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Currency

The official unit of currency is the Qatari riyal, consisting of 100 dirhams.

Government

General

Qatar occupies the main peninsula projecting N into the Persian Gulf from the Saudi Arabian mainland. Qatar has a dispute with Bahrain concerning territorial claims over the Hawar Islands.

The country is mainly flat, barren, and covered with loose sand and gravel.

The climate is hot and humid. There is very little rainfall, vegetation is sparse, and temperatures are very high.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.



Flag of Qatar

Qatar, which received independence from the United Kingdom in 1971, is a traditional monarchy.

The country is ruled by an Amir, who is also the Prime Minister, and a Council of Ministers, appointed by the Amir. There is no parliament, but the Council of Ministers is assisted by a 30-member nominated Advisory Council.

The country is divided into nine municipalities.

The legal system consists of a discretionary form of law controlled by the Amir. Civil codes are being introduced. Islamic law is significant in personal matters.

The capital is Doha (Ad Dawhah).

Holidays

The following holiday is observed:

Independence Day	September 3
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Islamic holidays, which are subject to the appearance of the moon, include Eid Al-Fitr (End of Ramadan), Eid Al-Adha (End of Pilgrimage), Hijrah (Islamic New Year), Ashoora, and the Prophet's Birthday.

Industries

Crude oil production, refining, and natural gas development are the major industries. Other industries include petrochemicals, fertilizers, steel, cement, and fishing.

There is little agriculture; however, fruits and vegetables are grown, and livestock are raised.

Languages

The official language is Arabic. English is also commonly used.

Mined Areas

Vessels are advised that mined areas exist in the N part of the Persian Gulf. Further information should be obtained from the local authorities. Mine sightings should be reported to the

naval authorities by INMARSAT (150 5612) or to Coalition naval vessels on VHF channel 13 or 16. Details of areas reported to be dangerous due to mines are also promulgated by Notice to Mariners issued by the Middle East Navigation Aids Service (MENAS) and by MARAD advisories.

Regulations

Liquor is not allowed ashore and it is a serious offense to offer alcoholic beverages to a Qatari.

Smoking is not permitted in public places during Ramadan.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is CHARLIE (-3). Daylight Savings Time is not observed.

World Time Zone Chart

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated in the Al-Luqtas District at 22 February Roadat, Doha.

The mailing address is P.O. Box 2399, Doha.

U. S. Embassy Qatar Home Page

<http://www.usembassy.org.qa>