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PAKISTAN

Land of Diversity

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Pakistan has Potential to Become One of World's Large Economies

Pakistan is a developing country and is one of the 'Next Eleven' countries that, along with the BRICS, (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) has potential to become one of the world's large economies in the 21st century.

The Textile industry in Pakistan is the largest manufacturing industry in Pakistan. It has traditionally, after agriculture, been the only industry that has generated huge employment for both skilled and unskilled labor being the second largest employment generating sector in Pakistan. Pakistan is the 8th largest exporter of textile products in Asia. This sector contributes 8.5% to the GDP and provides employment to about 15 million people.

Pakistan is the 4th largest producer of cotton. Its export and that of its products earns us about US \$ 12.5 billion from 20 countries. while fulfilling the country's own demand. Cotton fabric in vibrant colours hang at many a street corners and is sold-out by sun down. Silky, untextured feel of Pakistani lawn makes it in great demand for women of Pakistan and in south-east Asia being an ideal fabric for long hot summers.

Cotton handlooms are treasured and its weavers make cotton quilts for many homes, while khaadi (handspun and hand woven cotton) finds its way to most elegant purchasers, local or global. 'Ajrak' the unique block-printed shawl of Sindh is an integral part of Sindhi culture, evident at all levels of society and is often presented as a mark of honour to a guest.

Cotton bed linen and curtain fabric travel beyond our borders for their high quality, colours and designs. The art of embroidery lend bed linen a classic look: world-wide buyers recognize it and enjoy the elegant lifestyle it gives.

Cotton rugs, wall-hanging cotton carpets to hand-knotted carpets lend elegance to many homes here and abroad.

Craftsmen of Sialkot were famous for fine swords and daggers in the Mughal era. Today their specialised skill make Pakistani surgical, dental and veterinary instruments in demand in highly developed markets of Europe and USA.



Hand-stitched football gives the desired direction to the player, as it keeps the course when kicked and is perfect in its bounce and balance, moving according to the wish of the player. World requirement of hand stitched footballs is estimated between 45 to 50 million, of which 90 per cent is met by Sialkot based industries.

A roadside cobbler to makers of Pakistani leather jackets, boots and wallets that sell at competitive price and are sought in the Far East, Europe and USA, capatilise on availability of leather in the country. Furniture leather for upholstery is ideal for public places and has found international market because of its fine quality. Focus on better fashion design, trade fairs, e-marketing are all on the anvil to build the "Brand Pakistan".

Pakistan ranks 10th in the world for remittances sent home by overseas Pakistanis. Almost 10 million Pakistanis work overseas and the sum they have sent home has doubled in the four years through June 2013, to a record \$13 billion.



Today

We are an Emerging Economy

Generators outside shops are a common sight in Pakistan to beat the power shortage in the country. The shortage triggers options for power generation, offering opportunities for an emerging sector. Wikipedia states that the economy of Pakistan is the 26th largest in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), and 44th largest in terms of nominal Gross Domestic Product even though the country is sixth most populous in the world.

Karachi Insurance Institute (KII) played its role by organizing two full-day seminars to address the issue: Evolving Coal Power & Mining - Risk Management & Insurance Solutions in 2014, and Renewable Energy in 2013.

Telcom industry is thriving in Pakistan having posted the highest-ever revenue in 2013 at US \$ 472 million compared to US \$ 240.3 million in the previous year, states Pakistan Telecommunications Authority. 132.33 million mobile phone users were recorded in Pakistan in January 2014, making total cellular tel-density at 77%. Remaining connected with family and friends is part of living for Pakistan; with the result the country recorded the third highest SMS traffic in the world in 2010. Missed call is a unique Pakistani approach to budget-communication.

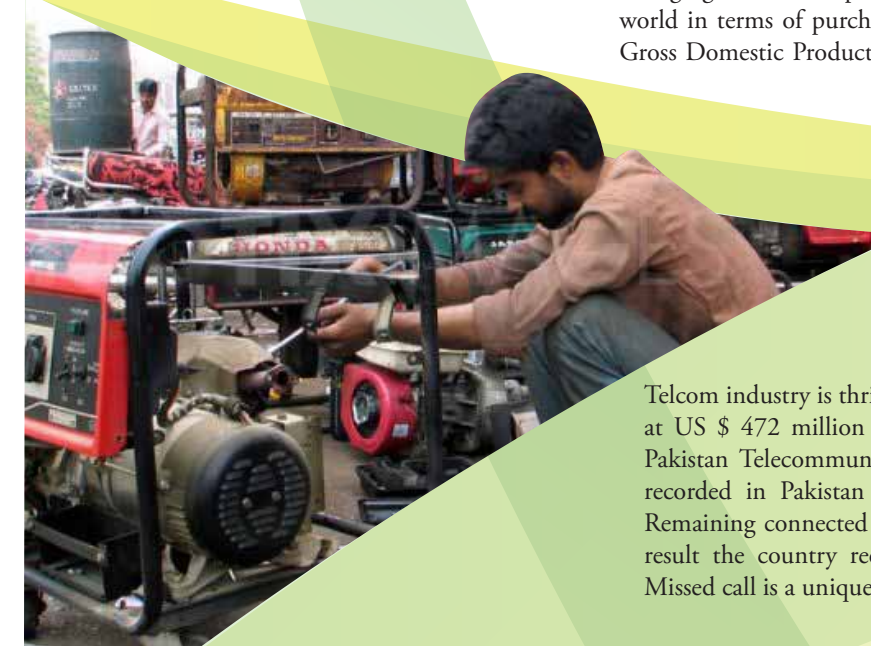
Pakistan is most suitable for solar power and compared to other technologies it is truly environment friendly. It also offers great business opportunity to the country.

Jhimpir Wind Power Plant in the Thatta district of Sindh is operational and provides 106.4 Megawatts (MW) to the national grid. Pakistan's wind corridor has potential for 50,000 MW of electricity and 12 wind power projects have been signed by the government in the Jhimpir area.

Online shopping or e-commerce is making its way also into rural Pakistan with FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) companies offering over 400 brands to 200 cities in Pakistan, states an FMCG operating in Pakistan. Branchless banking transactions had a growth of 327% in 2011-13, of which 20% of transactions were via mobile phones, people in the villages having adopted and utilized the facility in an amazing manner.

Pakistani demographic is a mouth-watering prospect for telecoms: 70% of Pakistan's population is under the age of thirty, with the youth hangout on the social media. 76% of Internet users surf at home with 25% of them on their mobiles, according to reports and surveys by social media operators.

The Grand Trunk Road of Sher Shah Suri built in 16th century stands even today. To keep pace with time, motorways have been also built to link major cities. M2 being the first motorway linking Islamabad and Lahore. Plans are in place for motorway/dual carriageway being built to link more cities and to meet the need of modernising transport network.



Our Music and Art

Thrive in Diversity

Teenage sisters Sania(15) and Muqqadas(13) Nooran singing Justin Bieber's "Baby" became an internet sensation in February 2015. They want to meet Justin and sing with him. While Benjamin Sisters - Nerissa, Beena and Shabana – sang in a 'single voice' in 1980s, achieving fame from release of their patriotic national songs.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan took listeners to mystical ecstasy with his Qawwali (devotional music of the Sufis), touring extensively to perform in over 40 countries. Abida Parveen is the foremost exponents of Sufi (devotional) music and considered one of the finest Sufi vocalists of modern era. She sings mainly ghazals (rhyming couplets and a refrain) and her forte, Kafis (classical form of Sufi poetry) is a solo genre accompanied by percussion and harmonium.

The King of Ghazal, Mehdi Hassan Khan was known for his "haunting" baritone voice. He influenced generations of singers from diverse genres, and remained a leading singer of film industry along with Ahmed Rushdi while Farida Khanum called "Malika-e-Ghazal" (Queen of Ghazal) is most associated with her Aaj Jaane Ki Zidd Naa Karo.

Shahbaz Qallander's dhamal song of Sindh to Reshma's magic in 'Lambi Judaai' for Bollywood, display the talent of our folk singers; while their instruments range from Dhol, chimta and bainsiri, to kamachi, sarod and tambur. Allan Fakir a Pakistani folk singer was the foremost exponents of sufi music in Pakistan, particularly his devotional rhetoric and Sufi dance singing.

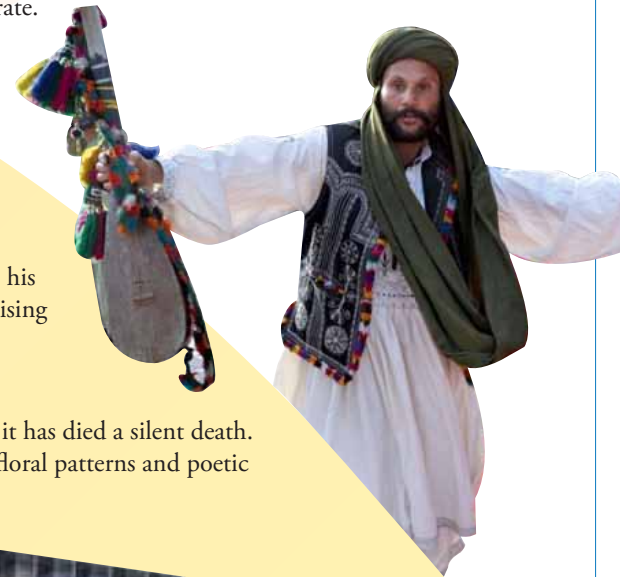
Trendsetting pop music duo Nazia and Zohaib Hassan, sister and brother, earned wide acclaim in a short span of time, pursuing music as a hobby. While pop bands Vital Signs, Janoon, Strings, Akash and Awaz have gained international exposure and recognition with their songs on satellite television; and eastern classical band Aaroh to avant-garde rock band Atitsh have a claim to local fame.

Pakistani dances from energetic Bhangara of Punjab to skillful dhandia with sticks, or lively Ho Jamalo of Sindh to the gentle sway of Luddi or be it Pashto Khattak with handkerchief, can all be seen when Pakistanis celebrate.

Sadequain's masterpiece mural on ceiling of Frere Hall has been dedicated to the citizens of Karachi. His calligraphy brought the art form to mainstream which now dominates the art scene in the country.

Miniature painting has its roots in Mughal musawwari technique but today there is divergence between traditional and contemporary miniatures. Rashid Rana's mosaics to his photo sculptures and large stainless steel works bring a freshness of purpose and a surprising inventiveness to visual art.

Billboards and cinema houses had life-size art painting but with use of new technology it has died a silent death. While Truck Art is new-born, vibrant and abundant: this indigenous art form features floral patterns and poetic calligraphy, customized and costing from US \$ 3,000 to USA \$ 5,000 per truck.



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Cricket is Not the Only Game We Play!

Insha Afsar lost her left leg up-to-her-hip, in 2005 earthquake in northern Pakistan, but the 14-year-old is now tearing down the giant slalom course at Loon Mountain as she competes for a top position in the US Paralympic Alpine National Championships.

Pakistan football team of 9 star street children from Lyari brought home the bronze medal in the Street Child World Cup 2014. Lyari is amazingly talented, not only in football but equally in cricket, cycling, donkey cart race, karate and boxing. Their enthusiasm for sports is palpable.

The Pakistan women cricket team has played in all the editions of the Women's Asia Cup except the inaugural edition and has won gold medals in the Asian Games in 2010 and 2014.

Free-styled mountain polo is arguably polo in its purest form. You can witness this at the 3-day Shandur Polo Festival in July between the home teams of Chitral and Gilgit: a tradition that dates back to 1936 and is held annually. Gilli-Danda is an amateur sport played in the rural areas and small towns of our country. The game is played with two sticks: a large one called a danda, which is used to hit a smaller one, the gilli. Seven Tiles is a team game where 'tiles' are built one upon the other, before the opposition can knock them down, or render the 'builder' out with a ball. Kancha or golis is a favourites game of young boys where a small hole is dug in the ground and with a stretched forefinger the player hits the marbles. The winner is one who gets all marbles in the hole.

Pakistan dominated squash like no other country in the world, the domination lasting for the best part of 5 decades, reaching its peak in the 1980s and 1990s with reigns of Jahangir Khan and Jansher Khan.

Muhammad Asif won the first title of 2012 World Snooker Championship and represents Pakistan in different international tournaments. He is the second Pakistani to win the world title, after Mohammed Yousuf, 20 years ago.

Aisam-ul-Haq played both mixed doubles and men's doubles at the US Open in 2010, and leads Pakistan at the Davis Cup campaigns.

Samina Khayal Baig reached the summit 'Koh-i-Brobar' in Mount Everest in 2011 becoming the first Pakistani woman and 3rd Pakistani to climb the Everest. Samina Baig set the record of capturing the Seven Summits in record age of 23 years and in record time.

Shuja-ud-Malik and Muhammad Irfan Islam won gold and bronze medals respectively in the XVIII Commonwealth Games in 2006 in Melbourne, Australia and Pakistani participants won two Gold, three Silver and one Bronze medal at the 11th South Asian Games in Bangladesh in 2010.



Flavours to Titillate Every Palate

Pakistan has a passion for food, diverging from bun kabab and samosas to Jalaibee (now even name of a Pakistani movie!) and chai (tea). They feed the humble and are delectable to the affluent. They are in street carts to special boutiques.

Biryani and Pulao have the distinction of being on every wedding menu. Wedding celebrations go upto 6 days: with Mayun, Uptan, Dholki, Mehndi, Baraat, and Valima, making it a feast of food, clothes, merriment and celebration wrapped up with customs and rituals.

Lassi (yogurt-drink) glasses can be seen lined-up in street carts offering different flavours. Gunney ka rus (sugar-cane juice) extracted by pressing in a heavy humble contraption makes a refreshing drink specially during hot summers.

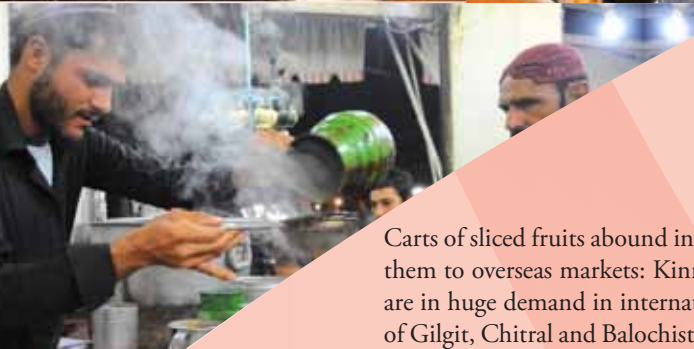
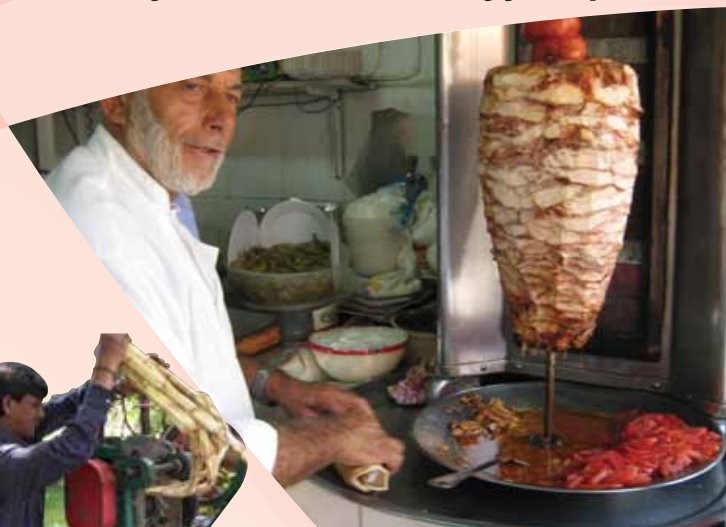
Carts of sliced fruits abound in business street corners at lunchtime and the nature's bounty and flavor also take them to overseas markets: Kinnoos (hybrid mandarin) only grown in Pakistan with its aroma and unique taste are in huge demand in international market while mangoes reach 27 world destinations. Chilgoza (pine nuts) of Gilgit, Chitral and Balochistan attract international trading and Pakistan's basmati (thin long-grain) captures the Middle-East and Africa.

Pakistanis love to cook and their hospitality is legendary. The natural outcome is dedicated food channels on television with housewives eagerly watching, cooking and commenting on recipes of the day.

Road side cafes to fancy food places and food streets abound. Karachi's Burns Road gives feast for foodies while Food Streets of Lahore are a unique tourist attraction. Melody Food Street has brought scattered restaurants in Islamabad in one place at affordable price.

Meethai (Pakistani sweets) is presented to family and friends on all festive occasions, and for any excuse it is a favourite indulged in most households. Milk, sugar and flour are dominant ingredients, with variety of colour, shapes and texture to tempt every taste-bud.

Fast food in Pakistan has its own twist: Kabab rolls are wrapped-up in minutes and ever-popular biryani is packed in takeaway boxes, serving our people complete meals on the go.



Our People

Our Pride

There is no typical Pakistani: we are a multi-ethnic, multilingual people with differing social mores and heterogeneous culture. Yet, village belle pulling water out of a well to our documentary filmmaker Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy clutching the Oscar, are all daughters of the soil.

Ayesha Farooq is a female Pakistani fighter pilot and one of five women who have become pilots in the Pakistan Air Force. She will now fly missions in a Chinese-made F7PG fighter jet alongside her 24 male colleagues in Squadron 20.

Tharparkar women in ghagras (long swirling skirts) with veiled faces and silver jewellery and those of Kalash with long black loose robes with colourful embroidery & cowrie shells are distinct in dress and culture.

Our child prodigies bring laurel to the land: two of them in IT: 9 year old (late) Arfa Karim the youngest person in the world to complete a Microsoft certification, while 6th grade Muhammad Shahzad for ethical hacking.

10-year old Umair Liaqet achieved an A in his Math GCSE generally attempted by 15-year old; while 12-year old Khadijah Niazi is the youngest person to complete online course in Physics by Udacity. Hassan Niazi attained first class honors degree at the University of London and secured enrolment at Harvard Law School while 9-year old Hasham Hadi Khan created world record with 878 points at the 6th International Scrabble Competition in Sri Lanka in 2014.

A Pakistani trait of caring and nourishing support, combined with innate capacity to recover quickly has helped the country emerge from earthquakes, floods and terrorism. More Pakistanis gave to charities and the country saw the "largest jump in the ranking globally, moving from 142nd position to 34th in 2011", according to World Giving Index 2011.

Garage schools, home schools, Aao Parhao (come teach) are, initiatives to educate the marginalized with love of learning, making education enjoyable and reshape the generation of future.

Cancer to kidney, angioplasty to restorative orthopaedic procedures or eye care is unconditionally free for less fortunate with the support of the fortunate, at hospitals built for the purpose. Cancer research is a priority too at these hospitals with molecular, cellular and genetic studies.

Abdul Sattar Edhi, has dedicated his life to 24-hour emergency service, orphans, handicapped persons, shelters, healthcare, international community centres, blood & drug banks, air ambulance and marine & coastal service.

Insurance's founding principles of sharing loss to help rebuild, is at play in Pakistan even today. It is natural for Pakistanis to mitigate crop, livestock and similar loss by help from extended family and community at large.

All of this makes Pakistanis survive, in fact shine, despite challenging times.

