



Kenya - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 10 December 2013

Where are the Mungiki based?

A *BBC News* report issued in October 2009 states:

“The Mungiki, a secretive sect mainly from Kenya's largest ethnic group, the Kikuyu...” (BBC News (27 October 2009) *Mungiki sect head freed in Kenya*).

Commenting on activities of the group, a *BBC News* story issued in May 2007 points out that:

“They extort, engage in fraud, robbery, murder and even kidnap their victims. Media reports say the sect has evolved over the years into an organised and intimidating underworld gang with bases in Nairobi, and parts of Central and Rift Valley Provinces” (BBC News (24 May 2007) *Profile: Kenya's secretive Mungiki sect*).

An *IRIN News* publication issued in February 2008 notes:

“A secretive, outlawed and quasi-religious group dating back to the 1980s, whose exclusively Kikuyu male membership is drawn mainly from Central Province. Mungiki ('multitude' in Kikuyu) claims ideological links with the anti-colonial Mau-Mau movement. While rooted in the Central Province, Mungiki has a strong presence in the slums of Nairobi, where it controls and charges for access to basic services such as electricity, water and sanitation” (IRIN News (22 February 2008) *Kenya: Armed and dangerous*).

A report published in February 2008 by the *International Crisis Group* comments on the Mungiki stating:

“The sect has its roots in the Rift Valley but is well entrenched in Nairobi slums and central Kenya. Membership is gained by swearing oaths (often forced) and strictly limited to Kikuyu men” (International Crisis Group (21 February 2008) *Kenya in Crisis*, p.13).

In May 2009 the *United Nations Human Rights Council* stated in a report that:

“Mungiki activities primarily affect those living in Nairobi and Central Province. According to information provided to me by provincial officials in Central Province, the areas most affected by Mungiki activities in Central Province are the districts of: Thika, Kiambu, Murang'a South, Nyandarua, and Murang'a North” (United Nations Human Rights Council (26 May 2009) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Philip Alston : addendum : mission to Kenya*, p.8/footnote10).

In January 2010 a report by *Landinfo* notes:

“Mungiki operates primarily in the Nairobi slums, in the Central Province and in the Rift Valley” (Landinfo (29 January 2010) *Kenya: Mungiki – Abusers or abused?*, p.3).

This report also notes:

“The Mungiki movement was established in the late 1980s by members of the Kikuyu ethnic group. The Kikuyus comprise 22 percent of Kenya’s total population, and by that, the Kikuyus constitute the largest ethnic group in the country, approximately 8,5 million inhabitants. Kikuyus live primarily in the Rift Valley and Central Province, but have also, as part of the rapid urbanisation in Kenya, migrated to Nairobi...” (ibid, p.5).

This document also states:

“When Landinfo was on a fact-finding mission in Kenya in 2008, the following areas comprised Mungiki strongholds, according to one of our well-informed Kenyan sources: Dadora, Mathare, Thika, Mlango Kubwa, and Jithurai in Nairobi; the Central province; and finally certain parts of Rift Valley, most notably Nyahururu, Nakuru, Rakipia, some parts of Eldoret and Naivasha” (ibid, p.7).

Research issued in April 2011 by the *Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia* notes:

“The Mungiki is based primarily in Nairobi, the Central Province and eastern parts of the Rift Valley Province. According to The New York Times, the Mungiki —seems to thrive in rural areas and overcrowded slums where the Kenya government does not quite reach. However, due to their connections with the matatu (minibus) industry, the Mungiki are believed to have —a presence and information network across the country” (Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia (14 April 2011) *Kenya: 1. Please provide background information about the Mungiki, including its history, its tribal connections, its objectives, its membership and ways of operating*, p.4).

Commenting on events of 2012, a report published in April 2013 by the *United States Department of State* notes:

“The Mungiki had a significant following among the poor and unemployed” (United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2012 - Kenya*, Section 2b Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association/Freedom of Association).

A report published in January 2013 by the *International Crisis Group* points out that:

“On the surface the Mungiki menace seems to have been addressed, but it is still alive, especially in the Central Province” (International Crisis Group (17 January 2013) *Kenya’s 2013 Elections*, p.47/footnote 247).

Research issued in November 2013 by the *Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada* notes:

“...the Mungiki are primarily active in the ethnic Kikuyu areas of ‘Central Province, Nairobi Province, Rift Valley Province and Eastern Province’...Other sources report that they are active in Central Province, the Rift Valley...and Nairobi slums...” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (15 November 2013) *Kenya: The Mungiki sect, including organizational structure, leadership, membership, recruitment*

and activities; the relationship between the government and sects, including protection offered to victims of devil worshippers and sects, such as the Mungiki (2010-October 2013)).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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