SOKOTO STATE

Sokoto, usually referred to as Sokoto State to distinguish it from the city of Sokoto, is located in the extreme northwest of Nigeria, near to the confluence of the Sokoto River and the Rima River. As of 2005, it has an estimated population of more than 4.2 million. Sokoto City is the modern-day capital of Sokoto State. Its predecessor, is Northwestern State. Its predecessor, is Northwestern state. Nickname: Seat of the Caliphate.

The name Sokoto (which is the modern/anglicised version of the local name, Sakkwato) is of Arabic origin, representation suk, "market." It is also known as Sakkwato Birnin Shaihu da Bello or "Sokoto, Capital of Shaihu and Bello.

Being of the seat of the former Sokoto Caliphate, the city is predominantly Muslim, and an important seat of Islamic learning in Nigeria. The Sultan who heads the caliphate is effectively the spiritual leader of Nigerian Muslims.

In 1967, not long after Nigerian's independence from the British, the region became known as the Northwestern State. This territory was in 1976, split into Sokoto State and Niger State. Later on, Kebbi State (in 1991) and Zamfara (in 1996) split off from Sokoto State.

Sokoto State is mainly populated by Hausa people. Most Sokoto State residents are Sunni Muslims, with a Shia minority; violence between the two groups is uncommon. Over 80% of people living in the state practice agriculture.

Sokoto State consists of twenty-three (23) Local Government Areas. They are Binji, Bodinga, Dange Shuni, Gada, Goronyo, Gudu, Gwabadawa, Illela, Isa, Kebbe, Kware, Rabah, Sabon Birni, Shagari, Silame, Sokoto North, Sokoto South, Tambuwal, Tangaza, Tureta, Wamako, Wurno, and Yabo.