the military, and the other part by the rice cultivation company, SEMRY, located in Yagoua, Far-North region. The Ministry of Economy, Regional Planning and Territorial Development signed a collaboration agreement and convention with these two structures in Yaoundé on February the 13th, 2013.

The military, funded by an envelope of 350 million francs CFA, will rehabilitate the Longone dyke, destroyed on a range of 5 km between Pouss and Begue-Palam. Among

other works, the military will also construct the earth road between Yagoua-Pouss and Pouss-Guirvidig. These projects are to be completed within the next two to three months.

Meanwhile SEMRY is expected to reconstruct the Maga dyke of one metre high and 27 km long, and other secondary works with a budget of 150 million francs CFA.

According to the Minister of Economy, Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi, "*the military has the task to control the quality of work carried out by SEMRY.*" AE

Rehabilitation Work on Yaoundé-Bafoussam-Bamenda Road at 35 Percent



Part of the 100-billion-francs CFA emergency works ordered in 2012 by the Head of state, Paul Biya, this portions of the road is at 35 percent of completion, according to engineers of Razel and Egis Companies in charge

respectively of the execution and the control of the project.

The first phase of the 370 km project running from Yaoundé to Ebéda is still ongoing, and the preparatory works for second and third phase from Ebéda to Bafoussam and Bafoussam to Bamenda are in gestation.

According to Bertrand Emame Ntiam, Director of the Razel construction site, speaking to the State radio, 26 km of the 69 km Yaoundé-Ebéda road is already refurbished, and now needs only to be covered with a new coat of tar.

For the Ebéda-Bafoussam stretch, only potholes will be filled, to render the road death-trap free, while what is being

done on the Yaoundé-Ebéda road will be repeated on the Bafoussam-Bamenda stretch.

However, engineers say that the pothole filling is only a cosmetic solution, which is done because the 27 billion francs CFA allocated to the project is insufficient for heavy maintenance required by the 25-year-old road.

The allocated amount is just a third of what would have been necessary for a proper maintenance, according to the Ministry of Public Works.

Patrice Amba Salla, Minister of Public Works visited the field on February the 13th, 2013, to inspect the ongoing work.

JV

CFAF 32.8 Billion for Yaoundé Municipal Lake Makeover



Municipal Lake of Yaoundé

A financial convention was signed in Yaoundé last Thursday, February 7, 2013, to this effect. In the future, the lake is to become a tourist attraction. Spanish consortium Emmsa will soon

begin the makeover of the lake, according to government sources.

A hotel, green belt, library and shops are some of the planned infrastructure.

Emmsa is also planning on constructing an abattoir estimated at approximately the same amount. Here, the transformation of beef and poultry etc will take place.

Meanwhile, an account for the financing of these projects has been opened at Caïca Bank.

According to Juan Manuel Gallego, representative of the Emmsa group, the projects will employ young Cameroonians and could be completed within three years.

The Minister of the Economy, Planning, and Regional Development, Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi, signed for Cameroon while Marcellino Cabanas Ansoarena, Spain's Ambassador to Cameroon, signed for his country. AE

Biya Projects 200,000 Jobs in the Formal Sector this Year



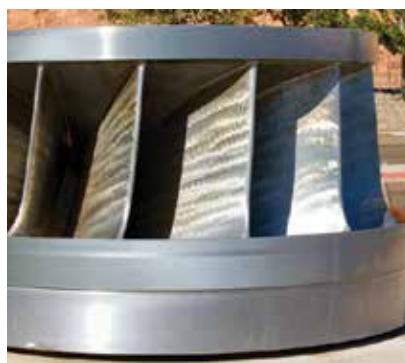
Cameroon's President Paul Biya says the formal sector of the economy will create this amount of jobs in 2013.

"The recovery of our economy, driven by the implementation of our major projects and our agrarian revolution will inevitably generate new job opportunities. For instance, 200,000 formal sector jobs will be created in the year 2013," he said in his address to the youth on the eve of the 47th edition of the national youth day celebrated yearly on February the 11th.

In his message at the end of the year 2012, on December 31, 2012, he stated, *"Cameroon's economy created about 160 000 jobs in the modern sector in 2012."*

"There is reason to hope that with the pick-up of economic activity, the trend will increase," he added. **AE**

Giant Projects in Cameroon Cost 23.22 Billion Dollars



18 in number, the giant projects expected to generate 200,000 jobs referred to by President Paul Biya in his message to the youth on February the 10th, 2013, will cost the state and its partners 23.22 billion dollars, according to *The Spark's* of February the 18th, 2013.

The project spanning from energy projects such as Lom Pangar, Memve'ele, to transport projects like the Kribi deep seaport, to the mining of diamond in Mobilong or exploitation of bauxite in Minim-Martap and Ngaoundere, are all

on course or soon to be completed, for example the Kribi Gas-Powered Plant.

The bauxite exploitation project in Minim-Martap and Ngaoundere will cost 6000 million dollars, about 3000 billion francs CFA, and is the most costly project. Other projects include the extension of the National Oil Refinery (SONARA), as well as the building of the Yaounde-Douala highway, of a second bridge over river Wouri, and the completion of the backbone optic fibre project. **JM**

South African Company, Ruhanique PTY Ltd to Invest CFAF 12 Billion in Cameroon

On the basis of private/public partnership (PPP), the University Housing Corporation (UHC) and their financial partners, Ruhanique PTY Ltd, will build a 2500 bed hostel at the University of Buea (UB), South West region. The foundation stone of the project was laid on February the 7th, 2013, and follows an initial Protocol Agreement between the two partners signed last November 2012 in Buea.

The structure, according to the Vice Chancellor, Prof Nalova Lyonga, will accommodate 1000 boys and 1500 girls and is under the Build Operate Transfer (BOT) plan.

According to Dr Donald Ngundam, General Manager of UHC, the project will *"deliver results in 24 months... our collective presence here today is eyewitness of our determination to match words with action."*

Estimated at a cost of 12 billion francs CFA, the project, according to the CEO



of Ruhanique PTY Ltd, Madame Henneke Strauss, will foster the evolution of academic institutions in Africa as a whole.

"This is a felt need for us in UB," the Vice Chancellor told her audience, noting that the current 100-bed capacity being multiplied to 2500 beds will create an immeasurable impact.

JV

L'Edifice Capital Prepares an Investment Envelope of CFAF 130 Billion for Cameroon

Former French Minister of Tourism Olivier Stirn made the declaration in a press conference on Friday the 14th of February, 2013, among "Enterprise days," organized by GICAM (Cartel of Cameroon Businesses). Mr Stirn, one of the five shareholders of *L'Edifice Capital*, a French investment office, said the funds will be allocated to agriculture and infrastructure.

A medical dialysis centre and the Ngaoundere-Ndjamena railway are proposed recipients.

A 10 000 hectares Stevia (a raw material



L'Edifice Capital, a French investment office

for the production of drinks) farm to provide 5000 jobs is also previewed. This plant could allow six harvests per annum. The third project concerns garden produce, and Mr Stirn confirmed there is already a market for farmers of these products. **JM**

NEF has Helped About 240,000 Youth to Find Salaried Jobs



Camille Mounté à Bidas, General Manager of NEF

The National Employment Fund (NEF), has since 2002 helped 240,000 youth to find jobs, 46,488 persons to receive funding and employed 79,534 persons in projects. Camille Mounté à Bidas, General Manager of NEF, revealed the figures during the 15th edition of the "Youth Employment Week" organized between the 7th and the 9th of February across the country.

Grouping students from colleges, higher education institutes, state universities and other schools, NEF, the Ministry of Youth and the Ministry of Vocational Training handed out to the youth publications and other support documents on how to find work.

According to *Le Quotidien de l'économie*, since its creation in 2002, NEF, has received, evaluated and oriented 403,191 persons. It has also been associated with 10,000 enterprise, and trained 78,000 persons. **AE**

G Power Cement Starts an 800,000 Tons Cement Plant in Limbe from March 2013



On Friday the 15th of February, 2013, the cement producing company, *G Power Cement*, signed an agreement with the Cameroon government to build a cement factory in Limbe with a yearly capacity of 800,000 tons.

Bernd Stiehl, CEO of *G Power Cement* says effective construction work will begin in March 2013, with the laying of the foundation stone, and the first cement bags are expected to be produced between 24 to 36 months.

In stating the figure of 150 direct jobs to be created initially, as a reason, Bernd Stiehl confirmed that government will grant his company exoneration from taxes on imported raw materials from the cement factory.

On the choice of the site of Limbe, Mr. Stiehl said the town's deep-sea port will enable large vessels to bring in imported raw materials like clinker, with more local raw materials will become available.

The factory will provide the cement needed for giant projects such as roads, railways, dams and other infrastructural projects, according to Fuh Calistus, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Mines and Industrial Development.

There is a high demand for cement in the country and in external markets in the neighboring countries of Chad, Central African Republic, confirmed Mr. Stiehl. **JV**

Local Real-Estate Developers Ready to Use Local Materials in Construction

Alain Mougang, President of the Association of Real Estate Developers (APIC) says his group will raise the awareness of its member to the use of local materials which are cheaper and long-lasting and thus ideal for the construction of buildings and social housing.

His statement comes after the signing of a partnership agreement

with the government-owned Local Materials Promotion Authority (MIPROMALO).

For her part, the Director of MIPROMALO, Uphie Chinje Melo, said her structure will train members of APIC on how to use local materials and will also put its machines at the disposal of real-estate developers.

AE



Price of CICAM Fabrics Doubles



All products of the Cameroon fabric manufacturing company CICAM have witnessed at least a 50% increase in price, depending on the type of fabric. Buyers from company stores across the nation now have an additional CFAF 1000 or 2000 to the prior price to pay.

The price increase is a direct consequence of the increase in the price of cotton, the main raw material used in manufacture of textiles, according to David Mounjoutouyi, the CICAM regional delegate for the Centre and East regions.

The price of a kilogram of cotton has seen an increase from CFAF 600 in 2011 to CFAF 1800 in 2013. **JV**

Work at Ebolowa Tractor Assembly Plant Advances

Located in Akak-Essatolo, the Ebolowa industrial complex work is in steady progress, according to the Minister of Economy, Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi, who paid an evaluation visit to the worksite on February the 18th, 2013.

Mr Nganou Djoumessi recommended that the tiled floor of the warehouse should be completed by the March 3, 2013. The warehouse for the storage of equipment, the administrative block, and the building to host the assembly unit, are at about 70% complete.

As of now top priorities remain, the rehabilitation of roads, the supply of water and electricity and the site's security, reports the *Cameroon Tribune*. **AE**

Customs Collects CFAF 50.6 Billion in January



Reviewing the activities of the custom directorate, its Director General, Minette Libom Li Likeng, stated that as of January the 30th, 2013, they have collected 50.6 billion francs CFA, representing an increment of 19% compared to January the 30th, last year.

638 billion francs CFA is the target budget expected from custom duties, compared to last year's 550 billion.

To attain this objective, *"every month, at the central services of customs, we will hold a meeting where will examine reports of our activities to ensure that we are moving towards the objective of 638 billion,"* Libom Li Likeng told attendees in one such meetings, held last Thursday the 14th of February, 2013. **JM**

Insurers Focus on Compensation Gaps at 37th General Assembly of FANAF



The general assembly of the Federation of African Insurance Companies opened on Monday February 26, 2013 in Yaoundé with a special focus on the compensation of victims of accidents, illness, and natural disasters.

The assembly entitled, “insurance and social risk,” under the distinguished patronage of Paul Biya, President of Cameroon, was opened by the Prime Minister, Philemon Yang, last Monday. He urged insurance companies to

extend their policies to cover the less privileged.

“Discuss are to be held on better ways to cover victims of accidents, natural catastrophes, and illness... on how to improve their condition of living which is already very difficult,” Yang told insurance professionals and observers. The African insurance companies, confirmed Protais Ayangma, President of FANAF, will work on universal medical coverage in Africa.

Insurance penetration in Cameroon is just of 1% annually, and only 10% of Cameroonians have health coverage, but with a planned increase to 20% by 2020, a percentage still judged insufficient by the Head of State, Paul Biya during his end of year address to the nation on December the 31th, 2012.

More so, insurance experts will discuss ways of making compensation equitable, just, total and timely. *“We want to emphasise the important topics like ...*



Martin Foncha, President of ASAC.

... health for all, accidents and, above all, compensation which remains a major preoccupation for many. Each time we meet, we challenge members to honor the claims of victims, our major role," Mr Ayangma said.

Challenges facing the insurance sector abound, and "experts in the sector are in Yaoundé to dissect" these challenges, according to Martin Foncha, President of ASAC. One such challenge is the automobile guarantee fund.

Another major axis of reflection of the conference bears on how insurance companies can contribute to the development of Africa. This role was discussed in a conference on Monday by guest speaker Paulo Gomes, founder and CEO of Constelor Investment Holdings. Mr Gomez told the participants that "insurance plays a central role in the development of infrastructure... you

are supposed to provide financing and without this infrastructure platform, it would be impossible for the continent to grow much faster." He also lamented the number of days taken to start up a business, up to 100 days in some countries; consequently there are "no local enterprises that can buy insurance."

Other experts blame the lack of political will regarding the poor coverage of risks by insurance companies. Taking the example of war-torn Mali, the experts said properties destroyed during the crisis will not be compensated, thus undermining development efforts.

Cameroon's insurance market is the second in the Inter-African Conference on Insurance markets (CIMA) zone, according to ASAC figures published in July 2012. Meanwhile, in 2011 insurance companies in the country had a turnover of 141.04 billion francs CFA, a 9.6% progression, organisers said, referring to a 2010 report. "It's a constant progression over the years, and we are optimistic that the figures of 2012 will show a considerable improvement," projects Alexandre Boya, general inspector at Colina Insurance.

FANAF as of December the 31st, 2012, counts 164 members, insurance and assurance companies, and two Automobile Guarantee Funds spread across 27 African countries. **Jude Viban**

Christophe Mien Zok Becomes Director General of Yaoundé Conference Centre

A journalist and mayor of Angossas, Haut-Nyong division, since 2002, Christophe Mien Zok was appointed by a presidential decree on Friday, February 15, 2013. He replaces, Ndifontah Nyamndi who has been DG for close to 26 years.

Until his appointment, Christophe Mien Zok, 53, has been the Director of the information and propaganda service of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) since October 1992. He will be assisted by Tabe née Ebeng Céline Nchong.

The conference centre inaugurated in 1981 has halls, auditoriums, and plays hosts to events of international repute such as the Africa 21 conference in 2010. In 2013, the centre will run on a budget of 1.3 billion francs CFA.

Yaoundé to Host International Institute of Insurance

ASAC (Association of Cameroon Insurance Companies) officials made the declaration during a press briefing in Yaoundé, on February the 13th, 2012 in anticipation of the FANAF (Federation of African Insurance Companies) assembly to take place in Yaoundé later this month. At a planned cost of 2.5 billion francs CFA, the foundation stone of the institute will be laid on the 27th of February 2013, on the sidelines of the assembly to

be held in the Fandena neighborhood, close to the Amadou Ahidjo Stadium in Yaoundé.

Quizzed on the number of hectares it would occupy, officials failed to give the details, but said that both land and funding was already available.

According to the officials, all members of Inter-African Conference on Insurance markets (CIMA) zone are funding the project.

JV



Protais Ayangma Amang, President of FANAF.

Chanas Assurances Wants to Increase its Social Capital in 2013



Jacqueline Casalegno, General Manager of Chanas Assurances

The objective, contained in a press release published in the *Cameroon tribune*, and signed by the General Manager, Jacqueline Casalegno, will be one of the main items on the agenda of the

company's board meeting on February the 26th, 2013.

As of now the company's capital stands at 2.3 billion francs CFA, but the communiqué failed to state other 2013 objectives for the company, to be discussed during the board meeting.

Established in 1999 by its shareholders, the company's social capital was the most pronounced in the central African sub region at the time.

Two shareholders provided more than half of the company's capital. Casalegno Group, major shareholder, founder and technical partner of the company with a 41% participation and the National Hydrocarbons Corporation (NHC) with 20%. **JM**

AGC Insurance Sacks General Manager

Leopold Nguiffo was sacked by the Board of Directors of AGC Assurances, on January the 11th, 2013 during the board's meeting. After six months of service, Mr Nguiffo was shown the door by his employer, millionaire, Joseph Kadji Defesso.

The reasons for the dismissal of the young insurance cadre, licensed on the 14th December, 2012 by CIMA (Confederation of Inter African Insurance Markets) remain unclear as the company made a healthy profit during the course of last year.

The insurance company's business is steadily growing. According to the Association of Cameroon Insurance Companies (ASAC), the company made just 360 million francs CFA in 2006 compared GMC that made 3,6 billion francs CFA.

JV

NSIA Becomes Camair-Co's Automobile Insurer

After an emergency tender launched on December the 27th, 2012, NSIA insurance company has been selected to insure the vehicles of Camair-Co, for a sum of 19,9 million francs CFA.

The decision is contained in a communiqué signed by the General Manager of Camair-Co, Matthijs Boertien,

published in the *Cameroon Tribune* on February the 13th, 2013.

Created in 1995 by Ivorian born Jean Kacou Diagou, NSIA implanted in Cameroon in 2008, and also operates in other countries like Benin, Gabon, Senegal, Congo and Togo.

JM



Jean Kacou Diagou, founder of NSIA Insurance

Cameroon Creates a “Guarantee Fund” for SMEs



The fund of 5 million francs CFA, placed at the Bank of Central African States (BEAC), is single-handedly contributed by the state of Cameroon.

Long awaited, this fund for small and medium-sized enterprises

(SME) was created following a decision signed on January 23, 2013 by the Minister of Finance, Alamine Ousmane Mey, on the creation, organization and functioning of a transitory mechanism for financing SMEs.

Authorities are attempting to finance investments of SMEs within the context of a private/public partnership between the state, microfinance institutions and SMEs.

The fund is expected to grow through funding by bilateral and multilateral partners of Cameroon, taxes from a beneficiary SMEy, the 1 percent commission on loans guaranteed by the mechanism, etc.

The mechanism is controlled by the administration of technical commission with the Director General of Treasury, Financial and Monetary Cooperation as president. Furthermore, the government announced the kickoff of the SME bank, and according to the Minister of Finance, license application documents were forwarded to the constable of banking of COBAC (Central African Banking Commission) of the Central African Region. A feedback is still awaited.

Figures from the National Institute of Statistics suggest that SMEs make up 90 percent of enterprises in Cameroon, and employ 70 percent of the active population. **JV**

CBC Bank in Restructuration



A recently signed decision of the Minister of Finance, Alamine Ousmane Mey, placed the Commercial Bank of Cameroon (CBC) in a restructuration process on the recommendation of the provisional administrator, appointed in November 2009, reads the first article of the document.

The decision goes on to add that the restructuration of CBC is to be executed in conformity with the plan the shareholders of the bank voted on May the 10th, 2012, at an extraordinary general assembly.

According to article 4, the deadline for the plan's execution is three months counting from the date of publication of the decision – January the 28th, 2013.

To assist the bank, government has exonerated the institution from some fiscal obligations, the decision further states.

However, it is difficult to say exactly what the plan looks like, because article 5 says that, “*taking into consideration banking secrecy, details of the restructuration plan*

cannot be published.”

The Central African Banking Commission (COBAC), Bank of Central

This is an attempt to bring CBC back to its normal state of business.

African States and a judge could nevertheless have access to the plan, continues the article.

This is an attempt to bring CBC back to its normal state of business, concludes the document.

JV

Cameroon Will Borrow CFAF 250 Billion from the Capital Market in 2013

The Minister of Finance, Alamine Ousmane Mey, stated that in 2013 the government will issue 250 billion francs CFA worth of treasury bonds and bills. He was speaking at an event organised by his Ministry in Douala on February the 22nd, 2013, aimed to convince investors to place their trust once

more in the government. In 2012, a total of 130 billion francs CFA worth of securities was issued, and at maturity the reimbursement of 50 billion francs CFA was paid for bonds issued in 2011.

With the recovery of the economy, treasury bonds have become



a source of funding for projects, and government repays them promptly. *"The government of Cameroon has got a very valid signature,"* confirms Mathieu Mandeng, General Manager of Standard Chartered.

JV

AfDB Lobbies for a Drop in International Transfer Charges



The African Development Bank (AfDB) made the plea on Friday February the 22nd, 2013, Douala at a workshop on money transfer services. Transfer charges on money of immigrants to their countries of origin, according to AfDB, are still too expensive. *"Commissions that international money transfer agencies receive, in Africa or in countries from where the money is sent are high... It is a risk for persons who use other informal channels,"* the *Cameroon Tribune* said, quoting Racine Kane, resident repre-

sentative of AfDB in Cameroon. Commissions can be of up to 20% of the money to be sent. Also, the money of immigrants is subjected to fluctuating exchange rates.

According to the French Development Agency (AFD), a partner of AfDB, by 2014 the commissions should be fixed at 5% of the amount sent. According to a study carried out by an NGO, *Epargne sans frontière*, money transferred by immigrants represents 2.5 times more than aid from the Organization for

Racine Kane, resident representative of AfDB in Cameroon.

Economic Co-operation and Development, and is used to build infrastructure, to satisfy the needs of the immediate family and much more.

Huge sums of money are transferred yearly to less developed countries. In 2012, over 203 000 billion francs CFA was transferred to developing countries, meanwhile in 2011, this amount was of 175 500 billion francs CFA, an 11% surge from the 2009 figures, according to the World Bank.

JV

BDEAC Gives CFAF 500 Million for Refinancing of MFIs to FOFIDES



Miheal Adande,
President
of BDEAC

FOFIDES and BDEAC. Ecobank will not only secure the funds but also ensure the payment to MFIs accorded refinancing.

BDEAC gave an additional 35 million francs CFA for FOFIDES to construct a head office building. According to Miheal Adande, President of BDEAC, the loan is non-refundable.

FOFIDES, which has as mission to refinance MFIs, covers the Grand North of the Republic of Cameroon.

Created in 2000 by BDEAC, the institution finances exclusively agro pastoral and artisanal projects, dominant sectors in the north of the country.

JM

The Bank of Central African States (BDEAC) has given a non-refundable loan of 500 million francs CFA to the Fund for Financing Social Development (FOFIDES S.A), an institution that guarantees the refinancing of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs). A convention

between the two partners was signed on Wednesday the 13th, 2013, in Douala.

Ecobank, will secure the funds, and accordingly Mr. Moustapha Fall, Director General of the bank, signed another convention with

“La Regionale Microfinance” Celebrates its 20th Birthday

Events to mark the anniversary were launched on Wednesday, the 7th of February, 2013, at the Hilton hotel in Yaoundé.

Under the distinguished patronage of its CEO, Reverend Charles Rollin Ombang Ekath, the MFI announced that in the years ahead its customers will be able to transfer money without charges.



Named “Club Mandat,” clients of all sorts will be able to adhere to the offer by paying a symbolic amount, between 2000 and 20,000 francs

Josephine Ndagnou
benefited
from the
MFI

CFA annually, for transfers ranging from 1 franc to 1 million francs CFA.

FESS Cameroun savings, introduced to finance secondary and higher education, is one of the hallmarks of the company. Introduced in 1993, Josephine Ndagnou, is one amongst many who have benefited from the offer. AE

Onomo, the International African Hotel Chain, Opens Kribi Unit Soon



Onomo hotel in Dakar, Senegal

After Onomo Dakar Airport and Onomo Libreville in January 2012, followed by Onomo Abidjan Airport hotel, two Onomo hotels are under construction in Lomé (Togo) and Bamako (Mali), and a dozen other projects are under study in Nigeria, Chad, Guinea, Mauritania and Burkina Faso, Onomo Kribi being one of them.

The Onomo concept is based on accessible, durable, and modern hotels in principal destinations. In Dogon mythology, the figure of Nommo or O'Nommo is often present in creation stories. Son of Amma, he was sent to the Earth to bring order and harmony, after the creation of Ogo, his brother. **JV**

Phillippe Colleu, President of Onomo International, says his company is soon to build a hotel in the seaside resort town of Kribi, South of Cameroon. He made the statement during the Cameroon-France Forum on Thursday the 31st of January, 2013, at

the Pavillon Gabriel in Paris, France. Onomo International has purchased a ten thousand square-metre parcel of land in Kribi, according to Mr. Colleu, the planned construction of a top class hotel of over one hundred and twenty rooms.

Qatar Airways Preselects 120 Female Cameroonian Hostesses



Young and beautiful girls alighted from private cars and taxis on February 3rd at the Douala Aviation Academy, location of the preselection test.

"I learned of the recruitment from the internet, and a friend later confirmed the information. I just needed to send my CV, with my photo and other attachments. I later received a mail informing me of my pre-selection," said Esther Njoya, an applicant. Two officials of the airline were in Douala to interview the candidates.

Dicko Bello, a pilot of Boeing 777 with the Asian airline, says *"all the postulants could be recruited because there is an urgent need for female hostesses as female nationals are not allowed to work."*

The monthly pay stands at 5,000 US dollars, close to 2,5 million francs CFA.

Qatar Airways counts about 170 aircrafts, with approximately 50 more expected. In a standard flight, two pilots and 16 cabin crew are used.

"The hostesses are employees of the Qatar Airways and as such they will be based in Doha," confirms Mr Bello.

JV

Robert Nkili Promises Tough Sanctions Against Inter-Urban Travel Agencies

Cameroon's Minister of Transport, Robert Nkili, after a three hour visit to four transport agencies in some neighbourhoods in Yaoundé on February 15, 2013, said what he had seen will force him to take *"drastic decisions."* Guarantee, Centrale, Binam and Super Comfort are the agencies the Minister visited. Norms are not respected, especially by agencies involved in inter-urban transport.

Apart from the Guarantee express in the Nsam, which had no first aid box, Binam, Centrale and Super Comfort agencies have dirty waiting halls, no rooms for drivers to rest, no restaurants, toilets,



and various other conditions that leave much to be desired. Faced with the ugly situation, Mr. Nkili said he will *"close down the agencies and give them time to improve."*

"We are disappointed with these agencies that make a lot of money, but are unwilling to invest in order to improve the conditions their clients travel in," Robert Nkili added. **AE**

Cameroon and EU Train Independent Auditors on Logging



A workshop grouping independent auditors selected to check the legality and ensure the transparency of the Government-European Union Voluntary Partnership Agreement (FLEGT) on logging activities in the country, took place in Yaoundé on Thursday, February the 14th, 2013.

With a special interest in the different control mechanisms and the role of independent auditors, according to team leader, Caroline Duhesme, the objective of the workshop is to ensure that the national legality verification system that issues FLEGT export licenses is credible and reliable.

Although illegal exportation of Cameroonian wood to EU countries is a reality, the inspector General No. 1 at the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, Ebia Ndongso says, *"Government will not spare any effort to ensure that the FLEGT process is voluntarily signed and applied."*

JV

Six New 2500 Horse Power Locomotives on CAMRAIL Rails

On Tuesday February the 26th, 2013, the Cameroon Railway Company (CAMRAIL) will present to the public its new fleet of six wagons, indicates a Communiqué from the office of the Board Chair, Hamadou Sali. Owned by the French consortium Bollore Group, CAMRAIL will use the locomotives to serve the Douala-Ngaoundere line.

Built by the National Railways Equipment Company (NREC), a United States entity, the locomotives cost the company 19 billion francs CFA.

On December the 1st, 2012, Mr Sali, Board Chair of CAMRAIL, received two locomotives of 2500 horsepower each, with a capacity of 114 tons. This brought to six the number of locomotives acquired by CAMRAIL in 2012, after four received on October the 25th of the same year. JM

World Bank Launches Cameroon Mining sector Technical Assistance Project

A ceremony to launch the project in Cameroon took place on Thursday, January the 31st, 2013, in Yaounde at Hilton Hotel. Through this project, the World Bank aims to *"improve the efficiency and transparency of the mining sector management, and frame works for sustainable mining development,"* says a statement on the bank's website. Costing around 15 billion francs CFA, the project, which was approved by the World Bank on December the 15th, 2011, will end on June the 30th, 2017.

According to Remi Pelon, team

leader of the project, *"Cameroon is not yet an industrial mining country, but it's rapidly becoming one. However, there is no tradition in managing the sector, and international experience shows that it is not an easy sector to manage."*

"You need to build capacities in institutions and that's what we are doing in the short term, but in the much longer term the project will also be financing geological data acquisition, because there are areas in the territory that remains unknown," he also said.

Jude Viban



AFD Disburses CFAF 5 Billion for Agriculture, Fishing, and Livestock Activities in Rural Areas

Coming from the debt relief and development contract fund (C2D), a convention for the said amount was signed in Yaoundé on the 22nd of February, 2013 between authorities of the agency and Cameroon. The second phase of C2D in Cameroon mostly concerns the rural regions, with an envelope of 130 billion francs CFA, 60% of the total sum.

Among the programs sponsored with this money is the support program for the management of tender boards in the rural sector (AMO), which has

been granted 5.1 billion francs for its second phase.

To Philippe Chedanne, Deputy Director of the French Development Agency (AFD) in sub-Saharan Africa, this support is crucial. *"Supporting agriculture does not only contribute to the fight against hunger, but also supports development,"* he said.

During its first phase, AMO received 6.9 billion francs to reinforce the capacities of services in the ministry of agriculture

and of livestock. It concerned three domains: planning chain, budgeting and the follow-up of activities, data collection and activity of localized services.

JV

PNDP to Grant CFAF 11,489 Billion to Councils in 2013

The National Participatory Development Programme (PNDP) will distribute, in the course of the year, 11,489 billion francs CFA to 329 local councils. The effort is part of the budget adopted during the 13th session of the Piloting and Orientation Committee (CNOP), on February the 6th, 2013 in Yaoundé. Representing 61.48% of the total committee's budget, the money will support local development and decentralization projects.

18,688 billion francs CFA is the total budget for the PNDP in 2013 (income and expenditure), and the programme will use the money for the coordination, management, follow-up, evaluation and communication of PNDP-sponsored projects carried by the councils.

With Marie Madaleine Nga as coordinator, PNDP aims to transform councils into pools of development and competition. JM



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