Bahrain

Location

Bahrain is located in the Middle East, in the middle of the Persian Gulf. Its 665 square kilometers lie east of Saudi Arabia, and north of Qatar and the Hawar Islands. Its geographical coordinates are 26 00 N 50 33 E. It is bordered on all sides by the gulf of Bahrain in the Persian gulf. The capital of Bahrain is Manama

Geography

619 square kilometers of the total 665 are land area. Bahrain’s highest point is 122 meters above sea level at Jabal ad Dukhan and its lowest points are all along the coast at 0 meters. It is a very dry land with 2.82% arable, 5.63% in permanent resources and only 40 square kilometers of irrigated land. 91% of land is built on or wasteland. The terrain is almost predominately low desert plain. Drought, dust storms and poor management practices have promoted the desertification of arable land.

Bahrain’s central location in the Persian gulf makes it a very active state in global politics in regards to the oil and petroleum manufacturing and processing.

Climate

The climate of Bahrain is arid with very hot, humid summer months. The location in the Persian gulf contributes to the humidity with the heat in the summer. Mild, pleasant winters are a benefit to the location. Year round, Bahrain remains dry from its latitudinal location. Periodic dust storms and droughts add to the climate

History

Bahrain became a country in 1971 after being captives of the Persians, followed by being conquered by the al-Khalifa then falling under the rule of the United Kingdom. Throughout its history, Bahrain has played a large political role in Middle Eastern affairs due to its central
location. These political issues focus around petroleum. In recent history, King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa has been successful in improving foreign relations as well as domestically with the shia.

**Important Dates**

Most of the important dates in Bahrain revolve around Islamic holidays given its high Muslim population. These dates are set based on lunar cycles and usually include Eid Al-Adha in January or February, Muslim New Year in February or March, Ashura in February or March, the Prophets birthday in April or May, the Prophets ascension in September, Ramadan in October, Eid al-Fitr in November, New Years day January 1, and National day or Independence Day on December 16th.

**Population**

Bahrain records a population of 718,306 people. Its growth rate is 1.35 with a birth rate of 17.2/1000, an infant mortality rate of 15.6/1000 and a life expectancy of 74.9 years. Due to its limited size, the population density is 1,080 people/ square kilometer. Bahrain has an unemployment rate of about 15%

**Currency**

The official currency of Bahrain is the Bahrain Dinar(BHD). The current exchange rate is 0.4 Bahrain Dinar to $1.00 U.S. The per capita GDP is $20,500 with a 2.7% inflation rate.

**Education**

Bahrain has an 89% literacy rate with 89.1% of males and 79.4% of females are literate. There is a free public education system for all Bahrain and all non-Bahrain children. Private education as well as religious educations is also available. The Directorate of Curricula at the Ministry of Education in Bahrain provides textbooks to all students involved in the public education system at the beginning of each term. Free transportation as well as meals are provided as well.
Language

The main languages of Bahrain are Arabic, English, Farsi and Urdu with Arabic being the official language. English is widely spoken in business and as a second language in schools.

Religion

Bahrain is predominately Muslim with 57.3% as Shiite Muslims, 24.5% Sunni Muslims, and 8.5% Christians.

Agriculture

The climate and geography of Bahrain make it difficult for agriculture. Only 40 square kilometers are irrigated and 91% of the total landmass is built on or waste lands. Some Fruits and vegetables are grown with some poultry and dairy production however fish and other sea food are a staple.

Trade

Most of the trade that Bahrain is involved in revolves around petroleum and oil refining. The resources of oil have been used in Bahrain however they process large quantities of oil. Their central location in the Persian gulf allows Bahrain to be a key central power in the trade of oil and petroleum.

Food

Fish and sea food is a staple in Bahrain due to its location in the Persian gulf. Rice is also served throughout Bahrain. Meat is not as widely consumed as in the U.S. however lamb, goat and chicken will be eaten. Spices are very common in the area for food.

Landmarks

Many mosques and temples are commonly visited in Bahrain. The Bahrain Fort is commonly visited by tourists. Some of the most historic buildings include the Al Fateh Mosque in Manama, the Beit Sheikh Isa in Muharraq, Barbar Temple in Barbar, and the Al Jasra house in
Al Jasra. A common nightlife place is the King Fahad Causeway. Many resort hotels and beaches are available for tourists.

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