

Q&A;; The Banyankole (Nkole) People of Uganda

Q1: Who are the Banyankole?

The Banyankole, also known as the Nkole people, are a Bantu ethnic group native to the Ankole region of southwestern Uganda.

Q2: Where do the Banyankole live?

They live in the districts of Mbarara, Bushenyi, Kiruhura, Ibanda, Isingiro, and Ntungamo.

Q3: What is their historical background?

They migrated to the Great Lakes region between the 10th and 15th centuries and established the Ankole Kingdom under the Omugabe.

Q4: What language do they speak?

Runyankore, a Bantu language widely spoken in southwestern Uganda.

Q5: What are their main social groups?

The Bahima (pastoralists) and the Bairu (agriculturalists).

Q6: What role do cattle play in their culture?

Ankole long-horned cattle symbolize wealth, prestige, and tradition.

Q7: How do they traditionally marry?

Marriage involved family negotiations, cattle bride price, and ceremonial events.

Q8: What traditional attire do they wear?

Men wear the kanzu; women wear the suuka.

Q9: What foods are common?

Eshabwe, akaro, matoke, milk, beans, and millet.

Q10: What is their religion?

Mostly Christian—Anglican, Catholic, and Pentecostal—with a minority Muslim population.

Q11: What cultural ceremonies do they celebrate?

Empaako naming, traditional weddings, and cattle initiation rituals.

Q12: What tourism sites showcase their heritage?

Ankole cattle farms, Igongo Cultural Center, and Lake Mburo National Park.