

KENYA

CAPITAL: NAIROBI—POPULATION: 8,600,000

Kenya, situated on the east coast of Africa, is bounded on the east by the Indian Ocean and Somalia, on the north by Ethiopia and Sudan, on the west by Uganda, and on the south by Tanganyika.

The northern three-fifths of the country is arid and almost waterless. The southern two-fifths, where 85 percent of the population and nearly all economic production is centered, comprises a low-lying coastal area and a plateau varying in altitude from 3,000 to 10,000 feet. This area includes Mount Kenya (17,040 feet), Mount Elgon (14,000 feet), the Aberdare Range (12,000 to 13,000 feet), and part of the Great Rift Valley, which is some 30 to 40 miles wide and often 2,000 to 3,000 feet lower than the surrounding country.

The country generally has two rainy seasons, the "long rains" from April to June and the "short rains" from October to December; but in the high areas west of the Rift Valley and north of the railway the wettest months are April to August. With the exception of the coast and the immediate interior, where the average temperature is about 80° F., the climate of Kenya is cool and invigorating. At Nairobi the mean temperature is 67° F., the mean maximum being 77° F. and the mean minimum 57° F.

Kenya has a total area of 224,960 square miles (slightly less than the area of Texas). Prior to independence the territory was called Kenya Colony and Protectorate. The protectorate was a strip of land of about 2,000 square miles that extended 10 miles inland from the coast and included the port of Mombasa and the islands of the Lamu Archipelago. Leased from the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1895 for an annual rent of £10,000, the strip was ceded by the Sultan to Kenya upon the latter's independence on December 12, 1963.

THE PEOPLE

Kenya has a population estimated in 1962 to be 8,600,000, of which only about 250,000 are non-Africans (Asians, Europeans, and Arabs). Approximately 160,000 Asians are engaged mainly in marketing, distribution, and transport; most of the 50,000 Europeans in large-scale farming, business, and public services. The overwhelming majority of the Africans practice subsistence farming on tribal lands. The main tribes are Kikuyu (20 percent of the total), Luo (14 percent), Baluhya (12 percent), Kamba (12 percent), and Meru (7 percent). There are about 150,000 persons of Somali stock, most of them in the northeastern region near the Somali border. The majority of this group in the past has indicated a desire to secede and join Somalia, but the Kenya Government has made clear this solution is not acceptable.

Accurate figures on religious affiliations are difficult to come by. One estimate based on a population lower than the present one numbers 3,773,000 pagans, 766,000 Catholics, 580,000 Moslems, and 370,000 Protestants.

GOVERNMENT

Kenya attained full internal self-government following the elections of May 1963, which were won by the Kenya African National Union. The head of the party, Jomo Kenyatta, became Prime Minister. Since independence, executive authority has been vested in the Council of Ministers headed by Prime Minister Kenyatta. Legislative power is in the hands of a two-chamber Parliament made up of a House of Representatives and a Senate.

Kenya, together with Tanganyika and Uganda, is represented in the East African Common Services Organization (EACSO), a body established in 1948 under another name to "give a constitutional and juridical framework for the administration of governmental departments and services which were by their nature interterritorial." The EACSO administers such services as ports, railroads, mail, telephone and telegraph, customs, excise and income tax collection, and certain research activities. Kenya also shares a common currency with Tanganyika and Uganda.