

Banaba (Ocean Island)

Overview:
Banaba (also known as Ocean Island), is an island in the Pacific Ocean which is part of the Kiribati islands. Along with Nauru and Makatea, it is one of the important elevated phosphate islands of the Pacific.

Territory:
Banaba is surrounded by coral reef. The highest point is 81 metres above sea level.

Location:
Banaba is a solitary raised coral island west of the Gilbert Island chain and 300 km east of Nauru. It is part of the Republic of Kiribati. It has an area of 5 km², and the highest point on the island is also the highest point in Kiribati, at 81 metres (266 feet) high. It is the only island in Kiribati that is not a low-lying coral atoll and less susceptible to rising sea levels.

Latitude and Longitude:
Lat: 0.87° S Long : 169.58° E

Time Zone:
GMT +12

Total Land Area:
6

EEZ:

Climate:
Tropical

Natural Resources:
Phosphate mining (for fertilizer) from 1900 until 1980 stripped away 90% of the island's surface.

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:

Per Capita GDP:

% of GDP per Sector:		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

% of Population Employed by Sector		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

External Aid/Remittances:

Growth:

Labour Force:

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)

Industry:
1900-1979: Phosphate mining

Niche Industry:

Tourism:

Imports and Exports:	
Tot. Value of Imports	0.00 ()
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	



Partners Outside EU:	
Import Partners:	
Tot. Value of Exports	()
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	
Main Imports:	
Main Exports:	

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

External:

Number of Airports:

Number of Main Ports: 1

Internal:

Air

Road:

Sea:

Other Forms of Transportation:

Economic Zones:

Energy Policy:

Year	Total Energy Production (Mwh)	Type			Total Energy Consumption (Mwh)	Sector				
		Thermic (Mwh)	Geothermic (Mwh)	Other (Mwh)		Domestic (Mwh)	Commercial (Mwh)	Public Service (Mwh)	Industry (Mwh)	Public Lighting (Mwh)

Official Currency:

Banking and Insurance:

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:

Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:

Number of Insurance Companies:

Financial Services:

Communications/E-Commerce:

Public Ownership:

Banaba now comes under the laws and jurisdiction of Kiribati legislation under a dedicated Chapter IX of the Kiribati Constitution, and even though the majority of Banabans reside in Fiji, there are certain considerations over their rights and ownership of their land holdings on the homeland. Some of these include: - That their right over their land will not be affected in any way by reason of the fact that he reside in Rabi Island in Fiji. - All land that was acquired by the Crown before Kiribati Independence Day would be returned to the Banaban from whom it was acquired or his heirs or successors upon the completion of phosphate extraction. - Where any Banaban possess any right over or interest in land in Banaba, no such right or interest shall be compulsorily acquired other than a leasehold interest and in accordance with 8 (1) of the Constitution. - Every Banaban shall have an inalienable right to enter and reside in Banaba - There shall be a Banaba Island Council - The powers and duties of the Banaba Island Council shall be prescribed by or under law.

Land Use:

Phosphate mining

Agriculture/Forestry:

Marine Activity:

Fishing:

Marine Life:

Critical Issues:

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES



Capital:
Antereen

Political System:

Banaba has two representatives in the Kiribati Assembly, one elected and representing Banaba and one appointed and representing Rabi Banaban people. Despite being part of Kiribati, its municipal administration is by the Rabi Council of Leaders and Elders, which is based on Rabi Island, in Fiji. The Rabi Council of Leaders in Fiji administers the running of Ocean Island at a cost of approximately \$12,000 a month.

Political Parties:

Important Legislation:

Articles 117-125 of the Kiribati constitution guarantees the displaced Banabans representation in parliament and preservation of their land rights, and permits the council of leaders on Rabi to administer the island from outside the country. Mining (Banaba Island Phosphate Re-Mining Agreement) Act 1988

Principal Taxes:

Associated Power:

Citizenship:

Paradiplomacy:

HUMAN RESOURCES

Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population
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Population:	
Year	Resident Population

Age of Population:	0-14	15-24	25-49	50-64	65 and up
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Migration:
Japanese forces occupied the island from August 26, 1942 until the end of World War II in 1945. The British authorities relocated most of the population to Rabi Island, Fiji after 1945, with subsequent waves of migration in 1977 and 1981-1983. The island was mostly depopulated by the late 1970s but some Banabas have subsequently returned, following the end of mining in 1979.

Crude Birth Rate:

Life Expedctancy:

Crude Death Rate:

Ethnicity:
Banaban oral history supports the claim that the people of the Te Aka clan, which originated in Melanesia, were the original inhabitants of Banaba (Ocean Island), having arrived before the arrival of later migrations from the East Indies and Kiribati.

Class Division:

Languages:

The Banabans often lament the loss of their traditional language. Leading up to the discovery of Phosphate in 1900, was the first arrival of the Missionaries to the island. Captain Walkup from the American Mission Society travelled the Pacific in his small yacht and arrived on Banaba in the late 1890's. The Banaban's folklore had foretold the arrival of such a man or prophet, and the community eagerly adopted this new religion. The Bible had been translated into the Gilbertese language, and the community was encouraged to adopt the language so the Banabans would be able to hear the word of God. Over the years this was promoted, and today the Banaban Elders are unable to talk or understand their old language.

Religion:

Literacy:

Education System:

Total Pre-schools:()	
Total Primary Schools	
First Level:	
Second Level:	
Third Level:	
Total Secondary Schools:	
Total Professional Schools	



Universities:

Number of Schools per Island:											
		Pre-school		Elementary			High-school		Prof.	University	
		Pub	Priv	1	2	3	Pub	Priv		Pub	Priv

Students Enrolled:					
Year:	Pre-School	Elementary	High-school	Prof.	University

Teachers							
Year	Pre-School	Elementary			High-School	Prof.	University
		1	2	3			

Medical Services:

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History:

The richest deposits of phosphate were discovered in 1900 by Albert Ellis, a New Zealander working for a London based company. Up until this discovery no one had wanted Banaba, or Ocean Island as it was then known throughout the western world, due to its considerable remoteness. By 1920 the original British owned Pacific Islands Phosphate Company was sold at great profit to a joint venture consortium made up of the British, Australian and New Zealand governments. This new company was called the British Phosphate Commission. At the beginning of 1942, Japanese forces invaded the island and exiled the Banabans to labour camps in other islands in the Pacific. Immediately after the War in the Pacific was over, the Banabans were transported to Rabi Island in the Fiji Group. Rabi had been purchased for them by the British government from the Banaban's own Provident Fund. Rabi is considered a beautiful island with plenty of water, and rich volcanic soil but the Banabans first beginnings on Rabi were a great struggle. They were originally left on the island in quickly erected army tents, with enough rations to only last the community for two months. To make matters worse they had arrived on the island in the middle of the cyclone season, and the Banabans began to experience cold and wet weather for the first time. Their homeland was situated right on the Equator and they had never experienced such cold weather before. The general health of the people was at a very low ebb after surviving years of deprivation in Japanese work camps. Army tents provided no protection against Fiji's annual cyclone season and they lost many of their aged and young people to pneumonia. In January 1974 the Banabans would unsuccessfully petition the British Government 'calling for the separation of Ocean Island from the Gilbert and Ellice Island Colony and the recognition of Ocean Island's independence' (Sighra & King 2001:18). When a Banaban contingent of over 100 young Banabans arrived on the island in 1977 and again in 1979 to stake their claim to the homeland, while their legal proceedings were underway in the British Courts, the situation was tense, with Banabans forced to live in a make shift camp down on the beach behind the their old village site of Uma. The Banaban aims were to try and stop mining while their court case was underway, and their protests had turned violent resulting in the death of one of their young men. The Court case against the British Government and the British Phosphate Commission (BPC) would finally come to an end in 1979 becoming known as one of the longest civil court cases in UK history. The Banabans would win their case against the BPC for their failure to replant a part of their island, but were awarded minimal damages of £9,000 and made to pay their own court costs which amounted to over £300,000. From the original 1,500 lush tropical acres that was the original Ocean Island, there is now only 150 viable acres left unmined, where the Banaban inhabitants reside today.

Referenda:

Recent Significant Events:

1900 - Phosphate mining begins 1942 - Japan invades and exiles the Banabans to other islands 1945 - Banabans transported to Rabi Island 1979 - Phosphate mining ends - Banabans begin moving back to Banaba

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

Dancing is one of the most important aspects of Banaban Culture. Banaban history has been passed down over the generations in an oral form by Banaban Elders. The other form of recording major events in Banaban history is through Dance. The Cultural dances are clever snippets of these events displayed in a combination of singing, dancing and mime and are constantly updated to include more contemporary issues which effect the community today. The tradition of the dance is strictly enforced, with costumes similar to those used over 100 years ago. A good example of this aspect of such detail is a dance called the - 'te Karanga' Stick Dance. Not only are the costumes kept similar, but the dance steps together with the old traditional Banaban language used in the dance are still used. Even though the meaning of the words are now lost the preservation of the dance in its original form is very exciting.

Sources:

- <http://islands.unep.ch/IKQ.htm#1499>
- <http://islands.unep.ch/IKQ.htm#1499>
- Mining (Banaba Island Phosphate Re-Mining Agreement) Act 1988 http://www.paclii.org/ki/legis/num_act/mipraa1988408/mipraa1988408.html
- Cultural Identity of Banabans <http://www.banaban.com/ISISA2004Paper-lakoba.pdf>

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