

Cameroon National Day Special

A steadfast commitment to citizens' well-being

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AMBASSADOR OF CAMEROON



On May 20, we celebrate the 52nd anniversary of our National Day. On behalf of the government and people of Cameroon, I would like to use this occasion to convey my warmest compliments

to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, as well as to the government, the Diet and the people of Japan.

This year's celebration focuses on the key theme of "Army and Nation, Together for a United, Peaceful and Prosperous Cameroon," which portrays the intrinsic link between the army and the people as the cornerstone of my country's sociopolitical and economic prospects.

Geared toward building its future, and under the authority of H.E. President Paul

Biya, my government continues working with great determination for a strong nation, a prosperous economy and a country that is proud, free and united in its diversity. Neither the lingering global economic and political challenges nor the huge financial commitments being made to address regional and local security threats have tainted the government's commitment to pursue our people's well-being and legitimate aspirations for better lives.

The government has kept pace with adjustments and taken flexible domestic measures that have contributed to contain inflation at 6.7% while keeping economic growth stable at a rate of 3.9% in 2023. Besides these temporary external shock containment endeavors and the ongoing implementation of policies to boost domestic financial resource potentialities and further strengthen local production capacities through the 2024 to 2026 Integrated Import Substitution Plan, the government has engaged in expanding social infrastructure nationwide. These efforts are focused on widening green energy sources, road connec-

tivity and increasing the availability of safe drinking water to residents and businesses, as well as in empowering youth through more diversified and affordable educational and vocational training opportunities.

Battling a pronounced energy deficit impeding the daily lives of citizens and the growth of businesses, Cameroon has recently turned to diversify its energy supply by investing in solar energy development. As a result, in 2023 more than 44,000 solar panels were deployed in the northern part of the country to meet 40% of electricity needs in this region. In addition, major hydropower projects such as the Nachtigal and Lom Pangar dams are being expedited to increase energy supply in other parts of the country.

Similarly, significant public investment has been channeled to rehabilitate over 700 kilometers of roads nationwide, increase the supply of potable water in urban and rural areas and support youth employment.

However, these investments in social infrastructure pose a heavy burden on the state budget, partly due to narrow domestic financial resource availability, which is

common to many developing countries in Africa. This endogenic limitation is further aggravated by the systemic inadequacy of development financing available in international capital markets as voiced by my president in 2022 at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. Indeed, the high cost of capital and global financial markets' constraining conditionalities are restricting a developing country like Cameroon to accessing affordable development funding, which is an impediment to successful development project implementation and external shock mitigation initiatives.

While commending the positive dynamics of Cameroon-Japan bilateral cooperation that are contributing to bolstering the socioeconomic development efforts of my country, I wish to appeal for stronger Japanese support in specific sectors. These include green energy technologies, potable water solutions, waste management and transportation infrastructure. Japan's renowned expertise in all these sectors could have a significant impact on my country's quest to achieve its development.



President of the Republic of Cameroon H.E. Paul Biya
EMBASSY OF CAMEROON

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Cameroon
on the Anniversary of
their National Day



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