

BAHRAIN

State of Bahrain

The State of Bahrain is an independent Arab State situated centrally on the southern shores of the Arabian Gulf, with the mainland of Saudi Arabia on the west and the peninsula of Qatar on the east. The Head of State is His Highness Shaikh Isa Bin Sulman AL-KHALIFA (The Emir of Bahrain)

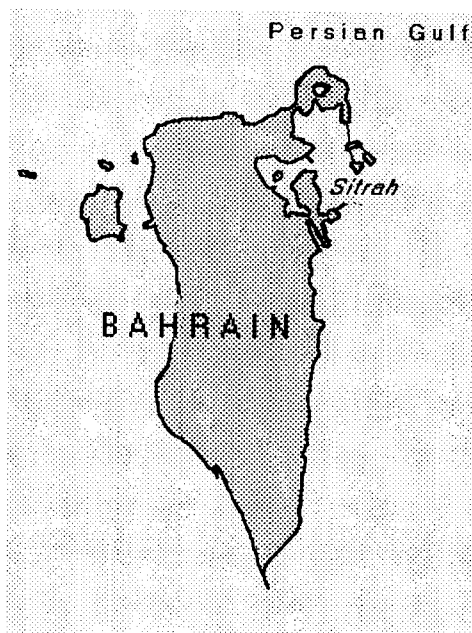


FIG. 1.- Bahrain.

Bahrain is an archipelago of over 33 islands and island groups which cover a total land area of 702 km². It has territorial waters of some 10,000 km², much of which are generally shallow and contain many coral reefs. The population of the country is 508,037 (1991 census). The main port of Mina Sulman is located the south of the capital city of Al Manama, on the northern end of Al Bahrain, the largest island.

In the pre-oil era, the bulk of the population of Bahrain, estimated at 100,000 in 1900, were villagers engaged in agriculture, fishing and pearl diving.

Along with associated cottage industries and trading, which flourished due to Bahrain's central Gulf location and plentiful fresh water supply, these provided the country's wealth. Bahrain pearls, in particular, were well known and claimed to be the purest in the world. In 1931, Bahrain became the first country in the Middle East to discover oil. Today, the country's economy is broadly based on industry, much of which is of oil related, commerce and financial services.

Merchant Tonnage

Bahrain currently has a total of 67 900 merchant tonnage. In addition, 1 500 fishing vessels are registered under the bahraini flag, along with 1 500 pleasure craft.

Hydrographic Section

The Hydrographic authority for Bahrain was established in 1978 as a section within the Survey Directorate of the Ministry of Housing, Municipalities and Environment. In 1993 Bahrain became a member of the IHO.

The Hydrographic Section is located at Mina Sulman. The Section has three boats for it's survey activities: two launches - AL MIYANAH (60 ft) and SURVEYOR (45 ft), plus a locally designed boat -ESKAN (26 ft) for surveys requiring shallow draft. Staff of the Section currently number 12 persons. Bahraini hydrographic staff are trained abroad in the United Kingdom and Italy (IHO).

The Hydrographic Section's main duties include traditional bathymetry, tidal analysis and tidal stream measurement within the territorial waters of Bahrain. Its products include a national chart series of 10 published charts, one of which has International Chart status. The Section also published annual Tide Tables for the State of Bahrain and provides a survey service for the private sector and other government bodies.