

News bulletin

13 -20 April 2009

Highlights

- Paoua: killing of leading cattle breeder
- Bangui: birth certificate gives access to schooling
- Mbaïki : hope for 960 flood victims

Background and security

Assassination of Soule Garga in Paoua

The president of the *National Federation of Cattle Breeders* (FNEC) in Paoua, Soule Garga, was killed on the 14th of April by members of the *l'Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la Démocratie* (APRD, the Army for the Restoration of Democracy) near Paoua market.

APRD president Jean Jacques Démafouth stated that he « firmly condemned this hateful act which tarnishes the image of the APRD ». Laurent Djim Wei who was until the 14th of April the spokesperson for the APRD has been relieved of his functions and replaced by Bertin Wafio Tchébo, according to Mr Démafouth.

The humanitarian community, who knew Mr Garga well and worked in close collaboration with him, expresses condolences to his family.

Kabo attack

3 a.m., 18th April, Kabo town - forces from the *Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain* (FDPC, the Democratic Front of the Central African People) of Abdoulaye Miskine launched an attack on the positions of the *Forces Armées Centrafricaines* (FACA, the Central African army) in CAR's north.

Fighting ceased at 7 a.m. and the town is now under the control of the FACA. *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) in Kabo is looking after the wounded from the attack.

A large proportion of Kabo's population fled the town following the fighting.

Permanent Military Court underway

The 2009 session of the *Tribunal Militaire Permanent* (TMP, the Permanent Military Court) started on Wednesday the 15th of April, lasting till the 24th of April – the court is holding its hearings at the Beal camp in Bangui.

Thirty soldiers will appear at the court in dozens of cases involving theft of arms, abandonment of positions, violence and arbitrary detention.

On the 22nd of April, the court will examine the case of police chief Sama who died on the 6th of April after an operation by members of the Presidential Guard.

News

5 millions Euro for sanitation

The French embassy and the Central African government signed an agreement worth 5 million euro on the 14th of April. Minister Sylvain Maliko signed for the Ministry of Planning, the Economy and International Cooperation while Ambassador Jean-Pierre Vidon represented France. The agreement will fund sanitation works in Bangui.

These High Intensity Labour Works - *Travaux à Haute Intensité de Main d'œuvre* (THIMO) - will allow THIMO phase 4 to proceed, involving the construction of almost 8 kilometres of gutters, dredging of 2.5 kms of existing gutters and the continuation of the rehabilitation of the pavement on Independence Avenue from the cathedral up till Port Amont.

Following THIMO 1 in 1995-1998 which involved sanitation rehabilitation in Kpetene, THIMO 2 between 1998 and 2000 for Malimaka and Mamadou Mbaïki, THIMO 3 from 2000 to 2006 for the neighbourhoods of Ngou Ciment, Yapele, Bacongo and Ouango, THIMO 4 is addressing the sanitation of the water basin in the city centre in order to channel rainwater towards the river.

It's expected that these works will prevent flooding in the city centre and reduce the population's exposure to water-borne illnesses and malaria. The project will also give a helping hand to small and medium sized businesses in the public works sector as well as distributing income in the neighbourhoods involved which will supply the labour.

More information: Jean Louis Pouninguinza, Planning Ministry, (236) 75 50 64 84, jlouninguinza@yahoo.fr

Birth certificates and access to school

Operation « Birth certificates for 6,000 children » kicked off on Friday the 17th of April at SOS Children's Village in Bangui, it will last for 6 months.

A 2007 census carried out by SOS Children's Village in the 7th arrondissement of Bangui indicated that more than 6,000 children did not have birth certificates.

With support of 725.000 FCFA as well as equipment from the *United Nations Children's Fund* (UNICEF),

the obstacles for access to schooling for these children are being removed.

Other partners in the operation include the Ministry for Justice and the 7th arrondissement's municipal council.

A certificate with an estimated age is supplied by the SOS Children's village maternity ward, allowing families to turn to the courts for legal approval of the certificate. In this way, the council can provide an official birth certificate – a legal certificate - for each child.

The aim of this operation is to facilitate children's access to schooling – future projects aim to raise awareness around the importance of birth certificates.

More information: Fernand Kaine, SOS Children's village (236) 75 04 76 40, kainefernand@yahoo.fr

€263,000 for food security

Friday the 17th of April saw the signing of a funding agreement worth € 263,000 by the NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) Première Urgence and the French embassy.

The agreement aims to provide food security through training and market gardening as well as facilitating development activities in the sub prefecture of N'Gaoundaye such as the rehabilitation of minor roads to improve access to villages and greater commercial trade.

Other activities include distribution of protection rations to 1,145 families and full food rations to 281 extremely vulnerable families.

More information: Kian Abbassian, Première Urgence, (236) 75 57 01 01, caf.cdm@premiere-urgence.org

Hope for 960 flood victims in Mbaïki

At the beginning of April, 124 households - more than 960 people - lost everything and were left homeless following heavy rainfall in Mbaïki in the south of CAR.

The Ministry for Social Affairs took charge of the humanitarian mission, providing a job lot of goods to the president of the Red Cross. The goods (aluminium sheeting, nails, soap, rice, salt, sugar clothes and lanterns) will help to reduce vulnerability for the people of the Lobaye region who have been victims of catastrophes and calamities.

More information: Bria Constantin, Ministry for Social Affairs (236) 72 28 87 75, briaconstantin@yahoo.fr

Approval for emergency response funds

April 17th: US\$ 91,500 has been allocated to the NGO Solidarités by the interim Humanitarian Coordinator Maï Moussa Abari to finance an emergency humanitarian response.

The funding is drawn from the emergency reserve of the *Common Humanitarian Fund* (CHF) in order to distribute food provided by the *World Food Programme* (WFP).

The distribution will reach those affected by recent fighting between the FACA (CAR's army) and members of the *Convention des Patriotes pour la Paix et la Justice* (CPJP, Convention of Patriots for Peace and Justice) on the Ndélé-Ngarba road in the Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture.

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