

Islamic Republic of **PAKISTAN**

L a n d o f t h e P u r e

HISTORY

Pakistan was one of the two original successor states to British India, which was partitioned along religious lines in 1947. For almost 25 years following independence, it consisted of two separate regions, East and West Pakistan, but now it is made up only of the western sector. Both India and Pakistan have laid claim to the Kashmir region; this territorial dispute led to war in 1949, 1965, 1971, 1999, and remains unresolved today

What is now Pakistan was in prehistoric times the Indus Valley civilization c. 2500–1700 BC. A series of invaders - Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Turks, and others controlled the region for the next several thousand years. Islam, the principal religion, was introduced in 711. In 1526, the land became part of the Mogul Empire, which ruled most of the Indian subcontinent from the 16th to the mid-18th century. By 1857, the British became the dominant power in the region. With Hindus holding most of the economic, social, and political advantages, the Muslim minority's dissatisfaction grew, leading to the formation of the nationalist Muslim League in 1906 by Mohammed Ali Jinnah (1876–1949). The league supported Britain in the Second World War while the Hindu nationalist leaders, Nehru and Gandhi, refused. In return for the league's support of Britain, Jinnah expected British backing for Muslim autonomy. Britain agreed to the formation of Pakistan as a separate dominion within the Commonwealth in August 1947, a bitter disappointment to India's dream of a unified subcontinent. Jinnah became governor-general. The partition of Pakistan and India along religious lines resulted in the largest migration in human history, with 17 million people fleeing across the borders in both directions to escape the accompanying sectarian violence.

Military tensions in the Kargil conflict with India were followed by a Pakistani military coup d'état in 1999 in which General Pervez Musharraf assumed vast executive powers. In 2001, Musharraf became President after the controversial resignation of Rafiq Tarar. After the 2002 parliamentary elections, Musharraf transferred executive powers to newly-elected Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali, who was succeeded in the 2004 prime-ministerial election by Shaukat Aziz. On 15 November 2007 the National Assembly completed its tenure and new elections were called. The exiled political leaders Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif were permitted to return to Pakistan. However, the assassination of Benazir Bhutto during the election campaign in December led to postponement of elections and nationwide riots. Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) won the largest number of seats in the elections held in February 2008 and its member Yousaf Raza Gillani was sworn in as Prime Minister.[36] On 18 August 2008, Pervez Musharaff resigned from the presidency when faced with impeachment. [37] Presently, (as the year 2009 nears its end), more than 3 million Pakistani civilians have been displaced by the on going conflict in North-West Pakistan between the government and Taliban militants.

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INTRODUCTION

Pakistan, officially the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, is a country located at the crossroads of South Asia, the Middle East, and Central Asia. It has a 1,046 Kilometre (650 mile) coastline along the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman in the south, and is bordered by Afghanistan and Iran in the west, India in the east and the People's Republic of China in the far northeast. Tajikistan also lies very close to Pakistan but is separated by the narrow Wakhan Corridor.

The region forming modern Pakistan was at the heart of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization and then later encompassed successively, recipient of ancient Vedic, Persian, Turco-Mongol, Indo-Greek and Islamic cultures. The area has witnessed invasions and/or settlements by the Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Turks, Afghans, Mongols, Sikhs and the British

In addition to the Indian independence movement which demanded an independent India, the Pakistan Movement (led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah of the Muslim League) which also sought an independent India, sought an independent state for the majority Muslim populations of the eastern and western regions of British India. The British granted independence and also the creation of the Muslim majority state of Pakistan that comprised the provinces of Sindh, North-West Frontier Province, West Punjab, Balochistan and East Bengal. With the adoption of its constitution in 1956, Pakistan became an Islamic republic. In 1971, a civil war in East Pakistan resulted in the creation of Bangladesh.

Pakistan's history has been characterized by periods of military rule and political instability. It is still a undeveloped nation that faces problems with high levels of poverty and illiteracy. It is the sixth most populous country in the world and has the second largest Muslim population in the world after Indonesia. It also has the second largest Shia Muslim population in the world. The country is listed among the Next Eleven economies and is the world's only Muslim-majority nuclear state.

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Land of the Pure

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