

Liberian gold find displaces thousands

MONROVIA, LIBERIA: A mining company announced on Tuesday (23 July) it had discovered around a million ounces (30 tons) of gold beneath two towns in western Liberia and said that as a result thousands of residents would be relocated.



"The relocation is about moving people in Kinjor and Lajor to a new site because they are sitting on the pit," said Shirk Sonii, spokesman for the Aureus Mining Company which has the mining concessions in the area.

Aureus Mining, a Canadian company, is engaged in the exploration and development of gold deposits in under-explored areas of Liberia and Cameroon.

This is the first commercial gold mining operation in Liberia, and Aureus' Liberty Gold Mine is expected to produce 120,000 ounces of gold a year over an eight year period with production on track for production in the last quarter of 2013.

In monetary value, it is expected that the company will earn US\$120m from its annual sales.

According to Sonii thousands of residents must be relocated to land about five hundred miles away from the blasting zone.

Scheduled to be resettled in October this year, residents of Kinjor and Lajor have agreed to relocate given the promises made to them by Aureus.

"We are pleased to relocate because they are going to build better structures than those we are currently living in. They are building a school for our children," Kinjor town head Lasana Sambola told AFP by phone.

Since the end of a civil war a decade ago, Liberia has accrued over US\$18bn in direct capital investment mainly from its mineral, oil and agriculture sectors.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge