

Pakistan

Introduction

Pakistan is the home to what used to be the Indus Valley civilization, which is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. Pakistan's cultural history is both political and architectural. This report will include information on its location and geography, its population and ethnic groups, its government, the economy of Pakistan, the religion of Pakistan, the culture of Pakistan, and a brief description of its long history, its architecture, and a description of its flag and national symbols.

Location, Geography, Capital, and Major Cities

Pakistan is located in southeastern part of Asia and is on the western border of India. It is a bit less than twice the size of California. Pakistan is located on the Indus Valley. It has a dry desert that is very hot during the summer and cold during the winter. The climate in Pakistan is hotter in the north and colder in the south. The capital is Islamabad, which is located on the northeastern part of Pakistan. Some of its major cities are Lahore, Karachi, Rawal Pindi, and Peshawar. Pakistan has only four states, Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and N.W.F.P. (North-West Frontier Province).

Earthquakes occur frequently in Pakistan, but mostly in the north and west. In July and August, there are many floods after heavy rains in the Indus. In the

east, there is an Indus plain. In the north there is a mountain range called the Karakorum. In that range there is a mountain called K2, which is the second highest mountain in the world.

Population and Ethnic Groups

“Pakistan has an estimated population of about 167,762,040 in 2007.” (CIA – The World Factbook) There are many different groups in Pakistan. Grouped by religion, ninety-seven percent are Muslim, and three percent are Jewish or Christian. Other groups are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun, Baloch, and Muhajir. Urdu is the official language spoken, but there are many other languages spoken like “Punjabi, Sindhi, Siraiki, Pashtu, Balochi, Hindko, Brahui, English, and Burushaski.” (Pakistan: The Land of the Pure) Although Urdu is the official language, the language commonly used is Punjabi.

Government

Pakistan’s government type is federal republic. Their legal system is very similar to that of the British, but with some revisions. In their political groups, military groups and leaders are the most important force. Landowners, small merchants, and industrialists are also very important.

Pakistan has the tripartite system in their government, so they have three branches: the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch.

Each province in Pakistan has its own assembly whose members were elected by voting, but the provincial governor is chosen by the president. The assembly also elects the chief minister.

Economy

The type of money used in Pakistan is called the Pakistani rupee (PKR). Pakistan has many exports including textiles, wheat, and cotton. They have about sixty-nine percent of fossil fuels and twenty eight percent of hydroelectric power. They trade a lot with the European Union nations and Japan, China, and the United States. Pakistan, however, was on the verge of bankruptcy in the late 1990s with a debt of over thirty billion dollars. The unemployment rate in Pakistan is about eight percent, and about twenty-four percent of the people are below the poverty line.

Religion (optional section, can be in culture)

In Pakistan, the main religion is Islam. Muslims are monotheistic, and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a messenger of God. Islam's Quran is similar to the First Testament in the Bible and the Torah. The basic teachings of Islam are very similar to the teachings of the Christians and Jews. One major difference in the religions is that Islam does not believe in the Holy Trinity. In Islam, Jesus is considered a prophet, or messenger of God.

Culture

Pakistani culture has been preserved over the years. Weddings in Pakistan are traditionally held in either the bride or groom's house. Weddings normally take many days, between four and five. The first two days are Mehndi, which is a ceremony when all the women in the family put henna on the hands of the bride, and there is a lot of singing and dancing. The next ceremony is the actual wedding day (Barat), where the couple recites their vows. The day after this is the ceremony held at the groom's house (Vallima), where all the family and friends get together to eat and congratulate the couple. Usually in Pakistan, family members all live together in the same house even after getting married.

History (this section must now be 3 paragraphs)

Pakistan used to be part of the Indian subcontinent, controlled by the British. It got its independence from the British on August 14, 1947, led by the founder of Pakistan, Muhammed Ali Jinnah. India was a British colony at the time, and in 1947 India split into India and Pakistan. The areas with a greater population of Muslims became known as Pakistan. There was not a war, but many political disagreements that led to the deaths of many innocent people trying to move to Pakistan.

Architecture (optional section – can be in culture)

Pakistan's architecture consists mainly of mosques, which are religious buildings similar to temples. There, Muslims can pray and read their scriptures. The mosques had many decorations including geometric shapes covering the walls and floors.

By the eighteenth century, the Sikhs of Punjab took control of the Muslim's areas that are now the northern half of Pakistan. They stripped down their mosques, which greatly affected the Muslim religion. They did, although, make their own architectural contributions.

Fortunately, the southern half of Pakistan stayed under the control of the Muslims. However, Afghanistan invaders eventually tore down their important structures. Persian invaders did the same. They stole anything they could and took it home.

National Symbols

Pakistan's flag is mostly green with a strip of white. The green represents the religious majority and the white represents the religious minority. "The crescent and star, which are located in the center of the



flag, are religious symbols of Islam.” (Flags of the World) Pakistan’s national bird is the dove. The national flower of Pakistan is the jasmine.

Additional Facts

Pakistan has many things that make it an individual country. One of these things is that they make many well known instruments used in hospitals. They also make athletic equipment parts for well known brands known here in the United States.

Conclusion

As you now know, Pakistan is a country full of excitement, history, and culture. My family is planning a trip to Pakistan this summer and although I have been there before, I will now look for the things I learned through doing this report and really appreciate the beauty of Pakistan. I cannot really tell you one main reason for choosing this report. I guess I can say I choose it because I had been there and wanted to learn more about what I have visited. Or, I could say that I could not think of another country at the moment and Pakistan just popped into my head, but now I realize that the real reason was deeper than that. I chose Pakistan because it was my father’s hometown and I wanted to deepen my knowledge of the place where he grew up, had some of his happiest memories, and spent time with his family. I could have easily chosen Mexico, it being my mother’s hometown,

but then I thought, why do research on something I already knew so much about?

So now you know a bit of my family, our culture, and most important, Pakistan.

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