

The india-pakistan conflict: an overview



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INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

India Pakistan conflict is one of long lasting and unresolved conflict of modern times. It started with the birth of Pakistan as a different state in 1947 after the Britain empire come to an end in India. On religious grounds, one country (i. e. India) was divided into two. In 1947, when British India got its independence, it was primarily divided into two countries: India and Pakistan. All areas with the majority of Muslim population were supposed to be the part of Pakistan. The dividing line between these two countries was bizarre. As major part of North West India after partition, was called West Pakistan and there were some territories in eastern part of India with majority of Muslim population, those areas were called East Pakistan (Bangladesh). Since the partition, these two south Asian countries have been the arch rivals. The rivalry has gone through several wars, terrorist activities and nuclear tests by these countries. (Ref: T. V. Paul, page 3). Both of these countries spend a great chunk of their funds in defense budgets. The race of becoming the superpower of South Asia has adversely affected the economic growth of both these countries. The origin of the India-Pakistan conflict is deep-rooted in the issues such as religion and the politics of revenge. Problem of Kashmir is the most important issue for the tension between India and Pakistan. (Ref: usamhi. army. mil) The some of the other issues between these two nations are problem of sharing waters, religion.

KEY ISSUES/REASONS:**Kashmir**

The Kashmir is the biggest cause of conflict between India Pakistan. After partition India and Pakistan were two nations. However, there were some “ princely states”, and they were left to make their own decision to join Pakistan or India or remain independent. The ruler of Kashmir (also known as Jammu and Kashmir) decided to remain independent. However, the attack by Pakistan tribal forces in late 1947 forced the ruler of Kashmir to sign the agreement to accede Kashmir to India. The nature of that accession has long been the subject of debate. After a short war, a ceasefire agreement was signed by both the nations under the support of United Nations. According to the agreement a ceasefire line (later called as Line of Control) was established defining that, the two-thirds of the Kashmir will stay under India’s control and rest will stay under the control of Pakistan. The territory under Pakistan’s control is called ‘ Azad’ i. e. Free Kashmir by Pakistanis and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) by India. Since then, the issue of Jammu and Kashmir has been the root of dispute between these two nations. Pakistan claims it to be its territory, since the majority of population is Muslims. For the Pakistan, the partition of the Indian-subcontinent will remain incomplete until the Kashmir is unified with their state. On the other hand, Indians believe that the Kashmir is a legal part of their territory. According to them, the partition was completed in 1947. (Ref: T. V. Paul, pages 8-9).

Security

India has also been accusing Pakistan for not taking serious actions against Pakistan-based militant groups and training camps. Government of India says these militant groups pose a big threat for its national security. Indian government demands that Pakistan needs to take serious actions against the Pakistan-based militant groups and training camps. Indians also suspect that the Pakistani security agents support these groups. India is much worried about its national security issue because of the militant attacks in various India cities. (Ref: zeenews. com). India accuses Pakistan security agencies for supporting the militant attack in recent years such as attack on Indian Parliament House in year 2001 and Mumbai attacks in 2008.

Water

Another issue which is causing the problems with these two countries is the use of water. Many rivers rise from India and flow down to the Pakistan. Pakistan claims that India is not playing fair in terms of user of waters according to a treaty under which India can use the waters of three eastern rivers and Pakistan can use water of three western rivers. Pakistan says India is diverting these waters by building dams. Pakistan is very much dependant on these waters for the farming and other needs of its population. India, on the other hand, denies all these accusations by Pakistan. (Ref: zeenews. com)

Religious Ideologies

Both the countries have their religious ideologies. The foundation of Pakistan was laid down on the basis of religion. Muslim in British India felt that after

the independence if a Hindu government takes the command of the nation, the Muslim community will be isolated from the political grounds. Therefore, they demanded their separate nation as Pakistan, a state of Muslim entity. Since partition, both the countries have become more reliant on their religious ideologies. Rise of Hinduism in India have made anti-Pakistan ideologies more strong. On the other hand, Pakistan has used their Islamic identity to defend their own political position, which has strengthened the rivalry. (Ref: T. V. Paul, page 22-24)

KEY EVENTS

The 1947-48 war

The wounds of partition were not healed yet, when both the countries went to war in October 1947. Pakistani tribal troops attacked the Kashmir. The Kashmir's ruler asked India for help and he agreed for accession of the state to India. That's how the first war between India and Pakistan started. This war ended in January 1949 with the involvement of United Nation and a ceasefire line was established between two countries. (Ref: news. bbc. uk)

The 1965-war

In the spring of 1965 two countries went to war again. A clash between border patrol forces on the south western border of Pakistan with India resulted in a major war. Pakistani forces entered the Indian-administered. Indian forces hit back by crossing the international border. Again with UN supported both countries agreed to cease fire. In year 1966, India and Pakistan signed an agreement in Tashkent (in former U. S. S. R.) to resolve their issues in peaceful manner. (Ref: news. bbc. uk)

The 1971 war

In 1971, two countries went on war with each other once again. However, the battle field this time was the border of India and East Pakistan (modern Bangladesh). In year 1971, Pakistan faced a civil war between West Pakistan army and East Pakistan. The civil war resulted in many people escaped to India from East Pakistan. After that, Indian army invaded the East Pakistan to help those people. Consequently, Pakistan army surrendered to Indian army and war came to end with the birth of another country, called Bangladesh.

(Ref: news. bbc. uk)

Kashmir Rebellion

In 1989, the beautiful valley of Kashmir came under siege by armed resistance to India rule. Some extremist groups started rebellion movement against Indian Government, calling it war of Kashmir's independence and some groups called the movement for union of Kashmir with Pakistan. Indian government accused Pakistan of supplying arms to these revolting groups. During this period, many Islamic groups came into emerged in the region for the fight against India. (Ref: news. bbc. uk)

Nuclear Tests

In 1998, India conducted nuclear tests near the border of Pakistan and later on Pakistan too conducted some nuclear tests. These tests were criticized by United States and many European countries. After these tests, it was now clear that both the countries will think twice before attacking each other. In fact, the relations between India and Pakistan started to improve after the nuclear tests. (Ref: news. bbc. uk)

Kargil war

Just when it seemed like the rift between India and Pakistan has started to heal, the conflict erupted again after Pakistan army break into Indian Kashmir in year 1999. India responded with air strikes against Pakistan forces. Both the nations suffered from great economics loss; many people were force to leave their homes on both sides of the Line of Control (LOC). Under the pressure of United Nations, the contemporary prime minister of Pakistan withdrew his forces from the region. (Ref: news. bbc. uk)

Mumbai Attacks

The financial capital of India, Mumbai has always been the target of terrorist activities. The city has experienced many terror attacks since March 1993, when Muslim underworld joined to Pakistani militant group carried out a series of bombings on Mumbai's stock exchange, trains, hotels and gas stations. In 2006, terrorists shocked the Mumbai with series of seven bombings on Mumbai railways within 11 minutes. According to officials the attack was carried out by POK based militant group Lashkar-e-taiba. In November 2008, terrorist attacks once again shocked the Mumbai. Pakistan based terrorist groups coordinated the shooting and bombing attacks in 10 different areas of the city. Again, the operation was carried out by Lashkar-e-taiba. (Ref: timesofindia)

Apart from the above, various other regions of India are also been the targets of Islamic terrorism activities. There were some plane hijacks by these militant groups. They even attacked Indian Parliament house in New Delhi.

KEY GROUPS

It is very hard to point out the groups that are involved in this conflict. In fact, it is conflict between nations, governments, and religions. The security agencies of both the countries are also involved. Indians have always accused Pakistan's top national security agency ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) for supporting militant activities in India and on the other hand, Pakistan says that the Indian intelligence agency RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) was involved in the conspiracy of separating Bangladesh from Pakistan.

During the decades of 1980s and 1990s the rivalry between India Pakistan was so intense that even their sports could not remain unaffected from the tension. For example, during this period the matches between Indian and Pakistani Cricket or Hockey teams used to be regarded as the battles between two countries.

As far as, Kashmir's issue is concerned, there are some terrorist groups that have direct involvement in the conflict. A few of these Islamic extremist groups are as Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HUM), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). All these groups belong to POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir) and were formed to seek to claim the region of Kashmir to Pakistan. Some officials claim that these extremist groups also have connections with Al-Qaeda. These groups are responsible for most of the terrorist activities in India.

FUTURE

In recent years, there have been a lot of efforts being made by both the sides to improve their relationship. There have been several peace talks between in India and Pakistan. However, militant attacks continue to obstruct the progress to maintain the peace. In 2001, Pakistan military ruler President visited India for a landmark summit. The summit held in Agra, the city of Taj Mahal, between Pakistan president and Indian prime minister. People on the both sides of the border were very optimistic about the meeting and hoped for peaceful resolution of some of the issues between the two countries. However, the summit ended without any agreement over the Kashmir conflict (Ref: news. bbc. uk). In year 2005, both the countries agreed to start a bus service across the LoC (Line of Control). Militants have tried to attack those buses. It has been proved that whenever some hope arises for maintaining the peace, extremist groups have tried to come up with something which deteriorates the relationship. After Mumbai attacks in 2008, India has put the hold on peace talks. Although there has been efforts being made by the governments on both sides, but the conflict doesn't seem to end, as long as, the issue of Kashmir is there. The issue of Kashmir can only be resolved by involving the people of Kashmir. The chances of which are not very bright, as the separatist leaders are not ready for anything less than the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan from India. Indian government claims that they own the Kashmir legally and they cannot afford one more partition. The majority of the population of Jammu and Kashmir is of Muslim. Many of them want Kashmir to be the part of Pakistan, and many wants to stick with India. Although the relations between India and Pakistan have

improved a lot, but the hopes of peace between the two countries are not very strong.

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