

GENERAL INFORMATION ON MALI

Mali is a country in West Africa with borders to Mauritania and Algeria in North, Niger in East, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast in South and Guinea in South East and Senegal in West. The highest point is Mobori Tondo (1155 meters) located in the central part of the country. Former French Colony, Mali (Sudanese Republic by then) became independent in 1960. Its capital is Bamako has 2 209 225 population in 2009.

History

Mali possesses a rich history and relatively well known. There were five important Empires or Kingdoms: Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Bambara of Segou and Macina. On 22nd September 1960, Sudan proclaimed its independence and became the Republic of Mali.

Politics

Mali is a Republic with unicameral parliament. The Executive is represented by the President and the Government. The Legislative is represented by the National Assembly. The highest Judiciary authority is the Supreme Court.

The Presidents of Mali, Malian Heads of State, since independence from France in 1960:

- 1960: Modibo Keita
- 1968: General Moussa Traoré
- 1991: Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré
- 1992: Alpha Oumar Konaré, réélu en 1997
- 2002: General Amadou Toumani Touré, re-elected during the presidential election on 29th April 2007 for a second term of five years.

Geography



Map of Mali

Mali with more than 1.2 million Square meters is the most spacious West Africa State after Niger. It is crossed by 2 big rivers: Senegal and Niger. The majority of the population lives in the rural area. The density is 90 inhabitants per km² in the central Delta of Niger and less than 5 inhabitants per km² in the Saharan Region in the North. Besides the Capital Bamako, the main towns are Kayes, Ségou, Mopti, Sikasso, Koulikoro, Kidal, Gao, and Timbuktu.

The country possesses three climatic zones:

- The 2/3 in the North of the country is entirely desert and belongs to Northern Sahara;
- The Sahel Region in the Center is relatively dry and covered by steppes progressively replaced by savannahs toward the South;
- The Valley of Niger can receive rice, cotton, peanut, millet, sorghum and vegetable cultivation thanks to some infrastructural work. A vast space in the Center of Mali is marsh land because of numerous tributaries of Niger river;

- Sudanese region has precipitation of 1,400 mm per year and average temperatures are between 24 and 32°C. In the northern part, it become denser and denser and is transformed in forest in forest progressively toward the South;

The relief is not accidental. The alluvial plain very vast is however dominated by chalk Plateau and sandstone (Plateau mandingues et dogon). The culminant point of Mali is Mount Hombori. Mali is divided into 8 regions and one district. The decentralization is a major ongoing reform. It aims at transferring the authority to the territorial collectivities so that the local affairs are managed nearer to the population. There are 703 Communes created in 1996.

Economy

Mali is a developing country. Nearly 10% of the population is nomad and approximately 80% work for agriculture, livestock and fisheries. Industrial activity is concentrated around agricultural activities. Mali is member of West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). In addition to cotton (12th world producer in 2004) and its by-products (grain and cotton), Mali is an important producer of cattle with 7.8 millions of beef and 22 millions of goats. For the real estate, Mali is a country which is building its infrastructure.

Tourism

It has recently developed and one can mention among others namely the sites declared world heritage by the UNESCO: Dogon, Timbuktu, Djenné, tomb of Askia in Gao.

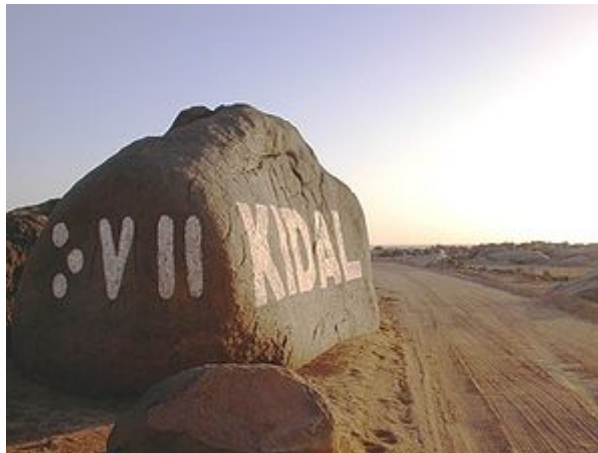
Demography

Population of Mali is approximately 14 million whose nearly 51 % are women.

Culture

Mali managed to maintain important elements of its traditional cultures. The griots (or "Djéli) continue to work as musician poets to transmit the history of the country and the population for many generations. Traditional melodies, once played on the kora, continue to be part of today's music. Amadou Hampâté Bâ is amongst the famous Malian writers and Cheick Oumar Sissoko and Souleymane Cissé are amongst the internationally recognized Malians cineastes.

Languages



Bilinguall Sign post at the entrance of Kidal. On the left hand side of the rock, Kidal is written in tiffinagh character.

French is the official language but the most used is Bambara, which is spoken by 80% of the population. Babamara and twelve others (bobo, bozo, dogon, peul, soninké, songhai (ou Songoy), sénoufo, minianka, tamasheq, khassonké, and maninkakan) are recognized by the State as national languages.

Religion

The religions practiced in Mali are Muslim (about 90% of the population), Christianity and traditional religions.

Ethnies

The population of Mali is divided into many ethnies such as Bambaras representing the major group as well as Malinkés, Soninkés, Peuls, Sénoufos, miniankas, Bwas, Bozos, Dogons Songhai, khassonkés, Maures, Touaregs representing each about 10 % of the population




Media

Media in Mali are composed by written press (French and some newsletters in national languages), radio, television and many linked services (satellite, cable, Internet). The newspapers are concentrated in Bamako or in the regional bigger towns. The private radios which quickly increase emits in local languages and reach out the majority of the population. Access to the Internet is developed.

Musics



Diversity of Malian music brings into relief cultural diversity of Mali. Various musical styles can be encountered such as hunters' songs, music of wassaoulou, griots, etc. Malian Music is known through celebrities such as Amadou and Mariam Bagayogo, *the blinc couple, who sings "Beaux dimanches à Bamako" (nice Sunday in Bamako)*, Ali Farka Touré, *who won twice the grammy awards*, Salif Keïta, Habib Koité, the young Baba Salah, Mama Sissoko, Oumou Sangaré. Dogon music is closely associated to various rites: marriage, funerals, etc. The young singer Déné Issébéré *is the emblem this dogon musical culture*. *Touareg music is appreciated beyond Malian borders especially the Touareg blues. It is represented among others by the Tinariwen Group, initiator and leader of this kind of music. In addition to her, the reggae man Koko Dembélé who has written many titles in dogon language.*

REPUBLIQUE DU MALI	
	
<i>National motto: One people, one goal, one belief</i>	
	
<u>Official Language</u>	<u>Français</u>
<u>Capital</u>	<u>Bamako</u> 12°39 N, 8°0 W
<u>Biggest town</u>	<u>Bamako</u>
<u>Form of State</u> - <u>President of Republic</u>	<u>République</u> <u>Amadou Toumani</u> <u>Touré</u>
- <u>Prime Minister</u>	<u>Modibo Sidibé</u>
<u>Surface</u> - Total - Water (%)	<u>Classé 24^e</u> 1 241 238 <u>km</u> ² 1,61

<u>Population</u> - Total (<u>2009</u>) - <u>Density</u>	<u>Classé 65^e</u> 14 517 176 inhab. 8,87 inhab. /km ²
<u>Independence</u> - date	de la France <u>22 septembre 1960</u>
<u>Gentilé</u>	Malien, Malienne
<u>Currency</u>	<u>Franc CFA¹ (XOF)</u>
<u>Time zone</u>	<i>GMT</i>
<u>National Anthem</u>	<u>'Pour l'Afrique et pour toi, Mali'</u>
<u>Internet Domain</u>	.ml
<u>Country Code for phone</u>	+223