US educators on working visit in Cameroon

Thirteen educators from South-eastern Kentucky in the United States of America are currently in Cameroon for a working visit and field study program. The more than one-month long visit is aimed at discovering the culture of Cameroonians and to under Africans better. It is the very first trip to Africa for some of the educators. The trip, which is expected to run from June 16 through July 22. Within this period the visitors will tour the whole of Cameroon.

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The main purpose of the visit is to study the interaction between the environment and cultures in Cameroon. The visitors are meeting with and interviewing Cameroonians, public policy experts, government officials, artists, and religious leaders. They are also interested in collecting samples of items of indigenous arts and crafts, and environmental specimens, which will eventually be used as teaching aids back in the USA.

The USA team has already been to the Northwest Province, Lebialem Division in the Southwest Province, Foumban in the West Province, Lake Bafoumba in the Bafoumba, Idoua, and Limbe, among others. In these areas, they discovered the cultural diversity of Cameroon and had a first-hand experience of local realities, giving them the opportunity to compare it to the reports often presented by Western media houses.

In the Northwest Province they enjoyed the beautiful landscape and greatly appreciated locally made fabrics. In Foumban, the Sultan’s palace was the major attraction. In Lebialem Division, they enjoyed the topography, the virgin forest, and the Fon’s palace.

According to Dr Fidelis Achenjang, a renowned Cameroon University Don and Associate Professor of Chemistry, who resides and works in the USA, it is a rare opportunity for the visitors to "learn about another culture, and work with colleagues on curriculum development." He equally states that the intensive field study is being sponsored by Union College in Barbourville, which was awarded a Fulbright-Hayes Grant in April this year to help fund the trip.

Union College professor Dr. Charles Jones, who helped develop the project, is also accompanying the educators. Dr. Jones is an Associate Professor of Psychology.

Upon return to the USA, the visitors will share their "African" experiences with colleagues and are expected to develop curricula based on their travels and observations.
High time for Democracy to reign!
Ntumfor Barrister Nico Halle

The Northwest Provincial Coordinator of the National Elections Observatory (NEO), Ntumfor Barrister Nico Halle, has said, it is high time that democratic elections were organised in Cameroon but this will not happen if Cameroonians continue to flout the rules of democratic elections. He was speaking recently in Kumbo during a civic education tour ahead of the July 22 twin elections. However, Ntumfor Barrister Nico Halle warned against the raising of false alarms on elections rigging.

Livius Tal Bam

Also in this edition

The Chinese Strike: When push comes to shove

About a week ago the Chinese business community in Cameroon organised and executed a sit-in strike to complain about heavy taxation policy to which they have been forced to compromise under as most of them did not open up their businesses although they were already present at their respective centres.

Emmanuel F. Sanosi

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Anti-AIDS Campaign

"Many have enriched themselves through the sale of condoms"

The Archbishop of Douala, Christian Cardinal Tumi, has told visiting Americans college educators that many institutions and people have unscrupulously enriched themselves to the detriment of others in the so-called fight against HIV/AIDS through the use of condoms. The Cardinal was responding to one of the numerous questions from the 13-man delegation of US college educators who are in Cameroon on a field trip.

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Collect your cards and vote wisely on July 22
ANTI-AIDS CAMPAIGN:
"Many have enriched themselves through the sale of condoms", Cardinal Tumi tells visiting Americans

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Rion Smith, one of the US college educators from South-eastern Kentucky, asked the Cardinal why the Church does not want to lift the ban on condoms so as to accelerate the fight against HIV AIDS. The Cardinal in return, asked why the AIDS pandemic is still on the rise in areas not necessarily full of Catholics where the use of condoms may be condoned. He said the disease is still growing in leaps and bounds despite the government's preaching of condoms. He regretted that instead of advocating for behavioural change through effective education, many seem to hold that the use of condoms is the panacea for HIV/AIDS. Condoms are not a hundred percent guarantee against HIV/AIDS as they were not initially made to prevent the disease.

Dr Achenjang Fidelis, a university don accompanying the US educators, also believes that the continuous spread of the disease is not connected to the Church's teachings against condoms. According to him, there is need for serious education with sincere commitment of political, traditional and other leaders.

He also asked the Cardinal what the Church is doing in face of the impunity and injustice in the country. The Cardinal said in areas where there is anything abnormal, the Bishops of Cameroon make their opinion known to the leaders of the country. According to him, the Bishops of Cameroon and other clergy have just their words and cannot force the regime or other leaders to do anything.

Cardinal Tumi also revealed that the Bishops are working on a document on the exploitation of Cameroon raw materials. These materials include forestry wood, oil among others. The prelate noted with regrets that Cameroon's natural resources are terribly and abusively exploited by some national and multinational companies with the complicity of some political leaders.

He regretted that these resources are wantonly exploited to the detriment of poor Cameroonians and to the benefit of a privileged few. The educators also wanted to know what kind of pressure the Church can put on the judiciary to make it more independent. In response the Cardinal said there is nothing the Church can do to bring back to normal any case that has been condemned.

The Cardinal also briefed his guests on the several aspects of the Archdiocese education and health. The 13 college educators from South-eastern Kentucky in the United States of America have been in Cameroon since June 16, their visit ends on July 22. The main purpose of the intensive field experience was to study the interaction of environment and culture in Cameroon. They met and interviewed Cameroonian teachers, public policy experts, government officials, artists, and religious leaders.

They also gathered items such as indigenous arts and crafts and environmental specimens, which would be later used in their classrooms. They also visited some schools and one of such was, Government teacher Training College (GTTC) Fontem where they were received by the staff of the institution led by its principal Mr Stephen Ajong. The USA team visited most of Cameroon notably the West, Northwest, South, Littoral, Southwest and Centre Provinces. In these areas, they discovered the rich nature of Cameroonian culture and also saw for themselves the realities of Africa. It was also a "rare opportunity for the Americans most of whom were coming to Africa for their very first time to learn about another culture, and work with colleagues on curriculum development" says Dr Achenjang. Speaking to L'Effort camerounais, Union College professor Dr. Charles Jones, who helped develop the project, said their trip to Cameroon was a wonderful one.

He said they had the opportunity of meeting with some chiefs and discovering some aspects of the African culture. Dr Jones, described Cameroonians as very welcoming and willing to collaborate in any research. Upon return in the USA, the visitors will share their "African" experiences with colleagues and are expected to develop curricula based on their travels and observations.

IST-AC (UCAC) graduates first batch of engineers

The first batch of engineers from the Higher Institute of Technology of Central Africa better known by its French acronym as IST-AC graduated on the 1st of July this year. The event which took place at the CPDM party house in Bonajno was presided over by the Grand Chancellor of the Catholic University for Central Africa (UCAC), His Eminence Christian Cardinal Tumi.

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Also present were the Rector of the Catholic University of Central African States, Rev Father Christian Morfaw, the President of the preparatory series, while three in Cameroon. The dean revealed that their institution is partnered with several local companies as well as multinationals. All students of IST-AC are attached to companies where they do internships constantly. Unlike most schools where students may spend five years of theory in engineering Fr John Zambo said their students spend a lot of time in the field where they do varied assignments. He stressed that they principally do generalised engineering like electronics, information technology, chemical, petroleum engineering, electricity etc.

In a very positive note, the director Alain Coulombel said most of their students are always assured of getting jobs upon