

The kashmir conflict is a political problem history essay



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The Kashmir conflict is a political problem that has existed since 1947 consisting of a territorial dispute between Pakistan and India regarding the “ princely” state of Jammu and Kashmir. India claims sovereignty over what is Kashmir mainly due to the document “ Instrument Of Accession”, which the Maharajah Hari Singh (Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir at the time) signed on the 26th of October of 1947. Pakistan claims that, it should either be an independent state or part of the same. This is because the population of Kashmir does not wish to be part of India, as could be considered after viewing the Kashmiri insurgencies. The reason being, according to the Pakistanis, that when the document “ Instrument of Accession” was signed, it was signed by what the Kashmiris considered a tyrant. As such, the document was only signed because the Maharajah suppressed the population by force. The main dispute about the territory was first originally about the religious views, and the resources that were to be found there. But since then, this ever changing world has changed, and it is no longer just that, but a show of strength from both countries. Neither is willing to cede, because of all the resentment and suffering that the conflict has caused. Neither can afford to look weak in the other’s eyes. All due to economic privileges and political trade-offs with rivals.

In 1947, Lord Mountbatten (the last viceroy of India) divided what was once British India into two countries, India and Pakistan. This was done based largely on religious grounds. The religious demographics were divided between a Muslim population, and a Hindu population. Kashmir had Sikh rulers and a Muslim population, so there was no obvious place to go for the Muslim population once the partition had taken place. The rulers opted to

join India when most of the population would have chosen Pakistan. Because of this, Both Pakistan and India claimed the territory.

That event started the first Indo-Pakistan war. India and Pakistan had agreed upon not intervening in the decision of Kashmir. The maharajah asked for help from India, who answered that Kashmir needed to be part of India to receive military aid. The annexation was then signed by the Maharajah and Lord Mountbatten. After this, the Indian army, aided by National Conference volunteers, drove out the Pakistanis. The resulting war lasted until 1948, until the UN was asked to intervene, which put into effect a plebiscite. Both states were supposed to not intervene during the plebiscite, and India withdrew its troops, but Pakistan did not. The conditions of the plebiscite were not complied with. India reentered militarily, and there became a standoff. Pakistan suggested both states remove any military presence unilaterally, but India rejected this suggestion. India also rejected 11 more proposals of demilitarization of the zone, all of which Pakistan accepted. So, no agreement was reached.

The second Indo-Pakistan war was in 1965 took place between April and September of the same year. The war began as a consequence of India's Operation Gibraltar, which was an operation to move military forces into the region of Jammu and Kashmir to control an insurgency against Hindu rule. The war lasted 5 weeks, in which thousands of people died from both countries. The confrontation escalated quickly , relatively no time passed, and it was soon a full scale aerial war and naval war as well. During this war, there were some extremely large tank confrontations. The Pakistani army had a numerical advantage regarding tanks, as well as equipment. Despite <https://assignbuster.com/the-kashmir-conflict-is-a-political-problem-history-essay/>

these advantages, Pakistan was outfought by India in a number of confrontations. Both countries made relative progress during the war, but were both held back by small, yet efficient defensive forces. At an effort to peace, the United States and the Soviet Union, both hosted ceasefire negotiations. Pakistan, worried about the lack of war supplies, accepted the ceasefire readily. India, on the other hand, was more opposed to the ceasefire, but finally ceded to it, due to the growing diplomatic pressure from other countries. The post war aftermath involved a series of ceasefire violations which were constituted mainly to the exchange of small arms and artillery fire. This ceasefire was in effect until the renewal of military exchanges in 1971.

The third Indo-Pakistan war was in 1971. This war is considered one of the shortest wars in history due to its duration of only 13 days. It started with of Pakistan's "preemptive" strike on 11 Indian airbases titled Operation Chengiz Khan. The war was fought mainly on the eastern and western fronts. The conflict was sparked by the Bangladeshi Liberation War, which was, in short, the fight for the liberation of East Pakistan from the whole. The Pakistani army, which was made up of Western Pakistanis in its majority attacked the eastern population leading millions of Pakistanis to go into exile or refuge to the open arms of India. India appealed several times to the international community, but failed to get a response. After these attempts, the Indian government decided that it was more convenient for the population if the Indian military intervened rather than just open its borders to refugee camps. Western Pakistan was becoming extremely agitated towards eastern Pakistan and India. India started amassing troops on the

border with East Pakistan. Due to this, on December 3rd, the Pakistani government issued operation Operation Chengiz Khan. The Indian government retaliated that very night, with its own aerial strike. These turned into massive retaliatory air strikes in between both countries. This marked the start of the third war. In contrast to the second war, which was slow in advancement, " blitzkrieg" strategy was used (in great success) in the form of three different assaults, that rapidly converged on Dhaka (the capital of East Pakistan). Due to the massive losses, the Western Pakistani army surrendered on December 16th. India took a huge number of prisoners of war in the aftermath. For Pakistan, it was a complete defeat, which established India's military dominance in that part of the subcontinent. In 1972, the Simla agreement was signed, which ensured that Pakistan recognize the freedom of Bangladesh in exchange for the return of the prisoners of war.

The most recent conflict in between Pakistan and India was in 2001-02 standoff. This consisted of the amassing of troops on either side of the the international border. This was due to a terrorist attack on Indian Parliament on December 13th, 2001. The attack was orchestrated by Pakistan based terrorist groups, Let (Lashkar-e-Taiba) and JeM (Jaish-e-Mohammed), both of which wish to free Kashmir from Indian rule. There was speculation as to nuclear war during this time. Both countries moved ballistic missiles and extremely large numbers of infantry to the border. As both countries possess nuclear weapons, the main worry about bordering states was the use of them. As was the world.

Most of these conflicts have started to kindle up due to the threat to one countries sense of safety. Both countries feel threatened by the other. Of course this is not the only reason, but it plays an important role in the escalation between Pakistan and India. Mainly because of the lack of communication and cooperation from both countries, there is a relative instability in the region. Due to the fact that if one country isn't willing to do something for fear of losing face or power, they remain at a standoff. Neither of them escalates the conflict without cause, yet both countries are unable to cede.

First of all, we should clearly define the difference between a preemptive strike, and a preventive strike. A preemptive strike is that strike which is done in face of an imminent attack. While there is no measure as to when an attack becomes imminent, there should be enough evidence to prove it before the UN. A preventive strike, is similar but differs from a preemptive strike in that which an attack doesn't have to be imminent. A preventive strike is a safety measure just in case things escalate. During these conflicts, both Pakistan and India have started a conflict with either a preemptive strike or a preventive strike. This in itself is dangerous due to both countries being nuclearly active.

If India or Pakistan decide to attack each other with nuclear weapons, there won't be time to respond. All the neighboring countries will instantly come awake. It is not simply a matter of monitoring the progress of a missile and guess where it is going. If a missile is in the air, it could easily go to any place on earth and that is what is so delicate. A missile from the United

States to Russia takes approximately 45 min, to an hour in arriving, and if a <https://assignbuster.com/the-kashmir-conflict-is-a-political-problem-history-essay/>

missile were to be launched in this area, neighboring countries would lose it. Having less than 15 minutes to try to defuse the situation is taxing and almost impossible. It gives no reaction time during which you can confirm the missile is not meant for your country. The neighboring countries won't wait to see if the missile is meant for India or Pakistan. The state will be watching the safety of its own population. This conflict has to be resolved quickly before India or Pakistan make the decision to use their nuclear armament. The consequences could be disastrous for the region. Kashmir would be in the middle of it, and probably where the escalation would start.

The Kashmiri people live in constant fear of war. The wars that have already taken place have already devastated the border. But it has all been with normal warfare. To put nuclear warfare into the conflict would only mean a quick demise for the people of Kashmir. They would have no means of fighting back, to protect their homeland.

The UN plays an important role in all of this because of the control it has to put into effect between both countries. As a mediator of the whole conflict, it has to be able to stay neutral. This of course is extremely difficult, as it is only an international court. There can be any number of ways one state can bypass international law. Countries around the conflict are also tense due to the nuclear armaments of India and Pakistan, yet the best thing they can do is hope for India and Pakistan to be able to sort out their differences peacefully.

This whole conflict has become a lot more complicated than it really should be. A person could compare India and Pakistan as two brothers fighting over

a piece of candy. The candy (Kashmir) is not necessary to either of them, yet they want the privilege of it. And because of this, they quarrel over who wants the treat more, or who deserves it more. They size each other up, and decide that they can hold their own, even if the possibility of the candy becoming lost or broken is ever present during the struggle for ownership of it. The candy should be the one to decide if it prefers one brother over the other, or if it deems that neither of them is the most convenient. The taste of this candy is unique as it is a mixture between rivers (Jhelum, Indus, Tawi and Chenab), woodland, and a variety of minerals. All of these resources are of great economic value, reason why the region is even more desirable. Neither sibling wishes to cede, because this candy looks extremely juicy and luscious. And yet, while the quarreling continues, the candy is slowly breaking into little pieces. Its losing what once made it so tasty.

There has been a lot of talk of peace during the last years. These movements have been organized mainly by the Kashmiri people who have been extremely affected by this conflict. Kashmir literally means “desiccated land”, and during these confrontations, it has become more and more so. The people have been affected in a variety of ways. These people are sick and tired of the continued conflict around them. In the last years, there have been nationalist Kashmiri protests against both Pakistan and India. These people are witnessing harsh repressions, which can be seen in the startling news that, on average, one person a day has been killed since June 2010. Their story has become one of tragedy during the years. These people were turned against each other by the intervention of India and Pakistan. There were Muslims and Hindus, instead of the actual Muslims vs.

Hindus. These people psyches have been divided into two because of the way they are raised. Segments of Kashmiri Hindus have grown up to call themselves Hindus before Kashmiri. And equally, there are segments of Kashmiri Muslims who have been raised to call themselves Muslims before Kashmiris. This itself is tearing apart Kashmir's history and identity. The people of this region share languages, beliefs, and even some traditional festivities.

Since the beginning of the conflict, Kashmir has been a war zone, and in all this time, its majority has been controlled by Indian governments which have failed to do something about the problem. What the Kashmiri people want, and what is probably best for the region is, in their words; "Azaadi" (Freedom). Kashmir is no longer a region, but the border point between China, India, and Pakistan. They disclaim being Indians, and want to be Kashmiris in the purest sense of the word. The Indian government continuously downplays all the suffering that there is, and promises more jobs and commodities to the people here. The Kashmiri people no longer want that. They want to be heard, to be recognized, to know that what they say is worth something to the bordering countries rather than just being a prize to be quarreled over.