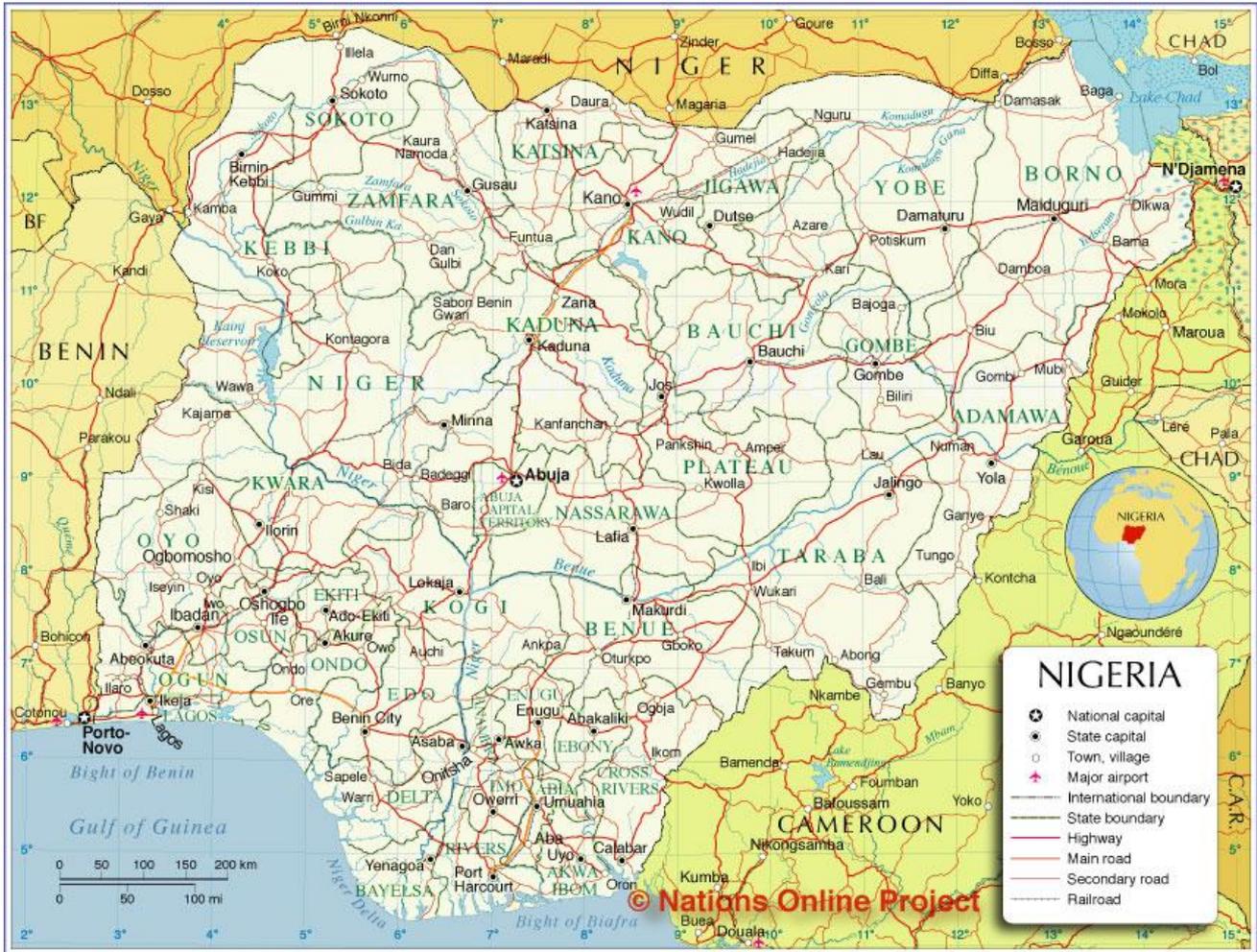


# Nigeria



## Basic facts about Nigeria

**Name:** Federal Republic of Nigeria

**Capital:** Abuja – Federal Capital Territory

**Total Population:** ~ 158 million

**Currency:** Naira

**Exchange rate:** To 1 USD ~ 155 Nigerian Naira (based on spot rate on August 23, 2011)

To 1 INR ~ 3.37 Nigerian Naira

**Time difference to India:** 4 Hrs 30 mins behind IST i.e (If 4:30 PM in India, 12:00 Mid-day in Lagos)

**Ethnic groups:** Over 250 ethnic groups including Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, Tiv 2.5%

**Religions:** Muslim 50%, Christian 40%, Indigenous beliefs 10%

**Name of Head of State/Head of Government:** H.E. Dr. Goodluck Jonathan

**Membership of major multilateral and regional organisations:** UNO, Commonwealth, NAM, OPEC, OIC, African Union, ECOWAS, G-77, WTO etc.

**Location and Geography:** Nigeria is in West Africa, along the eastern coast of the Gulf of Guinea, and just north of the equator. It is bordered on the west by Benin, on the north by Niger and Chad, and on the east by Cameroon. Nigeria covers an area of 356,669 square miles (923,768 square kilometres), or about quarter the size of India.

Nigeria has three main environmental regions: savanna, tropical forests, and coastal wetlands. These environmental regions greatly affect the cultures of the people who live there. The dry, open grasslands of the savanna make cereal farming and herding a way of life for the Hausa and the Fulani. The wet tropical forests to the south are good for farming fruits and vegetables—main income producers for the Yoruba, Igbo, and others in this area. The small ethnic groups living along the coast, such as the Ijaw and the Kalabari, are forced to keep their villages small due to lack of dry land. Living among creeks, lagoons, and salt marshes makes fishing and the salt trade part of everyday life in the area.

Politically, Nigeria is divided into thirty-six states. The nation's capital was moved from Lagos, the country's largest city, to Abuja on 12 December 1991. Abuja is in a federal territory that is not part of any state. While Abuja is the official capital, Lagos remains the financial, commercial, and diplomatic centre of the country.

**Climate of Nigeria:** Nigeria's climate is arid in the north, tropical in the centre and equatorial in the south. Maximum temperatures are 30 Deg C to 32 Deg C in the south and 33 Deg C to 35 Deg C in the North. High humidity is characteristic from February to November in the South and from June to September in the North. Rainfall ranges from 2000 mm in the coastal regions to 500 – 750 mm in the North.

During summers, major portion of the country comes under the influence of moisture-laden tropical maritime air. Temperatures are high throughout the year, averaging from pleasant 25° to 28°C. In the higher elevations of the Jos Plateau, temperature is at an average of 22°C.

**Demography:** Nigeria has the largest population of any African country. Estimated to be around 158 million, Nigeria has an average of 345 people per square mile. The Nigerian population is very young. Nearly 45 percent of its people are under the age of fourteen.

Major urban Centers include Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano and Port Harcourt.

**Linguistic Affiliations:** English is the official language of Nigeria, used in all government interactions and state-run schools. In a country with more than 250 individual tribal languages, English is the only language common to most people. Pidgin, a mix of African languages and English, also is common throughout Southern Nigeria. It basically uses English words mixed into Yoruban or Igbo (dominant indigenous languages of the South) grammar structures.

#### **Indians and Indian companies in Nigeria**

There are more than 35,000 Indian professionals working in Nigeria. The Indian community in Nigeria has thrived and flourished over the years. Since the restoration of democracy in Nigeria in 1998-99, its trade with India has increased substantially - climbing from USD 293.71 million in 1999-00 to USD 875 million in 2005-06. As of 2007, the value of non-oil bilateral trade was estimated between USD 6-7.9 billion. Exports to India accounted for USD 3.9 billion between April and September, 2006. India's exports to Nigeria were valued at USD \$875 million in 2005/06. Indian companies have invested heavily in Nigeria in manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, plastics, engineering, information technology and communications. Indian companies have invested in the Ajaokuta Iron and Steel Industry as well as Aladja Steel Complex in Delta. Nigeria has actively encouraged Indian companies to invest and expand Nigeria's mining and development of coal, gold, iron ore, chrome ore, lead and other mineral resources.

Nigeria has embraced the Asians from India, China, Lebanon, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and every other part of the world. Currently, Indian companies are the second largest employers of labor in Nigeria outside the Federal government. Security wise, there is no racial hatred in Nigeria against any people.

Also, places like Lagos which has got majority of Indians and people of Indian origins have various activities regularly for Indian communities. There is also an Indian Cultural Association which holds Indian festivals and meeting alike. Apart from Mosques and Churches the regular meet ups and festivals are organized in various Hindu temples present in the state. Usually the Most expat housing is in the areas of Ikoya and Victoria Island.

#### **Safety**

Nigeria is considered as a safe place. The travellers at all occasions reported that Nigerians are friendly and generous. Along with South Africa, Nigeria is considered a super-power in the African continent. It is the most populous nation in Africa, and is the Africa's largest oil producer and second largest economy. Nigeria is a culturally and religiously diverse country with 250 tribes, where tribe and ethnic affiliation is important. Be sure to be sensitive to these differences and respect the local customs.

Like any other country in the world, there are some Dos and Don'ts for this country which if not followed could lead to some uncomfortable moments:

- ▶ Do not use your left hand at all, as it is considered unclean. Do not eat with it, do not give or receive a present or objects with it. Using the right hand only or both hands.
- ▶ Do not rush a greeting without inquiring about the other person's general well-being, which is considered extremely rude.

- ▶ Do not step on anyone's toes.
- ▶ Do not show indifferent facial expression which indicates ignorant or obnoxious. Nigerians prefer facial expressions that imply empathy and believe an expression.
- ▶ Do not keep constant and direct eye contact, which can be seen as being intrusive.
- ▶ Do not ever criticise Nigeria or Nigerians, no matter how much a local may do so. Be polite and conservative in your actions, although in many cases, the politeness can easily be mistaken for weakness.
- ▶ Do not try to wear Nigerian clothes. They are beautiful, but Nigerians think they look stupid on other nationalities.
- ▶ Do not travel alone. Go around in a group, and do not let anyone touch or intimidate you. Voice anger if necessary.
- ▶ Do not discuss or make generalizations about religion in Nigeria. Nigeria is a religiously diverse country, maintain an open mind.
- ▶ Do not feel obligated to leave tips. Tipping is optional in Nigeria.
- ▶ Do not travel in unknown and unlit areas

Even with the above steps, we cannot totally brush aside safety problems. Places like Lagos and Abuja are safe if caution is exercised, but places of oil producing states which are nearly 500 kms away from Lagos, the Nigerian Delta region in particular is a bit unsafe where cases of attacks on oil industry facilities and expatriate oil workers have been reported. Foreigners are advised not to go to these areas without armed escorts for safety. Armed robbery is prevalent in certain areas; going for late night-outs is strictly not advised.

**Education and Schools:** Foreign nationals may initially be surprised at just how many international school options there are in Nigeria's major urban centres, namely the capital city of Abuja and the commercial capital of Lagos. Lagos has a CBSE school where more than 2,500 Indian students are studying.

### **Oil Industry and other Industrial progress**

Nigeria is the 10th largest oil producer in the world, the third largest in Africa prolific and the most oil producer in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Nigerian economy is largely dependent on its oil sector which supplies 95% of its foreign exchange earnings. The upstream oil industry is the single most important sector in the economy. According to the 2008 BP Statistical Energy Survey, Nigeria had proved oil reserves of 36.22 billion barrels at the end of 2007 or 2.92 % of the world's reserves. Most of this is produced from the prolific Niger River Delta. Nigeria's wealth of oil makes it most attractive to the major oil-multinationals, most of who are represented in Nigeria, with the major foreign stakeholder being Shell. Nigeria produced an average of 2355.8 thousand barrels of crude oil per day in 2007, 2.92% of the world total and a change of -4.8 % compared to 2006. Nigeria's downstream oil industry is also a key sector including four refineries with a nameplate capacity of 438,750 bbl/d. Nigeria is a member of OPEC and is its 12th largest producer. The former Secretary-General of OPEC, Dr Rilwanu Lukman, is a Nigerian national and Petroleum Advisor to the President. The petroleum industry in Nigeria is regulated by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources. The government retains close control over the industry and the activities of the NNPC, whose senior executives are appointed by the ruling government.

Apart from Oil industry, other industries such as textile are also quite rampant in Nigeria. Recently, Nigeria's Commerce and Industry minister Jubril Martins-kuye said, "Nigeria is committed to ensuring that the textile industries work again."

Indian High commissioner to Nigeria, Mahesh Sachdev said, "India is Nigeria's second largest trading partner with the total volume of trade nearing \$10.3 billion". He added "the federal government is the main employer in the country and this is followed by the Indian community and Indian based companies which together contribute employment of Nigerian people.

### **Economy**

Nigeria's economy is in the process of leveraging the country's vast wealth of fossil fuels in order to displace the poverty. Nigeria's export of oil and natural gas has enabled the country to post merchandise trade and current account surpluses in recent years. Reportedly, 80% of Nigeria's energy revenue flows to the government, 16 % covers operational costs and remaining 4% go to the investors.

So, after taking office in May 2007, President Umaru Musa Yar'adua embraced a policy to transform Nigeria into one of the world's top 20 economies by 2020.

### **Few important Nigeria attractions and Cities**

**Bauchi:** Located in north-eastern Nigeria, Bauchi is a small city with beautiful landscape as well as the capital of Bauchi State. Bauchi lies on the railroad from Maiduguri to Kafanchan – where it joins the line to Port Harcourt and has road connections to Jos, Kano, and Maiduguri and others

**Port Harcourt:** With its long expanses of beautiful coastal sandy beaches stretching from Opobo through Brass to Koluama, numerous long and winding creeks, streams, and rivers as well as forests with their associated shrines and wildlife, the city is a major industrial center as it has a large number of multinational firms as well as other industrial concerns, particularly business related to the petroleum industry. It is the chief oil-refining city in Nigeria, oil being one of Nigeria's most important commodities and the main foreign exchange earner. Rivers State, Port Harcourt inclusively, is very rich in tourist attractions.

**Lagos:** Lagos is the most populous city in Nigeria with the metropolitan area estimated 300 square km. The city is a group of islands endowed with creeks and a lagoon. Lagos is projected to be one of the world's five largest cities by 2010. It's administrative and economic center, and chief port with industries that include railroad repair, motor vehicle assembly, food processing, and the manufacture of metal products, textiles, beverages, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, soap, and furniture.

Lagos is also a place with varied cultural tolerances. Apart from the general religious practices of Muslim and Christian prayer houses, Lagos also holds Hindu temples and prayer houses. They also house spiritual places like Brahma Kumaris organisations etc.

**Abuja:** Established as the new federal capital territory in 1976, Abuja covers an area of 3,000-sq mi (7,770-sq km) of undulating grasslands in a scenic valley.

Construction of the well-planned and methodically laid out city of Abuja got under way and continued throughout the 1980s. The master plan envisages the development of the city in four stages, of which the first has been completed. The main reasons for the choice of the site were its central location in the Nigerian, its small population and hospitable climatic conditions all year round. It forms the heart of the federal capital territory and it was officially declared Nigeria's capital in 1991.

The original idea to build a new capital city was conceived in 1975 and, after 17 years, the seat of government was formally moved to Abuja from Lagos in 1992. Since then, Abuja has been growing from strength to strength in terms of people and in the area of development, and it is now one of the fastest growing cities in Africa.

### **Additional Information**

**Information for yellow fever vaccination certificate:** Yellow fever vaccination certificate is mandatory for all persons(including infants) who would be or have been travelling to the following countries:

Africa: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire), Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast (Cote D'Ivoire), Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan (South of 15 ° N), Togo, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia.

Yellow fever vaccination certificate is issued for 10 yrs and the certificate becomes valid after 10 days of vaccination.

Please find below the link for inoculation centres in designated by government of India

<http://yellowfevervaccine.blogspot.com/2010/07/yellow-fever-vaccination-centers-in.html>

### **NRE Account Opening formalities:**

High Commission of India based in Nigeria helps in attestation of Account opening form as required by the bank. The requirements for the attestation procedure are

- Photocopy of inside cover pages and other relevant pages of the passport.
- Original and one photocopy of the Account Opening Form as prescribed by the concerned Bank/Institution to be signed before the Consular Officer of The High Commission.

To download various application and registration forms for Nigeria and for further procedural information, please visit the following website link

<http://www.indianhcabuja.com/Consular-Services.htm>