

Kwame Nkrumah Biography

Kwame Nkrumah was the first president and first Prime Minister of Ghana after nation's independence from British rule. This biography provides detailed information on his childhood, life, career, achievements and timeline.

Quick Facts	
Also Known As	Francis Nwia Kofi Ngonloma
Famous as	First President of Ghana
Nationality	Ghanaian, Romanian
Religion	Roman Catholicism
Political ideology	Convention People's Party
Born on	21 September 1909 AD
Zodiac Sign	Virgo
Born in	Nkroful
Died on	27 April 1972 AD
Place of death	Bucharest
Father	Kofi Ngonloma
Mother	Elizabeth Nyanibah
Spouse	Fathia Nkrumah
Children	Samia Nkrumah, Gamal Nkrumah,
Education	Achimota School, London School of Economics, University of Pennsylvania, Lincoln University,
Founder/Co-Founder	Organization of African Unity
Discoveries / inventions	West African National Secretariat



Kwame Nkrumah and the members of his party, The Convention People's Party, worked towards starting a peaceful uprising towards British rule by initiating civil disobedience movement, strikes, protests, etc. Although he was put behind the bars but his demands were ultimately met and he was asked to form the government. Under his supervision he made sure that the constitution of Ghana kept reforming and changing, his efforts led him to become the Prime Minister of Ghana and later on the President. As the sole leader of the country, he made sure that along with political reforms, Ghana also went through some major economical and social changes. His leadership changed the future of Ghana but it also went through some tough times under him as he gradually changed into an authoritarian and started imposing his whims and fancies on the people of Ghana. He was overthrown in a military coup, which led him to live in exile in Guinea until his death. Despite a tragic end to his influence in Ghana, his contribution in making the foundation of the country is incomparable and he was honored with the Lenin Peace Prize for that.

Childhood & Early Life:

- Kwame Nkrumah was born in Nkroful, Gold Coast, to Kofi Ngonloma and Elizabeth Nyanibah of the Anona Clan. He studied in Achimota School in Accra and aspired to become a teacher.
- He worked as a school teacher from 1930-1935 and taught at various schools in Gold Coast, which also included a Roman Catholic school. All this while, he was saving up cash to be able to study in America in near future.
- In 1935, he finally sailed from Gold Coast to London and applied for an America visa from there and in the same year, he got admission in the Lincoln University of Pennsylvania.
- He finished his Bachelor of Arts Degree, Sacred Theology degree and then earned his Master of Science degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1942. He went on to get another Masters degree in philosophy the following year.
- While he was studying at the Lincoln University, he was elected as the president of the African Students Organization of the United States and Canada. He was into theatre and writing and one

of his essays was published in 'The Lincolnian'.

Career:

- In 1945, Nkrumah travelled back to London and got involved in organizing the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester and then worked towards decolonization of Africa by founding the West African Nation Secretariat.
- He got an invitation to become the General Secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention in 1947, an opportunity that he accepted and sailed back for Gold Coast. It took him a few months to make the journey.
- In 1948, Nkrumah was arrested along with other party members, after the police suspected party's involvement in the recent riots that spurred up in Accra, Kumasi, etc. after police fired on a group of protesting ex-serviceman.
- After he was released, he started working vehemently towards the political and social betterment of Gold Coast. He had Cocoa farmers, trade unions and women on his side. In 1949 he formed a new party, The Convention People's Party.
- The newly formed party demanded for universal franchise, a separate house of chiefs and self-governing status under the Statute of Westminster for Ghana and when the demands were rejected, Nkrumah organized civil disobedience movement, boycotts and strikes.
- The revolt against the British governance led to immediate arrest of Nkrumah in 1950, along with other members of The Convention People's Party in 1950. He was sentenced to imprisonment for three years.
- In 1951, owing to international pressures and internal disobedience, the British decided to leave Gold Coast and organized their first general elections. Although Nkrumah was in jail, his party won the highest number of seats in the Legislative Assembly.
- Nkrumah was released from the jail in 1951 and was asked to form a government. In the following year, another amendment in the constitution took place as it was decided that Gold Coast needed a Prime Minister.
- Nkrumah won the election for the position of Prime Minister, hands down, in 1952 and the first thing that he requested as Prime Minister of Ghana was independence within the British Commonwealth. The request was approved.
- In 1957, Ghana was declared free by their Prime Minister Nkrumah as it became a Commonwealth realm. With years of hard work and political maneuvering, he declared his plans to make Ghana a republic.
- The presidential election and plebiscite on the constitution were held in 1960 and the constitution was changed, which led to Nkrumah's election as the President of Ghana. Ghanaian sovereignty was surrendered to a Union of African States.
- As soon as Nkrumah became the President of Ghana, he founded the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute to train Ghanaian civil servants and endorse Pan-Africanism. He made it compulsory for all students to take a two-week ideological orientation before joining college.

- The downfall of Nkrumah began when he started being authoritarian by declaring strikes as illegal, opposing industrial democracy, giving way to Preventive Detention Act, making CPP the only legal party and declaring himself president for life.
- He went to North Vietnam and China for a visit in 1966 and in his absence, his government was overthrown in a military coup. He never returned back to Ghana, scared that he would be abducted and assassinated.

Major Works:

- Despite the later authoritarian subjection on Ghana, Nkrumah was the major reason how Ghana could achieve its decolonization and be included in the Commonwealth realm. Nkrumah in his role as a Prime Minister brought in amendments in the Ghanaian constitution.
- Under his leadership, forestry, fishing, and cattle-breeding expanded, production of cocoa increased tremendously, and modest deposits of bauxite and gold were exploited more efficiently. The construction of a dam on Volta River gave Ghana its irrigation and hydroelectric revolution.

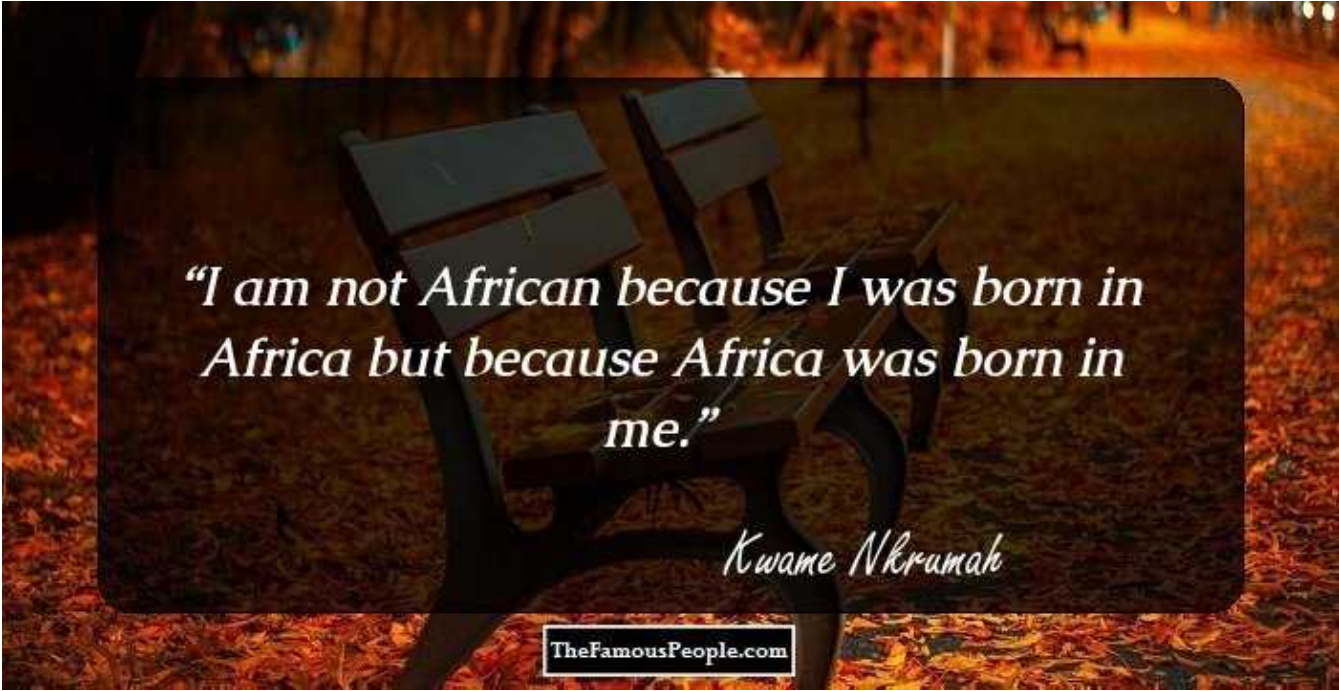
Personal Life & Legacy:

- After Nkrumah's government was overthrown, he lived in exile in Guinea. He was made the honorary co-president of the country. He lived a simple life but he was always under the fear that the western agencies were after him.
- In 1971, he went to Bucharest, Romania, for a medical treatment and died in the following year of prostate cancer. He was buried in a tomb in Nkroful, Ghana, but his remains were preserved in Accra.

Trivia:

- Nkrumah was voted Africa's man of the millennium by listeners to the BBC World Service.

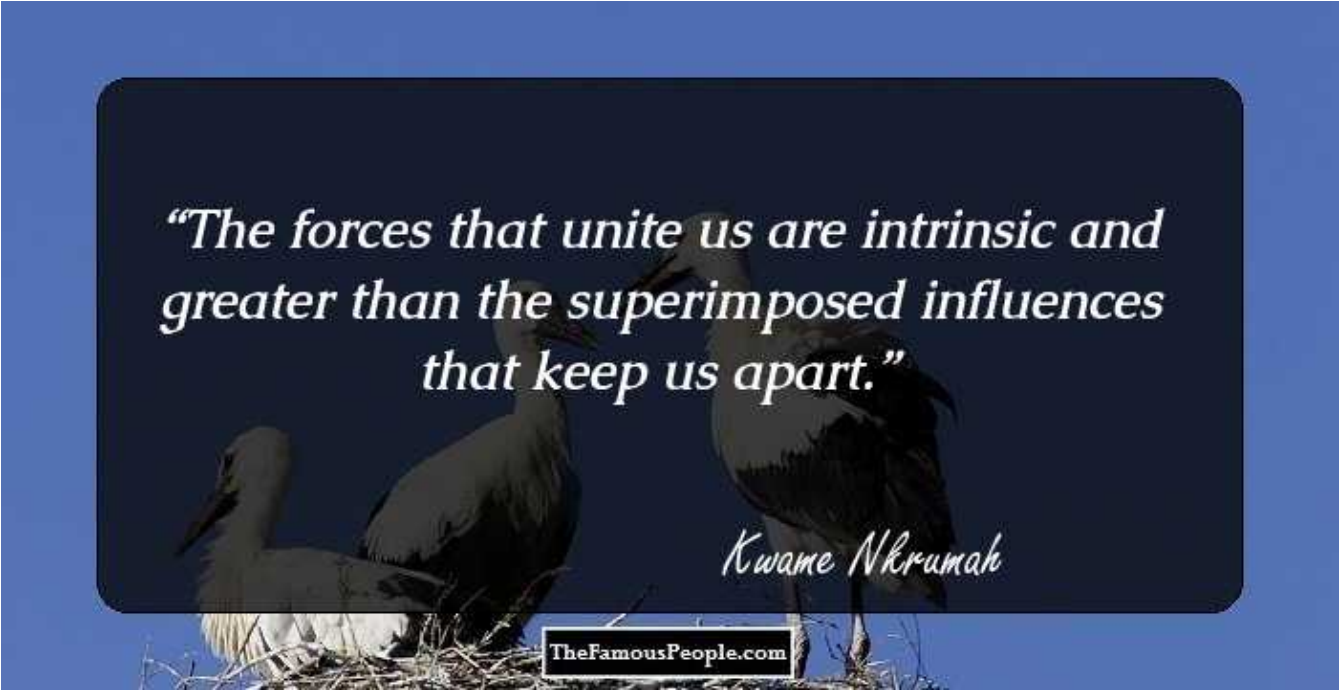
Quotes By Kwame Nkrumah



*"I am not African because I was born in
Africa but because Africa was born in
me."*

Kwame Nkrumah

TheFamousPeople.com



*"The forces that unite us are intrinsic and
greater than the superimposed influences
that keep us apart."*

Kwame Nkrumah

TheFamousPeople.com



"We face neither East nor West; We face forward"

Kwame Nkrumah

TheFamousPeople.com