

OCTOBER POLL

Aspiring candidates suffocate ELECAM with application files



The number rose to over 70 after more than 30 aspirants deposited their candidacy files to elections management body, ELECAM yesterday. The end of the file submission window is expected to set the stage for the final phase of the exercise where ELECAM and the Constitutional Council will dictate the pace of affairs in determining the aspirants who will be on the starting block as candidates during the Sunday October 12 mega political showdown. **P.8**

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ROUNDUP

MBENGWI

Newly constructed bridge collapses weeks after completion

The project, handled by PEACE Engineering Co., Ltd., has raised serious concerns as its pillars collapse, leaving locals questioning the construction quality.



By Brigette BATE

An 18-meter bridge in Munam village in Mbengwi in the Momo Division of the North West Region built for 127 million FCFA, is already falling apart less than a month after completion. It is said that, in December 2024, a construction company, PEACE Engineering Co., Ltd. secured a contract to construct the bridge for 127 million FCFA. Shortly after completion, the pillars began failing, sparking outrage among residents. The rapid deterioration has led to skepticism about how such a costly project could fail so quickly.

Building a durable bridge requires proper engineering standards, yet this one, made with basic cement blocks, says comments suggests questionable methods. Local anger is growing as the structure weakens daily. Residents now fear using the bridge, calling for accountability from both the contractor and the authorities who approved the project. Meanwhile, the community waits for answers, wondering how 127 million FCFA resulted in a collapsing bridge. The situation has called on serious concerns about construction standards and oversight in public projects. For now, the bridge remains a hazard, and the people of Munam are left demanding justice.

ENGLAND

Man United signs Mbeumo in blockbuster deal

The prolific forward, who netted 20 goals and provided eight assists last season, is expected to bring firepower and versatility to a struggling Red Devils attack.



By Eratus NDUKH

Manchester United have completed the signing of Brentford star and Cameroonian international Bryan Mbeumo, in a deal reportedly worth up to 71 million United Kingdom Pound, over 50 billion FCFA. The forward becomes the Red Devils' marquee signing so far this summer, as the club looks to rebuild its attack under new manager Ruben Amorim. According to American sports news portal, The Athletic, the agreement includes an initial 65 million fee to be paid in instalments, with a further £6 million in performance-related bonuses. Negotiations between the two clubs had been ongoing for weeks, with United seeing two initial bids rejected before finally meeting Brentford's valuation. Mbeumo's arrival adds proven Premier League quality to a United attack that has struggled for consistency. Last season, the 26-year-old registered 20 goals and eight

assists in 38 league games, his most productive campaign yet. His pace, creativity, and work rate made him one of Brentford's standout performers and a fan favourite since joining the club in 2019 from Troyes in France. He leaves the West London side after five seasons, racking up 242 appearances, 70 goals, and 51 assists across all competitions. Brentford had already turned down multiple offers for fellow forward Yoane Wissa, making it clear only one of their prized attackers would be allowed to depart this window. United's interest in Mbeumo intensified following a disappointing season that saw the team struggle for goals and fail to secure a top-four finish. With the club looking to offload out-of-favour attackers like Anthony Martial and Jadon Sancho, Mbeumo's signing is seen as a fresh start for United's frontline. The Douala-born winger, who represents Cameroon internationally despite featuring for France at youth level, was also reportedly on the radar of Arsenal, Newcastle, and Tottenham. However, sources close to the player say he

made it clear that Old Trafford was his preferred destination. United manager Ruben Amorim is said to be a keen admirer of Mbeumo's tactical intelligence and versatility. The forward is comfortable playing on either wing or as a central striker—qualities that will be crucial as Amorim looks to implement a fluid attacking style. Mbeumo is expected to undergo a medical and finalize personal terms in the coming days before being officially unveiled. The deal is part of a broader restructuring at United, who are also working to offload several players in a bid to balance their books and comply with UEFA financial fair play rules. The signing is not just a show of ambition by United's new sporting structure but also a signal to fans that the club is serious about returning to the top tier of English and European football. Mbeumo's Premier League experience, coupled with his international pedigree, having represented Cameroon at the 2022 FIFA World Cup, adds leadership and depth to United's squad heading into the new season.

NEWS

NORTH WEST

Regional assembly chief demands action for people with disabilities

The President of the North West Regional Assembly, Prof. Fru Angwafo III, is urging government and development actors to stop sidelining Persons with Disabilities and instead place them at the heart of budget planning and regional projects. Speaking during the Assembly's June session, he declared that inclusivity is no longer a favour, it is a duty.

By Eratus NDUH

In a bold call for inclusive governance and equitable development in Cameroon's North West Region, the President of the North West Regional Assembly, NWRA, Prof Fru Angwafo III, has urged both government bodies and development partners to prioritize Persons with Disabilities, PWDs in policy design and budget implementation. Speaking at the close of the June 2025 Ordinary Session of the NWRA, held under the theme "2025 Budget Orientation Debate and First Semester Review", the regional leader emphasized that inclusivity must go beyond political discourse to become a sustained and actionable priority. "Inclusivity must not be a subject of debate; it is a permanent commitment. Every budget we design must make room for the needs of Persons with Disabilities," Prof. Fru Angwafo III stated. While existing social programs in sectors such as education and health often acknowledge PWDs, Prof. Fru lamented the lack of regional auto-



nomies in most ministerial structures, which, he said, limits the ability to implement context-specific initiatives. "We are limited because not all ministries have the authority to act at the regional level. When ministries like Social Affairs and Women's Empowerment send their specifications, only then can we mobilize resources effectively," he explained. Despite these institutional constraints, the NWRA President reaffirmed the Assembly's commitment to designing future development projects that place PWDs and women, especially those

in underserved rural communities, at the center.

Citizens Urged to Champion Peace and Development

The Assembly session also emphasized the role of community-driven development in fostering peace and reconciliation. Representing the Head of State, Governor Adolphe Lele Lafrique called on citizens to take ownership of local development initiatives and contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding efforts. "Without peace, there can be no sustainable development. We need a bottom-up

approach where every citizen is a partner in progress," the Governor declared. His message resonated strongly amid the ongoing Anglophone crisis. The Governor further encouraged collaboration between community leaders, divisional representatives, and civil society organizations to rebuild fractured communities and restore social cohesion.

Bridging development gaps across divisions

Divisional Representatives raised serious concerns about disparities in project distribution, revealing that some areas have received little to no development funding from the NWRA. In response, the Assembly pledged to reassess its project bank to ensure a fairer, needs-based allocation of resources across all divisions. Prof. Fru called on Assembly members to take active roles in peace and development committees, emphasizing that inclusive governance requires sustained engagement beyond plenary sessions.

Progress in education amidst challenges

The Assembly reported significant

progress in the education sector, with student enrollment rising from 84,000 in 2024 to 103,000 in 2025. Currently, 318 schools are operational across the region. However, many rural schools remain deprived of basic services, including potable water, electricity, and adequate classroom infrastructure. Prof. Fru urged the Education Committee to work in close partnership with the Ministry of Secondary Education to close these gaps, particularly in hard-to-reach communities.

Health efforts centering community needs

In the health sector, the Assembly announced plans to collaborate with the Regional Delegation of Public Health to develop localized solutions that improve healthcare access. Key focus areas include reducing infant mortality and enhancing medical infrastructure in rural areas. Development priorities, officials said, will be shaped by the specific needs of communities, with particular attention to vulnerable populations who are often overlooked.

VALORIZING CULTURE

Toghu marathoner donates iconic attire to nation tomorrow

The historic event scheduled for the National Museum in Yaounde will take place under the distinguished patronage of the Minister of Arts and Culture, Bidoung Mp watt. It is expected to bring together government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, international guests and other dignitaries.

By Eratus NDUH

Famed Cameroonian long-distance runner, Afowiri Kizito Fondzenyuy, popularly known as the Toghu Marathoner, will officially donate his Guinness World Records-winning attire and certificate to the National Museum on Wednesday, July 23, 2025. The high-profile event will be held under the distinguished patronage of the Minister of Arts and Culture, Bidoung Mp watt. It is expected to bring together government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, international guests and others. Fondzenyuy who has captured global attention for completing marathons across six continents dressed in Toghu, a traditional re-

galia from the North West Region in Cameroon, earned a Guinness World Record at the 2024 Tokyo Marathon for the fastest marathon ran in traditional attire. He later became the first Cameroonian to complete the grueling Antarctica Marathon in March 2025. "This isn't just about running," Fondzenyuy said. "It's about purpose. Every stride I take is for children who deserve a chance, especially those with autism, who are so often left behind." Through his nonprofit, the Amom Foundation, Fondzenyuy has supported over 20,000 beneficiaries nationwide through school construction, scholarship programs, girls' education initiatives, and autism awareness campaigns. He is now championing the construction of a



dedicated school for children with special needs in Cameroon. "Too many children are left out not because they lack potential, but because they lack access," he said, appealing for national and international support. "We're building a space where every child can grow, learn, and be seen," he added. Fondzenyuy's marathon journey began in 2011 in the United States at the Thunder Road Marathon in Charlotte, where he ran to support un-

derprivileged children. Since then, he has completed 19 international marathons, including all six Abbott World Marathon Majors, and was honored in 2023 with the President's Lifetime Achievement Award by U.S. President Joe Biden. The donation of the Toghu attire, which has come to symbolize resilience and cultural pride, is seen as a powerful gesture of legacy-building. "We want this story to inspire Cameroonians at home and abroad," said Chinedu Hardy Nwadike, Brand Manager for the initiative. "This is about civic responsibility, cultural identity, and nation-building." As the National Museum prepares to receive this historic piece, the Toghu Marathoner's call remains clear: "Your support will lay the bricks, open the doors,

NEWS

DATA PROTECTION

CAMTEL, War college review fruitful cooperation

CAMTEL's head office yesterday July 21, 2025 welcomed a delegation from the Yaounde International War College, to elaborate on data security, a top priority for Cameroon.



By Brigitte BATE

Cameroon telecommunications company, CAMTEL and the Yaounde International War College, ESIG, have once more reviewed the fruitful tie that has existed between two institutions over the years particularly in the field of safeguarding national cybersecurity. The two institutions reviewed the tie during a visit by officials of the International war college at the CAMTEL head office in Yaounde yesterday. The visit coincided with the War college's 20th anniversary celebrations. Authorities in the course of discussions during the visit, drummed the critical role that the cooperation between the two bodies have played in

addressing personal data protection which the said has become a top priority for Cameroon. They highlighted the role that CAMTEL as an institution that boost of a robust telecommunications infrastructure, have played in addressing the growing and more sophisticated cyber threats that have now expanded to range from data leaks to ransomware. The Head of Sales Coordination at CAMTEL, Mathilde Abouem Mouangue, guided the delegation through the telecom operator's infrastructure, emphasizing its importance in securing national data.

Enter CAMTEL officials Technical adviser N°1 to the General Manager of CAMTEL, Francis Ottou emphasized that data is no longer

just files but encompasses identities, behaviors, and national security interests. One of the key concerns that were raised by the authorities was how CAMTEL has been able to ensure that data collected in Cameroon remains within the country. "Data hosting within Cameroon is an instrument of digital sovereignty," the Head of Sales Coordination at CAMTEL, Mathilde Abouem Mouangue, stated. She however acknowledged that more must be done to improve local internet traffic exchange. She revealed that at the moment, much of Cameroon's data still routes through foreign servers before returning, assuring that CAMTEL is working to strengthen the country's internal exchange points to tackle the challenge.

Strengthening cyber defenses

Per CAMTEL officials, the institution has implemented multiple security strategies, including enhanced software protections, regulatory compliance, and network redundancies. The Technical Adviser N°1 to the General Manager of CAMTEL, Ottou Ottou however noted that human factors remain critical both as potential vulnerabilities and as the first line of defense when properly trained. He also acknowledged the essential role of defense and security forces in protecting physical infrastructure from sabotage and vandalism, which directly impacts national connectivity. Ottou said modern threats require unified efforts, stressing that cybercrime operates

across borders, blending economic, political, and strategic sabotage. To counter these risks, he said the cooperation between government, regulators, telecom operators, and users is vital. While military and telecom sectors operate differently, he said both share the goal of ensuring continuity and security. Ottou Ottou concluded by reinforcing the importance of partnerships between civil, military, and digital institutions to face evolving threats. As CAMTEL protects digital infrastructure, official said Cameroon's defense forces safeguard physical assets like cables and transmission sites from sabotage. They said together, the efforts strengthen national resilience against evolving security challenges.

NEWS

BAC 2025

Result publication sets off new beginnings

Last Friday, July 18 marked an important day for thousands of students across Cameroon as the 2025 Baccalaureate exam results was published, announcing fresh starts for successful candidates.

By **Brigette BATE**

General Baccalaureate exams of 2025 brought mixed emotions across candidates as results were announced on Friday, July 18. While some students erupted in joyful celebration, others faced disappointment. Results this year was made available on some application like Ayoba easing candidates to use their matriculation to get their results, in addition to the online release, the results were announced on state radio, the Cameroon radio television, Crtv, at 9 p.m. on July 18. This tradition remains important for many Cameroonian families. The results covered major general secondary series including Series A, C, D, E, TI, and SH. Meanwhile, results for technical and vocational exams,



such as the Industrial Technical Baccalaureate (BAC TI), AF and F Baccalaureates, and other technical certificates, had been published a day earlier, on July 17. Although the board has not yet released the

full official statistics, early reports suggest an improvement in the pass rate compared to previous years. Some streams showed significant progress, while others remained stable. Over 144,000 candidates re-

gistered for the 2025 BAC exams, which began on May 26 across the country. A detailed breakdown of results by region, series, and gender will be shared later by the official board. Preliminary figures in-

dicate a pass rate of 47.45%, a notable increase from the 37% recorded in 2024, which had been the lowest rate in the last two decades. This improvement has brought relief to many students and their families. Among the successful candidates is Lyla Chris, a student at Government High School Mballa II Yaounde in the Centre Region, who expressed her excitement to one of our reporters. "I am so happy. I made a promise to myself to write this exam once and for all and it was fulfilled," she said with a bright smile. Her joy reflects the hopes of thousands who have been eagerly awaiting their results. As the academic year concludes, attention now shifts to higher education admissions and future opportunities for the college graduates.

NW MINI INTERPOOLS

Quarterfinal first legs produce blistering results

A total of 13 goals were scored across the four quarterfinal matches which were staged at the University of Bamenda Stadium last weekend.

By **TEMBA Junior SUH**

The first legs of the quarterfinal stages of the ongoing North West Regional League produced impressive fireworks, resultantly setting the stage for more blistering performances during the return leg of the matches which are scheduled to take place tomorrow Wednesday July 23 and Thursday July 24. Newly-created outfit, Mankon United and My Soccer Center launched the series when both teams played out a 3-3 draw at the University of Bamenda Down CCAST stadium on Saturday July 19. Mankon United scored its three goals through former PWD Bamenda star, Nundi Christian Cagawa who opened the scoring at the third minute before Tabor Etaka contributed a brace with goals at the 23rd and fourth minute of additional time. The



goals took the pair's goal tally in the championship so far this season to six and seven respectively. My Soccer Centre got its goals at the sixth, 48th and 52nd minutes through Jefferson Awah Fru, Marius Bivirka and Edmond Gwan. Dream Team recorded a 2-0 victory over Boyo Division team, Rockland Football Club of

Belo.

Similar drama on Sunday

Similar results were recorded during Sunday's matches that also took place at the University of Bamenda Down CCAST stadium. Defending champions, Options Sports Academy of Bamenda registered a 3-0 over Vision Sports of Bamenda. For-

mer champions, Hilltop Strikers of Bamenda played out a 1-1 draw with All Stars Football Academy of Bamenda.

Quarterfinals to conclude Thursday

The return leg of the quarterfinals will be held tomorrow Wednesday July 23 and on Thursday July 24. All four matches

will take place at the University of Bamenda Down CCAST stadium. On Wednesday, My Soccer Center will face Mankon United at 1pm before Rockland Football Club's showdown with Dream Team at 3pm. Thursday's matches will begin with a cracker between Hilltop Strikers and All Stars FA at 1pm before concluding with the fixture between Vision Sports and Options Sports Academy at 3pm. The four quarterfinal matches are serving as the first phase of the knockout series of the North West Region's flagship football competition. The North West Regional League serves as the region's qualifiers for the National Interpools. The winner of the competition features in the National Interpools where the 10 regional champions compete for qualification tickets to the second division football championship, the Elite Two.



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NEWS

ENERGY SECTOR

CSTAR refinery project set to create over 7,000 jobs

The announcement was made recently, by a representative of the Executive General Manager of the National Hydrocarbons Corporation, SNH, and Chair of the CSTAR Board of Directors. The multi-million-dollar initiative, aims to boost local fuel production, reduce imports, and position Cameroon as an energy hub in Central Africa.

By Eratus NDUUH

Over 2,000 direct and 5,000 indirect job opportunities are expected to emerge from the CSTAR Refinery Project, which has officially launched construction in Lolabé, Ocean Division of Cameroon's South Region. The announcement was made on July 17, by Nathalie Moudiki, representative of the Executive General Manager of the National Hydrocarbons Corporation, SNH, and Chair of the CSTAR Board of Directors. Speaking during the launch ceremony, Moudiki highlighted the project's national significance, not only in employment creation but in achieving Cameroon's long-term energy independence. The event brought together a host of dignitaries including the Mayor of Kribi, Guy Emmanuel Sabikanda, officials from Ariana Energy and TRADEX, administrative authorities, traditional rulers, and religious leaders. Moudiki revealed that the CSTAR project, an acronym representing its partners, Cameroon, SNH, TRADEX, and Ariana Energy, is designed to cost between 198 to 200 million US dollars, equivalent to over 112 billion FCFA. The initiative is aligned with President Paul Biya's vision of strengthening the energy sector and modernizing the country's petroleum logistics. Cameroon is contributing 30 percent of the project's funding through SNH and TRADEX. SNH is investing 23.5 million dollars (approximately 13 billion FCFA), while TRADEX is contributing 36.5 million dollars (over 20 billion FCFA). Ariana Energy, the largest shareholder, will provide the remaining 70 percent. In terms of ownership, Ariana Energy holds 49 percent of the shares, TRADEX 31 percent, and SNH 20 percent. Together, the shares of SNH and TRADEX give Cameroon a 51 percent controlling stake in the project. Spanning 250 hectares of land, the CSTAR refinery is expected to meet international standards. The integrated facility will include a massive storage infrastructure with a capacity of between 250,000 to 300,000 cubic metres, expandable in future phases. The refinery itself will be capable of processing 30,000 barrels of crude oil per day. According to project officials, construction will take place in three phases, with the first phase scheduled to be completed and commissioned commercially

by June 2028. The project is seen as a long-term solution to Cameroon's current challenges in the petroleum sector. With the shutdown of the National Oil Refining Company, SONARA, and the saturation of the Cameroon Petroleum Depot Company, SCDP, the country has been heavily reliant on imports. Cameroon currently produces 600,000 barrels of oil per day, yet it depends on the importation of approximately 1.9 million metric tons of petroleum products annually. The country only has a storage capacity of 275,500 metric tons, far below the estimated national need of 470,000 metric tons. This gap means the country's commercial stock can only sustain domestic demand for about 15 days, while safety reserves cover just 30 days—an unsustainable situation in the event of a supply crisis. By localizing petroleum product processing and storage, the CSTAR project aims to reduce Cameroon's reliance on foreign imports by 30 percent. It is projected to help the state save around 750 million dollars (over 424 billion FCFA) annually on imports. Additionally, the refinery is expected to generate 250 million dollars (approximately 141 billion FCFA) in revenue from the export of marine fuel and other petroleum products. Its design allows for the local refining of Cameroonian crude oil into Euro V diesel, petrol, jet fuel, kerosene, asphalt, and other petrochemical derivatives. Beyond its economic and energy impact, the CSTAR project holds promise for job creation, skills transfer, and regional development. In total, the project is expected to create more than 7,000 employment opportunities, 2,000 direct and 5,000 indirect. Moudiki emphasized that the project will not only offer employment but also facilitate the transfer of expertise to local engineers and technicians. She noted that Cameroon has the human capital required to achieve great industrial strides, and initiatives like CSTAR must unlock that potential. The financial model of the project reflects a strong business case, with an estimated gross annual revenue of 43.2 million dollars (around 24 billion FCFA) and net income projected at 37.2 million dollars (approximately 20.9 billion FCFA). The project's commercial debt is expected to be serviced over a seven-year period. According to officials, SNH and Ariana Energy will provide 40 percent of the capital, while the remaining 60 percent will be raised through the



financial market with the support of BGFI Bank. Azzam Marlouf, Chairman of Ariana Energy, reaffirmed his company's commitment to long-term investment in Cameroon. He commended the collaboration with SNH and TRADEX, emphasizing that the project will meet all international standards and deadlines. Marlouf pledged to ensure meaningful technology transfer and capacity-building among Cameroonians, with the aim of positioning Cameroon as an energy powerhouse in the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, CEMAC zone. Kribi City Mayor Guy Emmanuel Sabikanda also expressed satisfaction, describing the project as a strong reflection of President Paul Biya's foresight and dedication to industrializing the nation. He noted that the Kribi municipality stands to gain significantly from the presence of such a major infrastructure, particularly in terms of employment and local economic growth. Nathalie Moudiki reiterated that the CSTAR refinery is a bold step in line with President Biya's ambition of seeing Cameroon produce what it consumes and consume what it produces. She thanked the Head of State for his continued support of SNH's ventures and praised the faith shown by international partners in Cameroon's potential. With construction now officially underway, CSTAR is set to become a game-changing pillar in the country's energy independence and economic transformation.

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NEWS

OCTOBER POLL

Aspiring candidates suffocate ELECAM with application files

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By TEMBA Junior SUH

A record eighty-one aspirants have submitted candidacy files at Elections Cameroon, ELECAM in a bid to contest the forthcoming Presidential Election in Cameroon. The elections management body revealed the numbers early this morning at the end of the file submission window of the October exercise. Per data revealed by the institution, the number rose to 81 after some 50 aspirants submitted candidacy files for consideration and validation. Speaking in separate interviews after depositing their files, all the aspirants promised to front the complete transformation of Cameroon if they are elected the President of Cameroon. The end of the window is expected to set the stage for the final phase of the exercise where ELECAM and the Constitutional Council will dictate the pace of affairs in determining the aspirants who will be on the starting block as candidates during the Sunday October 12 mega political showdown.

Record application files

At 81, the list of aspirants who have registered for the forthcoming election is the highest number of application files that have been recorded in the history of presidential elections in Cameroon or at least in recent times. Since Cameroon transitioned to multiparty politics in the 90s and organized its first multiparty Presidential Election in 1992, such a number has never been recorded in a presidential election. The only time the country came close to beating that record was in 2011. Fifty-one Cameroonians submitted candidacy files to challenge incumbent Paul Biya for the 2011 election. Despite the relatively overblown number, only 23 of the application files were validated, placing the number of candidates at 23 before the candidate of the United Socialist Party, Daniel Soh later withdrew and backed incumbent Paul Biya of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, the CPDM party. Pundits had blamed the high rate of application for the 2011 exercise on the political discontentment that was experienced in the political landscape



in the political landscape in Cameroon at the time. The October 9, 2011 Presidential Election was the first presidential election that Cameroon was organizing after the cancellation of presidential term limit which formerly stood at two terms.

Facts and figures of 2025 applicants

The files submitted for the 2025 election include multiple files from independent candidates and several cases of double application files received under the banner of a single political party. In total, 25 independent candidates submitted candidacy files. Over 15 of the independent candidates submitted their application files yesterday including seven of them deposited at ELECAM regional offices in the North, Adamawa, Littoral and South regions.

Double applications under single party

Four cases of double files under the banner of a single political party were also recorded, opening the doors for the possible disqualification of one of the files in the four cases or in the worst-case scenario, the disqualification of both aspirants. The double files involve the ruling CPDM, UNIVERS, the Union of African Populations, UPC and the African Movement for New Independence and Democracy, MANIDEM. The

CPDM's National President, Paul Biya was the first to submit files for the ruling political party when his file was deposited at ELECAM last Thursday July 17 by other bigwigs of the institution. Chaos however hit the party when, a day after the submission of Biya's application, one of the councilors of the party, Onana Leon Theiller from the Centre Region, deposited his candidacy file under the same banner on Friday July 18. In the last over six months, Onana Leon Theiller have challenged Biya's status as the flagbearer of the CPDM in the forthcoming election, notably taking the 92-year-old who has served as Cameroon's Head of State since 1982 to court. He has placed his argument on the party's failure to organize a congress to officially elect the long-serving Head of State as the candidate of the CPDM. The last time a congress was organized to elect Biya as CPDM's flagbearer in an election was in 2011 in the leadup to the 2011 Presidential Election. Biya entered the 2018 race under the banners of the CPDM without the CPDM holding a congress to select him as a flagbearer.

Kamto faces similar headache at MANIDEM

Prof Maurice Kamto who is tipped to be Biya's biggest challenger in the forthcoming exercise, is facing a similar headache at the African Movement for New Inde-

pendence and Democracy party, MANIDEM. Kamto deposited his file at ELECAM last Friday July 18. Things however took a different twist when another aspirant, Yebga Dieudonne, dropped his candidacy file under the banner of the same party yesterday. The submission of double files sets the tone for another episode of drama for Prof Kamto after seven years of twists and turns in the leadup to the forthcoming election. In the last over eight years, Prof Kamto had fronted political movements under the banner of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement, the CRM party. He however announced last week that he had diverted to the MANIDEM party which is led by renowned Cameroonian politician, Anicet Ekane who contested the presidential elections in 2004 and 2011. Kamto stated after announcing the switch that he had resigned from the CRM party last month to officially facilitate the switch which many believe was motivated by the challenges that the runner up of the 2018 Presidential Election had faced in his bid to enter the forthcoming contest under the CRM party.

UNIVERS, UPC dancing to same tunes

The Union of Cameroonian Populations, UPC and the UNIVERS party are dancing to the same tunes like the CPDM and MANIDEM. Barrister Akere Muna first

submitted files as the flagbearer of the UNIVERS party on July 16, officially entering the ranks as the second aspirant to submit application documents. Chaos however took over his show yesterday when another aspirant, Membouet Chantale Adelaide, dropped an application file under the banner of the same party. Yamb Ntimba Dimba Dominique submitted files early yesterday as the leader of the UPC party before renowned Cameroonian health specialist, Prof Bahebeck Jean entered the list under the colors of the same party just a few hours later on the day.

Class of heavyweights

Several political heavyweights have joined the 2025 race to the Unity Palace. Besides Paul Biya, Prof Kamto and Akere Muna, the likes of Joshua Osih of the Social Democratic Front, SDF, Bello Bouba Maigara of the National Union of Democracy and Progress, the NUDP and Issa Tchiro-ma Bakary of the Cameroon National Salvation Front, the FSNC party, have also joined the ride. Other familiar names on the list include 2018 candidates, Cabral Libii of the Cameroonian Party of National Reconciliation, PCRN, Serge Espoir Matomba of the United People for Social Renovation, PURS and the leader of the Union of Socialist Movements, UMS, Pierre Kwemo.