

Ethiopia History

Ethiopia is a landlocked country in the Horn of Africa. It shares borders with Eritrea to the north, Djibouti to the northeast, Somalia, Kenya to the south, South Sudan to the west and Sudan to the northwest. With over 109 million inhabitants, Ethiopia is the most populous landlocked country in the world and the second-most populous nation on the African continent. Its capital and largest city is Addis Ababa, which lies a few miles west of the East African Rift that splits the country into the Nubian and Somali tectonic plates.

Some of the oldest skeletal evidence for anatomically modern humans has been found in Ethiopia. It is widely considered as the region from which modern humans first set out for the Middle East and places beyond. According to linguists, the first Afroasiatic-speaking populations settled in the Horn region during the ensuing Neolithic era. Tracing its roots to the 2nd millennium BCE, Ethiopia's governmental system was a monarchy for most of its history. Oral literature tells that the monarchy was founded by the Solomonic dynasty of the Queen of Sheba, under its first king, Menelik I. In the first centuries, the Kingdom of Aksum maintained a unified civilization in the region, followed by the Ethiopian Empire circa 1137.

During the late 19th-century Scramble for Africa, Ethiopia and Liberia were two nations that preserved their sovereignty from long-term colonization by a European colonial power and many newly independent nations on the continent subsequently adopted its flag colors. However, the country was later occupied by Italy in 1936 and became Italian Ethiopia until it was liberated during World War II.

In 1974, the Ethiopian monarchy under Haile Selassie was overthrown by the Derg, a communist military government backed by the Soviet Union. In 1987, the Derg established the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, but it was overthrown in 1991 by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, which has been the ruling political coalition since.



Ethiopia and Eritrea use the ancient Ge'ez script, which is one of the oldest alphabets still in use in the world. They follow the Ethiopian calendar, which is approximately seven years and three months behind the Gregorian calendar. A majority of the population adheres to Christianity but about a third follows Islam.

Ethiopia is a multilingual nation with around 80 ethnolinguistic groups, the four largest of which are the Oromo, Amhara, Somali and Tigrayans. Oromo is the most populous language by native speakers, while Amharic is the most populous by number of total speakers and serves as the working language in the federal government.

The nation is a land of natural contrasts, with its vast fertile west, its forests, and numerous rivers, and the world's hottest settlement of Dallol in its north. The Ethiopian Highlands are the largest continuous mountain ranges in Africa, and the Sof Omar Caves contains the largest cave on the continent.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Ethiopia experienced civil conflicts and communist purges, which hindered its economy. The country has since recovered and now has the largest economy in East Africa, having the largest population in the region. Despite these improvements, it remains one of the world's poorest countries.



In addition to poverty, Ethiopia faces hunger, corruption, weak infrastructure, and poor access to health and education.

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