

UAE



1. Country Brief with reference with its people

The States of the Persian Gulf coast granted the UK control of their defence and foreign affairs in 19th century treaties. In 1971, six of these states - Abu Zaby, 'Ajman, Al Fujayrah, Ash Shariqah, Dubayy, and Umm al Qaywayn - merged to form the United Arab Emirates (UAE). They were joined in 1972 by Ra's al Khaymah. The UAE's per capita GDP is on par with those of leading West European nations. Its generosity with oil revenues and its moderate foreign policy stance have allowed the UAE to play a vital role in the affairs of the region.

UAE totally has 82,880 sq km space with it out of which 82,880 sq km is land and 0 sq km of water. It has a total population of 2,602,713 out of which 71 percent are in the working age group and only 29 percent are dependent population out of which, around 25 percent are in the age group of 0-14. The median age is 28.1 years. The population growth is estimated to be 1.52 percent in 2006. The net migration rate is 0.66 migrants per thousand populations in the year 2006, which proves that the out-migration is slightly higher than the in-migration.

The ethnic composition in the UAE mainly consists of Emirati (19 percent); other Arabs and Iranians (23 percent); South Asian (50 percent); other

expatriates (includes Westerners and East Asians) is 8 percent (1982 census). It is to be noted that less than 20 percent of the population are UAE citizens (1982 census). UAE has a majority of Muslim population with 96 percent (Shi'a 16 percent); and the remaining 4 percent consists of Christians, Hindus, and others

The fundamental base of the UAE economy is the production and export of crude oil and gas which accounts to 32% (approximately) of the total GDP. Current oil production is around 2.2 million barrels per day (Proven oil reserves 98.8 billion barrels and natural gas-reserves – 212 trillion cubic feet). However, during the last few years, other sectors of economy such as services, industries have been showing rapid growth, showing diversification of economy.

2. Nature and Demographic Profile of Indian Diaspora

Though there was Indian migration to the UAE before the World War-I but it is only after the war that the numbers started increasing exponentially. The various emirates that constitute the UAE do not permit naturalization or permanent residence of foreign nationals in their territories. Nevertheless, since the formation of the UAE in 1971, a small number of Indian emigrants have been permitted to hold UAE passports. They have been accorded some economic privileges, but they do not have any political role in the country.

Industries involving the area's oil and natural-gas deposits are critical to UAE's economy. Massive infrastructure and development projects required a huge manpower with expertise and labour. India was an obvious choice to become a preferred resource country to meet most of these requirements. The inflow of Indian professionals and workers increased steadily until it peaked at 1.2 million persons by 1996. Most of the Indian migration to the UAE is from the state of Kerala.

There are studies on return migration from the Gulf region back to Kerala, which also needs to be considered because as a matter of fact UAE does not consider naturalization and hence there is a great possibility of return migration.

About 1.2 million Indians (majority from Kerala) are living in UAE – working in various fields ranging from managerial positions, senior executives and professionals to labourers. Three fourth of Indian migration to the UAE were labourers, with the unskilled workers being half the number.

3. Known distinguished Diaspora

B.R. Shetty, Industrialist – received the highest civilian award at Abu Dhabi

4. Concerns and problems of Indian Diaspora

The concerns and the problems in most of the Gulf region are similar. Most of the Indians in the Gulf were concerned about the education of their children. At the PBD 2006 held at Hyderabad, many of the delegates who have come from the Gulf region expressed their concern. They wanted their children to be given quota at the local colleges in India.

There were also concerns about the exploitation of women in the Gulf region. The recruitment of young housemaids leads to their sexual exploitation. Though the minimum age for housemaids is fixed at 30, but still the problem persists through fake age certificates and other rackets.

Present policies in UAE follow Emiritization and Categorization of companies to discourage single nationality emigration. Though Emiritization may not impact on the blue collar workers, where Indians are mostly present, but it does affect the white collar workers and future migrations.

The Cremation of the dead bodies of Hindu families was also an issue at the PBD 2006. There were complains of delay in permission for transportation of the dead to India.

5. Diaspora Associations (*selected important associations*)

Indian Social Centre, Abu Dhabi

PO Box : 816

Tel : 00971-2-6772225

Fax : 00971-2-6786895

Indian Association, Dubai

PO Box : 324
Tel : 00971-4-3511082
Fax : 00971-4-3511091
Indian Association, Sharjah
PO Box : 2324
Tel : 00971-6-5610845
Fax : 00971-6-5610805
Indian Islamic Centre, Abu Dhabi
PO Box : 4190
Tel : 00971-2-6424488
Fax : 00971-2-6428570
Abu Dhabi Malayalee Samajam
PO Box : 2779
Tel : 00971-2-6422433
Fax : 00971-2-6417196
Kerala Social Centre, Abu Dhabi
PO Box : 3584
Tel : 00971-2-6314455
Fax : 00971-2-6314457
Indian Ladies Association, Abu Dhabi
PO Box: 3660
Tel : 00971-2-6421520
Fax: 00971-2-6421623

6. Bilateral relation/agreements between India and UAE

India has had close social and mercantile contacts with the erstwhile seven Emirates, of the United Arab Emirates, since 3000 B.C. People-to-people contacts and barter trade for clothes and spices from India in exchange for dates and pearls from the region have existed for centuries. Following the accession of H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan as the Ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1966, and the rapid development of Abu Dhabi and other Emirates after the creation of the Federation in 1971, India-UAE relations have flourished. Diplomatic relations were established in June 1973.

India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) enjoy a strong and friendly relationship based on historical contacts, shared traditions and values. This relationship has been buttressed by long standing people to people and commercial contacts.

Important Bilateral Treaties -

• *Extradition Treaty, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters & Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Civil Matters*: Signed in New Delhi in October, 1999

provide for Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Criminal Matters and came into force in May 2000.

- *Agreement on Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in civil and commercial matters*: Signed in New Delhi in October, 1999 and provides for Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters, came into force on 29.5.2000.

- *Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*: Signed in New Delhi on January 6, 1994, provides for exchange of information through nodal agencies on smugglers, suspects, financiers, organizers and those involved in trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

- *Civil Aviation Agreement*: Signed in March 1989, provides for establishing air services between and beyond India and the UAE. The Bilateral Civil Aviation Agreement was amended in 2004 to provide for multiple designation of carriers, following Abu Dhabi's launch of Etihad Airlines.

- *Cultural Agreement*: Signed on January 3, 1975 provides for Cultural Exchange Programmes. The last Cultural Exchange Programme under this agreement covered the years 1994 to 1996.

- *Information Cooperation Agreement*: Signed in New Delhi in April 2000 between the Emirates News Agency (WAM) and the Press Trust of India (PTI), provides for cooperation and exchange of news.

- *Channel Carriage Agreement*: Signed on 24.09.2000 at Abu Dhabi between the Directorate General of Doordarshan Broadcasting Corporation of India [Prasar Bharati] and the Emirates Cable TV and Multimedia LLC [E-Vision] provides for the down-linking and distribution of DD World signals in the UAE through E-Vision's cable network.

