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Al Ain Times
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7 October - 13 October 2006 · Vol. 1 Issue 6 · www.alaintimes.ae · 2 Dhs

Proudly published every Saturday by Alpha Beta Publishers, Al Ain

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Carfour topped food-shopping places in Al Ain

Study found LuLu Center favored by most South Asians

UAE University research on consumers' behavior

Al Ain Times special report

A UAE University research found Carrefour as the most important food-shopping place in Al-Ain for the all examined ethnic groups while the South Asian population favored LuLu Center, a gathering place for Indian and Pakistani expatriates.

The study was conducted by Dr. Sherin Sherif of Department of Agribusiness and Consumer Science of the UAE University and analyzed consumers' behavior and the factors affecting demand for some foodstuffs in Al-Ain.

Broad beans and lentils were the two most popular legumes consumed by the four ethnic groups but the English Expatriates favored beans. Mangoes were the most favorite fruit for nationals and apples were for Arab, English and Urdu speaking expatriates.

All ethnic groups, with the exception of the English-

speaking population, found rice to be the major staple food item and lamb was mainly consumed by nationals and Arab expatriates, as opposed to other ethnic groups. Onions were the most important vegetable but the Urdu speaking population had tomatoes in first place followed by onions.

As researchers anticipated, nationals were the highest income earning group, followed by English-speaking Expatriates, Arab Expatriates, and the Urdu speaking population. Egyptians, Lebanese, and Sudanese were three major Arab expatriates and Philipinos, Britons, and Canadians were the three dominant English-speaking expatriates.

The research method implemented in this study involved conducting a comprehensive field survey directed to the four different



Lentils - pipped at the post by beans for English expatriates

ethnic groups who dominate Al-Ain population. The sample was composed of 270 nationals, 116 Arab Expatriates, 43 English Expatriates, and 56 Urdu speaking people making the total sample 485, mostly household heads.

Students from the College of

Food and Agriculture, UAEU, who helped the study includes (female): Fatima Al-Nuaimi, Alia Ahababi, Naouel Kotbi, Asma Al-Nuaimi, Bakhita Ameri, Aysha Dhaheri, and Safyya Shuraiki while male students were Omran Shatti, Saif Khalaf, and Ayman Monsser.

Companies to operate taxis from next year

NEW TAXI TRANSPORT SYSTEM TO BENEFIT OWNERS AND DRIVERS

Al Ain Times report

The taxi transport system in Al Ain will see major changes next year after a new law comes into effect in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

A new Taxi Transport Regulation Centre is to be established under a law issued by President His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahayan in his capacity as Ruler of Abu Dhabi Emirate to change the decades old taxi system in Abu Dhabi emirates.

Khalid Saleh Al Rashedi, the senior

project manager at the Mubadala Development Company, has been appointed general manager of the centre. He told reporters in Abu Dhabi that five to seven companies will be selected to operate taxi services and will start operations next year.

"The process includes the phasing out of taxis that have been on the road for more than five years. The phasing out of current taxis and full operation of the new system will be complete in three to five years," he was quoted as saying.

He said there will be no new permits for taxis as the permits of existing owners will be used and owners will be paid from a dedicated fund Dh1,000 for each permit as compensation per month.

About the taxi drivers he said priority would be given to current taxi drivers and the recruitment criteria will be simple.

"All the current taxi drivers will be invited to attend a training course to help meet the criteria. Whoever successfully completes the training

course will be recruited. They have to be well-versed in the geography of the emirate, in addition to having a basic knowledge of Arabic and English," he said.

He said benefits for drivers include a fixed monthly salary, a maximum working time of 12 hours and purpose-built accommodation.

Meanwhile, taxi drivers reacted favorably to the new system saying it will give them job and income security and will improve their working and living conditions (see page 3 for more details).

THE FNC SECRETARY GENERAL TO SPEAK IN AL AIN

Al Ain Times report

Mohammed Saleh Al Mazroui, Secretary-General of the Council Federal National Council (FNC), will speak at the Social Club of the UAE University about the functions and the forthcoming elections of the FNC.

Election to the UAE's Federal National Council (FNC) will be held on December 16, 18 and 20. The National Election Committee has already announced that the Electoral College will consist of 6,689 UAE nationals including women. This structure has been approved by the UAE Cabinet.

The FNC plays an important role in serving the people and the nation and consolidating the principles of shura (consultation) in the country. This is the first time that elections will take place to choose some of its members.

The Federal National Council (FNC) has 40 members drawn from the emirates on the basis of their population, with eight for each of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, six each for Sharjah and Ra's al-Khaimah, and four each for Fujairah, Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman.

MINOR INCREASE IN TAXI FARES EXPECTED

Khalid Saleh Al Rashedi, the head of the newly created Taxi Transport Regulation Centre assured residents not to panic about an increase in fares after the new system is introduced.

"Let me assure you that fares will be less than charged by other private companies. There will be a minor increase from the existing Abu Dhabi taxi fares. The increase is necessary to cover the additional costs involved in providing advanced and efficient services. Once operational, people will be satisfied with the fare and services; this is what I can assure," he was quoted as saying by Gulf News.

Taxi fares have remained unchanged for almost last 25 years.

The services will include a multilingual hotline (including Urdu) which is 600560006.

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Al Ain Times Eid supplement will be published on 21 October

Booking Deadline: 15 October

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