**Background**

Imran Khan was born in [Lahore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lahore) into a family of [Pashtun](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pashtun) origin, the only son of Ikramullah Khan Niazi, a civil engineer, and his wife Shaukat Khanum.[Long settled](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pathans_of_Punjab) in [Mianwali](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mianwali) in northwestern [Punjab](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punjab,_Pakistan), the family are of [Pashtun](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pashtun_people) ethnicity and belong to the [Niazi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niazi) Shermankhel tribe. Niazi is a branch of [Lohani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lohani) pashtuns. A quiet and shy boy in his youth, Khan grew up with his four sisters in relatively affluent (upper middle-class) circumstances and received a privileged education. He was educated at [Aitchison College](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aitchison_College) in Lahore, the [Royal Grammar School Worcester](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Grammar_School_Worcester) in [England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/England), where he excelled at [cricket](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cricket), and in 1972 he went up to [Keble College, Oxford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keble_College,_Oxford) where he studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics, he graduated with a [Bachelor of Arts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachelor_of_Arts).



Khan's mother hailed from the [Burki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burki) family which had produced several successful cricketers, including such household names as cricketers [Javed Burki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Javed_Burki), [Majid Khan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Majid_Khan_%28cricketer%29) and, paternally (from the Niazi tribe then), to [Misbah-ul-Haq](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Misbah-ul-Haq).

Khan is also a descendant of the Sufi warrior-poet and inventor of the [Pashto alphabet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pashto_alphabet), [Pir Roshan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pir_Roshan), who hailed from his maternal family's ancestral [Kaniguram](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaniguram) town in [South Waziristan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Waziristan), and a cousin to one of Pakistan's leading English-language columnist, [Khaled Ahmed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaled_Ahmed).

On 16 May 1995, Khan married [Jemima Goldsmith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jemima_Khan), in a two-minute ceremony conducted in [Urdu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urdu) in [Paris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris). A month later, on 21 June, they were married again in a [civil ceremony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_ceremony) at the [Richmond](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richmond,_London) registry office in England. Jemima was converted to Islam. Khan's later decision to join politics alarmed opposition politicians and [intelligence agencies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_agencies) mainly because of Jemima's half Jewish ancestry, this became point of criticism especially by Islamic parties who alleged that he was related to 'Zionists'. The couple has two sons, Sulaiman Isa and Kasim.

Rumours circulated that the couple's marriage was in crisis, Jemima denied that publishing an advertisement in Pakistani newspapers. On 22 June 2004, it was announced that the Khans had divorced, ending the nine-year marriage because it was "difficult for Jemima to adapt to life in Pakistan". The marriage ended. Khan now resides alone in [Bani Gala](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bani_Gala,_Islamabad) farmhouse. In November 2009, Khan underwent emergency surgery at Lahore's Shaukat Khanum Cancer Hospital to remove an obstruction in his [small intestine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Small_intestine).

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