Module: Modern Nigeria & Global Trends

Topic 1: Cultural Geography of Nigeria

To understand Nigeria, one must look beyond lines on a map. Nigeria's geography is a blend of diverse ethnic identities, varied climates, and strategic administrative zones that govern how the country is managed.

1. The 36 States and the FCT

Nigeria is a federation consisting of **36 states** and the **Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja**.

- **The Power Center:** Abuja became the capital in 1991 (shifting from Lagos) to provide a more central, neutral location for all ethnic groups.
- **The Pillars:** Each state has its own Executive Governor and House of Assembly, operating under the federal umbrella.

2. The Six Geo-Political Zones

Nigeria is informally but strategically divided into six zones to ensure "Federal Character" (fair representation) in government appointments and resource sharing.

Zone	Major States	Characteristics
North West (NW)	Kano, Kaduna, Katsina	Commercial hub of the North; highly populated.
North East (NE)	Borno, Adamawa, Bauchi	Agricultural potential; currently facing security recovery.
North Central (NC)	Plateau, Benue, Kogi	The "Middle Belt"; known as Nigeria's food basket.
South West (SW)	Lagos, Oyo, Ogun	Industrial and financial powerhouse; home to the Megacity.
South East (SE)	Enugu, Anambra, Abia	High concentration of entrepreneurship and trade.
South South (SS)	Delta, Rivers, Akwa Ibom	The "Niger Delta"; heart of the oil and gas wealth.

3. Ethnic Diversity

Nigeria is home to over **250 ethnic groups**. While the "Big Three" are the most prominent, the strength of the country lies in its diversity.

- **Hausa-Fulani:** Primarily in the North; known for a rich history in trade and Islamic caliphates.
- **Yoruba:** Primarily in the South West; famous for high educational attainment and vibrant arts/monarchy.
- **Igbo:** Primarily in the South East; world-renowned for their apprenticeship system and business ingenuity.
- **Others:** Includes the Ijaw, Tiv, Kanuri, Ibibio, Ebira, and many more, each with unique languages and traditions.

4. Physical Geography & Climate

- **The Divide:** The **Niger and Benue Rivers** meet at Lokoja (the Confluence), forming a "Y" shape that naturally divides the country.
- **Climate Zones:**
    - **South:** Tropical rainforest with high rainfall (ideal for cocoa, palm oil).
    - **North:** Sahel/Savannah with dry seasons (ideal for grains, groundnuts, and cattle).

5. Why This Matters Today

Understanding cultural geography is essential for:

1. **Conflict Resolution:** Respecting the boundaries and traditions of different groups.
2. **Resource Allocation:** Ensuring the "National Cake" is shared equitably among all zones.
3. **National Unity:** Recognizing that while we have different tongues, we share one destiny.