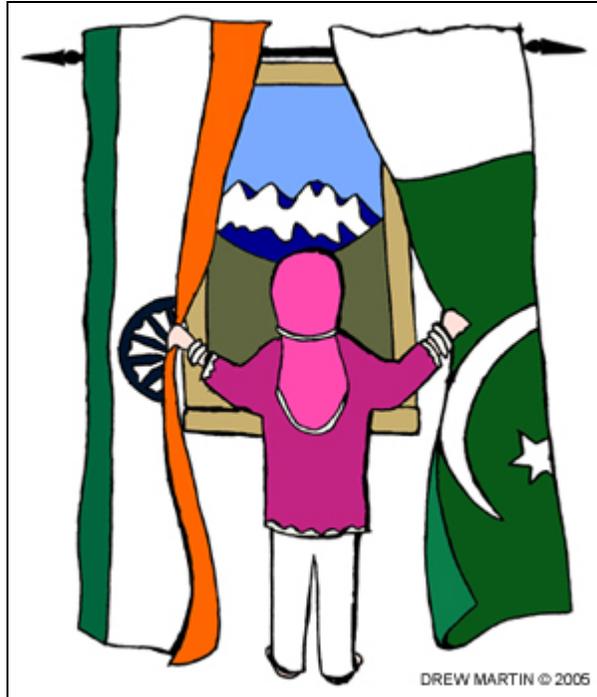


Oh let the sun beat down upon my face, stars to fill my dream
I am a traveler of both time and space, to be where I have been
To sit with elders of the gentle race, this world has seldom seen
They talk of days for which they sit and wait and all will be revealed

(Bonham, Page, Plant and Jones)



Both India and Pakistan claim they own and should rule this country but the people who live there want their freedom and independence.

What country is this?

Kashmir



Ever since the partition of the sub-continent in 1947, when Britain dismantled its Indian empire, India and Pakistan have been archrivals. The animosity has its roots in religion and history, and is epitomized by the long-running conflict over the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This has recently escalated into a dangerous nuclear arms race.

1947: Partition and Independence

The Indian subcontinent was partitioned into Hindu-dominated but nominally secular India and the newly created Muslim state of Pakistan after India's independence from Great Britain in 1947. Severe rioting and population movement ensued and an estimated half a million people were killed in communal violence. About a million people were left homeless. Since the partition, the territory of Jammu and Kashmir has remained in dispute, with Pakistan and India both holding sectors.

The 1947-1948 War

India and Pakistan first went to war in October 1947 after Pakistan supported a Muslim insurgency in Kashmir. India agreed to a request for armed assistance from Kashmir's Maharaja, in return for accession of the state to India. But the nature of that accession has long been the subject of debate.

The first Indo-Pakistani war started after armed tribesmen from Pakistan's north-west frontier province invaded Kashmir in October 1947. Besieged both by a revolt in his state and by the invasion, the Maharaja requested armed assistance from the government of India. In return he acceded to India, handing over powers of defense, communication and foreign affairs. In May 1948, the regular Pakistani army was called upon to protect Pakistan's borders. Fighting continued throughout the year between Pakistani irregular troops and the Indian army. Both India and Pakistan agreed that the accession would be confirmed by a referendum once hostilities had ceased. The war ended on January 1st. 1949, when the United Nations intervened with the establishment of a ceasefire line.

The 1965 War

In April 1965, a clash between border patrols erupted into fighting in the Rann of Kutch, a sparsely inhabited region along the south-western Indo-Pakistani border. When the Indians withdrew, Pakistan claimed victory. Later, in August, hostilities broke out again in the 2nd Indo-Pakistani war, when the government of Pakistan launched a covert offensive across the ceasefire line into the Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir. In early September, India retaliated by crossing the international border at Lahore. After three weeks, both India and Pakistan agreed to a UN-sponsored ceasefire.

In January 1966, the governments of India and Pakistan met at Tashkent and signed a declaration affirming their commitment to solve their disputes through peaceful means. They also agreed to withdraw to their pre-August positions.



The 1971 War

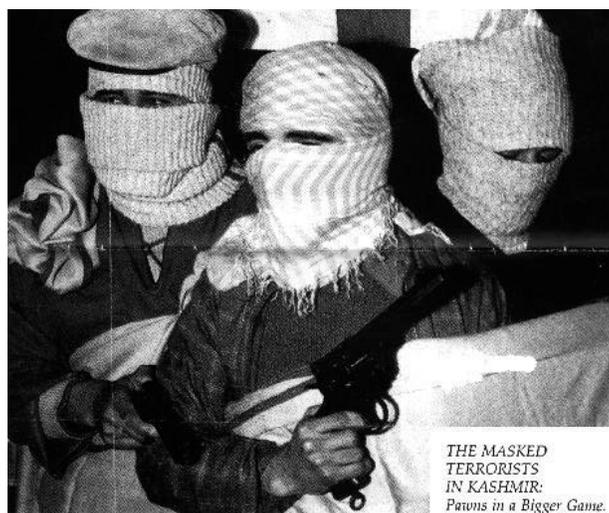
Indo-Pakistani relations deteriorated again when civil war erupted in Pakistan, pitting the West Pakistan army against East Pakistanis demanding autonomy and later independence. The fighting forced an estimated 10 million East Pakistani civilians to flee to India. In December India invaded East Pakistan in support of the East Pakistani people. The Pakistani army surrendered at Dhaka and its army of more than 90,000 became Indian prisoners of war. East Pakistan became the independent country of Bangladesh on 6 December 1971.

Regional tensions were reduced by the Simla accord of 1972 and by Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh in 1974. The Simla accord committed both sides to working through outstanding issues bilaterally and through the mechanism of working groups.

In relation to Jammu and Kashmir, the two countries agreed that the ceasefire line, which was renamed the Line of Control, would be respected by both sides "without prejudice to the recognized positions of either side". In 1974 the Kashmir state government reached an accord with the Indian Government, which affirmed its status as "a constituent unit of the union of India". Pakistan rejected the accord.

1989: Kashmir Insurgency

Armed resistance to Indian rule broke out in the Kashmir valley in 1989, with some groups calling for independence and others calling for union with Pakistan. India accused Pakistan of supplying weapons to the militants. During the 1990s, with the emergence of militant Muslim groups, the movement's ideology became essentially Islamic in nature. During the 1990s, several new militant groups emerged, most of which held radical Islamic views. The ideological emphasis of the movement shifted from a nationalistic and secularist one to an Islamic one. This was in part driven by the arrival in the valley of Kashmir of large numbers of Islamic "Jihadi" fighters who had fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union in the 1980s.



*THE MASKED
TERRORISTS
IN KASHMIR:
Pawns in a Bigger Game.*

1996-1997: Diplomatic Push

India and Pakistan set up low-level meetings to defuse tension over Jammu and Kashmir. The diplomatic push became more concerted a year later and an agenda for peace talks was agreed on. Also in 1997, Pakistan suggested that the two sides meet to discuss restraining nuclear and missile capabilities.

In 1996, Pakistani and Indian military officers met on the Line of Control dividing the state of Jammu and Kashmir to ease tension after clashes. The celebrations of 50 years of independence in 1997 in both countries coincided with a surge in diplomatic activity. During 1997, Indian and Pakistani foreign ministers met in Delhi.

After a second round of talks in Islamabad, they announced an eight-point agenda for peace talks, including discussion of the Kashmir issue. Although the talks ended in stalemate, both sides promised to meet again.

In a speech at the UN, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif offered to open talks on a non-aggression pact with India, proposing that both nations strike a deal to restrain their nuclear and missile capabilities.

In 1988 India and Pakistan had signed an agreement not to attack each other's nuclear facilities. India has consistently rejected any third party mediation to help end Kashmir border clashes, saying differences should be solved in bilateral talks, according to the 1972 Simla agreement.

The 1980s had seen some diplomatic discussions aimed at resolving outstanding differences, between India and Pakistan. In 1982, the two rivals began unsuccessful talks on a non-aggression treaty. However, in 1984 Indian troops were airlifted to the Siachen glacier in northern Kashmir which increased tension in the area. Pakistan retaliated by fortifying the glacier from its side of what has become known as the world's highest war zone.



1998: Nuclear Rivalry

Fears of a nuclear confrontation grew, after both sides conducted nuclear tests. The US ordered sanctions against both countries, with several European nations doing the same. Tensions were reduced early the following year after the two sides signed an accord pledging to intensify efforts to resolve all issues including that of Jammu and Kashmir.

The arms race between the rivals escalated dramatically in the 1990s. In May 1998, India conducted underground nuclear tests in the western desert state of Rajasthan near the border with Pakistan. In response, Pakistan conducted six tests in Baluchistan.

In the same year, Pakistan tested its longest range missile, the 1,500 km (932 mile) Ghauri missile, named after a 12th Century Muslim warrior who conquered part of India. Both sides were heavily criticized by the international community for the tests as fears of a nuclear confrontation grew.

The United States ordered sanctions against both countries, freezing more than \$20bn of aid, loans and trade. Japan ordered a block on about \$1bn of aid loans. Several European countries followed suit, and the G-8 governments imposed a ban on non-humanitarian loans to India and Pakistan.

The UN Security Council condemned India and Pakistan for carrying out nuclear tests and urged the two nations to stop all nuclear weapons programs.

Relations between India and Pakistan improved again in February 1999 when Indian Prime Minister Atal Vajpayee traveled to Pakistan to meet Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. They signed the Lahore accord pledging again to "intensify their efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir".

India had detonated its first nuclear device in 1974. In 1989, Pakistan announced the successful test firing of its first long-range surface-to-surface missile, the Hatf-1 and Hatf-2. In 1992 Pakistan said it had acquired the scientific know-how to make a nuclear bomb.



1999: Kargil Conflict

Conflict again erupted after India launched air strikes against Pakistani-backed forces that had infiltrated Indian-administered Kashmir. Fighting built up towards a direct conflict between the two states and tens of thousands of people were reported to have fled their homes on both sides of the ceasefire line. Later that year, General Musharraf led a military coup in Pakistan.

For the first time in nearly 30 years, in May 1999, India launched air strikes against Pakistani-backed forces that had infiltrated into the mountains in Indian-administered Kashmir, north of Kargil. Pakistan responded by putting its troops on high alert as the fighting built up towards a direct conflict between the two states.

India repeatedly claimed that Pakistani forces belonging to the northern light infantry, based in the Pakistani-administered Northern Areas, were engaged in the operations - a claim Pakistan consistently denied. Pakistan insisted instead that the forces were "freedom fighters" fighting for the liberation of Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir.

At the height of the conflict, thousands of shells were fired daily, and India launched hundreds of air strikes. The Red Cross reported that at least 30,000 people had been forced to flee their homes on the Pakistani side of the Line of Control. Correspondents reported that about 20,000 people became refugees on the Indian side.

Both sides claimed victory in the conflict, which ended when, under pressure from the United States, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif called upon the infiltrating forces to withdraw.

In October 1999, General Pervez Musharraf led a military coup in Pakistan, deposing elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. General Musharraf's assumption of power was later validated by the supreme court of Pakistan for a period of three years. The coup was, however, was condemned by the international community which called for elections and an immediate return to civilian government. Pakistan was also suspended from the Commonwealth.



2001: The Brink of War

Tension along the ceasefire line continued. In October 38 people were killed after an attack on the Kashmiri assembly in Srinagar. A month later, 14 people were killed in an attack on the Indian parliament in Delhi. India again blamed Pakistani-backed Kashmiri militants. A dramatic build up of troops along the Indo-Pakistan border ensued.

The 11 September 2001 suicide attacks in the United States brought a rapprochement between Pakistan and the West. Pakistan agreed to co-operate with the US's campaign against Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda network and the Taleban rulers of Afghanistan. Tension along the line of control continued. The worst fighting for more than a year broke out in October as India, which continued to condemn Pakistan for cross-border terrorism, started shelling Pakistani military positions.

October saw a devastating attack on the Kashmiri assembly in Srinagar in which 38 people were killed. After the attack, the chief minister of Indian-administered Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah, called on the Indian government to launch a war against militant training camps across the border in Pakistan. On 13 December, an armed attack on the Indian parliament in Delhi left 14 people dead. India again blamed Pakistani-backed Kashmiri militants. The attack led to a dramatic build-up of troops along the Indo-Pakistan border, military exchanges and raised fears of a wider conflict.

In January 2002 President Musharraf gave a keynote speech pledging that Pakistan would not allow terrorists to operate from Pakistani soil. He again called on the government of India to resolve the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir through dialogue. India said it would wait for action to back up his words. Supporters of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, led by leader Amanullah Khan, center, in sunglasses, stage a rally, demanding freedom of Kashmir near Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistani Kashmir, in April 7, 2004.



The disputes between Pakistan and India still continue today and Kashmir is still a major unresolved issue.

Occupied by	Area	Population	% Muslim	% Hindu	% Buddhist	% Other
India	Jammu	~3 million	30%	66%	–	4%
	Kashmir Valley	~4 million	95%	4%*	–	–
	Ladakh	~0.25 million	46%	–	50%	3%
Pakistan	Northern Areas	~0.9 million	99%	–	–	–
	Azad Kashmir	~2.6 million	99%	–	–	–
China	Aksai Chin	~2 million	–	–	99%	1%

