



Pakistan

Countries of South Asia



Background:

The separation in 1947 of British India into the Muslim state of Pakistan (with two sections West and East) and largely Hindu India was never satisfactorily resolved, and India and Pakistan fought two wars - in 1947-48 and 1965 - over the disputed Kashmir territory. A third war between these countries in 1971 - in which India capitalized on Islamabad's marginalization of Bengalis in

Pakistani politics - resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. In response to Indian nuclear weapons testing, Pakistan conducted its own tests in 1998. The dispute over the state of Kashmir is ongoing, but discussions and confidence-building measures have led to decreased tensions since 2002.

Location: Southern Asia, bordering the Arabian Sea, between India on the east and Iran and Afghanistan on the west and China in the north

Capital: Islamabad

Climate: mostly hot, dry desert; temperate in northwest; arctic in north

Area: 803,940 sq km

Area - comparative: slightly less than twice the size of California

Border countries: Afghanistan 2,430 km, China 523 km, India 2,912 km, Iran 909 km

Terrain: flat Indus plain in east; mountains in north and northwest; Balochistan plateau in west.

Religions:

Islam, with two major sects: Shia and Sunni. Christianity and Hinduism are practiced by a small minority.

Ethnic Groups:

Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun (Pathan), Baloch, Muhajir (immigrants from India at the time of partition and their descendants)

Languages:

Urdu, English, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtu, Baluchi, Seraiki, Hindko and other regional languages.

Foods:

Rice and hand-baked flatbreads are staples. Meat is a regular part of the diet, procured in the Islamic (Zabeeha) way.

Government:

Administrative Divisions: 4 provinces, 1 territory*, and 1 capital territory**; Balochistan, Federally Administered Tribal Areas*, Islamabad Capital Territory**, North-West Frontier Province, Punjab, Sindh.

**Background, independence:**

The separation in 1947 of British India into the Muslim state of Pakistan (with two sections West and East) and largely Hindu India was never satisfactorily resolved. A third war between these countries in 1971 resulted in East Pakistan seceding and becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. A dispute over the state of Kashmir is ongoing. In response to Indian nuclear weapons testing, Pakistan conducted its own tests in 1998.

Note: the Pakistani-administered portion of the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region includes Azad Kashmir and the Northern Areas.

Links of Interest

<http://www.storyofpakistan.com/>

An extensive reference on the political history of Pakistan with a timeline extending to as far back as

1205 A.D. Includes chat and discussion forums, articles, reviews on political personalities pre and post Partition.

<http://www.pakistanimusic.com/> or <http://www.pakimp3.org/>

Listen to different types of Pakistani music (pop, folk, devotional, classical, regional etc), watch music videos, read the latest on music artists, pop bands, cultural events, fashion, recipes..you name it!

<http://www.muzaq.net/index.php>

Highlights current trends in Pakistani pop music. Includes music downloads and videos. Has recently introduced a section on Cricket for the Cricket World Cup enthusiasts!

<http://www.heritage.gov.pk/>

Official website of the National Fund for Cultural Heritage. An extremely informative website on Pakistan's history (colonial and post-colonial), cultural heritage, tourist spots, poetry, museums and art galleries. Some parts of the website are still under construction. Packed with colorful photographs as well a map of Pakistan.

<http://www.nca.edu.pk/>

Website of the National College of Arts. Lahore