

## Economy expands in nonextractive areas

**Blamoh Nelson**  
AMBASSADOR OF LIBERIA



July 26 is the 173rd anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of Liberia, a country located on the west coast of Africa, between the Republics of Sierra Leone in the West, Guinea in the North, Cote

d'Ivoire in the East and the Atlantic Ocean in the South.

Liberia is the oldest democratic country in Africa. Of the 54 African countries, Liberia has the oldest diplomatic relations with Japan, which date back to 1961. The political system is a republic, modeled after that of the United States, with three equal branches of government. We have a legislature with two houses with the Senate as the Upper House having 30 members, two from each of 15 subpolitical divisions known as counties, and the Lower House of Representative comprising 73 members representing the same number of electoral districts. We also have the judiciary branch with a five-member Supreme Court and several subordinate courts presided over by circuit judges and magisterial court judges. Finally, we have the Executive Branch headed by the president to administer

state affairs and execute laws.

General and presidential elections are held every six years. The current president is the world soccer icon, George Weah, affectionately called Oppong in his playing days. He was elected president in 2017 and inducted into office in January 2018 for a six-year term. He is eligible to contest for a second term in 2023.

Liberia is a tropical country that contains a large portion of the Africa rainforest. It also has 350 miles-worth of Atlantic coastline and sits just a few degrees above the equator. There is evidence of offshore oil deposits for which exploration is currently ongoing. The country is also rich in minerals, including iron ore, diamonds, gold and many other precious minerals of commercial significance.

Until recently, Liberia's economy was dominated by extractive industries. Today however, the national development policy seeks to stimulate and expand the economy through agriculture production, with emphasis on food production on a commercial scale.

The population of Liberia is just over 5 million. In 2010, 43.5 percent of the population was below the age of 15; 53.7 percent was between the ages of 15 and 65; while 2.8 percent was 65 and above. The current population growth rate is 2.44 percent.

Liberia is open for business.

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



**President of Liberia George Weah shakes hands with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at The Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development on Aug. 30.**

THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN AND HIS CABINET

**Congratulations**  
to the People of  
the Republic of Liberia  
on the Anniversary of Their Independence

**DNC.**

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