

15 things you don't know about ... PAKISTAN

1 Once part of British colonial India, Pakistan gained independence on Aug. 14, 1947; Mohammed Ali Jinnah, a leader in the struggle for a Muslim state, became the new nation's first governor general

2 Originally, Pakistan consisted of two territories bracketing India; in 1971, East Pakistan became the independent nation of Bangladesh

President Pervez Musharraf at a press conference in Washington D.C., Sept. 2006



3 India and Pakistan have a strained relationship that erupted into war in 1947, 1965 and 1971 – twice over the still-disputed province of Kashmir; in the late 1990s, both nations conducted a series of dueling nuclear weapons tests

4 Pakistan is 97 percent Muslim, mostly Sunnis, with Christians and Hindus comprising the remainder

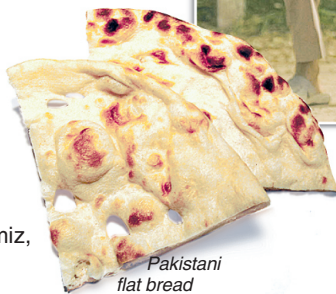
5 The nation covers 310,320 sq. mi. (803,700 sq. km); population of 164.7 million; Islamabad, the capital, has 955,000 people

6 The Pakistani rupee equals 60 rupees to a U.S. dollar (Nov. 2007) about 24 percent of the population lives below the poverty line

7 The official language of Pakistan is Urdu, though fewer than 10 percent of the population speak it as their first language

8 Pakistani cuisine includes flat loaves of bread called chapati, naan or roti, cooked lentils, vegetables, and mutton, beef or chicken curries; pork is forbidden by Islam; lassi, a yogurt beverage flavored with sugar or salt, is popular

9 The most common garment for men and women is the shalwar-qamiz, loose trousers and a long, knee-length shirt



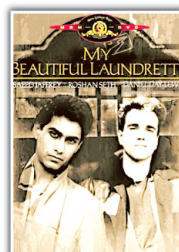
The village of Shekhanandeh clings to a mountainside near Pakistan's border with Afghanistan



Children play cricket – a passion in Pakistan – in a park in Islamabad

10 About 200,000 Pakistani-Americans live in the United States; New York City has the largest population of about 35,000

11 Western films featuring Pakistan or Pakistanis include "Gandhi" (1982), "My Beautiful Laundrette" (1985), "Syriana" (2005) and "A Mighty Heart" (2007); the Pakistani film industry, centered in Lahore, is referred to as Bollywood



"... Laundrette"

12 Popular Pakistani actress Meera faced death threats in 2005 after locking lips with an Indian co-star in a Bollywood production titled "Nazar," or "Sight," the first co-production between the two nations



Meera



Former prime minister Benazir Bhutto returned in Oct. from eight years in exile; assassinated Dec. 27

13 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto served as president and prime minister from 1971 to 1977; deposed by the military in 1977, he was executed in 1979; his daughter, Benazir Bhutto, led Pakistan 1988-1990 and 1993-1996, but was removed both times on corruption charges; she went into self-imposed exile in 1999; returned Oct. 2007; killed Dec. 27 by a suicide bomber while campaigning for parliament

14 Gen. Pervez Musharraf came to power in a 1999 military coup, and declared himself president, 2001; he has a son (a graduate student at Stanford University) and a daughter (an architect).

15 Declaring a state of emergency, Musharraf suspended the constitution and fired the chief justice of the Supreme Court Nov. 3; he said the courts hindered the fight against extremists; he announced elections would be held Jan. 8; he stepped down as head of the military and was sworn in as a civilian leader; Musharraf lifted state of emergency and restored the constitution Dec. 15