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Pakistan

pāk'īstānā, pāk'īstān', officially Islamic Republic of Pakistan, republic (2005 est. pop. 162,420,000), 310,403 sq mi (803,944 sq km), S Asia. Pakistan is bordered by India on the east, the Arabian Sea on the south, Iran on the southwest, and Afghanistan on the west and north; in the northeast is the disputed territory (with India) of Kashmir, of which the part occupied by Pakistan borders on China. Islamabad is the capital and Karachi is the largest city. Pakistan is composed of four provinces—Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province, Punjab, and Sind, all of which closely coincide with the historic regions—and two federal territories, one the site of the capital and the other a federally administered grouping known as the Tribal Areas along the central Afghanistan border. The Tribal Areas are essentially autonomous, with little government presence, and are governed largely by tribal traditions and councils. Pakistani-controlled Kashmir is divided into the Northern Areas and Azad Kashmir. Pakistan formerly consisted of two regions—West Pakistan and East Pakistan—located in the northwestern and northeastern corners of the Indian subcontinent and separated from each other by more than 1,000 mi (1,610 km) of India; East Pakistan became the independent state of Bangladesh following the 1971 civil war.

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Land

The country has a generally hot and dry climate, with desert conditions prevailing throughout much of the area. Along the western border and in a section of the north are semiarid steppelands and deserts; a subtropical climate with marked summer rainfall is found in a small section of the northeast along the Himalayan foothills; and a mountain climate that varies with altitude is found in the north.

The Indus is the chief river of Pakistan and is the nation's lifeline. It flows the length of the country and is fed by the combined waters of three of the five rivers of Punjab—the Chenab, Jhelum, and Ravi. The waters of the other two rivers, the Beas and the Sutlej, are largely withdrawn for irrigation in India. Along the Indus and its tributaries are found most of Pakistan's population, its chief agricultural areas, and its major hydroelectric power stations.

Pakistan may be divided into four geographic regions—the plateau of W Pakistan, the plains of the Indus and Punjab rivers, the hills of NW Pakistan, and the mountains of N Pakistan. The plateau region of W Pakistan, which is roughly coextensive with Baluchistan prov., is an arid region with relatively wetter conditions in its northern sections. Numerous low mountain ranges rise from the plateau, and the Hingol and Dasht rivers are among the largest streams. Large portions of the region are unfit for agriculture, and although some cotton is raised, nomadic sheep grazing is the principal activity. Coal, chromite, and natural gas are found in this area, and fishing and salt



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trading are carried on along the rugged Makran coast. Quetta, the chief city, is an important railroad center on the line between Afghanistan and the Indus valley.

East of the plateau region are extensive alluvial plains, through which flow the Indus and its tributaries. The region, closely coinciding with Sind and Punjab provinces, is hot and dry and is occupied in its eastern borders by the Thar Desert. Extensive irrigation facilities, fed by the waters of the Indus system, make the Indus basin the agricultural heartland of Pakistan. A variety of crops (especially wheat, rice, and cotton) are raised there. Advances in agricultural engineering have countered the salinity problems involved in farming the Indus delta. The irrigated portions of the plain are densely populated, being the site of many of Pakistan's principal cities, including Lahore, Faisalabad (formerly Lyallpur), Hyderabad, and Multan. Karachi, the nation's chief port, is located west of the irrigated land at a site accessible to oceangoing vessels. The higher parts of the plain, in the north, as in the vicinity of Lahore, have a more humid subtropical climate.

In NW Pakistan, occupying about two thirds of North-West Frontier Province, is a region of low hills and plateaus interspersed with fertile valleys. The elevation of the region tempers the arid climate. It is a predominantly agricultural area, with wheat the chief crop; fruit trees and livestock are also raised. Peshawar and Rawalpindi, the largest cities of this area, are the only major manufacturing centers. In the northern section of the North-West Frontier Province and in the Pakistani-occupied sector of Kashmir are the rugged ranges and the high, snowcapped peaks of the Hindu Kush, Himalaya, and Karakorum mountains; Tirich Mir (25,236 ft/7,692 m) is the highest point in the country outside Kashmir

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People

Pakistan has one of the world's most rapidly growing populations. Its people are a mixture of many ethnic groups, a result of the occupation of the region by groups passing through on their way to India. The Pathans (Pashtuns) of the northwest are a large, indigenous group that has long resisted advances by invaders and that has at times sought to establish an autonomous state within Pakistan. Baluchis, who live mainly in the southwest, have also pressed for the creation of a state that would incorporate parts of Afghanistan and Iran. Punjabis reside mainly in the northeast, and Sindhis in the southeast. Pakistan is an overwhelmingly (about 97%) Muslim country. Urdu is the official language, but Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Baluchi, and Brahui are also spoken; English is common among the upper classes and in the government.

Although the death rate has been reduced by improved health standards, sickness, disease, and malnutrition are still prevalent. A widespread effort to educate the population has raised the literacy rate to about 38%. Pakistan has a substantial number of universities, including a provincial university in each of the provinces; major universities and specialized schools in Lahore, Karachi, and Faisalabad; and a central university in Islamabad.

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Economy

Agriculture is the mainstay of Pakistan's economy, employing almost 50% of the population. Wheat, rice, cotton, sugarcane, and tobacco are the chief crops, and cattle and sheep are raised. Most of Pakistan's agricultural output comes from the Indus basin. The country is now self-sufficient in food, as vast irrigation schemes have extended farming into arid areas, and fertilizers and new varieties of crops have increased yields.

Pakistan's industrial base is able to supply many of the country's needs in consumer goods, although production has slowed in recent years. The country's natural resources provide materials for such industries as textile production (the biggest earner of foreign exchange), oil refining, metal processing, and cement and fertilizer production. Remittances from Pakistanis working abroad constitute the second largest source of foreign exchange. Since the mid-1950s electric power output has greatly increased, mainly because of the development of hydroelectric power potential and the use of thermal power plants. Pakistan's chief imports are petroleum, machinery, transport equipment, chemicals, and edible fats and oils. The chief trading partners are the European Union nations, the United States, Japan, and China. In the late 1990s, following years of lax fiscal policies, Pakistan appeared on the verge of bankruptcy, with a foreign debt of over \$30 billion.

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Government

Until Oct., 1999, when the constitution was suspended, Pakistan was governed by the constitution of 1973 as amended in 1985, which provides for a federal parliamentary form of government. Constitutional government was restored in 2002, although Pervez Musharraf, who seized power in 1999, remained president and unilaterally amended (2002) the constitution. Under the constitution, there is a bicameral parliament, comprising a 342-member national assembly with 272 members directly elected from single-seat constituencies and the rest nominated by the parties, and a 100-member senate chosen mainly either by provincial assemblies or, in tribal areas, by popular election. The president is the head of state, and the prime minister the chief executive. Each province has its own legislative assembly whose members are elected by direct popular vote, a provincial governor appointed by the president, and a chief minister elected by the legislative assembly. There is an independent judicial branch of government.

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History

Early History

The northwest of the Indian subcontinent, which now constitutes Pakistan, lies athwart the historic invasion routes through the Khyber, Gumal, and Bolan passes from central Asia to the heartland of India, and for thousands of years invaders and adventurers swept down upon the settlements there. The Indus valley civilization, which flourished until c.1500 BC, was one of the region's earliest civilizations. The Aryans, who surpassed the Indus, were

followed by the Persians of the Achaemenid empire, who by c.500 BC reached the Indus River. Alexander the Great, conqueror of the Persian empire, invaded the Punjab in 326 BC. The Seleucid empire, heir to Alexander's Indian conquest, was checked by the Mauryas, who by 305 BC occupied the Indus plain and much of Afghanistan.

After the fall of the Mauryas (2d cent. BC) the Indo-Greek Bactrian kingdom rose to power, but was in turn overrun (c.97 BC) by Scythian nomads called Saka and then by the Parthians (c.AD 7). The Parthians, of Persian stock, were replaced by the Kushans; the Kushan Kanishka ruled (2d cent. AD) all of what is now Pakistan from his capital at Peshawar. In 712, the Muslim Arabs appeared in force and conquered Sind, and by 900 they controlled most of NW India. They were followed by the Ghaznavid and Ghori Turks. The first Turki invaders reached Bengal c.1200 and an important Muslim center was established there, principally through conversion of the Hindus. Although the northeast of the Indian subcontinent (now Bangladesh) remained, with interruptions, part of a united Mughal empire in India from the early 16th cent. to 1857, the northwest changed hands many times before it became (1857) part of imperial British India. It was overrun by Persians in the late 1730s; by the Afghans, who held Sind and the Punjab during the latter half of the 18th cent.; and by the Sikhs, who rose to power in the Punjab under Ranjit Singh (1780–1839).

British Control and the Muslim League

The British attempted to subdue the anarchic northwest during the First Afghan War (1839–42) and succeeded in conquering Sind in 1843 and the Punjab in 1849. The turbulence of the region was intensified by the fierce forays of Baluchi and Pathan tribespeople from the mountainous hinterlands. The British occupied Quetta in 1876 and again attempted to conquer the tribespeople in the Second Afghan War (1878–80) but were still unsuccessful. With the creation of the North-West Frontier Province in 1901, the British shifted from a policy of conquest to one of containment.

Unlike previous settlers in India, the Muslim immigrants were not absorbed into Hindu society. Their ranks were augmented by the millions of Hindus who had been converted to Islam. There was cultural interchange between Hindu and Muslim, but no homogeneity emerged. After the Indian Mutiny (1857), a rising Hindu middle class began to assume dominant positions in industry, education, the professions, and the civil service. Although, in these early decades of the Indian National Congress, vigorous efforts were made to include Muslims in the nationalist movement, concern for Muslim political rights led to the formation of the Muslim League in 1906; in the ensuing years Hindu-Muslim conflict became increasingly acute.

The idea of a Muslim nation, distinct from Hindu India, was introduced in 1930 by the poet Muhammad Iqbal and was ardently supported by a group of Indian Muslim students in England, who were the first to use the name Pakistan [land of the pure, from the Urdu pak, =pure and stan, =land]. It gained wide support in 1940 when the Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, demanded the establishment of a Muslim state in the areas of India where Muslims were in the majority. The League won most of the Muslim constituencies in the 1946 elections, and Britain and the Congress party reluctantly agreed to the formation of Pakistan as a separate dominion under the provisions of the Indian Independence Act, which went into effect on Aug. 15, 1947.

Partition and Conflict

Jinnah became the governor-general of the new nation and Liaquat Ali Khan the first prime minister. While India inherited most of the British administrative machinery, Pakistan had to start with practically nothing; records and Muslim administrators were transferred from New Delhi to a chaotic, makeshift capital at Karachi. Moreover, an autumn of violence and slaughter among Hindus and Muslims came between independence and the task of developing the new nation. Disturbances in Delhi were only a prelude to the slaughter in the Punjab, where the Gurdaspur district had been partitioned to give India access to Kashmir. Although there was some violence in Calcutta (now Kolkata), the efforts of Mohandas K. Gandhi prevented widespread killing in partitioned Bengal. The communal strife took more than 500,000 lives; 7.5 million Muslim refugees fled to both parts of Pakistan from India, and 10 million Hindus left Pakistan for India.

Disputes between India and Pakistan arose also over the princely states of Junagadh, Hyderabad, and Kashmir. In the first two, Muslim rulers held sway over a Hindu majority but India forcibly joined both states to the Union, dismissing the wishes of the rulers and basing its claims instead on the wishes of the people and the facts of geography. In Kashmir the situation was precisely the opposite; a Hindu ruler held sway over a Muslim majority in a country that was geographically and economically tied to West Pakistan. The ruler signed over Kashmir to India in Oct., 1947, but Pakistan refused to accept the move. Fighting broke out (see India-Pakistan Wars) and continued until Jan., 1948, when India and Pakistan both appealed to the United Nations, each accusing the other of aggression. A cease-fire was agreed upon and a temporary demarcation line partitioned (1949) the disputed state.

In the meantime, Pakistan faced serious internal problems. A liberal statement of constitutional principles was promulgated in 1949, but parts of the proposed constitution ran into orthodox Muslim opposition. On Oct. 16, 1951, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated by an Afghan fanatic. His death left a leadership void that prime ministers Khwaja Nazimuddin (1951–53) and Muhammad Ali (1953–55) and governor-general Ghulam Muhammad (1951–55) failed to fill. In East Bengal, which had more than half of the nation's population, there was increasing dissatisfaction with the federal government in West Pakistan. In 1954, faced with growing crises, the government dissolved the constituent assembly and declared a state of emergency. In 1955, the existing provinces and princely states of West Pakistan were merged into a single province made up of 12 divisions, and the name of East Bengal was changed to East Pakistan, thus giving it at least the appearance of parity with West Pakistan.

In Feb., 1956, a new constitution was finally adopted, and Pakistan formally became a republic within the Commonwealth of Nations; Gen. Iskander Mirza became the first president. Economic conditions remained precarious, even though large shipments of grain from the United States after 1953 had helped to relieve famine. In foreign relations, Pakistan's conflict with India over Kashmir remained unresolved, and Afghanistan continued its agitation for the formation of an autonomous Pushtunistan nation made up of the Pathan tribespeople along the northwest frontier. Pakistan joined the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in 1954 and the Central Treaty Organization in 1955. After 1956 the threat to the stability of the Pakistan government gradually increased, stemming from continuing economic difficulties, frequent cabinet crises, and widespread political corruption.

The Ayub Khan Regime

Finally, in Oct., 1958, President Mirza abrogated the constitution and granted power to the army under Gen.

Muhammad Ayub Khan. Ayub subsequently assumed presidential powers (in 1960 he was elected to a five-year term), abolishing the office of prime minister and ruling by decree. Under the dictatorship, a vigorous land reform and economic development program was begun, and a new constitution, which provided for a federal Islamic republic with two provinces (East and West Pakistan) and two official languages (Bengali and Urdu), went into effect in 1962. The new city of Islamabad, N of Rawalpindi (which had been interim capital since 1959), became the national capital, and Dhaka, in East Pakistan, became the legislative capital.

In 1965, Ayub was reelected and a national assembly of 156 members—with East and West Pakistan each allocated 75 seats, and six seats reserved for women, who had previously been denied the vote under Islamic strictures—was elected. A treaty with India governing the use of the waters of the Indus basin was signed (1961). Communal strife was constantly present in the subcontinent—in Jan., 1961, several thousand Muslims were massacred in Madhya Pradesh state in India, and there were reprisals in Pakistan; in 1962 there was further communal conflict in Bengal. Diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan were severed (1961–63) after some border clashes and continued Afghan agitation, supported by the USSR, for an independent Pushtunistan.

A series of conferences on Kashmir was held (Dec., 1962–Feb., 1963) between India and Pakistan following the Chinese assault (Oct., 1962) on India; both nations offered important concessions and solution of the long-standing dispute seemed imminent. However, Pakistan then signed a bilateral border agreement with China that involved the boundaries of the disputed state, and relations with India again became strained. Pakistan's continuing conflict with India over Kashmir erupted in fighting (Apr.–June, 1965) in the Rann of Kachchh region of NW India and SE West Pakistan and in an outbreak of warfare (August–September) in Kashmir. Some improvement in relations between the two countries came in 1966, when President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri of India reached an accord in the Declaration of Tashkent at a meeting sponsored by the USSR. Despite the accord, however, the basic dispute over Kashmir remained unsettled.

In an effort to gain support in the conflict with India, Pakistan somewhat modified its pro-Western policy after 1963 by establishing closer relations with Communist countries, especially with China, by taking a neutral position on some international issues, and by joining the Regional Co-operation for Development Program of SW Asian nations. East Pakistan's long-standing discontent with the federal government was expressed in 1966 by a movement for increased autonomy, supported by a general strike. Following disastrous riots in late 1968 and early 1969, Ayub resigned and handed the government over to Gen. Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan, the head of the army, who then declared martial law. The first direct universal voting since independence was held in Dec., 1970, to elect a National Assembly that would draft a new constitution and restore federal parliamentary government.

Bangladesh and Bhutto

The Awami League, under Sheik Mujibur Rahman, in a campaign for full autonomy in East Pakistan, won an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly by taking 153 of the 163 seats allotted to East Pakistan. The opening session of the National Assembly, scheduled to meet in Dhaka in Mar., 1971, was twice postponed by Yahya Khan, who then canceled the election results, banned the Awami League, and imprisoned Sheik Mujib in West Pakistan on charges of treason. East Pakistan declared its independence as Bangladesh on Mar. 26, 1971, but was then placed under martial law and occupied by the Pakistani army, which was composed entirely of troops from West Pakistan. In the ensuing civil war, some 10 million refugees fled to India and hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed. India supported Bangladesh and on Dec. 3, 1971, sent troops into East Pakistan. Following a two-week war between Pakistan and India, in which fighting also broke out along the India-West Pakistan border, Pakistani troops in East Pakistan surrendered (Dec. 16) and a cease-fire was declared on all fronts.

Following Pakistan's defeat, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister, came to power in West Pakistan. Sheik Mujib was released from prison and eventually allowed to return to Bangladesh. Relations with India remained strained over the issue of the more than 90,000 Pakistani soldiers who had surrendered after the civil war and become prisoners of war, over Pakistan's refusal to recognize Bangladesh, and over Bangladesh's declared intention to bring to trial some Pakistani soldiers on war-crimes charges. A summit meeting held in Shimla, India, in July, 1972, resulted in an easing of tensions and an agreement to settle differences between the two nations peacefully.

Demarcation of the truce line in Kashmir was finally completed in Dec., 1972. In Aug., 1973, India and Pakistan reached an agreement on the release of Pakistani prisoners-of-war and the exchange of hostage populations in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh—especially of the Bengalis in Pakistan and the Biharis in Bangladesh. Bhutto recognized Bangladesh in Feb., 1974, prior to the start of a world Islamic summit conference in Lahore. In the mid-1970s Bhutto's government faced increasing regional tensions among Pakistan's various ethnic groups. After Bhutto's 1977 election victory was challenged by the opposition, widespread riots ensued.

Recent History

Failure to reach a reconciliation prompted the army chief of staff, Gen. Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, to depose Bhutto in a military coup in July and declare martial law. Zia was declared president in September, and Bhutto, convicted of ordering the murder of political opponents, was hanged in Apr., 1979. In the 1980s Pakistan was dominated by events occurring in neighboring Afghanistan, where the Soviet invasion resulted in the flight of over 3 million people to Pakistan. Pakistan served as the primary conduit for U.S. aid to the Afghan resistance, resulting in large amounts of U.S. aid to Pakistan as well. The relationship prompted Zia to return the government to civilian hands, and in 1985 he announced the end of martial law, but only after amending the constitution so as to greatly strengthen his power as president.

In 1986, Benazir Bhutto, daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his heir as head of the Pakistan People's party (PPP), returned to the country. In May, 1988, Zia dismissed parliament, charging it with widespread corruption, and announced general elections for November. In August, Zia died in a mysterious plane crash. The PPP won the November elections, and Bhutto became prime minister. Despite a strong power base, Bhutto encountered numerous problems in office, including regional ethnic clashes, the difficulties of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and long-term tensions caused by Pakistan's poverty and its uneasy relationship with India. In Aug., 1990, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed Bhutto and her cabinet, accusing them of misconduct and abuse of power.

November elections brought to power a coalition government headed by Nawaz Sharif, whose administration

instituted economic reform policies of privatization and deregulation in an effort to stimulate growth. In 1991 the parliament approved legislation raising the status of Islamic law. When Sharif moved to reduce presidential power, he was dismissed (1993) by President Ishaq Khan; the ensuing crisis was resolved with the resignations of both men. Bhutto's party won the most seats in new elections later in 1993, and she once again became prime minister, heading a coalition government; Farooq Leghari, a Bhutto ally, was elected president. In 1995 some three dozen military officers were arrested, reportedly for plotting an Islamic revolution in Pakistan. Bhutto was again dismissed in 1996 on charges of corruption by President Leghari. In 1997, Leghari established a Council for Defense and National Security, which gave a key role in political decision-making to the heads of the armed forces.

Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League won a huge majority in the 1997 elections and he once again became prime minister. Sharif soon moved to enact legislation curbing the president's power to dismiss elected governments and to appoint armed forces chiefs; the supreme court blocked these moves and reinstated a corruption inquiry against Sharif. In an apparent victory for Sharif, President Leghari resigned in Dec., 1997, and the chief justice of the supreme court was dismissed. Mohammad Rafiq Tarar became president in 1998. Following the detonation of underground nuclear devices by India in May, 1998, Pakistan carried out its own series of nuclear tests; the United States imposed economic sanctions against both countries. In the summer of 1999, conflict with India over Kashmir erupted again, with Pakistani-backed troops withdrawing from Indian-held territory after several weeks of fighting.

In Oct., 1999, a bloodless military coup led by Gen. Pervez Musharraf ousted Sharif, suspended the constitution, and declared martial law. Sharif was charged with treason, and in Apr., 2000, he was convicted of hijacking an airliner (as a result of issuing orders to deny permission to land to the plane that Musharraf had been on prior to the 1999 coup) and was sentenced to life in prison. Sharif subsequently was also convicted on corruption charges, and later exiled (Dec., 2000) to Saudi Arabia.

In June, 2001, Musharraf appointed himself president. A summit in July with Prime Minister Vajpayee of India proved unfruitful and ended on a bitter note. Following the September terrorist attacks on the United States that were linked to Osama bin Laden, the United States ended its sanctions on Pakistan and sought its help in securing bin Laden from the Taliban government of Afghanistan, but Pakistan proved unable to influence the Taliban, who had received support from Pakistan since the mid-1990s. Pakistan permitted U.S. planes to cross its airspace and U.S. forces to be based there during the subsequent military action against Afghanistan. These moves provoked sometimes violent anti-U.S. demonstrations erupted in Pakistani cities, particularly in border areas where many Afghan refugees and Pathans live. In response, the government cracked down on the more militant Islamic fundamentalist groups.

After terror attacks by Pakistani-based guerrillas on Indian government buildings in late 2001, India threatened to go to war with Pakistan unless all guerrilla attacks were ended. As Pakistan moved haltingly to suppress such groups the crisis escalated, but in Jan., 2002, Musharraf attacked religious extremism and its affect on Pakistani society, and stated that no group engaging in terrorism would be tolerated. A crackdown on such groups was complicated by strong popular Pakistani support for guerrillas fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, but many Pakistanis also objected to the Islamic fundamentalism espoused by many of the guerrillas and their supporters. In mid-2002 Pakistan's army established garrisons in a number of tribal areas for the first time since independence.

Also in January, Musharraf announced plans for national and provincial legislative elections in Oct., 2002, while indicating that he intended to remain in office. In April, he called for a referendum on extending his rule for five more years. Most national political parties called for a boycott of the referendum, and turnout appeared low in many locations; Musharraf claimed a 50% turnout, with a 98% yes vote. In August he imposed 29 constitutional amendments designed to make his rule impervious to political opposition in parliament.

Meanwhile, tensions with India again reached the brink of war in May, as a result of escalating attacks by Muslim militants in India. Concern that a conflict might evolve into nuclear warfare prompted international mediation, and the crisis eased after Pakistan stopped state-sponsored guerrilla infiltration across the line of control in Kashmir. The fighting in Afghanistan, violence and political turmoil in Pakistan, and tension with India hurt the Pakistani economy, particularly the export textile and apparel industries.

Parliamentary elections in Oct., 2002, resulted in a setback for Musharraf, as the Pakistan Muslim League–Quaid (PMLQ), which supported him, placed second in terms of the seats it won. Bhutto's PPP placed first, and a generally anti-American Islamic fundamentalist coalition was a strong third and also won control of the North-West Frontier prov., where the legislature subsequently approved (June, 2003) the establishment of Islamic law. Zafarullah Khan Jamali, the PMLQ leader, was narrowly elected Pakistan's prime minister. Tensions with India further eased in 2003, and midway through the year diplomatic relations were restored.

In Dec., 2003, two attempts were made to assassinate Musharraf, but both failed. That same month he sealed an agreement with the Islamic parties to pass a modified version of the constitutional amendments he had imposed in Aug., 2002. He accepted some limitations on his powers, and he agreed to give up his post as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff. Other opposition parties denounced the deal.

Following revelations in the news media concerning the transfer of Pakistani nuclear technology to Iran, Libya, and North Korea, Abdul Qadeer Khan in Feb., 2004, admitted that he overseen such transfers from the late 1980s until 2000. The Pakistani government said that Khan, who had led its nuclear weapons program for a quarter century, had sold the technology for personal gain, but missiles parts were transferred at the same time from North Korea to Pakistan, leading international arms experts and others to believe that the government was at the very least aware of the transfers. Khan, revered by many Pakistanis as the father of the Islamic bomb, was pardoned by President Musharraf.

In Mar., 2004, Pakistan's military began operations against foreign Islamic militants in South Waziristan, but local militants who regarded the attacks as a breach of local autonomy joined in fighting against government forces. The fighting continued into 2005, when operations were also begun in North Waziristan. Agreements with tribal leaders in both regions ended military operations in Waziristan in late 2006. Fighting also occurred in Baluchistan, where local tribes demanding a greater share in the provinces mineral wealth and an end of the stationing of military forces there mounted a series of attacks that continued into 2006. Meanwhile, in Apr., 2004, a bill was passed creating a national security council, consisting of military and civilian leaders, to advise the government on matters

of national interest. Creation of the council gave the military an institutionalized voice in national affairs.

Prime Minister Jamali resigned and the cabinet was dissolved in June, after Jamali lost the support of the president. Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, a close political ally of Musharraf, became interim prime minister until Shaukat Aziz, the finance minister in the outgoing cabinet and Musharraf's choice to succeed Jamali, was elected to the national assembly and took office (Aug., 2004). In Oct., 2004, the governing coalition passed legislation permitting Musharraf to remain chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, despite the president's earlier pledge to resign from the post, and at the end of the year Musharraf announced he would not resign.

In Apr., 2005, Musharraf visited India, and the two nations agreed to increase cross-border transport links, including in Kashmir, and to work to improve trade between them. Passage (July, 2005) by the North-West Frontier government of a law calling for Islamic moral policing was challenged by the national government, and the supreme court declared the legislation unconstitutional. A similar but somewhat weaker bill was passed in 2006 and again challenged. An earthquake in Oct., 2005, caused widespread devastation in N Pakistan, particularly in Kashmir, killed more than 73,000 and injured nearly as many, and left an estimated 3 million homeless. Many victims in remote areas were slow to receive aid when those areas became practically inaccessible as a result of damage to roads combined with inadequate alternative transportation.

In 2006 relations with Afghanistan became increasingly strained as Afghan officials accused Pakistan of allowing the Taliban and Al Qaeda to use bordering areas of Pakistan, particularly Baluchistan around Quetta, as safe havens and to send forces and weapons across border into Afghanistan. After a series of bomb attacks (July, 2006) in Mumbai, India, that India asserted were linked to Pakistani security forces, peace talks were suspended between the two nations, but they resumed in late 2006 and an agreement designed to prevent an accidental nuclear war between India and Pakistan was signed in Feb., 2007.

In Mar., 2007, Musharraf suspended Pakistan's chief justice for misuse of authority; the justice had conducted investigations into human rights abuses by Pakistan's security forces and was regarded as independent of the government. While the chief justice challenged the move in the courts, Pakistani lawyers and judges denounced the move as unconstitutional, and they and opposition parties mounted demonstrations in support of the chief justice, believing that the president was attempting to remove him as a prelude to extending his presidency beyond the end of 2007. A planned rally in Karachi in support of the chief justice led to two days of violence in May in which those who died were largely opposition activists; the violence provoked additional opposition demonstrations and strikes. In June, 2007, there was devastating flooding in Baluchistan after a cyclone struck the coast; some 2 million were affected by the floodwaters.

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