ABIA STATE

Abia is a state in the south-eastern part of Nigeria. The capital in Umuahia and its major commercial city is Aba. The commercial hub, Aba was formerly a British colonial government outpost in the region. Abia State was created in 1991 from part of Imo State. It is one of the constituent states of the Niger Delta region. Nickname: God's Own State.

Abia State which occupies about 6,320 square kilometres, is bounded on the north and northeast by the states of Anambra, Enugu, and Ebonyi. To the west of Abia is Imo State, to the east and southeast are Cross-River State and Akwa-Ibom State and to the south is Rivers State.

The southern part of the state lies within the riverine part of Nigeria. It is low-lying tropical rainforest with some oil-palm brush. The southern portion gets heavy rainfall of about 2,400mm (94in) per year especially intense between the months of April through October. The important rivers in Abia State are Rivers Imo and Aba which flows into the Atlantic Ocean through Akwa-Ibom State.

Crude oil and gas production is a prominent activity, as it contributes over 39% of the state's GDP. However, the indigenous oil companies through the Marginal Fields Programme (MFP) have not found it easy to attract the requisite funding and infrastructural capacity to explore some of the marginal oil fields, about 50 in the state.

The manufacturing sector only accounts for 2% of the GDP. The industrial centre of the state is in Aba, with textile manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, soap, plastics, cement, footwear, and cosmetics. In addition to the above, Aba state recently built a 9000 capacity multipurpose international conference centre in Umuahia.

Representing 27% of the GDP, agriculture, which employs 70% of the state's workforce, is the second economic sector of Abia. Abia has much arable land that produce yam, maize, potatoes, rice, cashews, plantains, taro, cassava, etc. Oil palm is the most important cash crop.

There are four universities in the state: the federal owned Michael Okpara University of Agriculture at Umudike, the state-owned Abia State

University in Uturu, and the private universities: Gregory and Rhema. There are two tertiary hospitals: the Federal Medical Centre in Umuahia and the Abia State University Teaching Hospital in Aba. The Abia State Polytechnic is also in the city of Aba.

Abia State consists of seventeen (17) local government areas. They are: Aba North, Aba South, Arochukwu, Bende, Ikwano, Isiala Ngwa North, Isiala Ngwa South, Isuikwato, Obi Ngwa, Ohafia, Osisioma Ngwa, Ugwunagbo, Ukwa East, Ukwa West, Umuahia North, Umuahia South, And Umu Nneochi.