

## Nimba's Profile



The Flag of Nimba County: - (Valor, Purity and Fidelity reflected in the stripes)

Nimba was part of the central province of Liberia which included Bong and Lofa. It became a full-fledged county in 1964 when President William V.S. Tubman changed the provinces into counties.

Nimba became one of the original nine counties of Liberia. Over the years, other sub-divisions have been added making the total of 15 counties. Nimba is located in the North-East Region of the country. The size of Nimba is 4,650 square miles. In his book, *Liberia Facing Mount Nimba*, Dr. Nya Kwiawon Taryor, Sr. revealed that the name of the county "Nimba", originated from "Nenbaa ton" which means slippery mountain where beautiful young girls slip and fall. Mount Nimba is the highest mountain in Liberia.

Nimba is the second largest county in Liberia in terms of population. Before the civil war in 1989, there were over 313,050 people in the county according to the 1984 census. Now Nimba Population has increased to 462,026.

Nimba is also one of the richest in Liberia. It has the largest deposit of high grade iron ore. Other natural resources found in Nimba are gold, diamonds, timber, etc.

In the late 50's, Nimba's huge iron ore reserve was exploited by LAMCO-the Liberian-American Swedish Mining Company. A considerable portion of Liberia's Gross Domestic Product, GDP, was said to have been generated from revenues from Nimba's iron ore for several years.

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There are negotiations going on for a new contract for the iron ore in Nimba. The new company, Mittal Steel, is set to take over LAMCO, Yekepa. The terms of the contract are still being negotiated. Mittal Steel is investing over a billion dollars in the mines according to reports.

## **Major Cities:**

The major towns/cities of Nimba are: Bahn, Ganta, Karnplay, Mehnla, Saclepea, Sanniquellie, Tappeta, and Zekepa. Ganta, the second largest city in Liberia is also Nimba's commercial and most populous city. Sanniquellie is Nimba's capital city.

## **Leaders of the County: District Commissioners, (DC's)**

Before Nimba became a county, it was governed by District Commissioners. Here is the list of the commissioners that governed Nimba from 1914 to 1964. (Courtesy of Sanniquellie City- Billboard of History):

Hon. Samuel Smith	1914 - 1917
Hon. Boimah Sandimani	1917 - 1918
Hon. A.R. Draper	1918 - 1922
Hon. David Carter	1922 - 1928
Hon. Scott Montgomery	1928 - 1928
Hon. Samuel Gardner	1928 - 1930
Hon. Joseph Watson	1930 - 1931
Hon. J. Reeves	1931 - 1932
Hon. George Dunbar	1932 - 1940
Hon. E. C. Jones	1940 - 1941
Hon. J.K. Padmore	1941 - 1942
Hon. Oscar S. Norman	1942 - 1945
Hon. Stephen S. Togba	1945 - 1948
Hon. J. Marsh	1948 - 1949
Hon. J. S. Milton	1949 - 1950
Hon. Daniel T. Bropleh	1950 - 1951
Hon. Samuel T. Voker	1951 - 1952
Hon. Allen H. Williams	1952 - 1960
Hon. Charles H. Williams	1960 - 1964

## **Superintendents:**

Nimba's first Superintendent was the late Hon. Gabriel G. Farngalo. Gabriel was one of the first indigenous Liberians to obtain higher education. He was a product of John Hopkins and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## **Superintendents of Nimba: 1964 - present:**

Hon. Gabriel G. Farngalo	1964 - 1968
Hon. Samuel T. Voker	1968 - 1972
Hon. David G. Dwanyen	1972 - 1974
Hon. David M. Toweh	1974 - 1977
Hon. Fulton J. Dunbar	1977 - 1980
Hon. Robert G. Saye	1980 - 1981
Hon. Joseph N. Farngalo	1981 - 1983

Hon. Gondaa Walkie	1983 - 1986
Hon. Stephen Daniels	1986 - 1990
Hon. Jackson J. Paye	1990 - 1990
Hon. Henry B. Barhn	1991 - 1993
Hon. Princeton Monmia	1993 - 1994
Hon. Edward K. Mineh	1994 - 1998
Hon. James D. Zota, Sr.	1998 - 1999
Hon. S.Yarloh Saywon	1999 - 2001
Mme. Rachel M. Yeaney	2001 - 2003
Hon. Harrison Karnwea	2003 - 2006
Hon. Robert Karmen	2006 - 2009
Mme. Edith Gongloe-Weh	2009 – 2011
Mme. Christian D. Dagadu	2011-Present

### **Other interesting facts about Nimba County:**

There are five major ethnic groups in Nimba: Maan, Daan, Mandingo, Krahn, and Gbii. We also have Bassa and Kpelle along our border towns in the county.

How the Maans and Daans became "Gios and Manos" and "Garpa and Sein Gbein" became "Ganta and Sanniquellie"-

There were no words such as "GIO" or "MANO" until "Maan and Daan" were corrupted by tax collectors of the Kpelle ethnic group in Liberia. Normally, the Maans refer to the Daans as "Geh-mian" so our Kpelle brothers corrupted the word "Geh" to "Gio". They also added an "o" to the word "Maan" and called it "Mano", meaning the Maan people. Gio also means the people of Nimba who speak Daan or Geh-way.

Ganta and Sanniquellie are called Garpa and Sein Gbein respectively. Here again, our Kpelle brothers added "ta" and "quellie" to make Ganta and Sanniquellie. "Ta" means town and "Quellie" stands for "quarter". Sein Gbein started as a quarter named after "Sein". Garpa and Seingbein have since been called "Ganta and Sanniquellie" respectively. Ganta is also referred to sometimes as "Gumpa".

Nimba County is named after the tallest and largest mountain in the region Neimbaa Thon. Translated from Mano it means "a mountain on which sister slip" or "a slipping mountain for sisters." Nimba was granted county status in 1964 during William V.S. Tubman's tenure. Sanniquellie is the capital and hosted the first African state summit in 1959. This summit ultimately formed the Organization of African Unity in 1963.



Because of Nimba County's location between Guinea and Cote D'ivoire it is considered to be of great geopolitical importance. This did not help when a civil war broke out in the 1980's. Much of Nimba County's basic social infrastructure was destroyed leaving the population vulnerable. They did not have adequate food, security, health care, education or employment.