

## FACTS ABOUT GHANA

### The National Flag



The Ghana flag was designed to replace the flag of the United Kingdom upon attainment of independence in 1957. It was flown until 1959, and then reinstated in 1966. It consists of the Pan-African colours of red, yellow, and green, in horizontal stripes, with a black five-pointed star in the centre of the gold stripe. The Ghanaian flag was the first African flag after the flag of Ethiopia to feature these colours.

**Red** represents the blood of those who died in the country's struggle for independence

**Gold** represents the mineral wealth of the country

**Green** symbolizes the country's rich forests and natural wealth

**Black Star** Symbolizes African unity and emancipation

*Designer: Mrs. Theodosia Salome Okoh*

## **The National Anthem**

### **First Stanza**

God bless our homeland Ghana  
And make our nation great and strong,  
Bold to defend forever  
The cause of Freedom and of Right;  
Fill our hearts with true humility,  
Make us cherish fearless honesty,  
And help us to resist oppressors' rule  
With all our will and might for evermore

*Composer: Mr. Philip Comi Gbeho*

### **Second Stanza**

Hail to thy name, O Ghana,  
To thee we make our solemn vow:  
Steadfast to build together  
A nation strong in Unity;  
With our gifts of mind and strength of arm,  
Whether night or day, in the midst of storm,  
In every need, whate'er the call may be,  
To serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore.

## **The National Pledge**

I promise on my honor  
to be faithful and loyal to Ghana my motherland.  
I pledge myself to the service of Ghana  
with all my strength and with all my heart.  
I promise to hold in high esteem our heritage,  
won for us through the blood and toil of our fathers;  
and I pledge myself in all things  
to uphold and defend the good name of Ghana.  
So help me God.

## **Ghana's Political History From 1957**

1957 - independence, Nkrumah of CPP is PM

1960 - declared republic, one party system, presidential system

1966 - military overthrow of 1st republic

1969 - 2nd republic, Busia of PP is PM

1972 - military overthrow of 2nd republic

1978 - palace coup to restructure military government

1979 - junior officer uprising and military housecleaning

1979 - ushered third republic, Limann of PNP is President

1981 - overthrow of the constitutional PNP gov't by the PNDC military junta

1983 - Attempted overthrow of the PNDC junta by other junior army men

1992 - Rawlings of NDC is democratically elected as President

1996 - Rawlings of NDC is re-elected

2001 - Kuffour (NPP) is President

2005 - Kufuor begins second-term in office

2009 - John Evans Atta Mills (NDC) is President

2012 - John Dramani Mahama (NDC) is sworn in as President following death of President Mills

2013 - John Dramani Mahama (NDC) is sworn in as President after winning the 2012 general

Elections

2017 – Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo is sworn in as President after winning the 2016 general elections.

## **Ashanti Region**

Ashanti is an administrative region in Ghana centrally located in the middle belt of Ghana. It lies between longitudes 0.15W and 2.25W, and latitudes 5.50N and 7.46N. The region shares boundaries with four of the ten political regions, Brong-Ahafo in the north, Eastern region in the east, Central region in the south and Western region in the South west.

Most of the region's inhabitants are Ashanti people, one of Ghana's major ethnic groups. Most of Ghana's cocoa is grown in Ashanti, and it is also a major site of Ghana's gold-mining industry.

The Asante (Ashantis) constitute the largest of the various subgroups of the Akan, who trace their origins partly to Bono-Manso and Techiman, in present-day Brong Ahafo Region. They constitute 14.8 per cent of all Ghanaians by birth, and 30.1 per cent of the total Akan population of 8,562,748 in the country. Various oral traditions have it that the Ashantis migrated from various places through Bono-Manso/Takyiman (Techiman) to present day Ashanti Region.

As a united people, they started with a nucleus of the Oyoko clan around Asantemanso. After several years of subjugation by other empires, such as the Akwamu and the Denkyira, Asante eventually grew to be a very powerful empire founded by King Osei-Tutu I (1695-1717), after defeating the Denkyira King Ntim Gyakari during the battle of Feyiase (Buah, 1998).

Ironically, King Osei Tutu I had spent his childhood days in the court of the Denkyira King, according to custom, and had escaped from there to Akwamu where he met his lifelong friend and spiritual mentor, the legendary Okomfo Anokye. It is believed that it was through Okomfo Anokye's extraordinary supernatural powers that King Osei Tutu founded the Ashanti Empire; as he is said to have commanded the Golden Stool to fall from "the heavens", the stool which, to this day, serves as the symbol of the spirit, unity and strength of the Ashantis.

At the height of its glory, the influence and culture of the Asante Kingdom stretched beyond the borders of the present day Ghana. The Ashantis were able to preserve what was best in Akan culture, including the use of gold dust as currency and gold weights as a measure, which system was actually originated by the great Bono (Brong) King Akumfi Ameyaw I (1328-1363) (Buah, 1998).

The Asante fought many successful wars against the Denkyira and their allies including the Wassa, the British, the Fantes, and even the Bonos (Brongs). Indeed it was the Ashanti King Opoaku Ware I who defeated the Bonos in 1723 and destroyed Bono-Manso, forcing the Bono Empire to move its capital from Manso to present day Techiman. The Ashanti Empire eventually collapsed with the defeat and exile of King Prempeh I, first to El-Mina Castle and eventually to the Seychelles.

Not even the last stalwart stand by the great warrior Queen Yaa Asantewaa could revive the fame, fortune and power of Ashanti. However, the culture, kinship and social structure of Ashanti, like many of the other Akan groups, has been preserved and maintained to the present day, and

underlines the cultural heritage, not only of the Asante, but of the entire Akan ethnic group. The present Asanti King (Asantehene) Osei Tutu II, is a direct matrilineal descendant of Osei Tutu I.

## **Brong Ahafo**

The Brong Ahafo Region was created on 4th April 1959 (by the Brong Ahafo Region Act No. 18 of 1959). The Act defined the area of the Brong Ahafo Region to consist of the northern and the western part of the then Ashanti Region and included the Prang and Yeji areas that before the enactment of the Act formed part of the Northern Region. Before the Ashanti Empire was conquered by the British in 1900, the Brong and Ahafo states to the north and northwest of Kumasi (the capital of Ashanti empire and the present Ashanti Region) were within the empire. Nana Akumfi Ameyaw III traces his ancestry to King Akumfi Ameyaw I (1328-63), under whose reign the Brong Kingdom with its capital at Bono Manso grew to become the most powerful kingdom of its time. Indeed oral tradition has it that nearly all the different groups of the Akans, including the Asante, trace their origins to Bono after migrating from the “north”.

The first remembered King of the Bono Kingdom is King Asaman, who is credited with leading his Akan people from what may be present day Burkina Faso or even further north, to Bonoland (Buah, 1998). Later migrations led to the Asantes, Fantes, Denkyira and other Akans settling in their present locations. Nana Akumfi Ameyaw is credited with the creation of gold dust as a currency and gold weights as a measure, later developed and adopted by all the other Akan groups, particularly the Asante. Legend has it that he even supported his yam shoots with sticks made of pure gold. It was when King Opoku Ware of Asante defeated Bono in 1723 and destroyed Bono Manso that the capital moved to Techiman. (Takyiman). Techiman and other Bono states therefore came under the Asante Empire until 1948 when Akumfi Ameyaw III led the secession of Bono from Asante, supported by other Bono states such as Dormaa.

The most significant change the British administration in Ashanti brought to the people of the Brong and Ahafo states until 1935 was that it made them independent of Kumasi clan chiefs (Busia, 1951, pp. 165-166). The British administration worked out a strategy that severed the interference of the Kumasi clan chiefs with the internal affairs of the Brong and Ahafo states. When the Ashanti Confederacy was restored in 1935 by the British administration, however, most of the Brong and Ahafo states saw that their independence from Ashanti was being threatened, because by restoring the Ashanti Confederacy, they were to revert to their former overlords in Kumasi. Though the Brong states joined the Ashanti Confederacy, most of them were not happy with the re-union because they felt their long historical association with Ashanti had brought them nothing.

The opportune time came when in 1948 Nana Akumfi Ameyaw III, the Omanhene (paramount chief) of Techiman led Techiman to secede from the Ashanti confederacy (Austin, 1964, p. 294). The secession of Techiman was supported by some of the Brong states and this led to the formation of the dynamic Brong political movement, Brong Kyempem Federation. The movement was formed in April 1951 at Dormaa Ahenkro under the auspices of the Dormaa State. The main objective of the movement was to struggle for a separate traditional council and a separate region for the Brong Ahafo states.

The name of the movement was later changed to the Brong Kyempem Council. In March 1955, the Prime Minister informed the National Assembly that the government was considering “the possibility of setting up a Brong Kyempem Council” to fulfil the desire of the Brongs for the establishment of a development committee for their area and that the government would “examine the case for the establishment of two administrative regions for Ashanti”. In March 1959, the Brong Ahafo Bill was passed under a certificate of urgency by Parliament. The Brong Ahafo Region Act was enacted after receiving the Governor General’s assent. Sunyani was made the capital of the new region.

## **Central Region**

The Central Region is one of Ghana's ten administrative regions. It is bordered by the Ashanti and Eastern regions to the north, Western region to the west, Greater Accra region to the east, and to the south is the 168-kilometre length Atlantic Ocean (Gulf of Guinea) coastline.

The Central Region was historically part of the Western Region until 1970 when it was carved out just before the 1970 Population Census. It occupies an area of 9,826 square kilometres or 4.1 per cent of Ghana’s land area, making it the third smallest in area after Greater Accra and Upper East.

The region was the first area in the country to make contact with the Europeans. Its capital, Cape Coast, was also the capital of the Gold Coast until 1877, when the capital was moved to Accra. It was in the castle of Cape Coast that the historic Bond of 1844 was signed between the British and the Fante Confederation.

In all, there are about 32 major festivals in the region. Notable among these are the Aboakyer at Winneba, Fetu at Cape Coast and Bakatue at Elmina.

The region has two Universities - University of Cape Coast and the University of Education,

Winneba. The Cape Coast Municipality has excellent educational institutions like Mfantshipim School, St. Augustine's College, Wesley Girls High School, Adisadel College and Holy Child that have produced some of the prominent citizens in the country.

The region's population is 1,593,823. The corresponding 1984 population was 1,142,335. This means that the region's population is growing at a rate of 2.1 per cent per annum. The region is also the second most densely populated in the country, with a population density of 162 persons per square kilometre. Out-migration, which continues to be a problem in the region, is declining gradually with immigrants constituting about a quarter of the population in all the districts. Between 1984- 2000, the region recorded a net out-migration rate of 14.3 per cent compared to that of 15.4 per cent recorded in the period 1970-1984.

Roughly between 20 and 37 per cent of the population in the districts are migrants. Twifo-Hemang-Lower Denkyira has the highest proportion of migrants of (37%) and Ajumako- Enyan-Essiam has the least (20%). Inter-regional migrants are more than intra-regional migrants in three districts, while four other districts receive more intra-regional migrants. In almost all the districts, most of the immigrants come from the Western, Greater Accra, Ashanti, Volta and Eastern Regions. The region is typically rural in nature, though there has been an increase in the urban population from 28 per cent in 1960 to 37.5 per cent in 2000. The most urbanized districts, which are about two-thirds urban, are Cape Coast, Awutu-Efutu-Senya and Agona.

### **Eastern Region**

The Eastern Region, with an area of 19,323 square kilometres, occupying 8.1 per cent of the total land area of Ghana, is the sixth largest region of the country. A total of 2,106,696 population for the region, representing 11.1 per cent of Ghana's population. It is the third most populous region, after the Ashanti and Greater Accra. The population is made up of 49.2 per cent males and 50.8 per cent females. The region is divided into administrative districts. The total number of districts were increased from 17 districts to 21.

It lies between latitudes 6° and 7° North and between longitudes 1°30' West and 0°30' East. The region shares common boundaries with the Greater Accra, Central, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Volta Regions.

**The region has four main geographical features, namely:**  
(i) The Kwahu scarp with an elevation of 2,586 feet above sea level.  
(ii) The Atiwa-Atwaredu Ranges near Kibi, reaching an elevation of 2,400 feet.

(iii) The Akuapem highland attaining an elevation of 1,530 feet which is the southern extension of the Togo-Atakora mountain ranges and

(iv) The isolated hills/mountains dotting the relatively low-lying plains to the south, notably the Krobo and the Yogaga mountains.

The Kwahu Scarp and the Atiwa-Atwaredu form the major watershed of the region. It is from these that the major rivers Pra, Birim and the Densu take their sources. The Volta lake also covers part of the region. The Kwahu scarp also has the highest inhabited place in Ghana, at Abetifi, though this is not the highest mountain pick in the country. The Akosombo and Kpong dams are located in the region. These rivers and the Volta lake are water bodies with high potentials for irrigation, farming, inland fishing, water transport as well as sources for drinking water for both urban and rural settlements. The region is also characterized by long range forest highlands such as the Akim, Kwahu, Akwamu, Krobo and Shai Hills.

The region is rich in minerals such as gold, diamond, bauxite-tantalite, limestone, kaolin and clay. Gold and diamond are however the only minerals that are mined commercially. For over 70 years, the diamond mines at Akwatia and Takrowase in the Birim River Valley was producing high quality industrial diamonds, but this has declined considerably over the last two decades. Plans to mine the major bauxite deposits at Kibi on the Atiwa Range are yet to materialize due to financial constraints and ecological and environmental concerns. The Range is the habitat of many rare and exotic flora and fauna, and is the source of rivers that are crucial for the survival of other parts of the country, such as the Densu river which is the source of water for the Weija dam at Accra. Ecological and environmental factors are therefore of prime importance in determining the commercial exploitation of the bauxite and other minerals.

### **Greater Accra Region**

The Greater Accra Region is the smallest of the 10 administrative regions in terms of area, occupying a total land surface of 3,245 square kilometres or 1.4 per cent of the total land area of Ghana. In terms of population, however, it is the second most populated region, after the Ashanti Region, with a population of 4,010,054 in 2010, accounting for 15.4 per cent of Ghana's total population.

The political administration of the region is through the local government system. Under this administration system, the region is divided into five districts namely, Accra Metropolitan Area, Tema Municipal Area, Ga East District, Ga West District, Dangme West District and Dangme East District. Each District, Municipal or Metropolitan Area, is administered by a Chief Executive,



representing central government but deriving authority from an Assembly headed by a presiding member elected from among the members themselves.

The major ethnic groups are the Akan (39.8%), Ga-Dangme (29.7%) and Ewe (18%). The Gas however form the largest single sub-ethnic grouping, accounting for 18.9 percent. Christians constitute the largest religious group (83.0%), followed by Moslems (10.2%), people who profess no religion (4.6%) and adherents of traditional religion (1.4%).

With regard to marital status, 50.0 per cent of persons 15 years and older are in formal or informal cohabiting unions, while an additional 9.6 per cent have once been in a marriage. A slightly higher proportion of females than males are in marital unions; 51.5 per cent compared to 48.5 percent. In spite of the minimum legal age of 18 years prescribed for marriage, there is an indication that some persons aged 12-17 years do marry. The proportion of persons aged 12-17 years who are married or in consensual unions is 1.7 percent, compared to a national average of 6.4 percent.

In 1960, Greater Accra, then referred to as Accra Capital District, was geographically and legally part of the Eastern Region. It was, however, administered separately by the Minister responsible for local government. With effect from 23 July 1982, Greater Accra was created by the Greater Accra Region Law (PNDCL 26) as a legally separate region to include the Ada local council area.

The region is administered at two different but complementary levels, the traditional and political levels. The traditional level of administration is through an intricate network of local governance dealing with purely traditional affairs concerning customs and land administration, while the political is along the lines of law and order and decentralized government machinery.

The administration of the region is through the local government system that derives its authority from the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and the Local Government Act 1993 (Act 462). Under this administration, the region is divided into five areas/districts with their capitals.

Accra Metropolitan Area (AMA) Accra, Tema Municipal Area Tema, Ga East District, Ga West District, Dangme West District, Dodowa and Dangme East District, Ada-Foah. Each administrative area is under the control of a Chief Executive representing central government but deriving his/her authority from an Assembly, headed by a Presiding Member elected from among the members themselves.

Two-thirds of assembly members are elected through local elections, while the remaining one-

third is appointed by Government. The Assemblies have wide ranging social, economic and legislative jurisdiction over their respective local authority areas, but there is a Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) to coordinate and monitor the activities of these Assemblies. The Regional Coordinating Council, which is headed by the Regional Minister, has the following membership.

### **Volta Region**

Volta Region is one of Ghana's ten administrative regions. It is to the east of Lake Volta. Its capital is Ho. The Volta region of Ghana, lies to the east of the Volta Lake. The region covers an area of 20,570 square kilometres representing 8.6% of Ghana. Between latitudes 5° 45'N and 8°45'N. Between the Volta Lake by the west and east by the Republic of Togo and south by the Atlantic Ocean. 20,570 sq. kilometers i.e. 8.6% of the total area of Ghana. The Region spans all the vegetational zones of the country stretching from the Atlantic coast in the south to the north.

The region's population in 2000 was 1,635,421. This implies, an increase of 35.0 per cent over the 1984 count 1,211,907, giving an annual growth rate of 1.9 per cent. The intercensal growth rate shows little change from 2.0 per cent in 1970, 1.8 per cent in 1984 and 1.9 per cent in 2000. The population density of the region increased from 59 persons per square kilometre in 1984 to 79.5 persons in 2000.

### **Upper East Region**

The Upper East Region of Ghana is located in the northeastern corner of the country between longitude 00 and 10 West and latitudes 10° 30'N and 11°N and bordered by Burkina Faso to the north and Togo to the east the west by Sissala in Upper West and the south by West Mamprusi in Northern Region. The capital is Bolgatanga, sometimes shortened to Bolga. Other cities include Bawku and Navrongo. In area, the Upper East Region is 8842 square kilometers. In 2002, its population was 964,500.

The land is relatively flat with a few hills to the East and southeast. The total land area is about 8,842 sq km, which translates into 2.7 per cent of the total land area of the country.

Historically, the Upper East Region is part of what used to be the Upper Region (Upper East and Upper West), which was itself carved out of what used to be the Northern Region on 1st July, 1960.

From 1902 the old Northern Territory was a British protectorate until 1960 when it was separated

into the Northern and Upper Region. The Upper Region was later apportioned into Upper East and Upper West in 1983 during the PNDC rule.

The process actually started in 1980 when what eventually became Upper West was run on an experimental base as a semi-autonomous region with Wa as the administrative centre, even though the Upper Regional Minister at Bolgatanga exercised overall responsibility.

The major ethnic groups are the Bimoba, Bissa, Buli, Frafra, Kantosi, Kasem, and Kusasi.

### **Upper West Region**

The Upper West Region of Ghana covers a geographical area of approximately 18,478 square kilometres. This constitutes about 12.7 per cent of the total land area of Ghana. The region is bordered on the North by the Republic of Burkina Faso, on the East by Upper East Region, on the South by Northern Region and on the West by Cote d'Ivoire. The capital and largest city is Wa. Other towns include Nandom, Daffiema, Jirapa, Kaleo, Nadowli, Lawra and Tumu.

The major ethnic groups are the Dagaba, Sisaala and Wala. The Dagaba live in the western part of the region, the Sisaala live in the eastern areas, and the Wala live in Wa and a few of the nearby villages. The Sisaala and Dagaba are mostly Christian and animist, while most Wala are Muslim; Wa is the largest predominantly Islamic city in Ghana. Waali, the language of the Wala, and the Dagaare language are mutually intelligible.

The major economic activity of the region is agriculture. Crops grown include corn, millet, groundnuts, okro, shea butter, and rice. Sheep, goats, chickens, pigs and guinea fowl are raised for meat and eggs. Because the region is poor and the dry season is long, extending roughly from October to May, many people leave the area to work in the southern part of Ghana for at least part of the year.

A distinctive feature of the region's culture is the brewing of pito (pronounced PEE-toe) a sweet, mildly alcoholic beverage derived from millet. The pito is sold by the brewers in open air bars and drunk from calabashes.

### **Northern Region**

The Northern Region is the largest area of Ghana. As of 2009, it is divided into 20 districts. The region's capital is Tamale.

Climatically, religiously, linguistically, and culturally, the region differs greatly from the politically and economically dominating regions of central and southern Ghana. The Northern

Region, which occupies an area of about 70,383 square kilometres, is the largest region in Ghana in terms of land area. It shares boundaries with the Upper East and the Upper West Regions to the north, the Brong Ahafo and the Volta Regions to the south, and two neighbouring countries, the Republic of Togo to the east, and La Cote d' Ivoire to the west.

The land is mostly low lying except in the north-eastern corner with the Gambaga escarpment and along the western corridor. The region is drained by the Black and white Volta and their tributaries, Rivers Nasia, Daka, etc.

The Northern Region is the largest of the 10 regions of the country in terms of landmass, occupying 70,384 square kilometres and accounting for 29.5 per cent of the total land area of Ghana. It has almost the same land area as the Western, Greater Accra, Volta and Eastern Regions put together (28.1%) or the Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and Greater Accra Regions combined (28.2%). Yet, apart from the two Upper Regions, the Northern Region's population is almost the same as that of Brong Ahafo and slightly larger than that of the Volta and Central Regions, which are much smaller in land area. The region currently has a population of 1.820,806, representing 9.6 per cent of the total population of the country.

### **Western Region**

The Western Region covers an area of approximately 2,3921 square kilometres, which is about 10 per cent of Ghana's total land area. The region has about 75 per cent of its vegetation within the high forest zone of Ghana, and lies in the equatorial climatic zone that is characterized by moderate temperatures. It is also the wettest part of Ghana with an average rainfall of 1,600mm per annum. It is bordered on the east by the Central Region, to the west by the Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire), to the north by Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo Regions, and to the south by the Gulf of Guinea. The southernmost part of Ghana lies in the region, at Cape Three Points near Busua, in the Ahanta West District.

The region has about 75 per cent of its vegetation within the high forest zone of Ghana. The south-western areas of the region are noted for their rain forest, interspersed with patches of mangrove forest along the coast and coastal wetlands, while a large expanse of high tropical forest and semi-deciduous forest is also found in the northern part of the region. The Western Region has 24 forest reserves, which account for about 40 per cent of the forest reserves in the country.

Prominent among them are the Bia Reserve, Cape Three Points National Park, and the Ankasa/Nini Suhyien Forest and Game Reserve.

The Western Region lies in the equatorial climatic zone that is characterised by moderate temperatures, ranging from 22°C at nightfall to 34°C during the day. The Region is the wettest part of Ghana, with a double maxima rainfall pattern averaging 1,600 mm per annum. The two

rainfall peaks fall between May-July and September/October. In addition to the two major rainy seasons, the region also experiences intermittent minor rains all the year round. This high rainfall regime creates much moisture culminating in high relative humidity, ranging from 70 to 90 per cent in most parts of the region.

The Western Region was one vast province covering the present Western and Central Regions, and known as the Western Province, with its capital in Cape Coast, until the country achieved republican status in 1960. The Region, as presently constituted, became a separate administration in July 1960, with Sekondi as its capital, when the Central Region was carved out of the erstwhile province. Present day urbanised settings have made Sekondi and Takoradi one big metropolis.