



Awka, City-

Anambra State, Nigeria

About Nigeria

Nigeria is a West African country with the largest population and the biggest economy in Africa. They are about 220 Million Nigerians

It has a federal republic system with 36 states and a capital territory^{1,3}.

It has a diverse geography, climate, and culture, with hundreds of languages and ethnic groups.

It is rich in natural resources, especially oil and gas. It is the largest oil producer in Africa . It is also known for its film, fashion, and creative industries.

What are some fun facts about Nigeria?

General Facts about Nigeria

- Total Area : 923,768 km² (356,669 sq mi)
- Capital: Abuja

- Total Population : 220,000,000
- Continent: Africa
- Demonym: Nigerian
- Official Language : English
- Currency : Naira (₦) (NGN)
- Government: Federal presidential republic
- President : Muhammadu Buhari
- Highest Point: Chappal Waddi

Awka, City-Anambra State, is in EASTERN

Nigeria Awka (Igbo: Ọka) is the capital city of Anambra State, Nigeria. The city was declared capital on 21 August 1991, after the creation of Anambra and Enugu state, which moved the capital from Enugu to Awka (an administrative center since pre-colonial times). The city has an estimated population of 301,657 as of the 2006 Nigerian census, and over 2.5 million as of a 2018 estimate. The city is located at 199.1 kilometres (123.7 mi), by road, directly north of Port Harcourt in the centre of the densely-populated Igbo heartland in South-East Nigeria.

The West-East Federal highway links Lagos, Benin City, Asaba, Onitsha, and Enugu to Awka and several local roads link it to other important towns such as Oko, Ekwulobia, Agulu, Enugwu-Ukwu, Abagana and Nnewi.

Strategically, Awka is located midway between two major cities in Northern Igboland, Onitsha and Enugu, which has played a significant role in its choice as an administrative center for the colonial authorities and today as a base for the Anambra State government.

History

"Awka has a certain kind of aura about it, because it was the place of the blacksmiths that created implements which made agriculture possible." -- Chinua Achebe

Awka is one of the oldest settlements in Igboland, established at the centre of the Nri civilisation, which produced the earliest documented bronze works in Sub-Saharan Africa, around 800 A.D., and was the cradle of Igbo civilisation at large.

The earliest settlers of Awka were the Ifiteana people, the name Ifiteana roughly translating into 'people who sprouted from the earth.' The people, themselves, were renowned as farmers, hunters and adept iron workers, all of whom indigenously inhabited the banks of the Ogwugwu stream, in what is now known as the Nkwelle ward of the city.

The deity of the Ifiteana was known as Ọkịka-na-ube, or the god renowned for the spear, and the Ifiteana were known as Ụmụ-Ọkanube, or "worshippers of Ọkanube," eventually shortened to both Ụmụ-Ọka and simply

Ọka (Awka when written in its anglicised form).

In ancient times, Awka was populated by elephants, insofar that a section of the town was named Ama-enyi, with a corresponding pond, Iyi-Enyi, used for elephants to gather to drink. The elephants were hunted for their prized ivory



tusks (okike), which were kept as a symbol to the god Ọkanube in every Awka home, with hunting medicine stored in the hollow of the tusk.

Over time, the town became known for metal working and its blacksmiths were prized throughout the region for making farming implements, dane guns and such ceremonial items as Oji (staff of mystical power) and Ngwuagilija (staff of Ozo men).

During pre.-colonial

times, Ọka became famous as the Agbala oracle, specifically a deity that was said to be a daughter of the great long juju shrine of Arochukwu. The oracle, which Chinua Achebe used as inspiration in his book *Things Fall Apart*), was consulted to whenever disputes (far and wide) occurred, until it was eventually destroyed by colonial authorities, in the early part of the twentieth century.

Before the inception of British rule, Ọka was governed by titled men known formally as Ozo and Ndichie, who were

accomplished individuals in the community. They held general meetings, known as Izu-Ọka, at either the residence of the oldest man (Otochal Ọka) or a place specially designated by the titled men. He was the Nne Uzu, or 'master blacksmith,' irrespective of whether or not he actually knew the trade, as the only master known to Ọka was the master craftsman, the Nne Uzu.

In modern times, Awka has adopted the republican system and is currently administered by the Awka South Local Government Area. However, it still preserves its traditional

systems of governance with the respected Ozo-titled men often consulted for village and community issues and a paramount cultural representative, the Eze Uzu, who is elected by all Ozo-titled men by rotation among different villages to represent the city at state functions.

Awka should not be confused with Awka-Etiti which is a town in Idemili South local government area that is often mistaken for the main capital.

