

2012 siachen glacier avalanche

[Countries](#), [India](#)



The Siachen Glacier, located in the eastern Karakoram range in the Himalaya Mountains, has been the site of intermittent conflict between India and Pakistan for several decades. In 1949, a ceasefire line was negotiated between the two countries in an effort to resolve the competing territorial claims of the the violent Kashmir conflict. [3] The agreement, however, did not clearly delineate Siachen as either Indian or Pakistani, and competing claims to the barren area began to escalate.

Both sides launched numerous mountaineering expeditions into the area during the 1970s and 1980s, and each side feared that the other's expeditions indicated plans to formalise control over the glacier and its surroundings; as such, both India and Pakistan began planning military operations to pre-empt the other's designs. [3] On 13 April 1984, India launched Operation Meghdoot with the objective of taking control of the area, fearing it would fall into Pakistani hands.

The operation was successful, and India extended its control over much of the small triangle of mountainous, icy land, up to the passes of the Salto Ridge, situated west of the glacier, while Pakistan retained control over the western slopes and foothills of the ridge. [3] Map of the Siachen Glacier area. The AGPL is shown as a red dashed line. Siachen Glacier Location of Siachen Glacier in relation to Pakistan

Though the Pakistani military has launched numerous attempts to wrest the region from Indian control, the situation on the ground has changed little, and the front has stagnated along the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL), on the northern extreme of the Line of Control between India and Pakistan in the Kashmir region. With troops deployed at elevations of 6, 700 metres (22, <https://assignbuster.com/2012-siachen-glacier-avalanche/>

000 feet) above sea level, the glacier has come to be known as " the world's highest battlefield".

A ceasefire has been in place since 2003, but thousands of troops from both sides remained stationed in at least 150 bases on the glacier and surrounding mountains and valleys. [2] The simmering conflict over the glacier costs both countries millions of dollars each year. [1] Avalanches are known to occur frequently in the Siachen region, though casualties from them are generally low due to the fact that they normally strike remote, high-altitude " forward bases" with only a handful of troops. The most devastating one occurred in 2010, in which 24 Pakistani soldiers were killed.