

Uganda's Gold Discovery Would Only Benefit Colonialists

News:

Uganda has announced the discovery of a gold deposit of 31 million tonnes, with extractable pure gold estimated to gross 320,000 tonnes. President Museveni confirmed it in his speech addressing the nation. The deposit is estimated to be worth more than \$12 trillion.

Comment:

As many other resources discovered and available in Uganda, it is expected beyond no reasonable doubt that the huge gold deposit discovered will only benefit the Western capitalists' companies in the name of foreign investments.

Apart from gold reserve Uganda has other massive natural resources, such as lakes and rivers cover nearly 20% of Uganda total area. It has a reserves include copper, tungsten, cobalt, columbite-tantalite, phosphate, iron ore, limestone and the notable quantities of petroleum were discovered in the Lake Albert at rift basin in 2008 and 2009.

Despite all of these natural resources, Uganda is among the poorest nations in the world. According to The World Bank's Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.90 a day (2011 PPP) (% of population) – Uganda, the proportion of people living in poverty according to the national poverty line increased by 1.7% between 2012 and 2016. With covid-19 pandemic the situation is even worse.

The majority of people are not benefiting from the natural resources available in the country even before the current discovery. It is however illogical even thinking that this new discovery would make any difference. The government has made clear on the role of capitalist firms on this discovery while announcing it. Solomon Muyita, a spokesperson for Uganda's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development announced that Uganda 'is seeking to attract international gold mining companies and investors, having already licensed Chinese gold mining firm...' (EnergyCapital&Power 06/07/2022). Therefore, the real beneficiaries on this public property are the colonialist western exploitative companies and few government ruling elite's families who are highly involved in bribery scandals.

According to Corruption Perceptions Index, Transparency International (2019) ranks Uganda is among the most corrupt countries in the world (137th out of 180) and 144th out of 180 in 2021, The Ibrahim Index of African Governance rates Uganda even worse. In 2016 President Museveni was accused in involving in bribery scandal with former Hong Kong Home Affairs minister Patrick Ho Chi-ping in which Ho offered \$500,000 bribe to Museveni, \$500,000 to Uganda Foreign Affairs minister Sam Kutesa in a bid to secure business dealings for the Chinese company CEFC China Energy Co.

Furthermore, this discovery might raise tension among colonial powers over Uganda, and consequently lead into the bloodshed of Ugandans, since wherever there is resources discovery, the colonialists brings conflicts, wars and instability so that they can freely exploit resources as it is the case of many African countries like Congo and Mozambique.

In the Uganda context, it is expected that the tension would be among Britain, China, and America. While America has started to disturb the Britain and European gold business in Uganda, gold exports in Uganda have reportedly been on the rise since the opening of the Africa Gold Refinery in Entebbe in 2014. America sanctioned in March 2022 Uganda's The Africa Gold Refinery over illicit gold from DRC.

Under the Islamic economic system implemented by the Islamic State (Khilafah Rashidah) it's the Ummah which will benefit from its abundant resources since all public resources like minerals are considered as public property that will never be privatized to benefit the few. Uganda and all developing nations would only be saved from capitalist exploitation and claws of colonialism by the rule of Islam, which is a mercy to the worlds.

The Prophet (saw) said: «المسلمون شركاء في ثلاث: في الماء، والكلاء، والنار» **“The Muslims are partners in three, water, pastures and fire.”** (Sunan Abu Dawud)

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Said Bitomwa

Member of the Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir in Tanzania