

Dates and events

c. 10,000 BC First archaeological evidence of human activity in Ghana.

c. 1298 AD Akan kingdom of Brong founded, other states arise.

1383 Arrival of first Europeans from France.

1472 Elmina castle constructed by Portuguese.

16th to 17th centuries Time of slave raids, wars, and important period of indigenous state formation.

1874 Gold Coast Colony established by Britain.

1878 Tetteh Quarshie introduces cocoa to Ghana.

1896 British-Ashanti war ends in exile of Ashanti king and establishment of Ashanti as a British Protectorate.

1900 First Africans appointed to the Gold Coast's Legislative Council.

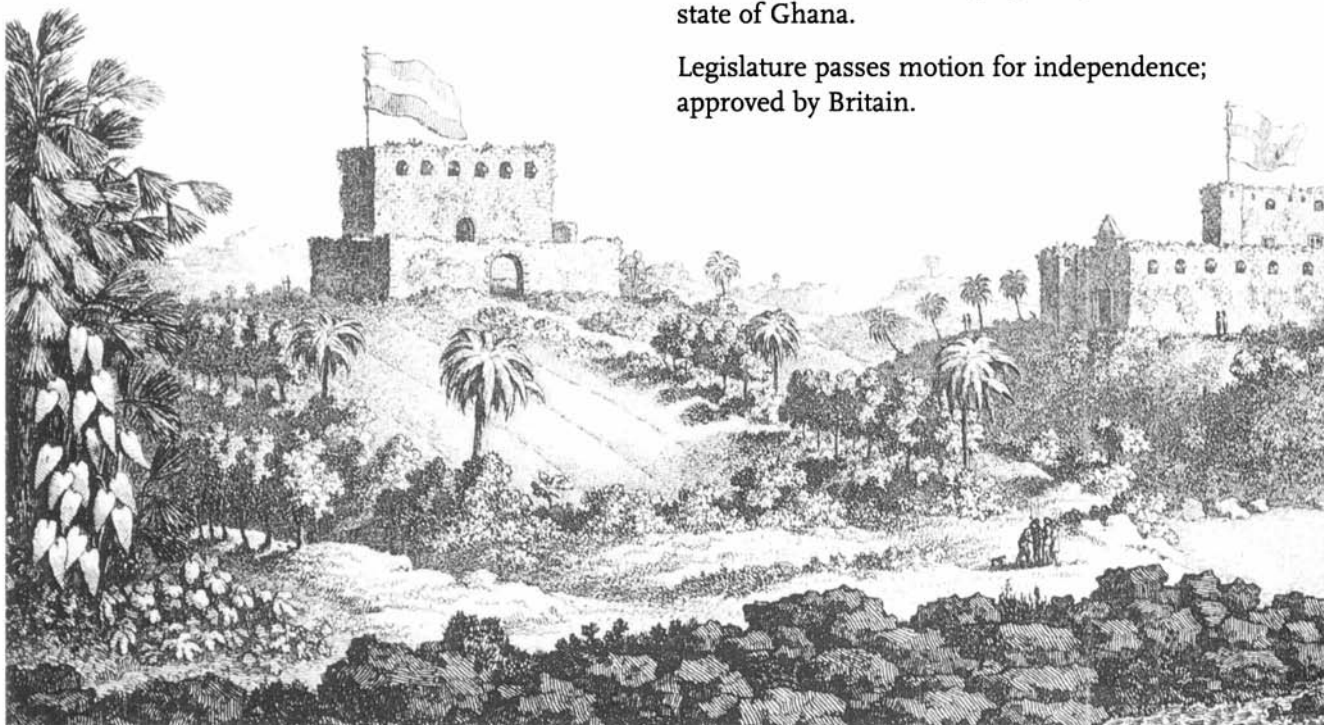
1902 The British protectorate of the Northern Territories proclaimed.

1919 German Togoland becomes a League of Nations mandate and the western section, British Mandated Togoland, is administered under the Gold Coast.

1951 New constitution permits general elections; Nkrumah's Convention People's Party wins.

1956 British Mandated Togoland votes to become part of the emerging independent state of Ghana.

Legislature passes motion for independence; approved by Britain.



6 March 1957 Independence.

1 July 1960 Plebiscite creates a Republic:
Nkrumah becomes President.

1966 Coup d'état brings National Liberation
Council to power.

1969 Busia and his Progress Party win general
election.

1972 Acheampong instigates coup, bringing
the National Redemption Council to power.

1979 and 1981 Rawlings stages coups,
Limann governs with a civilian adminis-
tration in the interim.

1983 Severe drought and economic crisis.

Beginning of structural adjustment, the
stabilisation phase of the Economic Recovery
Programme (ERP).

1985 National Commission for Democracy
convened to plan for democratisation.

1986 Second phase of ERP begins.



< European forts in
Sekondi-Takoradi, from a
eighteenth-century etching.



△ Independence Arch in Accra.

1988-9 New District Assembly elections.

1992 New democratic constitution. In May,
political parties legalised. Rawlings wins
presidential elections in November, and his
party, the National Democratic Congress
(NDC), succeeds in December parliamentary
elections boycotted by the opposition.

1994-5 Northern conflict.

1996 General elections contested by all parties.
Rawlings remains as President. NDC wins
parliamentary election, but with a reduced
majority.

1998 New Unit Committee elections.

1999 University of Ghana closed in the wake
of violent student demonstrations against
proposed fees increase.

2000 General elections won by the New
Patriotic Party.

Facts and figures

Area

238,537 sq km – roughly the size of the UK

Forest and woodland

37 per cent; annual estimated deforestation:
1.3 per cent

Population

18.3 million (1998 EIU estimate)

Average annual growth rate: 2.7 per cent
(1990–97)

37 per cent of Ghanaians live in urban areas

Languages

Approximately 60, including Akan, Dagbani, Dangme, English (official), Ewe, Ga, Gonja, Hausa, Konkomba, Nzema

Currency

Cedis (C1=100 pesewas)
C3,400=US \$1 (1999)

Education

School enrolment: 44 per cent (1995); 38 per cent of girls and 49 per cent of boys

Adult literacy: 65 per cent (1995); 53 per cent of women and 66 per cent of men

Life expectancy

57 for men, 61 for women (1996)

Infant mortality rate

74 per 1,000 live births (1997) – UK: 6 per 1,000 in 1997

Access to safe water

56 per cent (1995)

Access to health-care services

60 per cent (1995)

Gross National Product

US\$6.6 billion (1997); US\$370 per capita
Average annual growth (1988–98):
4.3 per cent

Shares of Gross Domestic Product

Agriculture: 38 per cent
Services: 37 per cent
Industry: 27 per cent
Manufacturing 9 per cent (World Bank figures 1998)

Inflation

74 per cent (1995); 19 per cent (1998).

Principal exports

Gold, cocoa, timber

Export earnings

US\$ 2,004 million (1998)

Import spending

US\$ 2,732 million (1998)

Communications

Telephone lines per 1,000: 4 (1996)
Television sets per 1,000: 16 (1995)
Radio sets per 1,000: 700 (1997 estimate)

Women

11 per cent of government ministers; 9 per cent of administrators and managers; 92 per cent adult economic participation (1995)

Labour force

61 per cent in agriculture; 29 per cent in services; 10 per cent in industry (1995)

Foreign debt

US\$6,900 million (1998)

Aid

Total official aid: \$654 million (1995)

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Noaa bu puuhiri toori

(Mamprusi proverb. 'The chicken does not thank the mortar' – because it will always return to the mortar, where grain is pounded, to search for more).

Meda ase paa!

Rachel

The editor would like to thank Jonathan Ofori for his help in obtaining the photograph of the Big Six on p18.



Oxfam in Ghana

Oxfam GB has been working in Ghana since the early 1970s. There are currently 16 staff working for the Ghana programme, all Ghanaian nationals. Oxfam's work is limited to northern Ghana, the area of greatest need, and this is where the country office is located. Oxfam works in the sectors of health care, water, and income generation for women in isolated, rural areas where poverty is most severe. One of these areas, 'Overseas', is cut off by flooding during the rainy season. Other areas are characterised by chronic food insecurity.

Oxfam is also involved in providing vocational training in Tamale, in region-wide peace-building, and in research, networking, capacity-building, and advocacy on poverty issues at the regional and national levels.

Most of Oxfam's work is with local partner organisations which implement the projects. In the case of the 'Overseas' project, Oxfam runs the scheme directly.

Fair trade

Oxfam Fair Trade works with a large number of local producers all over Ghana through a partner organisation, Aid to Artisans Ghana. Oxfam Fair Trade buys and markets the goods in the UK, ranging from pots and baskets to brass ware and drums. Through selling Fair Trade chocolate in its shops and offering capacity-building advice, Oxfam supports the cocoa farmers' co-operative Kuapa Kokoo.



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