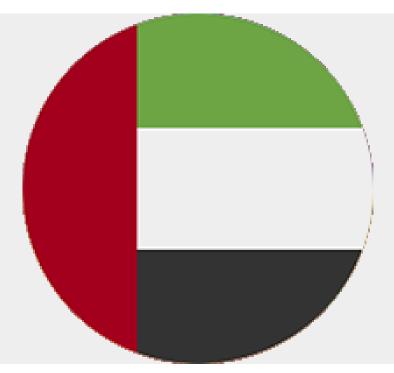
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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The United Arab Emirates is a country in Western Asia that consists of seven emirates along the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Although <u>Abu Dhabi</u>, the capital, is the largest emirate and the center of its oil industry, Dubai is one of the most vital commercial and financial centers in the region. Islam is the national religion and Arabic is the official language. The monetary unit is <u>Dirham</u> (<u>AED</u>).

UAE was founded by Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan. National Day, also known as Union Day, is celebrated on the <u>2nd of December</u>. It commemorates the official nationalization of all seven emirates which occurred in 1971. In that same year, Mohammed Abdel Wahab, an Egyptian composer created the melody for "Īshī Bilādī" however, the anthem did not have lyrics till 1986, which were written by Ārif al-Shaykh.

The Pan-Arab colors (red, green, white, and black) on the flag show Arab Unity and are thus the national colors. *Thawb*, the national dress, is a long garment with long sleeves commonly worn in UAE.

UAE symbolizes an international model of cultural diversity, as over 200 nationalities live in the country including Emirati Arabs, South Asians, Indians, and Pakistanis.

<u>Al Ayyala</u> "the stick dance" is a traditional group dance performed on joyous occasions throughout the U.A.E.

"Kabsa" has always been the Emirati's national dish. It consists of a mix of spiced basmati rice with meat or chicken. Arabic Coffee or *Gahwa*, is an important element of hospitality and is considered the national drink. Dates, the national fruits, are sweet and tasty! The Tribulus omanense is the country's national flower whereas the Ghaf tree was declared the national tree due to its cultural significance. It can survive the harsh desert environment and remain green!

The UAE's Bedouin community is represented by the Peregrine Falcon. Traditionally, this national bird was used for hunting and as a means of surviving in the desert. The <u>Arabia Oryx</u> is the national animal.

Football is the most popular sport and is widely played in schools and colleges. It's undisputedly UAE's national sport.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the current Prime minister of the United Arab Emirates, and Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan is the President.

- Further information regarding the symbols and knowledge of the United Arab Emirates can be found in the table of contents -

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