

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Iraq

CAPITAL: Baghdad

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Unitary Single-Party Republic

AREA: 434,925 Sq Km (167,925 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 24,237,600



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: Iraq is located in the Middle East. It is bound by Iran to the east, Turkey to the north, Syria to the northwest, Jordan to the west, Saudi Arabia to the southwest and south as well as Kuwait and the Persian Gulf to the southeast. The country can be divided into four main topographical regions. (1.) The northeastern highlands which include the Zagros Mountains. (2.) The upland between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, which is mostly desert. (3.) A marshland region just above the convergence of the two rivers and (4.) the extensive barren, rock and sand desert region in the south and west which constitute part of the Great Arabian and Syrian Deserts. Around 38% of the total land area is desert while the principal rivers are the Tigris and Euphrates. Major Cities (pop. est.); Baghdad 4,044,000, Diyala 961,100, as-Sulaymaniyah 951,700, Irbil 770,400, Mosul 664,200 (1987). Land Use; forested 0.5%, pastures 9%, agricultural-cultivated 12.5%, other 78% (1993).

CLIMATE: Iraq has an arid climate with hot dry summers from May to October and cold winters from December to March with most of the rainfall occurring between December to March. In Baghdad the average annual precipitation is 140 mm (6 inches) whilst in the northeast where it is highest, it varies from 400 to 600 mm (16 to 23 inches) annually. Elsewhere, rainfall is low and unreliable. The prevailing winds are the Sharqi or Sirocco, a southeasterly dry dust laden wind and the Shamal, a northwesterly dry cool wind. Average temperature ranges in Baghdad are from 4 to 16 degrees Celsius (39 to 61 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 24 to 50 degrees Celsius (75 to 122 degrees Fahrenheit) in July or August.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Arabs who constitute 77% of the population and there are two relatively unassimilated ethnic groups. The Bedouins who are the desert nomads and the Madans who are the sedentary Marsh Arabs of the lower Tigris and Euphrates Deltas. The largest ethnic minority are the Kurds who account for 19% of the population and live in the northeastern highlands. Other small ethnic groups include the Turks, Persians, Lurs, Assyrians, Armenians, Yazidis, Shabaks, Mandaeans and Sarliyahs, which together constitute less than 5% of the population.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 42 persons per sq km (109 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 70.4% urban, 29.6% rural (1991). Sex Distribution; 50.3% male, 49.7%

female (1991). Life Expectancy at Birth; 46.0 years male, 57.0 years female (1991). Age Breakdown; 45% under 15, 29% 15 to 29, 14% 30 to 44, 7% 45 to 59, 4% 60 to 74, 1% 75 and over (1991). Birth Rate; 46.0 per 1,000 (1991). Death Rate; 7.0 per 1,000 (1991). Increase Rate; 39.0 per 1,000 (1991). Infant Mortality Rate; 80.0 per 1,000 live births (1991).

RELIGIONS: The official religion is Islam with the Shiite Muslims accounting for 52% of the population while the Sunni Muslims, which dominate the government and the bureaucracy, account for around 42% of the population. The remainder are small Christian and Jewish minorities.

LANGUAGES: The official language is Arabic which is spoken by over 80% of the population, although English, Kurdish, Turkish and Assyrian are minority languages.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: N/A. Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 6,030,000 or 59.7% (1990).

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: During the 1950's the Iraqi government signed an agreement with foreign petroleum companies allowing them to produce oil in Iraq. In July 1958 army officers overthrew the Iraqi government, killed King Faisal and Prince Abdullah as well as Prime Minister Nuri al-Said and declared the country a republic. In Feb. 1963 the Nationalists and the Baathists, who represented Arab unity, overthrew the government and assassinated Brig. Abd al-Karim al-Qasim. The next five years resulted in a bitter civil war with the Kurds of the northeast and on July 17, 1968 Baathist officers led by Ahmed Hasan al-Bakr overthrew the government in another coup. In 1970 al-Bakr signed an agreement to end almost a decade of fighting with the Kurds, although fighting erupted again four years later and in Mar. 1975 another ceasefire was declared. In July 1979 al-Bakr resigned and Saddam Hussein Takriti, a Baathist leader, succeeded him. In Sept. 1980 Iraq invaded Iran and the eight year war over territorial disputes and other disagreements began. On July 18, 1988 Iran reluctantly accepted the UN negotiated ceasefire, although permanent peace did not come until Iraq was engaged in another war, the "Gulf War". During 1988 to mid 1990 Pres. Hussein embarked on an enormous arms buying spree and became technically, the region's premier military power. On Aug. 2 1990 one hundred thousand Iraqi troops and tanks invaded Kuwait and then proceeded to take up positions on the Saudi-Kuwait border. On Aug. 8 Iraq announced that it had annexed Kuwait and three weeks later that the territory was its 19th province which would never be surrendered. As a result the UN Security Council approved trade and financial sanctions, which involved the immediate freezing of all Iraq's overseas assets. US Pres. George Bush gained support for a US-led military solution and at Saudi Arabia's, King Fahd, invitation a build up of ground troops and air forces began which was also accompanied by a naval embargo. On Nov. 29, 1990 the UN Security Council, at the request of the US, authorized the use of "all necessary means" to

remove Iraq if it had not withdrawn by Jan. 15, 1991. On Jan. 17, 1991 "Operation Desert Storm" began and by Feb. 27, 1991 Pres. Bush announced that Kuwait had been liberated and that there would be a cease-fire effective Feb. 28. As part of the cease-fire conditions imposed on Iraq, it was to provide full disclosure, inspection and ultimate destruction of all its biological, ballistic and nuclear weapons stockpiles or development facilities. Immediately after the cease-fire Iraq launched a large scale military offensive against the Kurds resulting in the UN imposing a "No Fly Zone" in the northeast. On March 1, 1991 there was an uprising by Shiite Muslims in Basra that was later quelled. On April 8, 1991 a UK initiative resulted in the creation of safe havens around Amadiyah which were policed in principal by 10,000 US and 4,500 British troops. On July 19, 1991 Iraq admitted to the UN that it had been carrying out tests of a super gun in the Jabal Hamrin mountains. On Aug. 2, 1991 the US Congress ratified plans to destroy Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons capability with the "use of all necessary means". On Sept. 3, 1991 Pres. Hussein proclaimed a new law that allowed for the limited freedom of opposition political parties. On Sept. 13, 1991 Pres. Hussein dismissed Prime Minister Saadun Hammadi due to the government's inability to rectify the country's worsening economic conditions. In 1992 Iraq launched another campaign against the sedentary Marsh Arabs of the south which resulted the imposition of another "No Fly Zone" in the south in Aug. 1992 while trade sanctions also remained in force throughout the year. On Jan. 7, 1992 Iraq detained two Kuwaiti policemen who strayed into Iraqi territory while during the year Iraq also sentenced four westerners to seven years imprisonment for allegedly entering the country illegally. On March 11, 1992 the Deputy Prime Minister, Tariq Aziz told the UN Security Council that Iraq was ready to make a complete disclosure of all its weapons programs. However, UN inspectors in Iraq wishing to gain entry into the Agricultural Ministry building were denied access for several weeks. On April 16, 1992 a UN Iraq-Kuwait border commission awarded six oil wells and part of the Umm Qasr port to Kuwait, which Iraq disputed. On July 17, 1992, the 24th anniversary of the Baath revolution, Pres. Hussein announced to his people that they shouldn't expect an early end to economic sanctions imposed as a result of the Gulf War. Also during 1992 Iraq began work on Leader's River an 11km (7 mi) manmade canal designed to drain the lowland marshes where the bases of Shiite rebels were located. Work was completed in December 1992 and on Dec. 27, 1992 the US shot down a Iraqi MiG fighter that entered the UN imposed "No Fly Zone" in the south. In Jan. 1993 the US presented an ultimatum to Iraq to remove six police posts close to the Kuwaiti border and later fired Tomahawk cruise missiles at targets in Baghdad thought to be involved in the government's nuclear weapon program. In April 1993 an Iraq gunboat seized and Iranian ship in the Shatt al-Arab waterway while in July 1993 Iraqi troops opened fire on Saudi border positions. In June 1993 US warships fired a further 23 missiles in an attempt to destroy Iraq's intelligence-service headquarters, although by Nov. 14, 1993 Baghdad had claimed they had rebuilt their headquarters. On Nov. 15, 1993 the UK released photographs of Shiite villages destroyed in the lowland marshes that resulted in thousands of Shiite Muslims fleeing to neighboring Iran.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Dinar (ID) divided into 20 Dirhams and 1,000 Fils.

ECONOMY: Gross Domestic Product; USD \$12,640,000,000 (1991). Public Debt; USD \$20,000,000,000 (1994). Imports; USD \$5,100,000,000 (1993 est.). Exports; USD \$9,500,000,000 (1993 est.). Tourism Receipts; USD \$59,000,000 (1989). Balance of Trade; USD \$4,400,000,000 (1993 est.). Economically Active Population; 4,127,294 or 24.7% of total population (1988). Unemployed; 4.6% (1987).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partners are France, Brazil and Japan.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Camels, Cattle, Cereals, Cotton, Crude Oil and Natural Gas, Goats, Sheep, Tomatoes, Watermelons.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, Brick Manufacturing, Cement, Chemicals, Food Processing, Leather, Oil and Gas Production and Refining, Textiles.

MAIN EXPORTS: Cement, Cotton, Crude Oil and Refined Products, Dates, Hides, and Wool.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 2,457 km (1,527 mi) (1988), passenger-km 1,570,000,000 (976,000,000 passenger-mi) (1988), cargo ton-km 2,079,000,000 (1,424,000,000 short ton-mi) (1988). Roads; length 45,554 km (28,306 mi) (1989). Vehicles; cars 672,205 (1989), trucks and buses 368,525 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 143 (1990), deadweight tonnage 1,795,510 (1990). Air Transport; N/A.

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 6 with a total circulation of 660,000 (1992). Radio; receivers 3,700,000 (1994). Television; receivers 1,000,000 (1994). Telephones; units 675,000 (1993).

MILITARY: 382,000 (1993) total active duty personnel with 91.5% army, 0.7% navy and 7.8% air force while military expenditure accounts for 74.9% (1991) of the Gross National Product (GNP).