

HARD FACTS

REPORTING THE FACTS

HARDFACTS MAGAZINE

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LIBERIA PETROLEUM REFINING COMPANY: POWERING PROGRESS, FUELING THE FUTURE

PAGE 78



FROM SURVIVAL TO STABILITY: TACKLING LIBERIA'S BREAD AND BUTTER CRISIS TO SECURE A PROSPEROUS FUTURE

PAGE 32



PAGE 10

President Boakai Urges Global Solidarity for Peace and Security As He Nets Top Annual Peace Award



PAGE 14

LIBERIA SURGE ON DIGITAL LEARNING TO CLOSE EARLY-GRADE EDUCATION GAPS



CHINA-AFRICA TRADE EXPANSION, LIBERIA'S SPORTS DIPLOMACY INITIATIVE

PAGE 48



PRESENT BUT UNPROTECTED: LIBERIA'S HIDDEN HUMAN TRAFFICKING CRISIS AND THE PEOPLE TRAPPED BY POVERTY

PAGE 72



MALTA AND LIBERIA FORGE GLOBAL TOURISM EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP THROUGH ITS

PAGE 82



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MAGAZINE

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PRINT & ELECTRONICS MEDIA

Envisioning

L I B E R I A



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Editorial

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to welcome you to the second edition of Envisioning Liberia, proudly published by Hard Facts Print and Electronic Media. This magazine is more than pages and headlines — it is a vision, a commitment to seeing Liberia as it truly is, and as it can become.

Our mission is simply yet profound: to tell Liberia's story with honesty, clarity, and hope. In this edition, we continue to explore the achievements and challenges of our institutions, communities, and people. We bring you coverage on the economy, health, education, agriculture, environment, infrastructure, human rights, and the rule of law because these are the building blocks of a nation striving toward progress.

At Hard Facts, we believe journalism should serve the people. Our team of experienced journalists works tirelessly to ensure that every article is grounded in truth and relevance. Independence and integrity guide us, because we know that informed citizens are empowered citizens, and transparency is the foundation of accountability.

This magazine is also your platform. Ministries, agencies, concessionaires, private institutions, and individuals — your voices matter. By sharing your stories, you help shape the national dialogue and strengthen the vision of a Liberia that belongs to all of us.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our Managing publisher, Mr. Philip G. Nyantte, whose vision and leadership have made Envisioning Liberia possible. His belief in the power of credible journalism inspires us to keep pushing forward with purpose and passion.

Finally, we reaffirm our pledge: Hard Facts Print and Electronic Media will remain a beacon of independent reporting, committed to truth, balance, and the public interest. Together, let us envision Liberia — not only as it stands today, but as the nation we dream it to be.



From the Publisher

...from the Editor-in-chief

Glancing at a Key Issue in the Liberian Society

I honestly sit behind the desk of the Editor-in-Chief to carefully write a reliable note on the second edition of Envisioning Liberia. Thrilled by the essence of time afforded me by the management of this exciting magazine, I am delighted to fill the void in the editor's notepad by employing the brilliance of hinting an important subject.

In this note, I highlight the key story that centers on Liberia's current president, H.E. Joseph Nyumah Boakai, Sr. who has become a known icon for peace and security in the West African sub-region. Due to the president's wisdom factored by the sequence of development projects across the country, the global scene has recognized and honored him with a top annual peace award. Of course, there is fairly a lot of other meaningful stories in the existing edition.

Across our national landscape, there is a famous Liberian proverb that says: "Anything that cannot kill a man, only makes him stronger." This proverb, widely voiced by ordinary Liberian citizens, has become renowned in countless lively situations in communities and places of work. The creator of the expression is unknown, but it became a popular saying by people who endure unexpected disappointments and grieves in the Liberian society. The adage is also used on matters of public disagreements, ranging from political misunderstandings to demonstrations.

Also, continental-wide, it is observed that before a country excels, such nation must have suffered some forms of lengthened national struggles. And as this commonality of local struggles experienced by other African nations that are far more developed than we are today, it shows that Liberia is no exception to the compendium of struggling on the path of a sustained peace that leads to national development.

President Boakai's passion and endeavors for local and regional peace must be applauded. By peacefully steering the state of affairs, it becomes the reason why the president's ARREST agenda is easily placed in a conduit of accomplishment. By unleashing his presidential wisdom as a way of ensuring the safety of Liberians and foreigners alike, shows that Liberia is in the right trajectory to sustained development.

If Liberia must do well in the quest to preserve national peace, it means the government and people of the West African country must follow the path of recognizable peaceful pursuits.

Enjoy your reading spree!



Jonathan C. Benson

About the Founder

Saywhar Nana Gbaa is a voice of conviction and vision in Liberia. Guided by a deep belief that Africa's oldest republic must rise to its rightful place as a continental leader, she champions dignity, accountability, and innovation as the pillars of national progress. She believes that Liberia is not only a nation with a proud legacy, but one destined to set the standard for democracy, unity, and advancement across Africa.

As founder and CEO of **Hardfacts Print and Electronic Media Inc.**, the publishing house behind *Envisioning Liberia Magazine*, Gbaa has built a platform that challenges complacency and sparks dialogue. Envisioning Liberia is entirely about brainstorming the country in a variety of positive ways. Societal improvements like human resource development, infrastructure improvement, a better economy, and so forth, are a few of several concerning factors that make this dream come true. In line with these goals, Saywhar Nana Gbaa's 'Envisioning Liberia' phraseology is not only a mere verbal expression, but has become the catchphrase of this vibrant magazine. The magazine serves as a call to action urging Liberians to embrace truth, take pride in their identity, and accept the collective responsibility of shaping a future worthy of their history.

Her journalism reflects courage and integrity, telling Liberia's story with honesty while inspiring citizens and leaders alike to rise above division. Beyond media, she brings her expertise as a diplomat and public affairs strategist to bridge divides, foster unity, and amplify Liberia's voice on the global stage.

Whether through media, diplomacy, or advocacy, her work is animated by a single purpose: to see Liberia thrive as a beacon of democracy and pride in Africa. For Gbaa, envisioning Liberia's leadership is not abstract; it is lived daily in her dedication to truth, accountability, and innovation. She calls on Liberians to embrace their national identity with confidence, to lead with purpose, and to honor the country's legacy by shaping a future that reflects its rightful status as Africa's oldest nation.



Saywhar Nana Gbaa

About the Co-Founder

Sylvester M. Grigsby was a Liberian politician and diplomat who served as Minister of State for Presidential Affairs under President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., and previously held the same position under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Born in Sinoe County and educated at the College of West Africa in Monrovia, Grigsby had a distinguished four-decade career in public service, including roles as Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs (2010), Ambassador to Belgium and the Benelux countries, and various senior positions within Liberia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Known for his integrity, diplomatic expertise, and role as a trusted presidential advisor, he was instrumental in the establishment of Liberia's War and Economic Crimes Court and was regarded as one of the most experienced officials in the Boakai administration.

Grigsby also founded the Sun Times newspaper in the early 1980s and served briefly as Superintendent of Sinoe County.

Grigsby played a central role in launching President Boakai's ARREST agenda, focusing on Agriculture, Roads, Rule of law, Education, Sanitation, and Tourism. His experience and institutional knowledge were crucial in structuring the implementation of these priority areas.

Grigsby continued serving as Minister of State for Presidential Affairs until his death, remaining one of President Boakai's most trusted officials. He was described as providing crucial counsel on both domestic and international challenges, and his experience spanning four decades made him an invaluable asset to the administration.

The United States Embassy in Monrovia honored him as "a crucial, longtime friend and colleague," lauding his "invaluable contributions to strengthening the U.S.-Liberia bilateral relationship" and describing him as "a true leader and international statesman, who made Liberia and the world a better place."

Grigsby died in Houston, Texas on 9 August 2025, at the age of 74. His death was met with an outpouring of grief from across Liberia's political spectrum, testament to the respect he commanded throughout his distinguished career in public service.

Grigsby was married for 51 years to his wife Cleopatra, together they had two daughters.



CONTENTS

A Profile of a Trailblazer in Liberia MacDella Cooper Page 9	Hon. Laraamand Shenkin Nyonton: Driving Liberia's Hospitality Page 56
President Boakai Urges Global Solidarity Page 10	Building Liberia's Future: How Mustapha Njie's Investment Page 58
Liberia Surge on Digital Learning Page 14	Present but Unprotected: Liberia's Hidden Human Trafficking Crisis Page 60
Liberia's Steel Industry Strengthened Page 18	Liberia Concludes Landmark Fisheries Investment Conference Page 68
Martin K.N. Kollie: Championing Youth Accountability Page 20	Liberia Petroleum Refining Company: Powering Progress Page 74
Wilmot J. M. Paye: Guiding Liberia Toward a Resource Page 21	Free Regional Roaming Agreement Signed by Liberia Page 77
From Crisis to Leadership: Liberia's Role in Global Maritime Affairs Page 22	Malta and Liberia Forge Global Tourism Education Page 78
Brightening Liberia's Future Through Clean Energy Page 24	LFA Elective Congress Ends Months-Long Saga: Raji Wins Third Term Page 82
Hon. Magdalene E. Dagoseh: Using Prolific Methods Page 26	
Marconja Zor: A Liberian Journalist Building Bridges Page 28	
Karishma Pelham-Raad: Liberia's Voice Rising Among Africa's Page 30	
From Survival To Stability: Tackling Liberia's Bread And Butter Page 32	
Going Cashless: The Digital Revolution Page 36	
NASSCORP: Protecting Families, Building Futures Page 45	
NTA Signals Revival Under Edmond Forh's Leadership Page 46	
China-Africa Trade Expansion, Liberia's Sports Page 48	
Gold Mining Fueling Liberia's Growth Page 50	
Strengthening Liberia's Voice: Achievements, Media Freedom Page 52	
Ministry of Youth and Sports: Empowering Youth Page 54	

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OUR VISION:

To redefine the Liberian digital landscape by bridging the gap between raw data and creative storytelling and Liberia's most trusted source of truth, fostering an informed and empowered society through uncompromising integrity.

OUR MISSION:

To deliver accurate, evidence-based reporting that holds power to account, provides a voice for the voiceless, and sets the golden standard for journalistic excellence in West Africa.

ABOUT US

Hard Facts Print & Electronic Media Inc. has been a trusted name in news publishing, delivering timely, accurate, and comprehensive journalism to our readers. With dedicated reporters and a passion for truth, we ensure every story matters.

From global events to local highlights, we bring life to news to keep you informed.

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A Profile of a Trailblazer in Liberia

MacDella Cooper, Senior Political Advisor to President Joseph Nyumah Boakai Sr

As a Researcher and a listener for reformist voices, we must record the lives of those who fundamentally change the landscape of their democratic and social environment. In our 2026 Edition of Trailblazers in Liberia, we look at a woman who has become the subject of praise and criticism: MacDella Mackie Cooper, Senior Political Advisor to President Joseph Boakai.

Born on March 13, 1977, in Monrovia, Liberia, MacDella grew up in a time of civil war and was forced to flee the country when the civil war broke out; she went into exile in Côte d'Ivoire until she was reunited with her family in the United States. However, her seeming displacement turned out to be the crucible that shaped her strength. She excelled academically and graduated near the top of her class at Barringer High School in Newark, New Jersey, and received a full scholarship to The College of New Jersey, where she earned a degree in Electronic Communications.

Her public service was driven by both ambition and conviction: in 2003, she launched the MacDella Cooper Foundation, a humanitarian program that provides free education to the most marginalized children and women in Liberia, and established the MacDella Cooper Academy, the first free elementary school for vulnerable youth. She toiled in philanthropy for years, mostly out of the public eye, but always believing that the renaissance of Liberia would have to start with its people. Her path to office was forged in fire: She was the only female presidential candidate in 2017, finishing seventh among twenty candidates, but her campaign for free education, women's empowerment, and anti-corruption reforms was a clarion call that dismissed her as inexperienced and earned her the title of pioneer. Her years of quiet, behind-the-scenes work in philanthropy were honed in these "hidden years" of political struggle.

As Senior Political Advisor to President Joseph Boakai, MacDella Cooper is the face of governance in Liberia today, leading the charge for inclusivity, transparency, and reform in a country that is still healing from war and corruption. She is lauded for being a champion of women and youth, but often vilified for being too demanding in her insistence on accountability, which some say is too much for a system used to compromise. Yet, her unwavering commitment to being vocal and unapologetic about standing for principle rather than popularity has only made her more influential.

Her hallmark as a leader is her ability to serve as a mentor and mender of society, raising a generation of young leaders who embody her DNA of "service over self," with many of her protégés now occupying spaces in civil society and government to ensure that her vision is not held in the hands of one woman but diffused throughout the nation. Her influence has spread to the international level.





President Boakai Urges Global Solidarity for Peace and Security as He Nets Top Annual Peace Award

By: Hardfacts Media

His Excellency President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr. on April 25, 2026 called on global actors to continue adherence to Global Peace and Security by joining forces to call for global Peace and Stability.

The Liberian Leader made the plea during the 30th anniversary of the Center for Africa Peace and Conflict Resolution where he served as Keynote Speaker and the recipient of the 34th Annual Peace Award held under the theme: "Honoring Our Peace Heroes".

The Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution (CAPCR) was established

in 1996 at California State University Sacramento as a multidisciplinary institution dedicated to advancing peace-building, conflict management, and reconciliation, particularly in Africa and the African diaspora. Emerging in the post-Cold War era when civil conflicts across Africa drew global attention, the Center was created to bridge academic research with practical solutions.

The Center has since engaged governments, civil society, and international partners through training, mediation initiatives, policy research, and dialogue platforms aimed at preventing conflict and promoting sustainable peace.

As part of its outreach, CAPCR hosts annual conferences and presents peace and leadership awards—often tied to initiatives like the Africa Peace Awards—to honor individuals and institutions contributing to conflict resolution and good governance.

Receiving the 2026 Award, President Boakai shared Liberia's historical journey from conflict to sustained peace and called on all nations to echo the call for global Peace, asserting that all of Liberia's post conflict democratic transition has become possible because the nation believes that sustainable peace must rest on fairness, inclusion, and respect for the rule of law.



Speaking on the Theme: "BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF PEACE LEADERS IN AFRICA & HER DIASPORA," Keynote Speaker Boakai averred that peace must continuously be respected and the call for it must be joined by nations irrespective of the institutions, personality and tune of those calling for it.

"Across the borders we continue to see instability, conflict, and emerging threats, violent extremism, private aggression and inequality that challenge global Peace," he noted, pointing out that, "These realities remind us that peace must be continuously respected as no nation is too small to contribute or too quiet to be marginalized."

The President stated that the Liberian nation's journey to recovery demonstrates transformation and as such, Liberia is going to use her tenure (2026-2027) at the United Nations Security Council to promote dialogue, strengthen diplomacy and advocate corporations.

As guest of honor, the Liberian Chief Executive called on governments across Africa to go beyond simply ending conflict through aggressive prevention, intimating that Africa is a world where wealthy people are scared with about seventy percent (70%) of South Sahara Africa are young people. Africa face a demographic reality that presents both opportunity and serious risk.

The President said global conflict, economic downturn, private pressure, and unemployment have increasingly subjected the youths of Africa to negative vibes, keeping them marginalized while at the same time leaving them only with limited access to employment and opportunity; a condition he described as breeders of instability across Africa.

He further noted that the youthful population must therefore be protected and used as an engine for peace innovation and development. He warned that if neglected, this population could be used as a source of tension, fragility and conflict.

The Liberian Leader called



on governments and national leaders across the continent to ensure that the aspiration, energy and potential values of the young people of Africa are fully integrated into development and governance processes.

President Boakai recommended that Governments in Africa undertake deliberate and bold measures that support universities and regional bodies to invest in leadership initiative like fellowship and mentorship programs

so as to encourage and mentor young people.

The top Honoree opined that Africa should rethink its education philosophy by integrating new ideas that connect youths to services and patriotism and formulate programs that alter marginalization of youths.

He urged nations to: "Formulate programs that alter the historical marginalization of youths. Incorporate programs of peace, education, and

network. From primary school to University young people are taught conflict resolution, peace building, civic responsibility and critical thinking that ensure young people learn technology," President Boakai urged, while stating that digital platforms must be used to modernize, advocate, educate, promote dialogue, counter misinformation and build cross border solidarity.

The President also recommended that traditional youth organizations be restructured to integrate programs of peace mentorship, establish peace movement, schooled peace mentorship initiatives that enhance inter generational partnerships.

Award winner Boakai concluded by calling on African diaspora to become integral part of reconciliation and development across Africa, stating that peace leaders are not only Presidents and Diplomats, but everyone.

The President lauded organizers of the 30th anniversary of the Center for Africa Peace and Conflict Resolution and the 34th Annual Peace Award Committee, promising to use the award as an insulin to renew and boost his commitment to working for a prosperous Liberia, a peaceful Africa and a just and equitable world.



THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, LIBERIA

P R E S E N T S

MoE DIGITAL LEARNING PLATFORM INITIATIVE

Liberia Learns: Digital Radio & TV program

The Liberia Learns Radio and TV program is a national educational initiative led by the Ministry of Education, under the leadership of Dr Jarso Marley Jallah, and supported by the Public Sector Investment Program (PSIP). Its goal is to enhance literacy and numeracy among learners across Liberia through interactive radio and television lessons. The program ensures equitable access to quality education for all, especially in hard-to-reach areas.

ABOUT THE RADIO & TV PROGRAMS

- ▶ Deliver curriculum-based lessons in Literacy and Numeracy.
- ▶ Provide interactive, engaging, and inclusive learning for all students.
- ▶ Feature Liberian teachers and local content, making learning relatable.
- ▶ Broadcast nationwide on selected radio and TV stations.
- ▶ Strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy skills.
- ▶ Reach learners in remote and underserved communities.
- ▶ Encourage parent and teacher participation in supporting learners.
- ▶ Contribute to the Ministry's goal of quality and equitable education for all.

FOCUS AREAS

- ▶ **RADIO PROGRAM:** Interactive literacy & numeracy lessons
- ▶ **TV PROGRAM:** Visual learning for classrooms
- ▶ **DIGITAL PLATFORM:** Access any-time, anywhere

WHY IT MATTERS

- Expands access to learning
- Supports foundational skills
- Promotes digital transformation in education



MoE RADIO FREQUENCY

92.9 MHZ

DIGITAL EDUCATION PLATFORM, SUPPORTING LITERACY AND NUMERACY IMPROVEMENT ACROSS LIBERIA
THROUGH RADIO AND TV LESSONS.

"ADVANCING LEARNING THROUGH DIGITAL INNOVATION"





Liberia surge on Digital Learning to Close Early-Grade Education Gaps

By: Hardfacts Media

The Ministry of Education (MoE) on December 16, 2025, officially launched the MOE Digital Learning Platform alongside the Liberia Learns Digital Radio and TV Program, marking a major step in Liberia's education reform agenda aimed at strengthening foundational learning and expanding equitable access to quality education nationwide.

The launch ceremony, held at Paynesville City Hall, brought together senior government officials, development partners, educators, parents, and students. It underscored growing national commitment to addressing

persistent learning gaps in early-grade education while leveraging technology and local expertise to improve outcomes across the country. The initiative is fully supported under the Government of Liberia Public Sector Investment Program (PSIP)—a 100% Government of Liberia-funded program, reinforcing national ownership of education reform and long-term investment in human capital development.

A National Investment in Foundational Learning

Liberia continues to face significant challenges in early-grade literacy and numeracy, with many students advancing through primary education without mastering basic reading and arithmetic skills. Education

officials have described this as a foundational learning gap that undermines the overall academic progress and long-term development outcomes.

Speaking at the launch, Education Minister Jarso Maley Jallah emphasized that the initiative represents a shift from access-focused reforms to learning-focused investment.

"A nation's commitment to learning is revealed not in what it promises, but in what its children are actually able to do," she said.

The MOE Digital Learning Platform is designed specifically for Grades 1 to 3, targeting the critical early years of education where literacy and numeracy

foundations are established. The platform delivers structured, curriculum-aligned lessons through video, audio, and radio broadcasts, ensuring consistency in instruction across all counties.

Officials noted that the program is not an isolated intervention but part of a broader government strategy under the Public Sector Investment Program, which prioritizes education as a central pillar of national development and economic transformation.

Multi-Modal Learning to Reach Every Child

A defining feature of the initiative is its multi-modal delivery system, which integrates digital learning with traditional broadcasting platforms such as radio and television.

This approach was developed to ensure that learning reaches every child, including those in rural and hard-to-reach communities where internet access and electricity remain limited.

Through this system, students can engage with lessons in different ways depending on their environment. Urban learners may access content through online platforms and television, while rural learners can rely primarily on radio-based instruction, which remains the most accessible medium in many parts of the country. But rural learners will also have an access to offline version



where internet connectivity is not assessable. The Ministry emphasized that this model ensures no child is left behind due to geographic or infrastructural barriers.

In partnership with AfriLearn Tech Company Ltd, the platform also includes sign language interpretation, ensuring accessibility for learners with hearing impairments.

Beyond lesson delivery, the platform provides structured

learning activities, practice exercises, assessments, and teacher support materials, all aligned with Liberia's national curriculum.

100% Liberian Teachers behind Content Development

A key highlight of the initiative is that all instructional content was developed by 100% Liberian teachers, carefully selected and rigorously vetted through a national screening and quality assurance process.



These educators were chosen based on teaching experience, classroom performance, subject mastery, and alignment with national curriculum standards.

The Ministry emphasized that this decision ensures that all learning materials are contextually relevant, culturally appropriate, and reflective of Liberia's education environment.

By relying entirely on Liberian educators, the program also strengthens national capacity in instructional design, digital education content creation, and curriculum delivery.

Nationwide Engagement to Support Implementation

Following the launch, the Ministry conducted a

nationwide stakeholder engagement exercise between January and February 2026 to build awareness and assess readiness for implementation across all counties.

The exercise covered all 15 counties and included visits to 43 schools, reaching approximately 1,380 students and 279 stakeholders, including teachers, parents, school administrators, education officers, and community leaders.

The engagement focused on classroom conditions, access to learning tools, and community understanding of the new platform.

Findings confirmed that foundational learning gaps remain widespread, particularly in reading fluency, comprehension, and

early numeracy skills among lower primary students.

At the same time, the assessment revealed that while many households have access to radio, mobile phones, and television, these devices are rarely used for structured educational purposes.

Bringing Learning to Rural Communities

The engagement highlighted the critical importance of ensuring that rural communities are fully integrated into national education reforms.

In many remote areas, stakeholders identified radio as the most reliable and widely accessible learning medium, followed by television in select communities. Internet-based learning was widely seen as less feasible



due to connectivity and infrastructure limitations.

In response, the Ministry designed the platform to prioritize radio and television broadcasting alongside digital access.

Parents and community leaders expressed strong support for the initiative.

Teachers Remain Central to Learning Delivery

Teachers remain at the core of the implementation strategy for the Digital Learning Platform.

"This platform does not replace teachers; it strengthens them," Minister Jallah said. Teachers are expected to integrate platform content into their lesson planning.

Strengthening Government Ownership of Education Reform

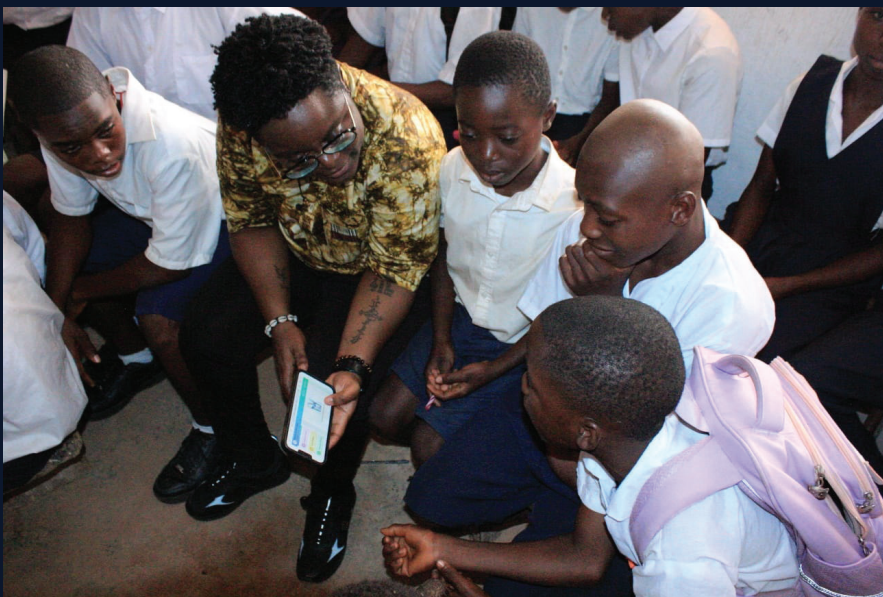
The Digital Learning Platform is fully supported under the Government of Liberia Public Sector Investment Program (PSIP), a 100% government-funded initiative.

Towards a More Inclusive Education System

The platform is expected to strengthen early-grade education nationwide through blended learning approaches.

Looking Ahead

The Ministry will continue expanding content and strengthening support systems for teachers and learners.





Liberia's Steel Industry Strengthened by Sethi Group Expansion

By: Hardfacts Media

Liberia's industrial sector has long struggled with limited infrastructure and a heavy reliance on import challenges that have slowed growth and driven up costs for construction and manufacturing. Building domestic capacity has often proven difficult, leaving the country dependent on foreign markets for essential materials. That is why the expansion of steel manufacturing and recycling by the Sethi Group of Companies is being seen as a turning point for Liberia's economic future.

President Joseph Nyuma

Boakai has praised the company's Phase II steel plant and recycling facility as a landmark investment that will not only strengthen the economy, but also creates thousands of jobs.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 18 in the Jamaica Road Community on Bushrod Island, President Boakai described the project as a "huge investment" that goes beyond financial returns. He emphasized its role in improving livelihoods, equipping Liberians with skills, and building confidence in the nation's industrial growth. "This is not just about investment; it is about improving people's lives, equipping them with skills,

building their confidence, and strengthening the economy," he said.

According to Jay Sethi, Managing Director of the company, the expansion is expected to generate more than 4,000 direct jobs within the next two years.

The Sethi Group already employs over 2,500 workers and has created more than 500 indirect jobs in the steel scrap sector, boosting both economic activity and environmental sustainability. President Boakai noted that the benefits extend beyond the company itself, creating opportunities across distribution networks and related businesses. He urged



Liberians to support and protect such investments, stressing that their success directly strengthens families and the country's future.

Jay Sethi reflected on the company's journey from trading to manufacturing, highlighting its role in Liberia's economic transformation. He reaffirmed his family's deep ties to the country, noting that they have lived in Liberia for more than fifty years and consider it their home.

With a portfolio that includes cement and steel production, the Sethi Group has become a cornerstone of Liberia's industrial development, backed by strong corporate social responsibility programs.

Meanwhile, the project signals a new chapter in the country's push toward industrial self-sufficiency as it reduces reliance on imports, lowering construction costs, and opening new opportunities for small businesses. The Sethi Group's expansion is widely regarded as a critical driver of sustainable growth and industrial independence.





Martin K.N. Kollie: Championing Youth, Accountability, and Social Change in Liberia

By: Hardfacts Media

Martin K.N. Kollie has emerged as one of Liberia's most dynamic voices for youth empowerment, accountability, and social transformation. His journey is not simply that of an activist; it is the story of a man who has dedicated his life to ensuring that ordinary Liberians, especially young people, have access to opportunities that can change their futures.

Kollie's rise to prominence began with his fearless advocacy for transparency and good governance.

He has consistently challenged corruption and mismanagement, speaking truth to power in a way that resonates with thousands of Liberians who see him as a symbol of resistance and hope. His writings and public engagements have

placed him at the center of national debates, making him a respected intellectual whose ideas inspire reform and progress.

But Martin Kollie is more than a voice; he is a man of action. Through the Martin K.N. Kollie Foundation, he has turned vision into reality. In 2025 alone, the foundation carried out more than thirty-one interventions across Liberia, directly impacting thousands of lives. From scholarships that opened doors for students, to free WASSCE preparation classes that gave hundreds of young Liberians the chance to excel academically.

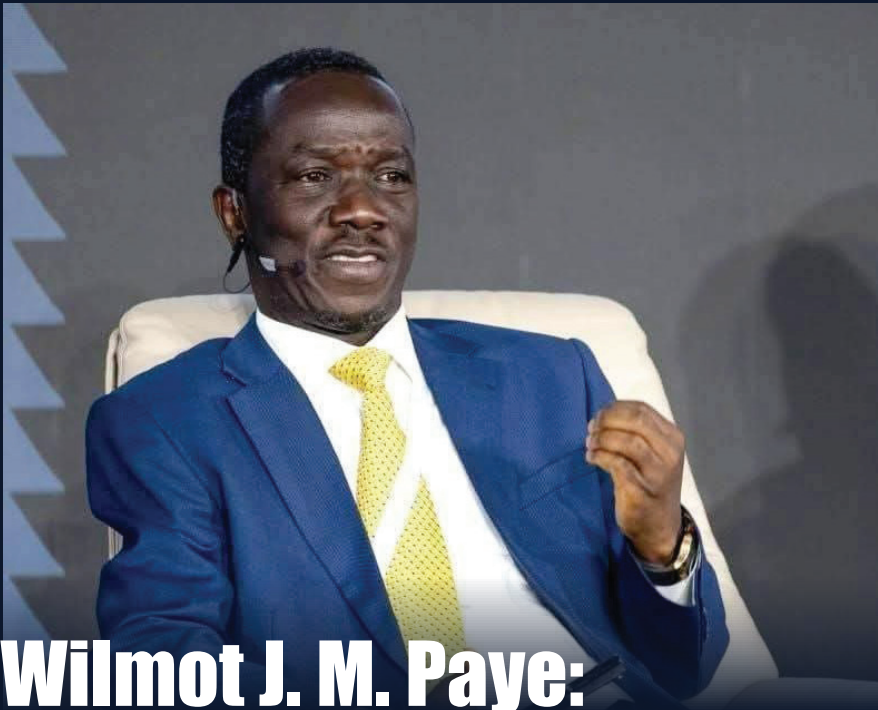
Kollie has proven that education is the cornerstone of empowerment. His foundation has also provided food to struggling families, cement to rebuild schools and clinics, and financial aid to those in need, ensuring that his activism translates into tangible relief for communities.

His philanthropic work reflects a deep understanding of Liberia's challenges. By investing in vocational and technical training, Kollie has equipped young people with practical skills that foster independence and economic growth. His holistic approach to nation-building combining education, health, and community development demonstrates a leader who is not only concerned with immediate needs, but also committed to long-term empowerment.

Internationally, Kollie's voice has carried beyond Liberia's borders. He is recognized as a bold advocate for democracy and social justice, admired for his ability to blend intellectual leadership with grassroots action. His activism has drawn attention to Liberia's struggles while also highlighting the resilience of its people, positioning him as a respected figure in African civil society.

Martin K.N. Kollie's story is one of courage, service, and impact. He embodies the qualities of a leader who not only speaks truth to power, but also delivers solutions that change lives.

His record of achievement positions him as a driving force for Liberia's future a man whose dedication to education, accountability, and empowerment continues to inspire hope across the nation.



Wilmot J. M. Paye: Guiding Liberia Toward a Resource Powered Future

By: Hardfacts Media

Liberia is entering a new phase of economic transformation, and Wilmot J. M. Paye, former Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy, has been one of the strongest advocates for responsible growth in the mining and energy sectors. During his tenure, Paye emphasized the importance of transparency, governance, and community benefits, ensuring that resource concessions contributed to both national development and local prosperity.

For decades, Liberia's mining industry was built on iron ore, gold, and diamonds. Yet Paye consistently reminded the nation of its broader

potential, declaring:

"More than 90% of Liberia's mineral potential remains untapped, including recent gold and iron ore discoveries." His push for modernized mining laws and comprehensive geological mapping was designed to attract investors and make projects more bankable. That vision has now been reinforced by a China-funded mineral survey, the most extensive in over 50 years, which revealed significant deposits of lithium, neodymium, silver, nickel, zinc, uranium, and cobalt.

The discoveries could unlock up to \$3 billion in investment, create thousands of jobs, and stimulate local economies. Paye's foresight is particularly evident in the

lithium and cobalt findings, which position Liberia as a potential player in the global electric vehicle and renewable energy industries. "We are updating these studies to provide accurate data, reduce negotiation times, make projects bankable, and attract investors," he explained.

Minster Paye also championed Liberia's renewable energy potential, pointing to abundant hydro, solar, and water resources. He argued that revenues from natural resources should be directed into education, agriculture, and infrastructure, ensuring that resource wealth translates into sustainable national progress.

On the international stage, Paye encouraged partnerships—especially with the United States—highlighting Liberia's deep historical and cultural ties. With new mineral discoveries and a more open regulatory environment, Liberia is increasingly seen as a strategic gateway into West Africa for investors in mining, energy, and agriculture.

Through his leadership, Wilmot J. M. Paye helped set the stage for Liberia's transformation into a critical mineral's powerhouse and renewable energy hub, ensuring that the nation's natural wealth supports both economic growth and global sustainability.



From Crisis to Leadership: Liberia's Role in Global Maritime Affairs

By: Hardfacts Media

In the vast and interconnected world of international shipping, Liberia has emerged as a strong and responsible voice. With one of the largest ship registries in the world, the country carries immense responsibility—not only to uphold international

safety and environmental standards, but also to advocate for the welfare of seafarers, who are the lifeblood of global commerce. Recent events have underscored this dual role, as Liberia has called for urgent protection of stranded crews in the Strait of Hormuz while simultaneously strengthening its leadership

within the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Liberia's prominence in maritime affairs is rooted in its open registry, which has allowed thousands of vessels to sail under its flag for decades. This global reach makes Liberia a central player in trade, but it also places the nation at the heart of

international debates about safety, sustainability, and humanitarian responsibility. The crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, where more than 20,000 seafarers remain stranded amid escalating tensions, has highlighted the human dimension of maritime security.

At recent IMO engagements, Liberia's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Robert W. Kpadeh, voiced deep concern about the worsening situation. "The safety of seafarers must remain a top priority for the international community," he declared. "These men and women are the backbone of global commerce, and their protection must not be compromised under any circumstances." His words carried urgency, reflecting the reality that prolonged uncertainty has left crews exposed to danger and deprived of essential supplies.

He urged coordinated measures to guarantee safe passage, provide support services, and restore confidence in maritime operations. "Beyond the economic implications, this is fundamentally a humanitarian issue," he stressed. "We must act swiftly to guarantee that these seafarers are protected, supported, and able to carry out their duties without fear."

Liberia's appeal is not an isolated gesture but part of its broader commitment to international maritime

conventions and IMO principles. As a nation with one of the largest registries, Liberia has a unique responsibility to ensure that the rights and safety of seafarers are upheld.

The government has been actively engaging with maritime partners and IMO officials to push for a unified response, while reiterating its support for the IMO's mission to keep sea lanes open and secure.

At the same time, Liberia has been strengthening its leadership within the IMO. Ambassador Kpadeh has been at the forefront of discussions on safety standards, environmental protection, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping.

In sessions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee, he emphasized the need for balanced approaches to emissions reduction—solutions that advance climate goals while recognizing the diverse capacities of member states. "Liberia remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting the IMO's objectives and ensuring that international shipping continues to operate safely, securely, and sustainably," he affirmed.

Liberia has also invested in digitalization and capacity-building initiatives to improve governance, transparency, and efficiency. Bilateral meetings with key maritime nations have strengthened

partnerships, while Liberia's registry has been promoted as a model of compliance and innovation. Ambassador Kpadeh's engagements highlighted Liberia's role in fostering collaboration and supporting developing countries in building maritime capacities. "Cooperation and shared responsibility are essential to addressing challenges in the global maritime industry," he noted.

The combination of urgent advocacy for seafarers and long-term leadership in sustainability underscores Liberia's reputation as a responsible maritime nation. By speaking out on humanitarian crises while shaping global policy, Liberia is not only safeguarding the dignity of seafarers but also helping to chart the future of international shipping.

In a world where maritime stability is essential to trade, security, and livelihoods, Liberia's voice carries weight. It is a voice that calls for compassion in times of crisis, fairness in regulation, and innovation in sustainability. And as Ambassador Kpadeh concluded, it is a voice committed to constructive engagement and collective action: "Liberia stands committed to upholding the safety, security, and dignity of all seafarers."



Brightening Liberia's Future Through Clean Energy

By: Hardfacts Media

Since its creation in 1973, the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) has been more than just a utility provider.

It has been a cornerstone of national development, tasked with delivering affordable, reliable power while fueling economic and social progress. Today, under the leadership of Mohammed M. Sherif, CEO of LEC, the company is undergoing a transformation modernizing

operations, embracing renewables, and preparing Liberia's energy sector for the future.

"I envision a Liberia where every business can access reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity within the next four to five years," Sherif explains. To reach this goal, LEC is tackling inefficiencies head-on, reducing losses that currently stand at 44%, and shifting from reactive maintenance to predictive, technology-driven solutions.

"We are rebuilding public confidence and positioning LEC as a commercially viable, customer-centric, and digitally enabled utility," he adds.

A major part of this transformation is grid expansion and renewable energy projects. LEC has signed an agreement with Scatec to build a 23.75-megawatt solar plant with battery storage in Margibi County, scheduled for completion in 2027.

International partners are also playing a role: the World Bank is financing energy access projects, the EU is supporting grid consolidation, and the African Development Bank is driving rural electrification.

On the generation side, LEC is advancing ambitious projects, including a 100 MW solar initiative with Energy America, scalable up to 1,000 MW, and a 190 MW hydro project on the St. John River, which could eventually reach 400 MW. Together, these efforts will add nearly 600 MW of new capacity.

"Across all initiatives, the goal is clear: raise national access from 33% to 75% by 2030 and connect 60,000 new customers through our Mission 300 program," Sherif emphasizes.

Currently, hydropower accounts for about 60% of Liberia's electricity, with thermal plants filling the gap. But Sherif is clear about the future:



"Our strategy is to steadily reduce reliance on fossil fuels and transition toward renewables, particularly solar PV."

LEC is also encouraging greater participation from American investors. "Liberia is a land of opportunity. Liberians are open-minded, welcoming and committed to ensuring investors receive real value," Sherif affirms. With demand expected to grow by more than 300% in the next five years and regional connections through the CLSG line to Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia is poised not only to meet domestic needs but also to export power across West Africa.

By 2030, LEC envisions a nation where every citizen has access to clean, reliable, and affordable electricity. This vision is driving innovation, partnerships, and operational excellence—ensuring that energy becomes a true catalyst for economic growth, social progress, and a brighter future for Liberia.





Hon. Magdalene E. Dagoseh: Using Prolific Methods to Improve Liberia's Commercial & Industrial Landscape

By: Hardfacts Media

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Liberia was officially established by an Act of Legislature in 1987, aiming at promoting, regulating, and controlling commercial and industrial activities within the country. Following this long period of historical enactment, Liberia's commercial and industrial landscape have been striving for progressive ways and means that will serve

as faultless mechanisms for improving the section.

Under the leadership of Hon. Magdalene E. Dagoseh as Minister of Commerce and Industry, it appears that the yearning for such necessary improvements in the commerce and trade industry of Liberia is becoming a final reality.

As a proficient expert in economics, policy analysis, and financial management, Hon. Dagoseh

has underscored the need to widen the possibility of applying more functions in light of decorating the viable environments across the country. In this way, the growing need for citizens to expand in their responsibility in the area of commerce and finally give meaningful results is becoming applicable.

After gaining prominence for her principal role in leadership, communication, and policy analysis, Hon. Dagoseh is keen on certainty that sustainable development must drive all citizens toward the overall development of Liberia.

Even though she has acquired several accolades, ranging chronologically from graduate studies in Finance & Banking, to a Bachelor of Science in Economics, and a Diploma in Secretarial Science, yet passionately, it seems that the astound Liberian lady is robust in her quest by ensuring that her homeland becomes an improved society. Additionally, based on her passion with a sense of purpose, she obtained a professional certificate in Gender-Responsive Economic Policy Management from the United Nations African Institute of Economic Development and Planning (IDEP).

With additional know-hows in both public and private enterprises, Hon. Dagoseh has played leading roles in government and private sectors. She once served as Assistant Minister of Planning and Administration, Executive Director of Liberia Community Development Foundation,

and a Board Member of Liberia Aviation Authority. In the private sector, Hon. Dagoseh once served as CEO of Hair Image. It is evident that through her career, Hon. Dagoseh has shown how skillful she has been on the frontline of policy management, institutional governance, and organizational leadership.

- **Key purpose of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry**

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) of Liberia was established (originally in 1962, and restructured later) to promote, regulate, and control commercial and industrial activities within the country.

Its primary purpose is to drive economic growth and industrialization by creating an empowering environment for private sector development, promoting both foreign and domestic trade, and protecting consumer interests.

- **Key Foundation Behind its Enactment**

Trade Regulation and Promotion: Overseeing both domestic and international trade, issuing import and export permits, and ensuring compliance with trade agreements.

Industrial Development: Driving the growth of local industries to reduce import dependency and add value to local products.

Consumer Protection: Establishing and enforcing standards for goods,

commodities, and business practices, including monitoring the prices of essential goods.

Liberianization Policy: Ensuring that certain business activities are reserved for Liberian citizens and enhancing local ownership.

Business Environment Improvement: Strengthening the regulatory environment, encouraging entrepreneurship, and shifting informal businesses into the formal economy.

- **Major Tasks Under Minister Magdalene E. Dagoseh in 2026**

Enforcement of Liberianization Policy (May 2026): Minister Dagoseh spearheads efforts to enforce the 2010 Investment Act, which reserves specific business sectors specifically for Liberian citizens. Her leadership is energetically cracking down on 'fronting', where foreign businesses illegally operate in reserved sectors, with a particularly focus on distribution.

Price Control and Market Inspections: She has launched nationwide inspections to enforce President Boakai's directives on reducing the prices of essential commodities, including rice, fuel, and cement.

Launch of the National Trade Facilitation Committee (April 2026): She launched the Liberia National Trade Facilitation Committee (LNTFC) to modernize trade systems, reduce trade costs, and boost economic growth,

aligning with regional and international obligations.

Urban Regulation (April/May 2026): She mandated the removal of goods from sidewalks and unauthorized public spaces to improve order and safety in commercial areas.

Infrastructure and Local Business Support: She participated in the commissioning of the New Monrovia Super Mall on April 12, 2026, intended to create jobs and strengthen the retail sector.

Five-Year Strategic Plan (Launched Nov 2025): She oversees the implementation of the Ministry's Five-Year Strategic Plan, which is in line with the government's ARREST Agenda, focusing on improving the business environment and industrial development.

Her leadership is characterized by a push for digital transformation, including support for e-commerce, and collaboration with partners like the World Bank on the \$40 million LIFT-P project.

Meanwhile, as she encourages her treasure of experience on the Liberian society by helping to drive economic growth, thereby promoting innovation, and champion sustainable development, Honorable Hon. Magdalene E. Dagoseh as Minister of Commerce and Industry must be esteemed as a key element to Liberia's development.



Marconja Zor: A Liberian Journalist Building Bridges Across Borders

By: Hardfacts Media

In the heart of Washington, D.C., Marconja Zor has built a career that spans PBS NewsHour, Yahoo News, and The Grio, while also producing television news. Being a Liberian journalist, she has become a respected voice in international media, known for her integrity, passion, and commitment to truth.

Her journey into journalism

began in an unexpected place—computer science. After earning her bachelor's degree, she worked as a business analyst, writing requirements for IT projects. But her natural gift for storytelling and factual writing pulled her toward journalism. "I was really good at storytelling and compiling factual information, so I decided to become a full-time journalist and get my master's in journalism," she recalls. That decision

reshaped her career and life.

For close to a decade, Marconja has worked as a professional journalist, covering both print and broadcast media. She emphasizes that journalism is not just about reporting—it is about responsibility. "Me having a master's in journalism has given me a solid foundation and a sense of responsibility. I owe the public the truth, and I owe dignity to every story I produce," she explains.

Her return to Liberia is driven by a mission to empower students and bridge opportunities between Liberian journalism and U.S. media institutions. She envisions fellowships that allow Liberian graduates to gain hands-on newsroom experience in major U.S. outlets such as ABC, NBC, and CBS. "Hands-on fellowships are imperative to a journalist's future. You can go to school all you want, but until you get hands-on training within national television news, no school can prepare you for the unexpected newsroom chaos," she stresses. Marconja believes classroom learning alone cannot prepare journalists for the realities of international newsrooms. By bringing Liberian students into U.S. newsrooms, they will learn how to properly structure stories, conduct interviews, and write with clarity and accuracy.

Her goal is to build relationships with institutions like the University of Liberia's Mass Communication Department. She would like to create a pipeline where

students can graduate, secure visas, and spend time in U.S. newsrooms before returning home with valuable skills. But she is candid about the challenges facing journalism in Liberia. She points out the reliance on hearsay and outdated facts, the lack of structured editorial processes, and the growing influence of politics and social media. "If you want a credible and respectable news site, you form trusted relationships with reputable sources," she says.

For Marconja, passion is non-negotiable. "If you're only doing this because it's your job, you will not produce impactful stories, and you will not be an exceptional journalist," she says. Political favoritism is another issue she highlights. "If you feel that passionate about a political party where you're unable to be an objective writer, you've automatically blurred the lines of integrity," she cautions.

Comparing Liberia and the United States, she sees troubling similarities. Both countries face political influence on journalism, and both are experiencing the rise of uncredentialed reporters armed with cameras and microphones. "We also have people right now that believe they only need a camera and a microphone to say they're journalists," she observes. She believes social media has negatively affected journalism. "Journalism has become a bunch of opinions with no credentials. Social media has taken its toll in a major way," she says.

Her solution is to build professional teams in Liberia. Journalism needs researchers, digital specialists, scriptwriters, print writers, and multiple editors. "In the U.S., we send our stories through about three editors before they're even published. So we need formality," she explains. Accountability, she insists, is a personal characteristic tied to integrity. "It shows more integrity to have accountability. So I think to have accountability, that's just a character trait that you would have to have within you," she says. She also notes that Liberian media is heavily influenced by social media, with most people consuming news via phones rather than reputable outlets. "Liberia is being swayed by social media... that's just not the way to go," she remarks.

Politics and media are intertwined in both Liberia and the U.S. In America, political coverage dominates due to constant policy changes and presidential actions. "Currently, right now, we're going through voter restrictions against Black people," she reports, linking it to the civil rights struggles of the 1960s.

Her mission in Liberia is also personal. Inspired by her undergraduate experience at Shaw University in North Carolina, where she met many Liberians and other international students, she wants to replicate that spirit of inclusion and opportunity. "From reading news and meeting with different programs and students in

Liberia, they have so much to give, and they're so highly intelligent. They just need the proper molding after their education," she says. In the near future, she would like to spend part of each year in Liberia, running creative writing programs at UL for three months annually. "I want to do a creative writing program at least three months out of the year at UL, where they know that I'm coming, it's being publicized, and people sign up for that program," she explains.

Her time in Liberia is short—just ten days—but she wants to connect with at least two universities before leaving. She prefers focusing on small groups of students to ensure quality mentorship, gradually expanding to give all students a fair chance.

In her reflections, Marconja is optimistic. "I see a lot of potential in all the upcoming journalists here, and I feel like this country can be turned around in terms of fact-checking stories and publications," she says. For her, journalism is not just a career—it is a calling to uphold truth, empower voices, and build bridges across borders.

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We have a long way to go, but we can get there if we create a system and create a team that's willing to be passionate about the work.
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Karishma Pelham-Raad: Liberia's Voice Rising Among Africa's Most Outstanding Women

By: Hardfacts Media

Hon. Karishma Pelham-Raad's recognition among Africa's 100 Most Outstanding Women of 2025 by The New Africa Magazine is more than a personal accolade. It is a powerful symbol of Liberia's

growing presence in global affairs and a testament to the determination of a woman who has consistently turned vision into action.

Her name now sits alongside trailblazers such as UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed and other remarkable leaders,

innovators, athletes, and advocates shaping Africa's future across governance, entrepreneurship, technology, and culture. The magazine described its annual feature as a landmark celebration of women whose achievements are transforming Africa's present and future. Publisher Dr. Gift



Chidima Nnamoko Orairu emphasized that the list is not simply about recognition, but about honoring the silent battles, bold dreams, and unshakable strength of African women who continue to rise, lead, and inspire. Pelham-Raad's journey embodies exactly that spirit.

Her career in public service has been marked by historic milestones. As Liberia's Assistant Minister for International Organizations, she coordinated the country's engagement with the United Nations and the African Union. She also served as Liberia's National Campaign Chairperson for the successful bid to secure a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2026–2027. This achievement elevated Liberia's profile within the global multilateral system and demonstrated the power of strategic diplomacy from a nation often overlooked.

Pelham-Raad's leadership extended into nuclear policy, a field rarely championed by African leaders. She coordinated Liberia's five-year Country

Programme Framework with the International Atomic Energy Agency, creating a roadmap for cooperation in health, agriculture, energy, and regulatory capacity-building. She spearheaded the development of a national radiotherapy facility at JFK Medical Center in Monrovia, a groundbreaking step toward expanding access to cancer treatment. She also guided the drafting of Liberia's first Nuclear Law, laying the foundation for an independent Nuclear Regulatory Authority to ensure the safe and peaceful use of nuclear technology. These initiatives were not abstract policy exercises — they were practical solutions designed to save lives, strengthen food security, and secure energy for Liberia's future.

Her professional achievements are underpinned by strong academic preparation. With a Master's in International Relations, a Bachelor's in Business Administration, and executive studies at Harvard Business School and Peking University, she combined intellectual rigor with practical diplomacy. Colleagues and peers often describe her as a leader who listens deeply, speaks with conviction, and never loses sight of the bigger picture.

Her impact has been recognized across Africa. In Abuja, Nigeria, she received the African Young Icon in Public Service Award at the Democracy Heroes Award Africa, where she dedicated

the honor to Africa's youth, highlighting their resilience and hope as the driving force behind her work. Her story has been widely profiled in African media, with The New Africa Magazine calling her "a model for young women to break barriers," spotlighting her journey from financial hardship to international diplomacy.

Even after stepping down from government service in September 2025, Pelham-Raad has remained committed to Liberia's development and Africa's global voice. She continues to champion institutional reform, peacebuilding, and inclusive leadership, reminding audiences that leadership is not confined to office walls but carried forward in vision, advocacy, and the ability to inspire others.

Her recognition among Africa's most outstanding women is both a celebration of her personal achievements and a testament to Liberia's growing influence in diplomacy, development policy, and nuclear governance. It stands as an inspiration to young Africans everywhere — proof that bold dreams, pursued with discipline and courage, can reshape not only a career but the destiny of a nation.



FROM SURVIVAL TO STABILITY: TACKLING LIBERIA'S BREAD AND BUTTER CRISIS TO SECURE A PROSPEROUS FUTURE

By: Hardfacts Media

and future prospects.

In Liberia, the phrase “bread and butter issues” is not mere political expression – it is the daily reality for millions. From the crowded markets of Monrovia to the remote villages of Lofa and Grand Gedeh, these words capture the urgent, practical concerns that shape the lives of ordinary Liberians. Putting food on the table, finding decent work, sending children to school, and accessing basic healthcare. For many families, these challenges are not abstract policy debates but immediate struggles that determine their well-being

As Liberia stands at a pivotal moment in its post-conflict recovery, addressing these core issues is not just a matter of policy – it is a moral imperative and the foundation for lasting peace and prosperity. Sustainable progress depends on the government's ability to deliver tangible improvements in daily life, restore public trust, and create opportunities for all citizens. Only by prioritizing these fundamental needs can Liberia build a more stable, inclusive, and hopeful future for its people.

The High Cost of Survival: *Food Security and Inflation*

For the average Liberian family, the struggle to afford basic necessities is relentless. The price of rice – the nation's staple food, has soared in recent years, driven by global supply shocks, currency depreciation, and limited domestic production. Imported goods dominate the market, making Liberia acutely vulnerable to external price fluctuations.



Jobs and Opportunity: The Unfinished Business of Youth Empowerment

In Monrovia's Red-Light Market, vendors and customers alike lament the shrinking value of the Liberian dollar, which erodes purchasing power and deepens poverty.

Rural communities face their own challenges. Many rely on subsistence farming, but poor roads and lack of storage facilities mean that crops often spoil before reaching markets. The result is a painful paradox: food insecurity in a country with vast agricultural potential. Women, who make up the majority of smallholder farmers, are particularly

affected, as they juggle farming with household responsibilities and limited access to credit.

Liberia's youth are its greatest asset –and its greatest challenge. With over 60% of the population under 25, the country's future depends on harnessing the energy and creativity of its young people. Yet, unemployment and underemployment remain stubbornly high. Many young Liberians, even those with diplomas, find themselves hustling in the informal sector, selling phone credit or driving motorcycle taxis to make ends meet.

The lack of formal job opportunities fuels frustration and, at times, social unrest. It also drives migration, as young people seek better prospects abroad. While the

government has launched initiatives to promote entrepreneurship and vocational training, these programs often lack scale and sustained funding. Without a robust private sector and targeted investment in youth skills, the promise of a demographic dividend will remain unfulfilled.

Education: The Key to Breaking the Cycle

Education is universally recognized as the pathway out of poverty, yet too many Liberian children are left behind. Public schools are overcrowded, under-resourced, and plagued by teacher shortages. In some rural areas, children walk miles to reach the nearest classroom, only to find a single teacher for dozens



of students. The cost of uniforms, books, and exam fees can be prohibitive for low-income families, leading to high dropout rates – especially among girls.

The consequences are profound. Without quality education, young Liberians are ill-equipped to compete in a modern economy or participate fully in civic life. Investment in teacher training, school infrastructure, and girls' education is not just a social good – it is an economic necessity.

Healthcare: *Bridging the Gap Between Promise and Reality*

Liberia's healthcare system has made progress since the dark days of the Ebola epidemic, but significant gaps remain. In urban centers, clinics are often overcrowded and underfunded. In rural

areas, access to healthcare is even more limited, with many communities relying on traditional healers or traveling long distances for basic services.

Preventable diseases such as malaria, diarrhea, and respiratory infections remain leading causes of death, particularly among children. Maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the world. The lack of reliable electricity, clean water, and medical supplies further undermines the quality of care. Strengthening the health system requires not only more resources, but also better management, accountability, and community engagement.

Infrastructure: *The Backbone of Development*

Infrastructure is the silent enabler – or inhibitor – of progress. In Liberia, poor

roads, unreliable electricity, and limited access to clean water constrain economic growth and social development. During the rainy season, entire regions become inaccessible, cutting off farmers from markets and children from schools. Businesses struggle to operate without consistent power, stifling job creation and innovation.

Investing in infrastructure is not just about building roads and bridges – it is about connecting people to opportunity. Rural electrification, improved water systems, and digital connectivity can transform lives and unlock Liberia's vast potential.

Governance and Accountability: *The Foundation for Change*

No discussion of bread-and-butter issues is complete without addressing governance. Corruption, mismanagement, and lack of transparency have eroded public trust and diverted resources from those who need them most. Strengthening institutions, promoting accountability, and ensuring that public funds are used effectively are essential for sustainable development.

Civil society and the media play a critical role in holding leaders accountable and amplifying the voices



of ordinary Liberians. International partners can support these efforts, but lasting change must come from within.

A Call to Action: *Building a Liberia That Works for All*

Liberia stands at a crossroads. The challenges are daunting, but the opportunities are real. Addressing bread and butter issues requires bold leadership, inclusive policies, and the active participation of all Liberians—women and men, young and old, urban and rural.

Policy makers must prioritize

- **Economic Stabilization:** Strengthen the currency, control inflation, and support local production to make food and essentials affordable.
- **Youth Employment:** Expand vocational training, incentives for private sector growth, and create pathways to decent work.
- **Education and Health:** Invest in teachers, clinics, and community health workers to build human capital.

- **Infrastructure:** Prioritize roads, electricity, water, and digital access to connect people and markets.
- **Good Governance:** Promote transparency, fight corruption, and ensure that resources reach the most vulnerable.

Liberia's future depends on the choices made today. By focusing on bread-and-butter issues, the nation can lay the groundwork for a more just, prosperous, and peaceful society. The time for action is now – so that every Liberian, regardless of background or circumstance, can share in the promise of a better tomorrow.



Going Cashless: The Digital Revolution Liberia Cannot Afford to Delay

By: Hardfacts Media

Education: The Key to Breaking the Cycle

In the heart of West Africa, Liberia stands at a critical juncture. While the nation has made notable strides in post conflict reconstruction, a fundamental barrier to inclusive growth persists: many Liberians still lack access to formal financial services. This exclusion is not just a banking gap; it is a development crisis that perpetuates poverty, limits entrepreneurship, and

constrains national potential.

Liberia does not need to replicate the costly, brick and mortar banking systems of wealthy nations. Instead, it has a chance to leapfrog directly into a digital future through financial technology (fintech) and mobile payments—following the path of several African countries that show what is possible when technology meets vision and political will.

The High Cost of Cash Dependence

Liberia's financial exclusion

is severe. Bank account penetration remains very low, and for many citizens, especially in rural areas, the nearest bank may be hours away. Minimum balance requirements, fees, and documentation demands put formal banking out of reach for most. As a result, Liberia remains a cash dominated economy.

This dependence on cash creates a cascade of problems. Farmers cannot access credit for seeds and fertilizer. Small businesses lack secure ways to store income. Women entrepreneurs face security risks when



handling cash. Government payments remain slow, inefficient, and vulnerable to corruption. Most of the informal economy—where the majority of Liberians earn a living—remains invisible to policymakers and disconnected from formal growth.

Yet within this challenge lies an opportunity. Mobile phone penetration has expanded steadily. Basic phones are common even where banks are absent, creating a foundation for digital finance to transform lives—if Liberia chooses to act.

Kenya's M Pesa: Mobile Money as a Development Tool



**African Success
Stories:
Proof That
Transformation
Is Possible**



Kenya's M Pesa, launched in 2007, is the leading African example of what is possible. Built for basic phones and supported by a nationwide agent network, M Pesa allowed people to send and receive money, pay bills,

and store value without a bank account. Today, a large majority of Kenyan adults use mobile money. Studies show that M Pesa lifted roughly 2% of Kenyan households out of poverty, with especially strong gains for women and small businesses. Kenya proved that mobile money is not just a payment tool—it is a powerful development instrument.

Zambia: Smart Rules and Regional Links

Zambia's experience highlights the importance of a modern regulatory framework and regional



integration. The central bank created clear rules for mobile money operators and promoted interoperability between platforms, which fostered competition while letting users transact across networks. Zambia also linked into regional payment systems, making cross border transfers cheaper and easier – vital for trade and remittances.

Ghana and Rwanda: When Government Leads

Ghana and Rwanda show what happens when governments lead. Both adopted national financial inclusion strategies, built digital ID systems, and digitized government payments such as salaries, pensions, and social transfers. Rwanda in particular pushed a “cashless economy” vision, pairing policies with investments in digital literacy. The lesson for Liberia is clear:

digital financial inclusion advances fastest when government sets direction, leads by example, and backs its vision with concrete actions.

Building Liberia's Roadmap for Digital Financial Inclusion

Liberia can draw on these lessons to build its own roadmap for fintech driven financial inclusion. Progress will require coordinated action across several key areas.

A Modern Regulatory Framework

The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) should design a clear, enabling regulatory framework for mobile money and fintech.

This framework should license

diverse providers, including telecoms, fintech firms, and banks, while maintaining financial stability and strong consumer protection.

Regulations should mandate interoperability so users can send and receive money across networks, and should introduce a “regulatory sandbox” so innovators can test products in a controlled environment. Consumer protection must sit at the center, with clear disclosure requirements, simple complaint mechanisms, and strong safeguards against fraud.

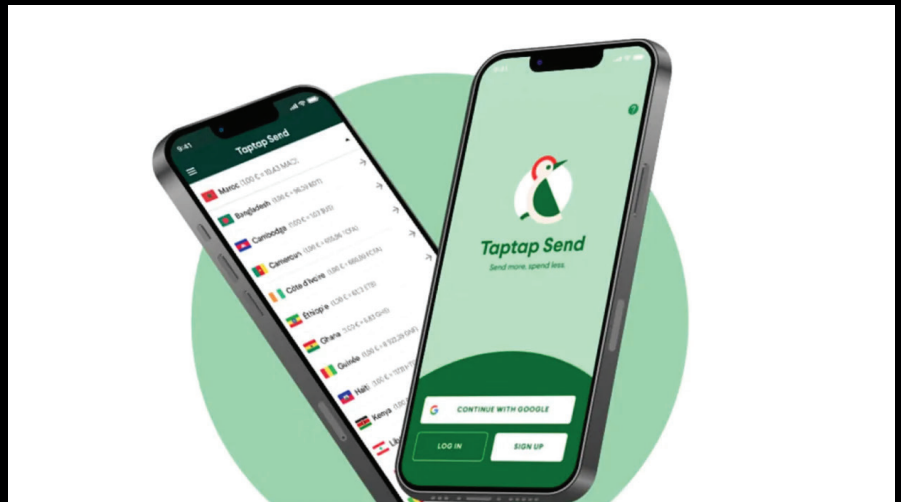
The framework should also formalize and supervise agent banking so shops and businesses can serve as cash in/cash out points nationwide. The goal is to unleash innovation and competition while protecting users and the financial system.

Investing in Digital Infrastructure

Liberia must invest in digital infrastructure. Digital finance requires reliable electricity, especially in rural areas, so people can charge phones and agents can operate consistently. It also requires improved mobile and internet connectivity, achieved through partnerships with telecom operators and backbone infrastructure investments.

Developing a secure digital identity system will simplify account opening and reduce fraud by allowing providers to verify customers efficiently. At the same time, Liberia should invest early in cybersecurity to protect users and preserve trust in digital systems.

Without power, connectivity, secure identification, and cyber resilience, even the best fintech ideas will struggle.



Putting People First: Digital and Financial Literacy

Liberia must prioritize digital and financial literacy. Technology alone will not deliver inclusion; people must understand and trust it. The government, private sector, and civil society should launch national awareness and training campaigns, with special focus on rural communities, women, the elderly, and other excluded groups. Agent networks should be trained to serve as local “digital finance ambassadors,” educating and supporting users in their communities.

Basic financial and digital literacy should be integrated into school curricula so that the next generation grows up comfortable with digital tools. Churches, mosques, traditional leaders, and community organizations can help build trust and counter misinformation, while services offered in local languages ensure that no

one is locked out by language barriers.

Government as the Anchor User

The Government of Liberia can be the single biggest driver of adoption by digitizing payments and services. Paying civil servants, security forces, and contractors through digital accounts or mobile money would create immediate demand and demonstrate confidence in the system.

Delivering social benefits digitally would reduce leakage and ensure funds reach intended beneficiaries.

Allowing taxes, fees, and licenses to be paid digitally would make compliance easier, reduce opportunities for corruption, and improve transparency. Using digital payments in procurement would create audit trails that strengthen accountability and improve the use of public resources. When government goes digital, citizens and businesses follow.

Bringing Farmers and Rural Liberia into the Digital Economy

Liberia should integrate the agricultural sector into its digital finance strategy. Agriculture employs most Liberians, so gains here have out sized impact.

Digital payments for crop purchases would allow farmers to receive money directly and securely. Mobile based credit and micro insurance tailored to smallholder farmers would help them afford seeds, fertilizer, and other inputs, while protecting them from weather and price shocks.

Market price and weather information delivered via mobile platforms would help farmers make better decisions about what to plant, when to harvest, and where to sell. Supporting agro dealers to accept digital payments would create a fully digital value chain—



from inputs to payments for produce – embedding farmers more firmly in the modern economy.

Connecting Liberia to the Region

Liberia should leverage regional integration. The country should coordinate with ECOWAS on regional payment systems to lower the cost of remittances and cross border trade, which are critically given to the Liberian diaspora and regional commerce.

Partnerships with established regional mobile money

players can bring in technology, capital, and expertise. Harmonizing key regulations with neighbors will ease cross border transactions and attract regional investment.

As the African Continental Free Trade Area advances, countries with strong digital payment systems will be better positioned to seize new trade opportunities; Liberia should not be left behind.

Partnering for Impact: Government, Business, and Donors

Liberia needs strong public-private partnerships. No

single actor can transform the system alone.

The government should convene regular forums where banks, telecoms, fintechs, regulators, civil society, and development partners coordinate strategies, identify bottlenecks, and align efforts.

Incentives may be required to encourage private investment in underserved areas where market returns alone are too low to justify infrastructure and agent network expansion.

Local fintech startups should receive support through incubators, accelerators,



and better access to capital so they can design solutions grounded in Liberian realities.

Development partners can provide technical assistance, risk sharing mechanisms, and funding for pilot programs that, once proven, can scale sustainably.

Closing the Gender Gap in Finance

Liberia must address gender gaps directly. Women face particular barriers to financial inclusion, from lower phone ownership to restrictive social norms. Financial products should be designed to meet

women's needs, including flexible savings tools, small and short term credit, and group based financial services that build on existing women's savings groups.

Recruiting and training female agents can make women more comfortable using digital financial services and help overcome cultural barriers. The government and civil society should work with community and religious leaders to challenge norms that limit women's access to phones, IDs, or financial control.

Collecting and analyzing gender disaggregated data is essential to ensure that

women benefit equitably from financial inclusion initiatives, rather than being left behind.

Facing Liberia's Constraints with Clear Eyes

Liberia must confront its challenges honestly. Infrastructure deficits in power and connectivity remain significant, particularly outside Monrovia. Digital literacy is low in many communities, especially among older adults. Regulatory capacity at the Central Bank of Liberia needs strengthening to keep pace with fast moving



LIBERIA GOING DIGITAL

fintech innovations. Trust in institutions is fragile after past financial scandals and governance failures.

Commercial players may resist interoperability that threatens their competitive advantages.

Cyber risks – from fraud to hacking – are rising as more activity moves online.

However, other African countries have overcome similar obstacles. Kenya's M Pesa emerged despite patchy infrastructure by using basic phones and low bandwidth technology.

Rwanda and Ghana built regulatory and technical capacity by working with partners and learning by

doing. Many countries have used regulatory sandboxes and phased rollouts to test, learn, and improve in real time. The key is not to wait for perfect conditions, but to design systems that work in Liberia's current context and then strengthen them over time.

The Cost of Delay and the Promise of Action

The stakes could not be higher. The cost of inaction is measured in continued poverty, stalled businesses, and a government that cannot deliver efficiently for its people. Each year without progress means farmers remain without credit or

insurance, entrepreneurs cannot safely save or invest, women remain financially dependent, and Liberia falls further behind peers that are rapidly digitizing their economies. The opportunity cost grows larger with every delay.

The upside of decisive action is trans-formative. Effective digital financial inclusion can reduce poverty by expanding access to savings, credit, and investment opportunities. It can empower women economically, with powerful ripple effects for families and communities.

It can bring parts of the informal economy into the formal system, enlarging the tax base and improving



the quality of economic data for policymaking. It can improve governance by creating transparent, audible financial flows and reducing opportunities for corruption. It can make social programs more efficient and better targeted, and it can attract investment and innovation by signaling that Liberia is building a modern, 21st century economy.

A Decision That Cannot Wait

Liberia's fintech revolution will not happen by accident. It requires deliberate choices from all key actors. The Central Bank of Liberia must lead on regulatory reform that encourages innovation while

safeguarding stability and consumers. The Ministry of Finance and other agencies must digitize payments and services to create immediate demand and demonstrate commitment.

Telecom operators and financial institutions must invest beyond Monrovia into rural and underserved communities. Local entrepreneurs must design products suited to Liberian realities, not simply import foreign models. Development partners must support capacity building and innovation rather than building parallel systems.

Citizens must be willing to learn, adapt, and hold institutions accountable for

delivering inclusive services. Kenya, Ghana, Rwanda, Zambia, and others show that rapid progress is possible when vision, policy, and technology align. Liberia now stands at a similar crossroads. The tools exist. The models are proven. Mobile phones are already in people's hands. What remains is the decision to act with urgency and purpose.

The choice is stark: either maintain a cash bound status quo that sidelines millions, or embrace a digital financial future that opens opportunity to all. Liberia cannot afford to delay this decision. Its economic future and the prosperity and dignity of its people—depends on the path chosen now.



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From its offices on 24th Street, Sinkor, Tubman Boulevard in Monrovia, NASSCORP continues to stand as a pillar of financial security. Its message is clear and deeply human: "We secure your



NTA Signals Revival Under Edmond Forh's Leadership



By: Hardfacts Media

Liberia's public transportation system has long reflected the nation's broader struggles: years of underinvestment, poor maintenance, and limited fleet capacity left citizens dependent on costly private operators and informal transport networks.

For rural communities, the absence of reliable buses meant isolation from markets, schools, and healthcare facilities.

The National Transit Authority (NTA), created to bridge this gap, often fell short of its mission.

Today, however, the NTA is showing signs of revival under the leadership of Hon. Edmond Forh Forh, its Managing Director.

His stewardship represents more than an institutional turnaround—it signals a broader effort to restore public confidence in state-run services, a cornerstone of Liberia's national recovery. In an April 8, 2026 interview with Hardfacts Liberia, Forh described the state of the institution he inherited as "completely broken down," but emphasized that reforms are restoring credibility and sustainability.

"We are rebuilding the NTA from the ground up," he said. "This is not just about buses—

it is about restoring faith in public service."

Among the reforms is the construction of a modern administrative headquarters valued at US\$590,000, designed to strengthen institutional capacity and streamline operations.

The Authority currently operates 47 functional buses, with more under repair, and has kept fares stable despite rising fuel costs. "We know the hardship our people face," Forh explained.

"Keeping fares affordable is a sacrifice we must make" to ease the burden on commuters."

The NTA employs about 400 staff members, with the lowest-paid worker earning at least US\$200 monthly. Salaries have steadily improved, reflecting management's commitment to employee welfare.



"Our staff are the backbone of this institution," Forh noted. "If they are motivated and treated fairly, the NTA will thrive."

In a symbolic gesture of sacrifice, Forh disclosed that neither he nor his deputies uses government-assigned vehicles, relying instead on private cars.

"We cannot preach reform while enjoying privileges that drain the institution," he said. To promote fairness, all directors earn the same salary, a measure aimed at fostering unity within leadership.

Recent progress includes the arrival of 20 fully air-conditioned, 18-seater mini-buses procured from ABK Motors Incorporated, part of a larger plan to acquire 60

buses.

These mini-buses are expected to improve access in underserved communities, particularly along feeder roads.

"These buses are designed for the people who need them most," Forh said. "They will connect villages to towns, students to schools, and farmers to markets."

Additionally, five cargo trucks are expected to join the fleet, boosting logistics and goods movement across Liberia.

"Transport is not only about passengers," Forh emphasized. "It is also about moving goods efficiently to support trade and livelihoods."

These investments

highlight the government's commitment to strengthening transport infrastructure and ensuring affordable, reliable mobility.

While challenges remain—fleet size is still modest compared to national needs—the reforms suggest a shift toward accountability and efficiency.

The revival of the NTA is more than a transport story; it is a symbol of Liberia's broader struggle to rebuild trust in public institutions.

Forh's leadership blends practical improvements with symbolic sacrifices, signaling that public service can be both credible and people-centered. "We are proving that government can deliver," he concluded. "This is just the beginning."



China-Africa Trade Expansion, Liberia's Sports Diplomacy Initiative

By: Hardfacts Media

A series of significant developments in trade, sports diplomacy, and international cooperation have reinforced the growing strength of relations between China, Liberia, and the African continent at large.

In a landmark move to strengthen economic ties and deepen cooperation, China has announced the expansion of zero-tariff treatment to all African countries maintaining diplomatic relations with it. The policy will take effect on

May 1, 2026, and run through April 30, 2028, marking a major milestone in China-Africa trade relations.

The Customs Tariff Commission of the State Council is quoted as saying, the initiative will extend preferential zero-tariff treatment to 20 African countries that are not classified as least developed countries but maintain diplomatic ties with China.

This builds on an earlier measure implemented on December 1, 2024, which granted 33 least developed African countries zero-tariff treatment on 100 percent of tariff lines. The expanded

policy ensures that all African partners with diplomatic relations benefit from improved market access.

With this step, China becomes the first major global economy to offer unilateral, full-coverage zero-tariff treatment to all African countries with diplomatic ties. The initiative is expected to boost exports, promote industrialization, create new business opportunities, and enhance Africa's integration into global value chains, while supporting sustainable development goals and inclusive globalization.

Complementing these economic developments, the



Government of Liberia has launched the Village Super League friendly matches in Monrovia, underscoring the country's commitment to sports diplomacy as a tool for unity, youth empowerment, and international engagement.

Delivering a keynote remarks on behalf of Her Excellency Sara Beysolow Nyanti, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Charlyne A. Taylor, Assistant Minister for Afro-Asian Affairs, emphasized the broader significance of the initiative. "We are not merely celebrating football. We are celebrating a powerful idea that sport is diplomacy in motion," she stated.

The event brought together His Excellency Yin Chengwu, Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, members of the diplomatic corps, community leaders, and young athletes, reflecting strong collaboration.

Inspired by the "Cun Chao" model from Rongjiang County in China, the Village Super

League integrates football with local enterprise, culture, and tourism. Liberia aims to replicate this model by transforming communities into vibrant hubs of sport and economic opportunity.

Assistant Minister Taylor also announced Liberia's intention to participate in the 2028 Village Super League World Cup, noting, "Liberian energy on the pitch is as vibrant as our music and as warm as our hospitality." She called for sustained collaboration and investment while commending the Government, the Embassy of China, and partners for their efforts.

Strengthening bilateral ties
On April 24, Chinese Ambassador Yin Chengwu delivered a lecture titled "How the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Proposed by China Could Benefit Developing Countries" at the launch of the George Wallace Lecture Series at the Gabriel L. Dennis Foreign Service Institute of Liberia.

Ambassador Yin outlined the development process, principles, and objectives of the BRI, highlighting achievements in China-Africa and China-Liberia cooperation, particularly in infrastructure, trade, and capacity building. He emphasized the initiative's role in promoting economic development, connectivity, and inclusive global governance.

Looking ahead, he reaffirmed China's commitment to implementing the outcomes of the 2024 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and advancing high-quality Belt and Road cooperation with Liberia during China's 15th Five-Year Plan period.

The lecture, attended by more than 100 participants including Hon. Reginald Goodridge, His Excellency George Wallace, Her Excellency Olubanke King-Akerele, and His Excellency Monie R. Captan, alongside other officials and trainees featured an interactive session that addressed key opportunities and challenges associated with the BRI.

Together, these developments highlight a shared commitment to economic partnership, innovation, and long-term prosperity, reinforcing Liberia's role in advancing international cooperation and sustainable development.



Bea Mountain Mining Corp.

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Gold Mining Fueling Liberia's Growth

By: Hardfacts Media

For much of its history, Liberia's economy was built on iron ore and rubber exports. While these resources remain important, it is the gold mining industry that has become a powerful engine of growth and foreign investment over the past decade. At the center of this transformation is the Bea Mountain Mining Corporation (BMMC), part of the Turkish-based Avesoro Group, and the country's first and largest commercial gold mining company.

BMMC signed its initial agreement with the Liberian government in 2001 and has since established operations in Grand Cape Mount

County, where it runs four mines within a 50-kilometer radius alongside its main production facility. "We are now one of the country's largest employers and a key contributor to national revenue, ranking first and second as Liberia's top taxpayer for two consecutive years," explains Debar W. Allen, General Manager of BMMC. He stresses that the company's operations have spanned three successive governments, from Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to George Weah and now Joseph Boakai, with continued investment in exploration to extend mine life and sustain employment.

When BMMC began operations in 2003, Liberia was emerging from civil

war and lacked basic infrastructure. The company had to build roads, housing, electricity, and water systems from scratch. "Initially, all electricity came from fuel, but we recently completed a solar plant and plan to combine renewable energy with fuel-based power going forward," Allen says. With power accounting for nearly 40% of operating costs, renewable energy is now central to keeping production efficient and sustainable.

The company has also embraced responsible mining practices. "Mining inevitably has environmental impacts, but the key is to manage them responsibly," Allen explains. Before operations begin, BMMC assesses potential impacts



limited infrastructure, Liberia's gold sector offers significant opportunities. "Liberia is still largely unexplored for gold, and we see strong technical potential," Allen emphasizes. He acknowledges that early investors must take risks but points out that improving governance and government incentives are making the country increasingly attractive.

and implements mitigation measures for biodiversity, water, dust, noise, and community well-being. It follows international standards, reports regularly to regulators such as the Environmental Protection Agency, and uses independent third-party verification to ensure compliance. By doing so, the company balances resource development with environmental protection, ensuring that communities benefit while minimizing harm.

Another cornerstone of BMMC's strategy is developing local talents. Ten years ago, thousands of Liberians employed today had little or no experience

in gold mining. Through in-house training programs and succession planning, young engineers and geologists are now taking on key roles. "Training local employees not only builds expertise, but also reduces costs compared to relying on expatriates," Allen says. The company also provides healthcare, education, and community infrastructure, extending benefits beyond its workforce and into surrounding communities. Roads, schools, and clinics maintained by BMMC have become lifelines for local residents, reinforcing the company's role as both an employer and a development partner.

Despite challenges such as high production costs and

"Our success demonstrates that it is possible to operate profitably here, providing a model for new investors," Allen concludes. With ongoing exploration, infrastructure development, and a commitment to sustainability, BMMC is not only fueling Liberia's economic growth but also setting the standards for responsible mining in West Africa.

The company's journey reflects Liberia's broader story: a nation rebuilding from conflict, harnessing its natural wealth, and opening its doors to international investment.



Strengthening Liberia's Voice: Achievements, Media Freedom, and Cultural Preservation

By: J. Monchen Parchiebo

The Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism (MICAT) has long stood at the crossroads of governance, communication, and cultural identity. Minister Jerolinmek M. Piah recently reflected on the ministry's achievements, reminding Liberians that its role is not just about announcements that it is about building trust, safeguarding media freedom, and amplifying

Government's achievements.

"MICAT's work is not confined to one sector," Piah explained. "It serves as a consistent platform to articulate the government's achievements."

Since the end of Liberia's civil wars, rebuilding trust between government and citizens has been a national priority, and communication has been central to that effort. Weekly press briefings, mandated by the President, have become a cornerstone

of accountability. "We allow the public to hear directly from officials," Piah said, noting that both government spokesmen and sector ministries present updates on schedule.

He pointed to the New Liberia Newspaper and its quarterly magazine as vital outreach tools, distributed freely to citizens. Despite financial challenges, the newspaper is set to return to thrice-weekly publication, expanding its reach. At the same time, government town halls



have taken leaders beyond Monrovia, engaging citizens face-to-face on issues ranging from the economy to agriculture and governance.

These town halls, he stressed, have strengthened inclusivity by involving all branches of government, including the legislature.

The Liberia News Agency (LINA) has also embraced digital transformation, producing bulletins and a weekly radio program summarizing government deliverables.

Routine appearances on talk shows, partnerships with community radio stations, and ELBC's language broadcasts have bridged communication gaps, ensuring that rural and marginalized communities are not left behind. "Our duty is to keep communication open, inclusive, and credible," Piah emphasized.

“Our duty is to keep communication open, inclusive, and credible, while safeguarding national unity and stability”

He also highlighted reforms in agriculture and governance, where accountability measures have been given equal visibility through press briefings, newspapers, and town halls. In culture and tourism, MICAT has played a pivotal role. One of its proudest achievements was laying the groundwork for the Liberia National Tourism Authority.

Through the National Program for Tourism Development and Promotion, part of the ARREST Agenda, \$250,000 was secured to rehabilitate cultural heritage sites such as the J.J. Roberts Monument and Providence Island. The Liberia National Cultural Troupe received a new 18-seater bus, land at the Kendeja Cultural Center was resurveyed and protected, and tourism infrastructure advanced with a new information center at Roberts International Airport and improvements to the National Museum.

At the heart of Piah's reflection was media freedom. He recalled lifting the ban on registering new media institutions in 2021, paving the way for accrediting over

40 outlets between 2024 and 2025. "We do not regulate content directly," he stressed, "but we promote freedom of the press, even when faced with challenges of ethics and false accusations." He urged journalists to uphold the ABC of journalism Accuracy, Balance, and Credibility as essential standards for coexistence between government communication and independent media. At the same time, he cautioned against negative reporting that distorts Liberia's global image. "We are Liberians first before our professions," he reminded. "Without Liberia, there can be no ministers or journalists."

Piah praised the leadership of the Press Union of Liberia under Julius Kanubah for its proactive stance and called on the media to avoid exaggerated reporting during crises. He reaffirmed MICAT's role as a government of peace, committed to promoting media freedom, supporting cultural preservation, and ensuring transparent communication platforms. "Our duty," he declared, "is to safeguard national unity and stability."

His reflections underscore MICAT's dual mission: to amplify government transparency and accountability while protecting press freedom and cultural heritage. In doing so, the ministry continues to strengthen Liberia's voice—anchoring democratic values in communication, inclusivity, and national pride.



Ministry of Youth and Sports: Empowering Youth, Elevating Sports

By: Hardfacts Media

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS) continues to play a pivotal role in shaping Liberia's future, with its current leadership working to empower young people and strengthen the country's sporting culture. At the forefront of this transformation is Minister

Cornelia W. Kruah, whose vision has expanded the Ministry's role beyond sports into education, entrepreneurship, and international partnerships. Alongside her, is Mustapha Raji, President of the Liberia Football Association (LFA), who has been instrumental in restoring Liberia's football program and positioning it for global recognition. Together, they represent a dynamic

partnership that shapes the future of Liberia's youth and sports.

The immediate past Minister, D. Zeogar Wilson, deserves recognition for laying the groundwork. Under his tenure, county-level tournaments were revitalized, bringing communities together and showcasing local talent. Nimba County was crowned in football, Lofa County excelled in basketball, and Margibi County shone in kickball. These competitions became symbols of unity and pride, setting the stage for the Ministry's broader mission.

Building on this foundation, Minister Kruah has shifted the focus toward holistic youth empowerment. She has championed literacy and entrepreneurship programs, ensuring that young Liberians are equipped not only to excel in sports but also to thrive in education and business. In partnership with the Luminos Fund, the Ministry launched a Youth Community Literacy Program in Bong and Nimba counties. Hundreds of young Liberians graduated from the six-month initiative, gaining essential reading, writing, and numeracy skills. As Kruah explained, "Our goal is to empower young Liberians not only through sports but also through education and entrepreneurship, giving them the tools to succeed in every arena of life."

Meanwhile, Mustapha Raji has continued to strengthen Liberia's football sector.



Under his leadership, the LFA has aligned with FIFA standards, introduced reforms to ensure integrity, and expanded grassroots football development. Raji has often highlighted the unifying power of sport program, stating: "Football is more than a game—it is a force that brings Liberians together, and our mission is to ensure athletes can compete with pride and integrity on the global stage." His vision has helped restore confidence in Liberia's football program, while also inspiring young athletes to dream bigger.

Internationally, Minister

Kruah has expanded Liberia's partnerships, engaging with organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and welcoming delegations from China. These collaborations have already begun to yield results, including improvements in stadium facilities, training programs for coaches and referees, and expanded youth entrepreneurship initiatives. Together, Kruah and Raji embody a new era of leadership in youth and sports. Kruah's focus on education and empowerment complements Raji's dedication to football

and community pride. Their combined efforts are charting a path where young Liberians are not only athletes but also innovators, leaders, and contributors to national progress.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports sees youth not as a challenge but as Liberia's greatest asset. With Kruah's vision and Raji's transformative leadership, Liberia is building a future where young people are empowered, athletes are celebrated, and the nation's identity is strengthened through unity and opportunity.



Hon. Laraamand Shenkin Nyonton: Driving Liberia's Hospitality and Skills Revolution

By: Hardfacts Media

Hon. Laraamand Shenkin Nyonton has become a defining figure in Liberia's push to modernize vocational education and create real opportunities for young people. As Deputy Minister for Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET), he has consistently challenged

the old ways of doing things, insisting that training must be practical, industry-driven, and globally competitive. His work has not only reshaped the TVET sector but has also positioned Liberia as a rising force in hospitality and skills development.

The most striking example of his vision is the National Hospitality Training Hotel (NHTH) in Paynesville. This

US\$1 million facility, built with support from the European Union and AFD, is more than a hotel—it is a living laboratory where students are trained in real-world conditions. Operating as a fully functional 4-star establishment, the hotel allows trainees to work side by side with professionals, handling everything from guest relations during peak seasons to inventory management during quieter periods. It is a model that blends education with enterprise, ensuring that graduates are not just certified but truly prepared for the demands of international hospitality.

Nyonton's innovation lies in the public-private partnership that governs the hotel. A private sector partner manages daily operations, covering all expenses and reinvesting 30% of profits back into the facility. This arrangement guarantees sustainability, shields the public treasury from losses, and ensures that the hotel remains state-of-the-art for years to come. For students, it means learning in a dynamic environment where theory meets practice every single day.

Equally important is Nyonton's commitment to inclusivity and empowerment. He has mandated that at least 30% of participants in every training cycle must be women, ensuring that female students have equal access to opportunities in hospitality. Trainees also receive



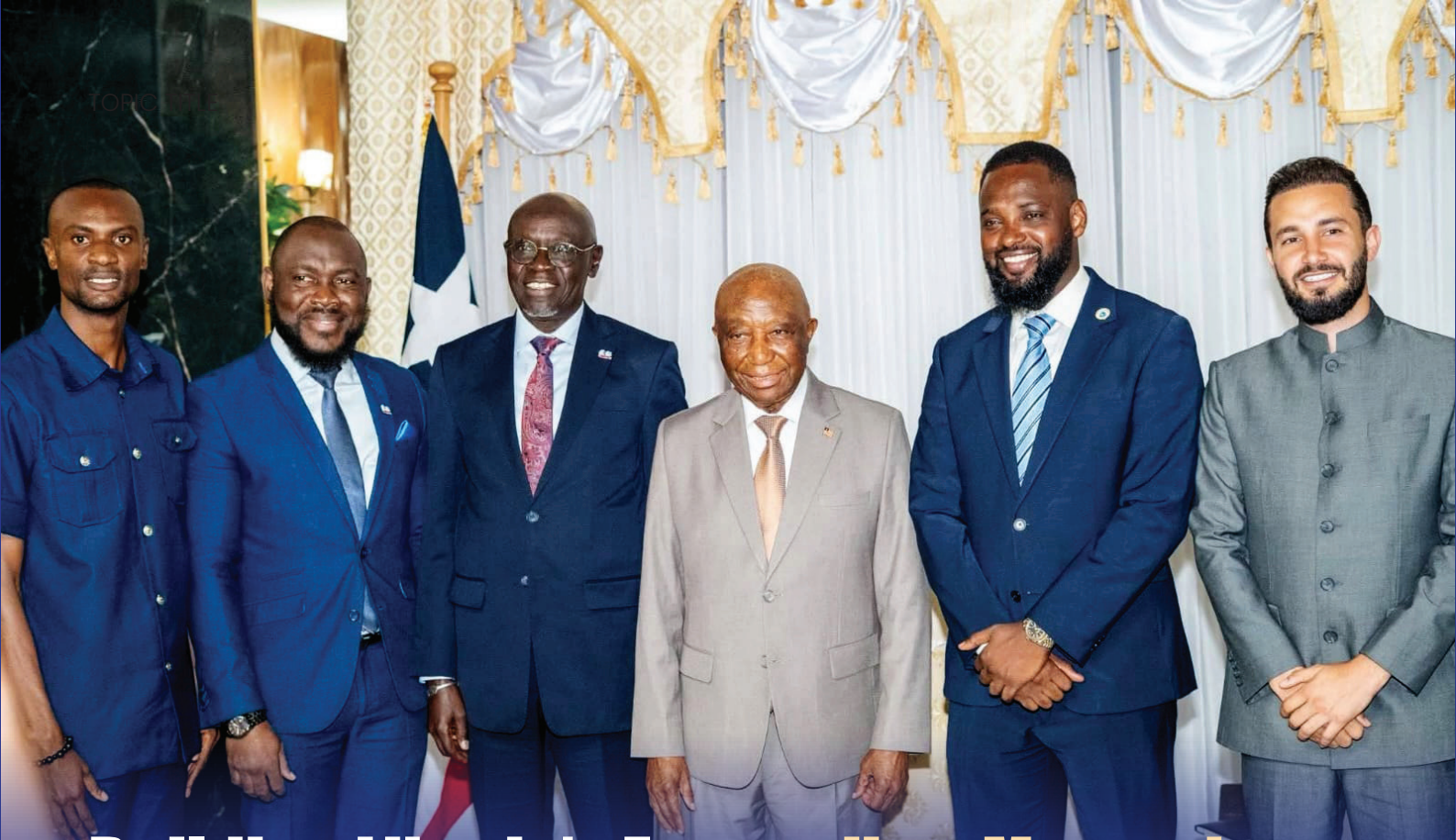
stipends, a recognition of their contributions and a way to support them as they build their careers. With a strict trainee-to-staff ratio, mentorship is personalized, giving each student the guidance they need to excel.

Transparency and accountability have been central to Nyonton's approach. Independent oversight boards and quarterly audits keep the project on track and reassure donors and stakeholders that resources are being used effectively. This culture of accountability has strengthened Liberia's credibility with international partners and created a foundation of trust that will attract further investment in the future.

The launch of the National Hospitality Training Hotel is more than just the opening of a new building—it is a turning point for Liberia's youth. It represents a promise fulfilled, a vision realized, and a pathway to global relevance in the hospitality industry. At the heart of this transformation is Hon. Laraamand Shenkin Nyonton, whose determination, foresight, and leadership have proven that vocational education can be a powerful engine of national progress.

Liberia is moving upward, and Nyonton's work ensures that its young people are not just passengers on this journey but skilled professionals driving the nation's future.





Building Liberia's Future: How Mustapha Njie's Investment Mission Opened a New Chapter for Affordable Housing

By: Hardfacts Media

When Mr. Mustapha Njie, the visionary founder and Group Managing Director of TAF Africa Global Limited, touched down in Liberia this week, it was more than a routine business trip—it was the beginning of what could become one of the country's most transformative housing and smart city conversations in recent years.

Across Africa, Mustapha Njie is widely respected as one of the continent's leading real estate pioneers. From humble beginnings in construction,

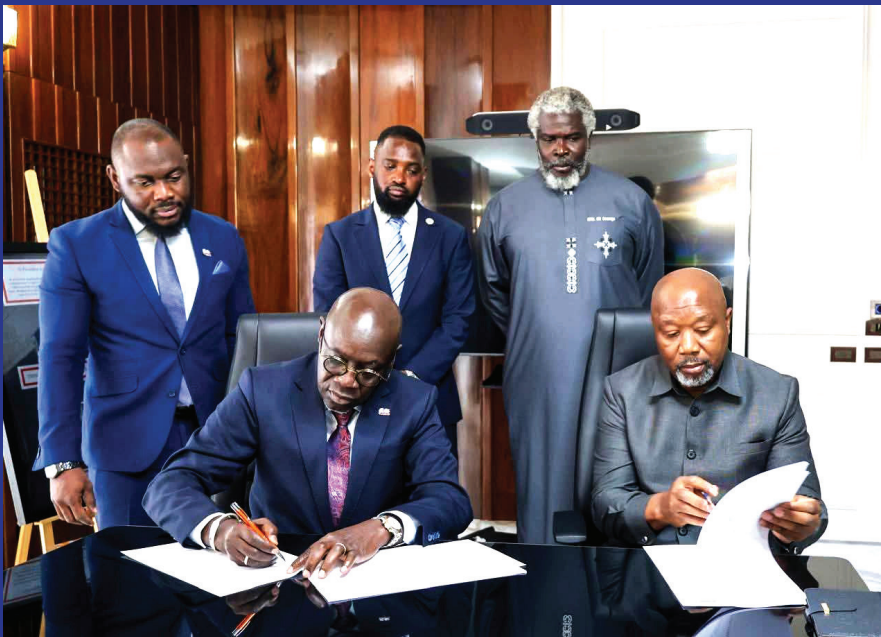
he has spent more than four decades building a Pan-African housing brand that now operates across multiple countries, with an ambitious vision to deliver one million affordable homes across sub-Saharan Africa.

His company's track record speaks for itself: large-scale estates, mixed-use communities, and smart city concepts that combine homes with roads, schools, health facilities, green spaces, and modern infrastructure. The flagship TAF City model—built around 5,000 homes on roughly 500 hectares—has become a benchmark for integrated urban development in West

Africa.

It was this proven experience that brought Mr. Njie to Liberia, in response to the invitation of His Excellency Joseph Nyuma Boakai Sr., who has continued to signal his administration's openness to credible private sector partners capable of addressing national development priorities.

At the heart of this breakthrough engagement is Amb. Mohammed M. Bah, Presidential Special Envoy on Investment, whose strategic diplomacy and persistent engagement were instrumental in bringing the mission to life. Working quietly but effectively



behind the scenes, Amb. Bah coordinated the investor outreach, government scheduling, institutional alignments, and stakeholder access that gave the visit both structure and momentum.

Those close to the process describe Amb. Bah's role as more than protocol coordination. His office shaped the visit into a deliberate investment diplomacy mission—connecting the investor directly with the highest levels of government while ensuring the right technical institutions were at the table. The centerpiece of the visit was the high-level meeting at the Executive Mansion, where Mr. Njie presented a bold proposal centered on a 5,000-unit affordable housing and smart city initiative for Liberia, with an estimated 500-hectare land requirement within the Greater Monrovia growth corridor. The concept aligns closely with Liberia's urgent housing needs, urban

expansion pressures, and the growing demand for planned modern communities.

The mission quickly moved from vision to measurable progress.

One of the most significant outcomes of the visit was the signing of a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) between the National Investment Commission and TAF Africa Global Limited at the Executive Mansion, creating the formal confidentiality framework needed for the secure exchange of technical, financial, legal, and land-related project information. This single development sent a strong message to the market: the conversations had moved beyond courtesy and into structured partnership-building.

The delegation's engagements also extended to the Monrovia City Corporation, and the Liberia Land Authority, where discussions focused

on municipal planning, mortgage and financing pathways, and the identification of suitable government-owned land for the project.

A particularly symbolic moment came during the delegation's stop at the historic Ducor Hotel hilltop, where the visitors took a panoramic view of Monrovia. From that vantage point, the city's coastline, density, and growth trajectory offered a vivid reminder of both the challenge and the opportunity ahead.

For Liberia, the implications are significant: affordable housing delivery, job creation, urban renewal, banking sector participation, and a new model for public-private collaboration.

For Amb. Mohammed M. Bah, the visit further reinforces his growing reputation as a results-driven investment diplomat, one focused on converting presidential goodwill into bankable opportunities for national development.

As the meetings now transition into land verification, legal drafting, and implementation planning, one thing is already clear: this visit has moved the conversation from aspiration to action.

And if the momentum built this week is sustained, Liberia may soon be on the path toward one of its most ambitious modern housing partnerships yet.



Liberia On Trafficking Watchlist

Liberia has again landed on the U.S. State Department's Tier 2 Watch List for human trafficking.

Present but Unprotected: Liberia's Hidden Human Trafficking Crisis and the People Trapped by Poverty

By: Hardfacts Media

On a crowded Monrovia street, 13 year old "Sarah" (not her real name) weaves between honking cars, a basin of oranges balanced carefully on her head. She starts work at dawn, long before the sun burns off the night's humidity, and stops only when traffic dies down late in the evening.

The woman she calls "auntie" takes the money. Sarah does not attend school. She sleeps on a thin mat in a cramped room with other children,

wakes when she is told, and works until she is told to stop. To most people hurrying past, she is one of many child street vendors trying to survive. In reality, Sarah is likely a victim of human trafficking – one of countless Liberian children and adults whose exploitation remains largely unseen, even as it unfolds in plain sight.

A Crisis Beyond the Headlines

Liberia's most visible struggles – persistent poverty, high unemployment, and fragile public services – often

dominate public debate. Yet behind these headline issues lies a quieter emergency: human trafficking. It touches rural villages and urban slums, border towns and mining camps, and leaves lasting scars on individuals, families, and communities.

Traffickers feed on the same pressures that make daily life so difficult for ordinary Liberians. Parents unable to pay school fees or hospital bills, young people desperate for work, women and girls with few options, and communities with weak safety nets all become fertile ground. In this environment, a promise can



be more dangerous than a threat. Offers of a job in town, schooling in the city, or help with medical expenses can easily turn into chains of exploitation that are hard to see and even harder to break.

Families rarely imagine that they are handing their children to traffickers. Many believe they are opening a door to a better life. Only later, if at all, do they realize the true cost.

The Many Faces of Trafficking in Liberia

Human trafficking in Liberia does not always look like the dramatic images often shown on television. More often, it is a story of control without visible chains – of fear, isolation, unpaid debts, and broken promises. Inside the country, boys and

girls are moved from rural villages to cities and large towns to work as domestic servants. They cook, clean, fetch water, and care for younger children from early morning until late at night. Many receive no pay, no rest days, and no chance to attend school. In other cases, children are sent to work on farms, rubber and palm plantations, or in artisanal mining areas. There, they haul heavy loads, handle dangerous tools, and endure threats and beatings if they complain or fall ill.

Liberian streets tell another part of the story. Children and young women selling goods in markets or weaving through traffic with trays on their heads are not always working for themselves or their families. Some must meet daily sales targets or face punishment. If they come home with too little

money, they may be denied food or forced to work longer hours.

Along major roads, in informal bars, entertainment spots, truck stops, and mining camps, teenage girls and young women are sexually exploited under the guise of “helping at the bar” or “working in a guesthouse.” Many came believing they had secured restaurant work, domestic jobs, or support for school.

Beyond Liberia’s borders, another pattern emerges. Women and girls leave for neighboring countries or the Middle East after being promised domestic work or hotel jobs. On arrival, some find themselves in domestic servitude or prostitution, their passports seized, movement restricted, and wages withheld. Men and boys who sign up for jobs in mining,



agriculture, or construction abroad may end up in remote camps, working long hours for little or no pay, under constant threat. Returning home is often not an option; they are in debt to recruiters, undocumented, or simply too afraid.

The traffickers in these stories rarely fit the stereotype of the stranger in a dark car. They often present themselves as benefactors: "uncles," "aunties," neighbors, church members, businesspeople, or informal agents who claim to know someone in Monrovia, Accra, Lagos, or Dubai. They speak the local language, attend community gatherings, and sometimes have genuine relationships

with the families they target. That familiarity, combined with desperation, makes their offers hard to refuse.

A Problem Bigger Than the Numbers

Official figures tell only part of the story. Reports from government institutions, international organizations, and civil society show that Liberia has become more aware of human trafficking in recent years. The national anti-trafficking task force has increased its activities, public sensitization campaigns have reached more communities, and the number of reported

cases, investigations, and convictions has risen.

But the true scale of the problem remains largely hidden. Many survivors never report their abuse. Some do not even recognize their situation as trafficking. Others fear retaliation from traffickers, worry about stigma within their communities, or simply do not trust that authorities will protect them. Longstanding practices of "sending children" to live with relatives or acquaintances in the city, combined with social acceptance of child labor, make it easy for exploitation to hide behind cultural norms.

What data exists suggests that children represent a large share of known victims, especially in domestic servitude, street vending, forced begging, and sexual exploitation. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by sex trafficking and domestic servitude, while men and boys are more frequently exploited in forced labor in agriculture, mining, and informal work. For each victim counted, there are many more who remain invisible.

Human Trafficking as a Human Story

Behind every incident is a personal tragedy that reshapes a life.

There is a boy from a rural county who believed he was



going to school in Monrovia. Instead, he spent years as a houseboy, rising before his “host family” to clean, cook, and wash, punished if he dared ask about school. There is the teenage girl who left her village for a job in a restaurant in a neighboring country, only to find herself locked in a room where men came and went, her earnings taken by others. There is the young man who sold his family’s land to pay a “travel agent,” hoping for work abroad, and ended up on a distant farm, working long days with no contract, no rights, and no way home.

Their names may not appear in court records or statistical reports, but their experiences reflect broader patterns described by survivors,

communities, and frontline organizations across Liberia.

Why Liberia Struggles to Respond

Trafficking, A national task force coordinates government responses. Awareness campaigns have begun to change how communities think about child labor and exploitation. Still, the country faces steep challenges.

Many local police stations, border posts, and magistrate courts lack the specialized training, equipment, and consistent funding needed to investigate trafficking cases effectively. Files are

lost, evidence is mishandled, and cases stall for months or years. In such conditions, traffickers can operate with limited fear of punishment.

Support for victims remains uneven. Safe shelters are few and often concentrated in or near Monrovia. Legal assistance and psychosocial support exist, but coverage is thin, especially in rural areas. Survivors who do come into contact with authorities may be sent back to the same environments where traffickers first targeted them, without long-term support to rebuild their lives.

Trust is another barrier. In Liberia, as in many countries, trafficking victims have sometimes been arrested for immigration violations,

charged with sex-work-related offenses, or blamed for crimes they committed under coercion. Even when laws exist to protect them, practice does not always follow. For a young woman who has been forced into prostitution, or a boy who has been compelled to steal, walking into a police station may feel more dangerous than staying with an abuser.

Deep poverty makes change even harder. When a family cannot afford food or medicine, or when a sudden illness threatens to push them over the edge, an offer from a trafficker can appear as the only available lifeline. Without broader economic and social support, messages about “staying safe” and “avoiding risky offers” cannot compete with hunger and desperation.

Finally, the lack of comprehensive data and coordination among agencies makes it difficult to understand trafficking patterns or measure the impact of interventions. Without a unified system that pulls together information from police, immigration, social services, health facilities, and NGOs, Liberia is fighting with fragments rather than a full picture.

Learning from African Neighbors

If Liberia wants to confront human trafficking effectively, it must start by changing how it sees and treats victims. The first rule must be simple:



protect the victim, pursue the trafficker.

In practice, this means ensuring that victims are not punished for crimes they were forced to commit. Laws and operational guidelines should clearly prohibit the prosecution of trafficking survivors for immigration offenses, sex-work-related crimes, or other illegal acts that took place under coercion.

Frontline workers—police officers, immigration officials, social workers, teachers, nurses, and community leaders—need practical, scenario-based training to recognize signs of trafficking and respond appropriately. They must know how to ask sensitive questions in a way that does not put the victim at greater risk, and where to refer them for shelter, legal aid, and medical care.

Equally important is protection for those who are willing to testify against traffickers. Without safe housing, anonymity when necessary, and the possibility

of relocation, survivors who come forward risk their lives and the safety of their families. A justice system that offers them real protection and pursues traffickers vigorously sends a clear message that the state stands with the exploited, not the exploiters.

Putting Survivors at the Center

Liberia does not have to invent its response from scratch. Other African countries, confronting similar challenges, have developed approaches that can be adapted to Liberia’s context.

Nigeria established the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), which combines investigation, victim support, shelter, and public education under one roof. Ghana’s community child protection committees operate at the grassroots level, tracking local risks, identifying abuse early, and referring children to appropriate services. Ethiopia and Kenya have



strengthened their regulation of recruitment agencies and labor brokers and provide pre-departure information to citizens planning to work abroad. South Africa's integrated shelters bring together medical care, counseling, legal aid, and skills training in coordinated facilities linked to police and clinics.

For Liberia, elements of these models could translate into more effective institutions and networks. Specialized units or agencies dedicated to trafficking could bring together investigations, victim services, and awareness work.

Community-based structures could help detect abuse early in villages and

neighborhoods. Stronger regulation of "travel agents," middlemen, and recruitment agencies could reduce the number of Liberians lured into exploitative overseas jobs. Partnerships among shelters, hospitals, police, and NGOs could ensure that survivors do not fall through the cracks.

Tackling Root Causes: Giving Families Real Choices

Rescuing victims and prosecuting traffickers, while essential, will not be enough if the conditions that make people vulnerable remain unchanged. Families need real choices.

Expanding social protection programs – for example, cash transfers or targeted support for households in crisis—can reduce the pressure to send children to work or to accept offers from unknown intermediaries. Ensuring truly free and accessible education, including in rural communities, helps keep children in school and out of situations where they can be easily abused.

Investments in youth employment and vocational training can give young people alternatives to dangerous migration or exploitative labor. Supporting small businesses, agriculture, and rural enterprises can create opportunities beyond the capital and a few urban centers. Improving rural



health services, roads, water, and electricity makes village life less precarious and reduces the appeal of risky promises from traffickers.

Social norms must also evolve. Community and faith leaders, women's groups, youth associations, and traditional authorities can play a critical role in re-examining practices around child placement, early marriage, and child labor.

Local radio dramas and talk shows, community theater, school debates, and church or mosque discussions can all help highlight children's rights, the risks of trafficking, and the responsibilities of adults to protect the young.

Strengthening Systems: Law, Money, and Information

An effective response to human trafficking cannot rest on isolated programs or short-term projects. It requires long-term commitment and strong systems.

On the legal and enforcement side, Liberia needs to continue implementing and refining its anti-trafficking laws.

Specialized police units and prosecutors should receive consistent training and tools for evidence collection, digital forensics, and financial investigations. Traffickers rely on money flows; following those flows through stronger anti-money laundering measures and cooperation

with financial intelligence units can expose networks and make trafficking less profitable.

A national referral mechanism is also essential. Such a mechanism would formally connect police, immigration, health facilities, social services, shelters, and community organizations. It would provide clear guidelines so that any worker who suspects trafficking, whether a nurse in a rural clinic or a teacher in a village school, knows whom to contact, how to ensure immediate safety, and where to send the victim for further support.

Better data will be key to sustaining progress. A unified, secure national database that draws information from relevant agencies, while respecting privacy and data protection, would help Liberia



track trends, identify gaps, and allocate resources more effectively. Standardized reporting tools and regular public updates could foster greater transparency and accountability.

Given the cross-border nature of many trafficking cases, regional cooperation will remain vital. Through ECOWAS and bilateral arrangements, Liberia can participate in joint investigations, share intelligence, and coordinate the safe return and reintegration of victims. Shared watch lists of known traffickers and fraudulent recruitment agencies can protect potential victims before they travel.

A Test of Liberia's Values and Resolve

Human trafficking in Liberia is not only a criminal justice problem. It is a mirror that reflects how the nation values its most vulnerable members. Every time a child like Sarah is taken from school and turned into unpaid labor, every time a young woman is coerced into sexual exploitation, every time a man is trapped in forced labor, the country loses more than an individual – it loses part of its future.

Liberia has been tested many times: by war, by disease, by economic hardship. The struggle against human trafficking is another such test – of political will, of social solidarity, and of the state's capacity to protect its citizens.

Success will not be measured solely by the number of laws passed, task forces convened, or workshops completed. It will be measured in quieter, more personal ways: the

girl who returns to school instead of sleeping under market stalls; the boy who earns a living wage instead of working under threats; the survivor who finds shelter, counseling, and justice rather than blame and silence; the trafficker who faces a courtroom instead of continuing in business.

Liberia's choice is clear. It can allow trafficking to remain a hidden cost of poverty and underdevelopment, or it can place the protection of its people, especially its children, at the center of its national project. The path it takes will be evident not only in official reports, but in the daily lives of those like Sarah who, for too long, have been seen but not truly seen, present but unprotected.

INVESTING IN LIBERIA

FISHERIES CONFERENCE 2026

Liberia Concludes Landmark Fisheries Investment Conference with Strong Commitments to Blue Economy Growth

By: Hardfacts Media

Harbel, Margibi County, Liberia, March 31, 2026 – Liberia has concluded its National Fisheries Investment Conference 2026 with renewed commitments from government, development partners, and private sector actors to transform the country's fisheries sector into a major driver of inclusive economic growth, food security, and employment.

Held from March 30 to 31 at the Farmington Hotel under the theme "Unlocking Blue Horizons: The Future

of Fisheries and the Blue Economy," the conference brought together more than 250 delegates from over 15 countries, positioning Liberia at the center of regional dialogue on fisheries and blue economy development.

The conference provided a high level platform to mobilize investment, deepen partnerships, and advance policy reforms in a sector widely regarded as critical to Liberia's long term development. Participants highlighted the country's rich marine and inland water resources, noting that while the potential is vast, strategic investments and coordinated

actions are required to unlock it.

Opening the conference, Director General of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA), J. Cyrus Saygbe, Sr., set the tone with a strong message of readiness and ambition. "Liberia is open for responsible and sustainable fisheries investment," he declared. "We are determined to turn our natural endowments into jobs, food security, and shared prosperity for our people."

The opening ceremony featured goodwill messages from key development



partners. Aliou Mamadou Dia, Resident Representative of UNDP Liberia, underscored the importance of aligning fisheries development with climate resilience and inclusive growth. "The blue economy is not only about growth," he noted. "It is about sustainability, equity, and ensuring that coastal communities, especially women and young people, are not left behind."

Madam Georgia Wallen, Country Manager at the World Bank Liberia Country Office, reaffirmed the Bank's commitment to supporting sector reforms and infrastructure development. "Liberia's fisheries sector presents a compelling investment case," she said. "With the right policies and partnerships, it can become a powerful engine for jobs and economic diversification."

The European Union Delegation to Liberia, represented through a proxy on behalf of Ambassador

Nona Deprez, emphasized the importance of strong governance and regional cooperation. The message highlighted the EU's continued support for regulatory compliance and sustainable fisheries management aligned with international standards.

A defining moment of the opening ceremony was the signing of key partnership agreements, all executed on behalf of the Government of Liberia by NaFAA. These included a landmark collaboration with Orange Liberia to advance digital solutions in fisheries management, an agreement with a private company for the operations of the Sea King Vessel, and another with a private sector partner for the renovation and operations of the Robertsport Fishing Cluster in Grand Cape Mount County.

"These agreements signal a new era of public private

collaboration in Liberia's fisheries sector," NaFAA Boss Saygbe emphasized. "We are moving from conversation to concrete action."

All partnership signings preceded the keynote address delivered by His Excellency President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., who articulated a bold national vision for the sector. "We are shifting from potential to prosperity," the President stated. "Our government is committed to creating the policy environment, strengthening institutions, and attracting the investments needed to sustainably transform this sector."

The conference also witnessed the launch of key national frameworks, including the Fisheries Strategic Plan, the National Fisheries Investment Plan, and a Public Private Partnership Strategy, providing a structured roadmap for sector transformation.

Across thematic sessions, participants engaged on issues ranging from sustainable fisheries governance and aquaculture investment to financing models, climate resilience, value addition, and technological innovation. There was strong consensus on the need to address infrastructure gaps, particularly in cold chain systems, landing facilities, and processing, while expanding access to finance for artisanal fishers and small enterprises.

Discussions also confronted persistent challenges, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and the growing impact of climate change on coastal livelihoods. Stakeholders called for strengthened monitoring systems, improved coordination, and sustained investment in research and capacity

development.

Concrete outcomes from the conference included increased investor interest in industrial fisheries and aquaculture, strengthened development partner commitments, and endorsement of a coordinated national roadmap to accelerate growth across the fisheries value chain.

In their recommendations, participants urged the government to fast track implementation of national strategies, strengthen public private partnerships, and invest in critical infrastructure.

They also emphasized the importance of empowering women and youth, expanding access to finance, and leveraging digital innovation to improve efficiency and market access.

Participants expressed appreciation to the

Government and people of Liberia for their hospitality and commended the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority for its leadership. They also recognized the contributions of development partners and the professional coordination provided by Golden Touch Corporation (GTC), a Liberian-owned event management firm.

The conference concluded with the adoption of a formal communiqué mandating NaFAA to coordinate implementation and track progress. Stakeholders reaffirmed a shared commitment to unlocking Liberia's blue economy potential and ensuring that the fisheries sector delivers inclusive and sustainable development outcomes for generations to come.





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Liberia Petroleum Refining Company: Powering Progress, Fueling the Future

By: Hardfacts Media

Monrovia, Liberia – In the midst of global energy uncertainty, the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC) has emerged as a symbol of resilience and transformation. Under the leadership of Managing Director Amos B. Tweh, who assumed office in 2023, the company has undergone a remarkable evolution. Once burdened by supply challenges and inefficiencies, LPRC now stands as a modernized, transparent, and strategically vital institution that is helping to stabilize Liberia's economy and secure its energy future. Its achievements resonate far beyond the petroleum sector, aligning seamlessly with the government's ARREST Agenda—Agriculture,

Roads, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation, and Tourism.

Fuel supply has long been a sensitive issue in Liberia, where scarcity and price volatility have historically disrupted daily life and economic activity. Since 2023, LPRC has made it a priority to ensure that petroleum products remain consistently available across the country. This achievement is particularly significant given the turbulence of global oil markets. By implementing price stabilization measures, the company has shielded households and businesses from unpredictable costs, easing the burden on transport operators, farmers, and industries that rely heavily on fuel. The ripple effect of this stability has been felt across the nation, reducing economic strain and fostering confidence in

Liberia's energy sector. For agriculture, this has meant lower costs for transporting produce and farm inputs, ensuring that farmers can reach markets more reliably and contribute to national food security.

For many Liberians, the difference has been tangible. Taxi drivers in Monrovia speak of fewer days spent idling in long queues at filling stations. Farmers in rural counties note that the cost of transporting produce to markets has become more predictable. Small business owners, who once struggled with fluctuating fuel prices, now find it easier to plan and sustain their operations. These everyday stories illustrate how a national institution can directly shape the rhythm of daily life, while simultaneously advancing the Agriculture pillar of the



ARREST Agenda.

Infrastructure development has been another cornerstone of LPRC's progress. Recognizing that energy security depends on robust facilities, the company has invested heavily in upgrading its operations. The Bushrod Island terminal in Monrovia has seen major improvements, with expanded storage capacity and enhanced safety protocols that align with international standards. The introduction of digital monitoring systems has revolutionized inventory management, reducing

losses and ensuring efficiency in distribution. These upgrades not only strengthen Liberia's ability to meet rising demand but also position the country as a credible player in regional energy trade. For the Roads pillar, LPRC's reliable supply of diesel and bitumen has been indispensable, enabling contractors to pursue road-building projects more effectively and ensuring that Liberia's infrastructure ambitions are not undermined by fuel shortages.

Equally important has been the company's commitment to transparency and governance. Under Tweh's leadership, LPRC has introduced stricter oversight mechanisms to curb illegal fuel practices and

ensure compliance with national energy policies. The publication of annual reports in 2024 and 2025 marked a new era of accountability, offering stakeholders clear insights into financial performance and operational reforms. These steps have strengthened public trust and demonstrated that state-owned enterprises can operate with integrity and efficiency when guided by strong leadership. This directly supports the Rule of Law pillar, reinforcing Liberia's broader commitment to accountability and institutional reform.

The impact of these reforms extends beyond infrastructure and governance. Affordable fuel has reduced the economic strain on households, while



reliable supply has supported industries critical to national growth. LPRC has also created jobs and training opportunities, equipping a new generation of Liberians with skills in petroleum logistics and management.

This human capital development ensures that the benefits of modernization are not confined to corporate offices but are shared with communities across the country. For the Education pillar, these training programs represent a vital investment in Liberia's future workforce, preparing young

technicians and engineers to compete not only locally but across the region.

Environmental responsibility has also been woven into LPRC's modernization drive. By introducing safer storage facilities and digital monitoring systems, the company has reduced leakages and minimized risks to surrounding communities. These measures align with the Sanitation pillar of the ARREST Agenda, ensuring that petroleum operations do not compromise public health or environmental safety. Cleaner, safer practices

demonstrate that industrial progress can coexist with community well-being.

Tourism, often overlooked in discussions of petroleum, has also benefited indirectly from LPRC's achievements. Reliable fuel supply and stabilized prices have made travel more affordable within Liberia, encouraging both domestic and international visitors to explore the country's cultural and natural attractions. Improved roads, supported by LPRC's fuel provision, further enhance accessibility, ensuring that Liberia's tourism potential can be realized as part of its broader development vision. As 2026 unfolds, LPRC is consolidating its reforms and preparing for the future. With a foundation built on stability, modernization, and transparency, the company is poised to expand its role in regional energy trade, strengthen national reserves, and continue driving economic resilience.

The journey of LPRC under Amos B. Tweh is more than a corporate success story; it is a testament to Liberia's determination to secure energy independence and economic stability. By fueling progress and powering the future, LPRC has positioned itself as a model for state-owned enterprises across Africa and beyond, while simultaneously advancing the pillars of the ARREST Agenda that define Liberia's national development priorities.



Free Regional Roaming Agreement Signed by Liberia, Ghana, and Sierra Leone

By: Hardfacts Media

Liberia, Ghana, and Sierra Leone have officially signed the ECOWAS Free Roaming Agreement, marking a significant step toward stronger regional integration and improved connectivity.

At the signing ceremony, Hon. Clarence K. Massaquoi emphasized the close ties among the three nations and the real benefits the

agreement will bring to citizens. He noted that everyday travelers—like a Liberian trader moving across borders—will no longer need to buy new SIM cards in each country.

He also thanked President Joseph Nyuma Boakai for his continued support of the telecommunications sector and his leadership in advancing regional cooperation.

The participating countries reaffirmed their commitment to implementing the agreement, ensuring that citizens soon begin to enjoy seamless and more affordable mobile connectivity across borders.

ITS

INSTITUTE OF TOURISM STUDIES

Malta and Liberia Forge Global Tourism Education Partnership Through ITS

By J. Monchen Parchiebo

Malta and Liberia are forging a global tourism education partnership through the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS). Tourism is one of the world's most dynamic industries, driving economic growth, cultural exchange, and youth empowerment. For many nations, hospitality offers accessible pathways to employment and entrepreneurship, but the sector is evolving rapidly, shaped by global travel

trends, technological innovation, and rising service expectations. To remain competitive, countries must invest in education and training that prepare their workforce for international standards.

Malta, with its thriving tourism industry and advanced hospitality ecosystem, has positioned itself as a leader in tourism education through ITS. Over the past decade, ITS has built a reputation for excellence, combining academic rigor with hands-on industry experience. Liberia, meanwhile, is seeking to strengthen its tourism

sector as part of its broader economic diversification strategy. By partnering with Malta, Liberia aims to provide its students with access to world-class training and create new opportunities for sustainable growth in West Africa.

This vision is being realized through a landmark Memorandum of Understanding between ITS and the Liberia National Tourism Authority (LNTA). Signed in Valletta by LNTA Director General Hon. Princess Eva Cooper and ITS Chief Executive Officer Pierre Fenech, the five-year



agreement establishes a framework for skills development, employment pathways, and institutional strengthening. It will open direct opportunities for Liberian students to access international training, hands-on work experience, and career prospects within Malta's advanced hospitality ecosystem.

For Pierre Fenech, this partnership is another milestone in a career defined by vision and transformation. Having begun as a student at ITS, he now leads the institution through a period of remarkable growth. Since becoming CEO in 2015, Fenech has pursued two strategic priorities: good governance and internationalization. On governance, he oversaw the Extension of Scope, enabling ITS to self-accredit courses up to Level 7 after rigorous international audits. On internationalization, he championed partnerships with prestigious institutions such as The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, Institute Lyfe (formerly Institute Paul Bocuse), and Haaga Helia University of Applied Sciences. These collaborations elevated ITS's global reputation and attracted foreign students, who now represent 25 percent of its student body.

Fenech's vision extends beyond Malta. He has established satellite campuses in China, Switzerland, and Jordan, with the first cohorts of



international students already enrolled. To support this expansion, he is overseeing the construction of a new state-of-the-art campus in Malta, designed

to accommodate more students and provide cutting-edge facilities.

The Liberia-Malta partnership reflects Fenech's



belief in education as a driver of opportunity and growth. Liberian students will gain exposure to global service standards and secure placements with leading operators such as AX Group, ensuring a seamless transition from classroom learning to careers. Meanwhile, Maltese faculty and industry professionals will support curriculum development and training delivery in Liberia, strengthening local institutions. Discussions are already underway about establishing an ITS satellite campus in Liberia, which would bring internationally accredited tourism education directly to West Africa.

From his beginnings as a student to his current role as CEO, Pierre Fenech has transformed ITS into a beacon of hospitality education. His leadership has not only reshaped the Institute in Malta but also positioned it as a global player in tourism training. The new collaboration with Liberia is a testament to his vision: building tourism sectors that generate opportunity, empower youth, and drive sustainable growth across continents. Under Fenech's guidance, ITS is no longer just Malta's pride — it is becoming a global force in hospitality education.



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MUSTAPHA I. RAJI

LFA PRESIDENT

2026-2030



By: Albert M. Fania

LFA Elective Congress Ends Months-Long Saga: Raji Wins Third Term Unopposed as New Executive Committee Takes Shape

After months of legal wrangling, public debate, and uncertainty that gripped Liberian football, the Liberia Football Association's long-awaited Elective Congress finally concluded on Friday, May 15, with incumbent president Mustapha I. Raji re-elected unopposed to a third and final four-year term.

The 30th Ordinary Congress, held at the LFA headquarters in Congo Town, delivered a white ballot for the presidency and returned a mix of familiar faces and new entrants to the Executive Committee. With the gavel down, Liberian football now turns its attention from courtrooms and eligibility disputes back to the pitch.

Raji Secures Third Term Until 2030

Mustapha I. Raji's re-election was confirmed without opposition, extending his leadership of the LFA until 2030. The unopposed

result, officials said, reflects confidence among the 47 voting delegates in Raji's direction for the game.

"This is not about one man," Raji said in brief remarks after the declaration. "It is about the trust delegates have placed in a process and a plan. We have laid a foundation in infrastructure, youth, and women's football. The next four years must be about consolidating that work and delivering results on the field."

Raji's second term, which began in 2022, was defined by a push to improve infrastructure and grassroots sustainability. Under his watch, the LFA prioritized youth leagues, expanded the women's football program, and invested in county-level competitions. Financial integrity became a central theme, with the association strengthening reporting standards and transparency in the use of FIFA Forward and CAF development

funds. Relations with both continental and global governing bodies also deepened, with Liberia hosting more FIFA and CAF-sanctioned events and capacity-building programs.

The lack of a challenger on the ballot followed a contentious pre-election period that saw several potential candidates blocked on eligibility grounds. Most notably, former LFA Vice President for Operations Cassell Anthony Kuoh was disqualified after the Appeals Committee upheld a provision barring individuals with criminal convictions. The committee cited Kuoh's 2017 conviction in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of North Carolina for a \$9.5 million investment fraud scheme. Kuoh's legal team argued that Article 21(j) of the Liberian Constitution restores civil rights after punishment is served, but the LFA ruled that its statutes are "mandatory, prohibitive, and backward-looking," leaving no room for discretion.

With no other candidate meeting the eligibility requirements by the close of nominations, Raji's path to a third term was cleared. Under the LFA Statutes, this will be his final term.

Seaton Retains Women's Representative Seat

Jodie Seaton retained her position as Women's Representative on the Executive Committee,

continuing her role as the highest-ranking woman in LFA governance.

Seaton's was re-elected with 26 votes out of 47 votes over two other candidates. Since first joining the committee, she has been a leading voice for the expansion of women's leagues, the Liberia Women's National Team, and safeguarding programs. Her continued presence ensures gender representation remains embedded at the

decision-making table as the LFA prepares to implement CAF's women's football strategy and pursue FIFA's Women's Football Campaign.

"Women's football in Liberia is no longer an afterthought," Seaton said. "We have the U-15, U-17, and senior national teams competing regularly. The next phase is about quality, infrastructure, and creating pathways for girls from the counties to the national team and beyond."

Executive Committee: Continuity and Change

The Congress preserved a core of incumbent Executive Committee members while introducing five new faces, signaling both continuity and renewal.

Retained Members:	New Members:
Sekou Konneh – LFA First Vice President	Amos Tweh
Adolphus Dolo – LFA Second Vice President	Momo Cyrus
Pawala Janyan – Executive Committee Member	Christian G. Weah
Tickly D. Monkoney Jr. – Executive Committee Member	Elvis Sirleaf
Anthony Deinuka – Executive Committee Member	Pokah Robert
Hilary Sackie – Executive Committee Member	

The new members replace K. Jlayteh Saylor, Ivan Brown, Kelvin Bayoh, and Cyrus Yeanay, who did not return to the committee. The changes reflect shifts in county football politics and a desire among delegates for new energy in specific portfolios.

Sekou Konneh and Adolphus Dolo retain their positions as First and Second Vice Presidents respectively, ensuring stability in the association's top leadership

team.

Voices from the Newly Elected

Reactions from returning and newly elected members emphasized unity and responsibility.

Tickly D. Monkoney Jr., who secured another term, said the result was a "collective achievement."

"This victory belongs to every club, every stakeholder, every supporter who believed in our

vision," Monkoney stated. "I recommit myself to working with all stakeholders to build a stronger, more united, and successful future for Liberian football. The work starts now."

Pawala Janyan, also re-elected, struck a similar tone. "I thank the stakeholders for the trust and confidence shown throughout this process," Janyan said. "This is not just my victory. It reflects a shared vision for a stronger, more united, and

progressive Liberian football. We must now turn that vision into action through unity and collective work."

Newcomers Amos Tweh and Momo Cyrus are expected to take on key roles in youth and competition management, areas where delegates have called for stronger oversight. Christian G. Weah, Elvis Sirleaf, and Pokah Robert bring backgrounds in club administration and grassroots coaching, broadening the committee's technical base.

A Congress Defined by Dispute and Delay

The road to May 15 was anything but smooth. What began as a routine election cycle evolved into one of the most contested and legally complex processes in LFA history.

The trouble started in early 2026 when the Elections Committee, led by Meo D. Beyan, began vetting candidates. Multiple hopefuls were disqualified on grounds ranging from alleged non-payment of club dues to criminal records. The disqualification of Cassell Anthony Kuoh became the flashpoint, triggering appeals, press conferences, and threats of litigation.

Kuoh's camp argued that the LFA was overstepping by applying a foreign conviction to a domestic sporting election and that Liberian law protected his right to participate after completing his sentence. The Appeals



Committee disagreed, ruling that LFA statutes operate independently of state law and that integrity provisions are non-negotiable.

The civil court system was also drawn into the dispute, with injunctions and counter-injunctions creating further uncertainty. At one point, the Congress was postponed twice, raising concerns from FIFA and CAF about third-party interference in football affairs.

Throughout, the LFA maintained that football governance must be guided by the statutes of

the association, FIFA, and CAF. FIFA's statutes are clear that member associations must manage their affairs independently and without undue influence from third parties. The LFA's legal team argued that upholding eligibility rules was necessary to protect the association from sanctions.

"The debates were painful, but they were necessary," said a senior LFA official who requested anonymity. "For too long, eligibility was treated as a formality. This process forced us to confront what integrity means in practice."



What the Statutes Say

The core legal issue centered on Articles 45.4 and 58.1 of the LFA Statutes. Article 45.4 states that a member of the Executive Committee shall be ineligible if “found guilty of a criminal offense.” Article 58.1 extends similar restrictions to candidates for the presidency.

The Appeals Committee described these provisions as “mandatory, prohibitive, and backward-looking,” meaning they apply regardless of when the offense occurred

or whether the individual considers themselves rehabilitated. The committee also rejected the argument that the LFA should recognize Article 21(j) of the Liberian Constitution, which protects civil rights post-punishment, on the grounds that the LFA is a private association with its own rules.

Legal scholars remain divided. Some argue that the LFA’s approach aligns with global best practice in sports governance, where integrity standards often exceed national law. Others

contend that the rules create a permanent barrier to participation and should include a rehabilitation mechanism.

Regardless of the debate, the outcome set a precedent: the LFA will enforce its integrity clauses strictly, and future candidates can expect detailed scrutiny.

From Campaigns to the Pitch.

With the election concluded, the LFA’s focus shifts to governance and development. The next four years present both opportunity and pressure.

Immediate priorities for the new Executive Committee include

- **Youth Development:** Expanding the U-15 and U-17 leagues across all 15 counties, improving coaching education, and establishing a national talent identification system.
- **Women’s Football:** Implementing the second phase of the LFA Women’s Football Strategy, including a professionalized women’s league structure and increased support for the senior national team.
- **Infrastructure:** Completing the rollout of FIFA Forward-funded mini-stadia projects and upgrading the Antoinette Tubman Stadium and SKD Practice Pitch.
- **Financial Sustainability:**

Increasing commercial revenue through sponsorships, improving ticketing systems, and ensuring transparent use of development funds.

- **Governance and Integrity:** Strengthening the Ethics Committee, adopting a club licensing system, and reducing reliance on FIFA funding for operational costs.

Fans and stakeholders interviewed after the Congress said they are ready to move past the disputes.

"We want to see a league where players are paid on time, referees are respected, and our national teams win," said Emmanuel Koffa, a Montserrado County club administrator. "The politics is over. Now it's about football."

International Eyes on Liberia

FIFA and CAF officials monitored the Congress closely, given the legal challenges and previous warnings about third-party interference. In a letter dated April 2026, FIFA reminded the LFA of its obligation to hold free and fair elections in line with its statutes.

The unopposed outcome and peaceful conduct of the Congress are likely to ease concerns, though FIFA will continue to monitor the implementation of governance reforms. Liberia's improved standing in CAF, evidenced by increased participation in club competitions and hosting rights for youth tournaments,

also depends on maintaining stability.

Raji's re-election ensures continuity in Liberia's engagement with FIFA and CAF. His administration has been credited with improving Liberia's compliance rating in FIFA's governance audits and increasing the country's allocation under the FIFA Forward program.

Challenges Ahead

Despite the optimism, the new leadership faces significant challenges.

Financial constraints remain the biggest hurdle. The LFA relies heavily on FIFA and CAF funding, with local revenue from sponsorships and gate receipts still limited. Inflation and currency volatility have also increased the cost of running competitions.

Infrastructure gaps persist outside Monrovia. While several county stadiums have been renovated, many still lack basic facilities like changing rooms, floodlights, and proper drainage.

Player welfare and professionalism are ongoing concerns. Many Premier League clubs struggle to pay salaries regularly, and the absence of a functioning players' union has left grievances unresolved. Refereeing and match officiating continue to draw criticism. The LFA has invested in training, but consistency and accountability remain issues.

The Executive Committee has

pledged to address these through a four-year strategic plan to be launched in the third quarter of 2026.

A Mandate for Delivery

Raji's third term is constitutionally his last. That reality shapes the mandate: deliver measurable progress or face a contested succession in 2030.

The unopposed election gives him political space, but also removes the buffer of competition. Every decision, from budget allocation to national team appointments, will be scrutinized through the lens of legacy.

"The people have spoken through their delegates," Raji said. "Now we must speak through results. More youth players in the national team, more girls playing football, better pitches in the counties, and a league that fans are proud of. That is the standard."

Looking Forward

The 30th Ordinary Congress closed with a call for unity from outgoing and incoming members alike. The outgoing members who did not return—Sayer, Brown, Bayoh, and Yeanay—were thanked for their service.

The new Executive Committee is expected to hold its first meeting within two weeks to assign portfolios and approve a work plan for 2026–2027.

For Liberian football, the election ends a chapter marked by uncertainty. It opens another defined by expectation.

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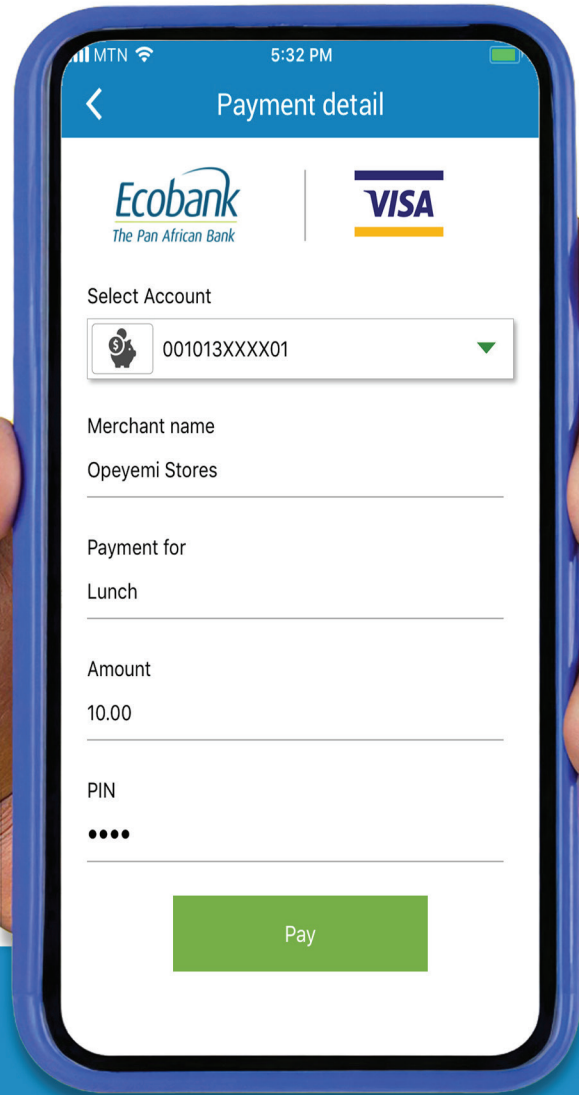
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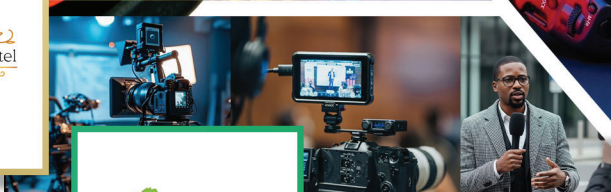


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