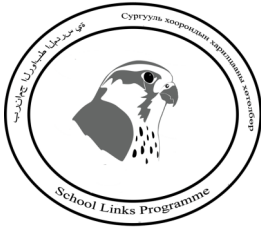


Fact Sheet



All About UAE



Flag

The colours of Emirati flag stand for the Arabian unification of the seven self-governing sheikh-ruled emirates: Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Um Al-Quwain. Green is a symbol of fertility, white represents peace and neutrality. Black stands for the oil wealth of the country and red dash is represent strength and bravery. The flag is considered one of the most important national symbols and it represents the people and their pride.

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates, abbreviated as the UAE, or shortened to "the Emirates", is a country situated in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula in Western Asia on the Persian Gulf. It borders Oman and Saudi Arabia and has shared sea borders with Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Iran.

The UAE is a federation of seven emirates (equivalent to principalities), each governed by a hereditary emir, with a single national president. The constituent emirates are Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah, and Um Al-Quwain. The capital is Abu Dhabi, which is also the state's centre of political, industrial, and cultural activities.

Prior to independence in 1971, the UAE was known as the Trucial States or Trucial Oman, in reference to a 19th-century truce between the local sheikhs, hereditary rulers of the territories, and the United Kingdom. The term Pirate Coast was also used by some to refer to the Emirates from the 18th to the early 20th century, owing to the preponderance of pirates operating from Emirati ports.

The UAE's political system, is based on its 1971 Constitution, which is composed of several intricately connected governing bodies. As a federation of seven monarchies, whose rulers retain absolute power within their Emirate, but with a UAE president, it is neither a constitutional monarchy nor a republic. The emirs choose one of their members to be the president of the federation, but this does not alter the monarchical character of the government of the individual Emirates. The constitution is concerned solely with the relations between the Emirates as members of the federation, and does not prescribe a constitutional system of government.

Islam is the official religion of the UAE and Arabic is the official language.

UAE oil reserves are ranked as the world's sixth-largest and it possesses one of the most developed economies in West Asia. It is the thirty-fifth-largest economy at market exchange rates, and ranks among the world's wealthiest nations with per capita GDP (PPP) of US\$48,597. It is 15th in purchasing power per capita and has a relatively high Human Development Index for the Asian continent, ranking thirtieth globally. The UAE is classified as a high-income developing economy by the IMF.

Traditional Bedouin Culture

The Bedouin are a part of a predominantly desert-dwelling Arabian genetic group traditionally divided into tribes or clans.

Bedu, the Arabic word from which the name Bedouin is derived means "inhabitant of the desert," and refers generally to the desert-dwelling nomads of Arabia. Many tribes of the Bedouin journeyed by camel from oasis to oasis, following a traditional way of life.

Few places in the desert are capable of supporting the life of even a small community for an extended period of time, and so the Bedouin would stay on the move. With herds of sheep and goats as well as camels, Bedouin migrated from one meagrely fertile area to another--each offered sustenance and shelter for time, while the others were naturally replenished.

The most easily recognised aspect of a Bedouin's attire is his headgear--which consists of the kufiyaa-cloth and 'agal-rope that constitute proper attire for a Bedouin man. The head rope in particular carries great significance, for it is indicative of the wearer's ability to uphold the obligations and responsibilities of manhood. Bedouin women, too, signal their status with their headgear--while all women are required to keep their hair covered, married women in particular wrap about their forehead a black cloth known as 'asaba'.

Bedouins mark their graves with exceptional simplicity, placing one ordinary stone at the head of the grave and one at its foot. Moreover, it is traditional to leave the clothes of the deceased atop the grave, to be adopted by whatever needy travellers may pass by.

A Bedouin tent is customarily divided into two sections by a woven curtain known as a ma'nad. One section, reserved for the men and for the reception of most guests, is called the mag'ad, or 'sitting place.' The other, in which the women cook and receive female guests, is called the maharama, or 'place of the women.'

Having been welcomed into a Bedouin tent, guests are honoured, respected and nourished, frequently with copious amounts of fresh, cardamom-spiced coffee. Visitors are also cause for some festivity, including music, poetry, and on special occasions even dance. The traditional instruments of Bedouin musicians are the shabbaba, a length of metal pipe fashioned into a sort of flute, the rababa, a versatile, one-string violin, and of course the voice.

Religion

Islam is the official religion of the UAE and 96% of the population is Muslim (16% Shi'a). Other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism constitute the remaining 4% of the population. Despite the dominance of Islamism, other religions are duly respected and Dubai has two Christian churches: St Mary's (Roman Catholic) and Holy Trinity (inter-denominational). Most Arabs are Muslim and their daily lives are governed by the teachings of their holy book, The Quran. The Quran is the basis of Islamic life, and contains a comprehensive code of conduct that influences and controls all aspects of Muslim life – from personal through to business. A Muslim prays five times every day and always faces in the direction of the holy city of Mecca when he prays. Daily prayers do not have to be said in a Mosque. Muslims may pray wherever they happen to be at the time of prayer, which is often in a public place.

Mosques are found throughout the United Arab Emirates, and the Muezzin chants the call for prayer five times a day from the Minaret in the mosque. Friday is the holy day of the week

The Constitution of the United Arab Emirates provides for freedom of religion in accordance with established customs, and the government generally respects this right in practice; however, there were some restrictions. The federal Constitution declares that Islam is the official religion of the country.

Pearl diving

See <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/the-perils-of-the-pearl-divers#full>

See film <http://www.sheikhmohammed.co.ae/vgn-ext-templating/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=b8e2a89a2aaa0210VgnVCM1000004d64a8c0RCRD&vgnextchannel=2bec4c8631cb4110VgnVCM100000b0140a0aRCRD&vgnextfmt=default&date=1239449314793>