

Forum: Historical Security Council

Issue: Indo-Pakistani War of 1947-48

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Introduction

Indo-Pakistani Wars refer to a series of conflicts between the newly established countries India and Pakistan after a long existing British rule. The confrontation of these two countries has started right after their independence from the British Empire. After partitioning the borders of the dissolved British Raj, there were two disputed territories: Jammu and Kashmir. In order to expand their newly established territories, they claimed rights over these disputed territories that had an area of 222, 000 square kilometers and was located in between India and Pakistan. India's justification for controlling the area was that Kashmir's ruler was a Hindu, yet the majority of the population was Muslim, which became the justification for the Pakistani state.

The overlap in the interests of these two countries initiated a conflict that hasn't been solved even today. Both countries adopted several war techniques such as the employment of non-state combatants. Even though the war ended with a ceasefire at the end with India defending two-thirds of Kashmir, this incident led to further wars between India and Pakistan.

In accordance with this year's RCIMUN theme, Political Innovation: Strengthening Diplomacy in an Evolving World, the delegates of the Historical Security Council must seek for solutions that will end the war in the most diplomatic way in order to prevent any further conflicts.

Definition of Key Terms

Asymmetric Warfare

After the end of World War II, interstate wars that are fought by regular forces became rare. Fights between states and non-state belligerents became the dominant warfare form. Asymmetric warfare is the type of warfare that is fought between belligerents that have significant power difference. Asymmetric warfare played a decisive role in Indo-Pakistani War as Pakistan had mostly deployed non-state actors near to Indian forces as a tactic

Jammu and Kashmir

It had been a princely state under the British Empire from 1846 until 1952. After the dissolution of British Raj, the states had three choices: to join India, join Pakistan, or stay independent. Contrary to many other states, the princely chose to stay independent majorly due to the decision of Maharaja Hari Singh. They developed friendly relations with both countries at first, but when a promised agreement with Pakistan became unstuck, Pakistan imposed economic blockades, and the princely has turned to India, which started armed rebels in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

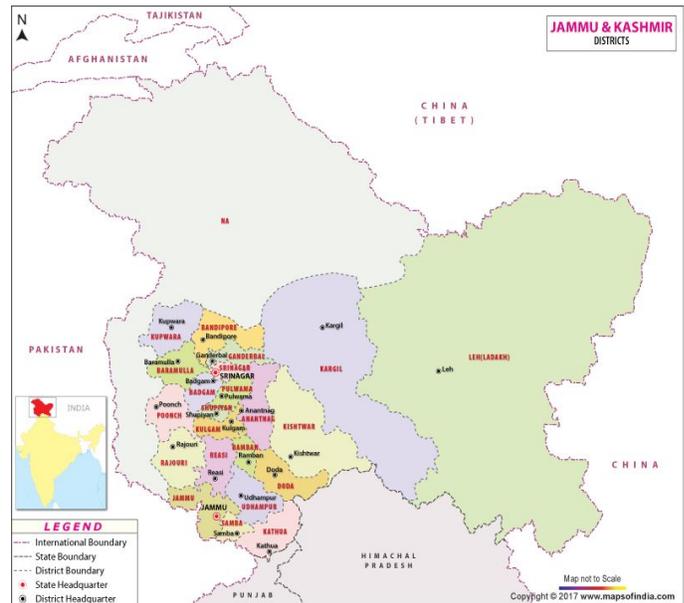


Figure 1: map of Jammu and Kashmir

Pathans

They are tribal militias from Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province. They had an important role in the war as Pakistan had employed them for tribal warfare for their operations in the Kashmir.

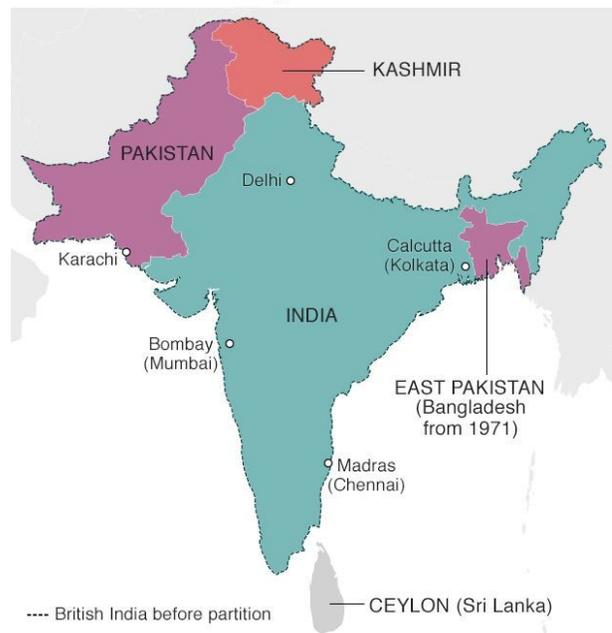
General Overview

The Dissolution of the Colonial Rule

After World War II, maintaining a colony was a huge burden for Britain even though colonies had very economic and strategic advantages. Following its electoral victory in 1945, The Labour Party, as a part of their agenda, granted independence to the colonies that were developed enough to sustain themselves (Kiss 1). India was one of the first colonies to declare its independence. The ruler class of India was majorly consisting of Buddhists, Sikhs, and Hindus.

Muslims in India are an important group that must be mentioned at this point. Muslims were a significant minority in India in 1947. Muslims had been majorly spread in the Indian subcontinent

Partition of India in August 1947



for hundreds of years, yet their role ended with the British Raj rule over India. According to Peter A. Kiss, Muslims “barely tolerated the rule of the Christian infidels, and simply could not imagine living under the rule of peoples they had subjugated and despised for centuries – the Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs – even if independent India promised secular democracy and free exercise of religion” (Kiss 2).

That’s why, during the independence process, the Muslim League, a political party that advocated for the establishment of a separate Muslim-majority nation-state, insisted on establishing a Muslim state. Therefore, Pakistan was established after the dissolution of British Raj, by combining majorly Muslim populated regions.

According to the Independence of India Act, the rest of the states had three options: to join India, join Pakistan, or stay independent. In almost all states, the rulers chose to join either side mainly due to the factor of demographics.

Kashmir Region and the Pre-war Conflict

However, the situation was very different for the Kashmir region. The state was located along the borders of India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China. Thus, it was a strategical state for both India and Pakistan. Their ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, was a Hindu, but the majority of the population was Muslim. Finally, Singh had to decide on staying as independent due to pressure from both sides. They developed friendly relations with both countries at first. However, Pakistan did not have approval for the decision to stay independent. So, when a promised agreement of Kashmir-Pakistan became unstuck, Pakistan imposed economic blockades, stopping essential supplies and trade. These sanctions led Kashmir to turn to the Indian government for help as India created new transport opportunities into Kashmir for the products that were sanctioned by Pakistan (Birdwood). Realizing that sanctions are not going to result with the scenario that was expected, the Pakistani government prepared several other plans. Even though this incident did not directly lead to a war, it incited the tension between two parties.

Indo-Pakistani War (1947)

In late 1947, the riots that broke up in Punjab about independence have affected people in Kashmir. Among the protestors, Hindus aimed for India rule, whereas Muslims aimed for Pakistan rule. Whenever state police force suppressed the riots, each side accused the state government of state terror against an innocent minority. Both sides prepared for an intervention into the region. At this point, it is crucial to look at the power of the armies of these two parties.

The formation of Indian and Pakistani Powers

After the division of the British Army in India, this army was partitioned between India and Pakistan. While the Indian Army obtained the majority of the elements from the British Army,

The Pakistani Armed Forces received only limited resources and elements. In addition to that, Pakistan had a shortage of officers (Kiss 7). Therefore, the Pakistani Armed Forces lacked the necessary equipment and resources to fight against India. As a temporary solution for this war, Pakistan hired British officers. Furthermore, they instructed Pathans to form battalions of about 1000 men and employ them in the assault regions. Starting with the region of Poonch, Kashmiris that were supporting Pakistan rule also formed local volunteer militias. The Kashmiri state's own forces were also divided right after the conflicts started. The Muslims in the army started to support Pakistan.

Meanwhile, India was also ready for the war. They had a relatively more powerful army than the Pakistani forces. They had an advanced army system that consisted of experienced officials. India also organized and raised local militias to fight against Pakistani forces in the region.

Indo-Pakistani War (1947) (Continued)

It would be said that the War started in October 1947. After 5000 Pathan soldiers walked to Kashmir region, most of the Muslims in the Kashmir state army joined Pathans and the local militia. They occupied many regions including Domel. They only faced with the weak resistance of the Kashmir army in Uri, but this resistance didn't stop the Pathans and the militias. They established the self-governing division of Pakistan, Azad Kashmir government, under the leadership of Mohammed Ibrahim. However, their main purpose was to capture Srinagar, which was seen as the key to control the Kashmir region. At this point, understanding that it was not possible to stop the Pathans with the state army, Singh requested military aid from the Indian government.

As the Kashmir region has a mountainous terrain, it took several months for India to move their equipment to the warzone. During that time, Indian and state soldiers joined their powers to stop the advancement of the Pakistani forces. In a short amount of time, Indians first captured Baramulla and, then, Uri. These incidents forced Pakistani forces to leave the Kashmir Valley. However, it did not stop Pakistani soldiers to advance in the north of Kashmir.

Indo-Pakistani War (1947 Winter- 48 Winter)

The Pakistani forces were advancing in the north, yet it was very challenging for India to stop them because most Indian soldiers were not accustomed to winter conditions. Pathans and Azad militants in the Pakistan army were more accustomed to such mountain conditions, which allowed them to easily lead operations. When March arrived, Indian soldiers were active again. As Kashmir Valley was under the control of India, they could easily initiate offenses in several directions. Thus, Pakistan felt the need to deploy more forces in its controlled regions. Increasing proportions of the Pakistani Army started to join the war in the late spring. However, they couldn't stop the Indian army. During the late summer, the Indian army was very well prepared for the offense by all means. They had responded to almost all logistical challenges.

As an example, in Srinagar, the Indian army was able to use tanks in mountainous terrain, which was a huge advantage (Kiss 22). In the autumn, Pakistan was losing many territories in Kashmir, and there were even rumors that India had the potential to occupy the Pakistani territory. Thus, a ceasefire was inevitable. Pakistan and India, finally, declared a ceasefire on 31 December 1948. India controlled two-thirds of Kashmir including, Kashmir Valley, Jammu, and Ladakh. Furthermore, as a result of the ceasefire, Line of Control was declared as the de facto border.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

British Raj

British Raj was the British rule over India (including Pakistani territories) from 1858 to 1947. Even though colonies had very economic and strategic advantages, maintaining a colony was a huge burden for Great Britain after World War II. Thus, following its electoral victory in 1945, The Labour Party, as a part of their agenda, granted independence to the colonies that were developed enough to sustain themselves. India was one of the first colonies to declare its independence. This led to the creation of India and Pakistan.

British Raj had an additional important role in this conflict. After the division of the British Army in India, this army was partitioned between India and Pakistan. This process of partitioning was overlooked by British officials from beginning to end.

India

India got the majority of the military equipment and soldiers after the partitioning. Thus, it made India a superior military power than Pakistan. After Muslim tribes advanced towards Kashmir, Hari Singh requested help from India. As Kashmir was an advantageous region due to geopolitical reasons, India responded positively. India referred the conflict to the United Nations, and "the UN asked Pakistan to remove its troops, after which India was also to withdraw the bulk of its forces" ("A Brief History of the Kashmir Conflict"). As the UN resolution didn't bring any results, the conflict went on. Even though the mountainous terrain of the region challenged the Indian army, they started to dominate the region within several months. Then, India has taken the case to the UN for the second time thinking that the UN was going to take a decision in favor of India as Sheikh Abdullah, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, was on India's side. As Pakistan also ignored the UN decision from this attempt, the fight went on until the ceasefire on 31 December 1948.

Pakistan

Pakistan claimed Kashmir region by stating that the majority of the population was Muslim. However, when Hindu rulers of the Kashmir decided to stay independent rather than joining

Pakistan, the Pakistani government was not content with this decision. Thus, economic actions against the Kashmir state incited tension in the region. After Muslim riots started in Punjab, Kashmir was also affected. With the endorsement of Pakistan, tribal militias started to advance to Kashmir. Even though India brought the issue to the UN for two times, Pakistan refused to halt its military operations by stating that the Muslim population in Kashmir was oppressed. There is an important tactic that Pakistan adopted during the war, and it was the deployment of tribal militias. The reason for this policy was that after the partitioning, Pakistan did only get a small partition of the British Raj's military. Thus, Pakistan was the weaker side in terms of military. To equalize the conditions, Pakistan employed tribal militias.

Timeline of Events

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| 1947 | British Raj Dissolved |
| August-October 1947 | Muslim riots in Punjab started and affected the Kashmir region. |
| October 1947 | Endorsed by Pakistan, Pathans and several other militia forces broke into the Kashmir Region and advanced. |
| November 1947 | Maharaja requested military aid from India, and India joined to the war. |
| January 1948 | Security Council adopted resolution 39, and the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was established. |
| April 1948 | Security Council adopted resolution 47 |
| December 1947 - May 1948 | First, affected by harsh winter conditions, the Indian army had problems with defending Maharaja's regions, but later proceed to attack Pakistan controlled areas in Kashmir. In response to that increasing proportions of the Pakistani Army started to join to the war in the late spring. |
| May-December 1948 | India started to dominate most regions in Kashmir |
| 31 December 1948 | The ceasefire was declared. |

UN Involvement

As the United Nations was newly established, it didn't play a major role. However, with two resolutions "the UN asked Pakistan to remove its troops, after which India was also to withdraw the bulk of its forces" (Telegraph). As Pakistan was disconcerted with Indian control over the

region, they refused to execute the conditions of the treaty by claiming that Muslim population in Kashmir is oppressed. Furthermore, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was established in order to investigate and mediate the India-Pakistan dispute.

Relevant UN Documents

- The India-Pakistan Question, 17 January 1948 (UNSC 38)
- The India-Pakistan Question, 20 January 1948 (UNSC 39)
- The India-Pakistan Question, 21 April 1948 (UNSC 47)

Treaties and Events

During the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan 31 December 1948, two-thirds of Kashmir was subjugated by India, whereas the rest was left to Pakistan. The line of Control was declared as the de facto border.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

This ceasefire had not ended the war. India and Pakistan had several other wars and conflicts. The main reason for this fight is continuous distrusts. Even though there had been several UN attempts, India and Pakistan cannot come to a mutual solution thinking that the proposed solution will give more legal support for the opposition side to claim rights over the Kashmir region. All this conflict and distrust started with the partition of British Raj and its resources. If the partition of the territories and regions satisfied the expectations of both parties, then further wars could have been prevented. It should also be remembered that the United Nations was newly established, and until the Cold War Era, the United Nations had a non-intervention policy. Even though this policy was mostly military wise, it also partially reflected the diplomatic agenda of the United Nations. That means the United Nations did not act as a very major party during the peace talks.

Possible Solutions

First of all the delegates must ensure that the ceasefire satisfies the expectations of both sides. This is the only way to prevent any further conflicts. Also, the opinion of the public has never been asked in 1947. Thus, having a referendum that reflects public opinion might be an effective way to shape and prepare a policy. It should also be remembered that there had not been any noteworthy peace talks attempt.

The measures for demilitarisation attempts are also crucial for achieving a solution. However, while proposing suggestions on partitioning the regions and demilitarisation, the delegates must also consider the religious and cultural factors for populations in different regions.

Furthermore, it should be remembered that the major reason for the war and the following conflicts is the partition of the territories and resources of British Raj. As the partition didn't satisfy the expectations, the parties got into conflicts. Thus, one of the major steps would have been the partition of British Raj territories and resources by considering the expectations of both parties.

Also, the delegates should look for ways to secure civilians. There have been many civilian casualties, especially in the Kashmir Region. Thus, the international humanitarian response could have been effective in protecting civilian populated areas.

Finally, delegates must bear in mind that the early United Nations was not very influential due to its non-intervention policy. This statement has been usually used for military policies of the UN; however, it also partially reflects the diplomatic agenda of the UN. If the United Nations was a more active party during the peace process, further wars could have been prevented.

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