INDO-PAKISTAN RIVALRY OVER KASHMIR: A CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS?

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Abstract

Samuel P Huntington's argued in 1993 that the nation-states will remain dominant actors in world affairs, yet the principal conflicts will occur between the nation-states composed of different civilisations. A civilisation is defined as the highest cultural grouping of peoples composed of a common language, history, customs, institutions, and, most importantly, religion. Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American, and African civilisations exist in the contemporary world. For centuries, South Asia has experienced conflict between Muslim and Hindu civilisations, thereby, giving birth to two new states in 1947. Against this backdrop, this paper applied the concept of 'clash of civilisations' to elucidate the Indo-Pak conflict over Jammu and Kashmir. It argues that the dispute between India and Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir is not politico-economic, rather it has civilisational dynamics. The ideological fault lines significantly contribute to the Indian brutality and suppression of Muslims in Kashmir as both Hindu and Muslim religions are opposite to each other.

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Introduction

Jammu and Kashmir is a nuclear flashpoint between India and Pakistan and has locked the two neighbours into an enduring conflict. The South Asian neighbours went to three full-fledged wars over Jammu and Kashmir, but military adventurism brought nothing but misery and annihilation. Kashmir became a prominent source of friction between India and Pakistan and left no chance for tranquillity and good neighbourly relations in the region. The dispute is internationally recognised and the United Nations has passed various resolutions recognising Kashmiris' right to self-determination.[1] Nevertheless, India has illegally occupied the region and turned it into a living hell. New Delhi has deployed more than a million army personnel in the region and has been using brute force to control the movement of independence.

The geostrategic position of Kashmir makes it important in South Asian politics. Historically, the British and Russian empires were rivals over the area and it remained as a buffer zone between the two imperial powers.[2] Now, India and Pakistan are fighting for the accession of the region. Kashmir is rich in natural resources and its geostrategic position connects South Asia with Central Asia. The security of Kashmir mainly determines the security of India and Pakistan. The frontier regions of Kashmir provide a shield to South Asia from foreign intrusion. So, in the post-1947 era, the region became a sort of lifeline for both India and Pakistan. Another aspect, which makes Kashmir prominent in the regional geopolitical and geostrategic environment is its religious and cultural identity. India is of the view that without Kashmir, its secular identity is nothing more than a claim. Whereas, Pakistan has always asserted that Kashmir is the core of the 'two-nation' theory and the agenda of Pakistan is incomplete without the accession of Kashmir.

In this context, it is argued that the lingering issue of Kashmir is influenced by the civilisational clash between India and Pakistan. The secular Indian identity provides an excuse for New Delhi to continue its occupation against the wishes of Kashmiri Muslims. Meanwhile, Pakistan's religious affinity with Kashmir cannot easily ignore the illegal occupation of India. So, Kashmir's accession to either side becomes a matter of national identity between India and Pakistan, and both neighbours are in no mood to withdraw their claims over the state of Jammu & Kashmir.

Theoretical Framework: Clash of Civilisations

In 1993, Samuel P Huntington warned the international community that the patterns of conflict among the states are going to transform. The era of conflict between the nation-states and ideologies is over, yet a new phase of dissension is emerging on the international front. Earlier, the post-war world witnessed the struggle between the two superpowers competing to expand their ideological influence. Whereas, the source of conflict in the post-cold war world is not primarily ideological or economic, rather the dominant source of conflict among the humankind is cultural. "The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future."[3]

A civilisation is a cultural entity, which is the highest level of grouping of peoples. Villages, ethnic communities, regions, and religious groups, all have distinct features of cultural homogeneity. Chinese and Arabs are culturally different from each other. Similarly, Hindus and Muslims are of opposite civilisations. A civilisation is defined by both the common objective elements such as language, customs, common history, institutions, religion, and the subjective self-identification of people.[4] So, it can be stated that common religion, customs, and values influence the development of civilisational identity. The civilisational clash among the Muslims and Hindus of South Asia is as old as the first Muslim entered into this region in 711 AD. Hindus portray Muslims as outsiders and invaders

occupying their land and converting local inhabitants into Islam. The Muslims ruled India until the reins of power were taken over from them by the British Crown in 1757, and the British Empire ruled India for another hundred years till the partition of 1947.

The religious and communal animosity between the Hindus and Muslims came in the way of every effort of the British government to obtain a unitary government for British India and the Indian states.[5] So the British government approved the partition plan on 3 June 1947 and announced to settle the partition question once and for all by 15 August 1947. The partition plan approved the option for princely states to join either India or Pakistan based on religious, geographic, cultural, and economic contiguity. The state of Jammu and Kashmir was a predominantly Muslim state with a Hindu ruler, and its accession with Pakistan was natural, based on conditions outlined in the partition plan. But the Indian National Congress leadership, particularly Jawaharlal Nehru, persuaded Maharaja Hari Singh to accede to India.[6] So, the Maharaja conceived the perpetual animosity between India and Pakistan after acceding the territory to India. So, since 1947, India and Pakistan are having contesting claims over Kashmir and spending billions of dollars to sharpen their military power. The cultural identity persuaded both states to use the military means to fully integrate the region with either side, but all their efforts have proven futile so far. India claims that being the largest secular state, Kashmir's integration is essential. To the contrary, Pakistan asserts that Kashmir is an unfinished agenda of the 'two-nation' theory and goes far away for the region. Both states have time and again claimed that their national identity is incomplete without the accession of Jammu and Kashmir.[7]

Two-Nation Theory and the Partition of India

The genesis of animosity between Hindus and Muslims of India can be traced back to the early eighth century when Muhammad Bin Qasim, a young Muslim general was sent out by the Umayyad Caliph in Baghdad to expedite a ship seized by a local Hindu ruler.[8] The

conquest of Muhammad Bin Qasim laid the foundations of Islamic rule in India, which lasted until the eighteenth century when the reins of power were taken by the British. Various Muslim dynasties had ruled India but the Mughal dynasty counted to be the most powerful and popular one. At the height of the Muslim rule, the minority status of Muslims did not matter to them but the onset of the British rule in the subcontinent their vulnerability in a predominantly Hindu state controlled by the British.[9] Therefore, the theory of two nations gained momentum and Muslims started a struggle to gain a separate state.

The advent of British rule brought significant benefits for Hindus as they readily accepted modern education and cultural values of the new masters. The change of masters was not an unusual phenomenon for Hindus, as they had spent centuries under the Muslim rule. The goodwill of the new masters earned them top administrative positions, which improved their economic and social status.[10] They made advancements in education, politics, culture, and economic spheres. Meanwhile, Muslims were deprived of power, education, politics, and economic opportunities.[11] The British accused the Muslims of the revolt of 1857 and used indiscriminate force against them. They were deprived of properties and pushed into extreme poverty and destitution. For instance, the British Crown passed the New Land Settlement Act (1793), whereby it created a new class of gomashtas or zamindars to collect land revenue. The new class of Hindu gomashtas overcharged the Muslim peasants, even during famines. SR Wasti documented that Hindu gomashtas got full protection of East India Company and the Company's servants "committed actions which make the name of the English stink in the nostrils."[12]

From 1857 to 1885, India experienced the worst economic scenario. Frequent cycles of famine heavily destroyed the agriculture sector, affected the farmers, excessive land tariff turned fertile lands barren, and strict control on the press left no option for Indians to

criticise the discriminatory policies of the British Raj. So, in 1885, the Indians were provided political space through the platform of the Indian National Congress, a political party conceived and set up by Allen Octave Hume, a former British Indian Civil Servant.[13] The Hindu ascendency claimed that there were only two forces in India, Hindus and the British India. Yet, the notion was outrightly rejected by Muslims and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan asserted that a third nation too existed in India with a distinct religion, philosophy, language, art, history, and culture. It was argued that the Muslims belonged to a different civilisation, which was based on opposing ideas and conceptions. So, the Muslims of India formed the All India Muslim League in 1906 to safeguard the interests of their community.

The early years of the twentieth century saw the clash of Hindu and Muslim civilisation in the British India. From 1921 to 1922 Bengal, Punjab, and Multan witnessed serious riots between Hindus and Muslims in Muharram. The communal clashes resulted in the utter vandalization of properties with little human losses. In 1924, Kohat burned due to Hindu-Muslim clashes. The incident brought major causalities and property losses to Hindus. This tragic event affected many areas of the subcontinent such as Nagpur, Lahore, Lucknow, Moradabad, Bhagalpur, Kankinarah, Shajahanpur, Allahabad, and Delhi. In 1931, Hindu-Muslim relations experienced another blow with the outbreak of Kanpur riots. The rioters killed more than 400 people in just six days, burned eight mosques, forty-two temples, and 250 houses. Soon after the riots, some prominent Congress leaders published a report in which they shed light on the historical clash of Hindu and Muslim communities.[14]

Since Muslims and Hindus were opposite civilisations, their representative political parties also advanced communal interests. Muslim League demanded a separate electorate system, while Congress pursued the joint electorate system because it ensured Hindu domination in the centre and Hindu majority in provinces. In

1928, the Nehru Report recommended that Muslims are granted one-fourth representation in the central government and Sindh is established as a separate province with a self-sufficient mechanism.[15] The report also proposed minimum reforms for NWFP and Balochistan. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah termed the report a Hindu document and outrightly rejected it. In 1929, he responded to the Nehru report with his famous fourteen points, a truly representative document of Muslims and other minority groups.

When elections for provincial assemblies were held in the winter of 1936-37, Congress formed the government in nine out of eleven provinces from 1937-39. Before the elections, Jawaharlal Nehru had stated, "there are only two parties in India, the Congress and the Government, and others must line up."[16] During its two years in power, Congress took various steps to advance the agenda of Hinduisation. The singing of *Vande Mataram* became compulsory in opening assemblies of schools and legislatures, the INC flag was hung at local administrative buildings, a military department was established to raise a national army, the children of government schools were forced to salute Gandhi's portrait, Hindi replaced Urdu as a language of instruction, and Congress members were appointed on government posts. Francis Yeats-Brown made the following observation about the two-year term of Congress:

> "During the first two years of Congress rule in the United Provinces, riots had doubled in number, armed robbery had increased by seventy percent and murder had gone up by thirty three percent."[17]

So, it is worth mentioning here that communal clash was taken to new heights during the Congress rule, which taught a harsh lesson to Muslims that life in United India was impossible. So, on 23 March 1940, the Pakistan Resolution was adopted in the annual session of Muslim League and a resolute movement began to achieve the final

destiny. Therefore, in a short span of time, Muslims of India got their separate homeland in August 1947. Yet, independence was not free from bloodshed and destruction.

Independence and the Future of Princely States

At the time of Indian independence in August 1947, some 562 sovereign princely states constituted about a third of the British Indian empire. Among them, the Muslim majority State of Jammu and Kashmir was enjoying the full legislative and jurisdictional powers.[18] Yet, the 3 June Plan of 1947 laid the principles for princely states to join either India or Pakistan based on geographical, religious, cultural, economic, and political contiguity. The accession of Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir, and Junagadh was tremendously problematic. Hyderabad and Junagadh were in Indian geographical possession, so considered to be part of India. While the Nizam of Hyderabad proclaimed to stay independent, he met with Indian military intervention. Junagadh was annexed by India through an ambiguous plebiscite.

Jammu and Kashmir differed in one important respect from the other princely states. It had a border with Chinese territory of Tibet and the newly created state of Pakistan. This geographic location made Kashmir significant for imperial powers of nineteenth and twentieth century.[19] The British considered it a buffer state to avoid a direct conflict with the Soviet empire, meanwhile, the geography of Kashmir provided a strategic edge to British India for trade with China and rest of Central Asia. The geographical links between Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan were much better than those with India if the Muslim majority Gurdaspur district was awarded to Pakistan in the actual process of partition. A Pakistani Gurdaspur district meant that there was no direct Indian land access to the State of Jammu and Kashmir.[20]

Geography, population, economy, and religion comprised the fundamental grounds for the Pakistani claim over Kashmir. An

overwhelming majority of Kashmiri population was Muslim and it was contiguous to the Muslim-majority region of Punjab, which became part of Pakistan. Second, the economy of Kashmir was bound up with Pakistan. Its best communication links with the outside world lay through Pakistan and the bulk of Kashmiri exports and imports used the Pakistani route. Third, Pakistani rivers of Jhelum, Chenab, and Indus, which flow through Jammu and Kashmir territory, are essential for the prosperity of the agricultural life in Pakistan.

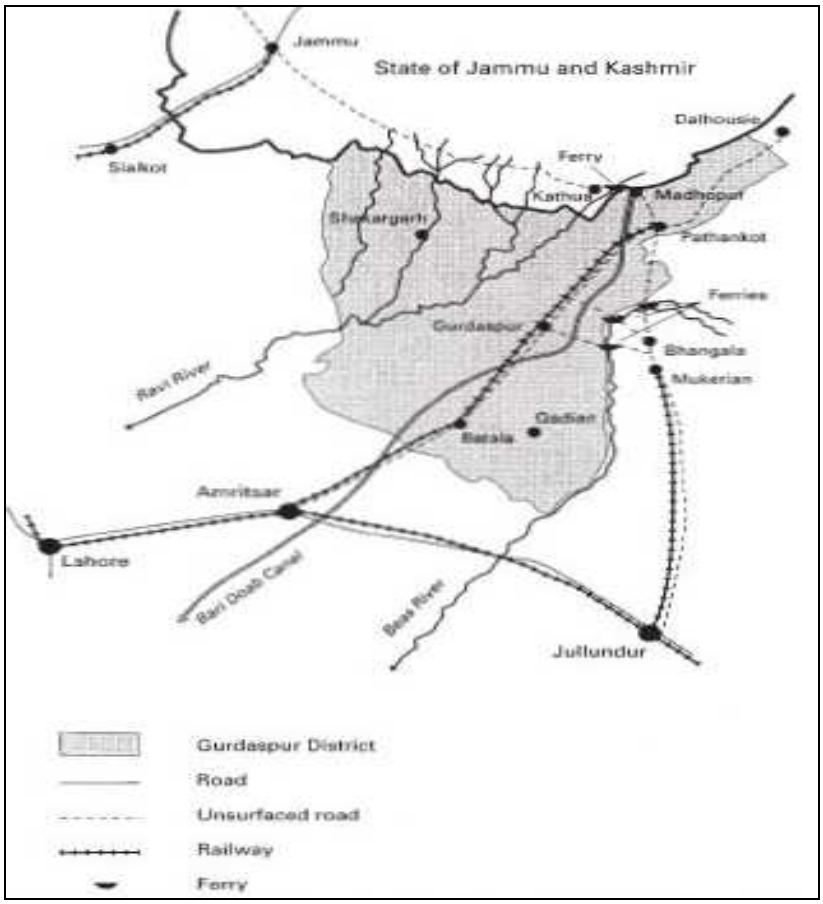
The factors discussed above proved the importance of Pakistan for Kashmir, yet Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to annex Kashmir into the Indian Union. Maharaja Hari Singh, on the other hand, was preparing the ground to announce independence. This was alarming for Nehru and Congress leadership. So, to induce Maharaja Hari Singh, Lord Mountbatten arrived in Srinagar on 17 June 1947. Just before his departure, on 14 June, he received a private letter from Krishna Memon, warning him that there might be negative consequences for Anglo-India relations if the State of Jammu and Kashmir were permitted to go to Pakistan.[21] Similarly, on 17 June, Mountbatten received a long note from Nehru in which he argued that despite 70 per cent of the Muslim population, inhabitants of Kashmir would approve accession to India because of their devotion to Sheikh Abdullah. This note proved that Nehru was aware of the fact that based on the Muslim population, Kashmir would become part of Pakistan, but he wanted the territory at any cost.

The demarcation of territorial boundary of new dominions was proposed to set up through two Boundary Commissions chaired by Sir Cyril Radcliffe. The partition of Gurdaspur district was deliberately difficult as it had a Muslim majority population and a geostrategic position. The boundary commission was supposed to work independently. Documented evidence exposed, however, that Jawaharlal Nehru, Lord Mountbatten, and his aides influenced the partition process. The original plan of the boundary commission

granted the entire Gurdaspur to Pakistan but the persuasion of Mountbatten and Nehru worked and the boundary commission granted three eastern tehsils of Gurdaspur district to India in a provisional map published on 8 August 1947.[22] So the direct land link provided an excuse to India to claim Kashmir. This entire process exposed two major objectives of Jawaharlal Nehru. First, Nehru wanted land access to China and Central Asia through Kashmir, second, Kashmir accession provided strength to the Indian argument of secularism.

Map 1

Land Routes to the State of Jammu and Kashmir



Source: Royal Geographical Society Collection. Published under the direction of the Surveyor-General of India, revised 1937

Clash of Civilisations and Demographic Change in Jammu

The civilisational and communal clash has always been a source of antagonism between Muslims and Hindus of India. The Hindu and Sikh inhabitants of India always portrayed Muslims as invaders and never missed a chance of their extermination. Jammu massacre of October 1947 is one example to quote here. To make an explicit assessment of genocide, it is essential to assess the composition of the population. According to the 1941 Census, eastern Jammu was inhabited by 619,000 people, including 10,000 Sikhs and 305,000 martial Dogras Rajputs and Brahmins, and 411,000 Muslims.[23] Forming 40 per cent of the total population, Muslims were in majority in Riasi, Ramban, and Kishtwar areas and nearly attained parity in Bhadrawah. The Muslims of Jammu had close geographic, historic, economic, ethnic, religious, and cultural connections with Pakistani Punjab so they favoured joining Pakistan. Yet, the Dogra ruler preferred to accede to India.

In March and April 1947, communal violence broke out in Punjab and NWFP areas of Pakistan. In a matter of weeks, some five thousand Hindus and Sikhs were slaughtered and thousands migrated to Kashmir. These emigrants brought tales of brutality and oppression, which ignited a wave of retaliation. So, Jammu's Muslims were to pay a heavy price for the violence, which was a part of the clash of civilisations. The Jammu region turned into a killing field when the Dogra forces with the assistance of Hindus and Sikhs committed the carnage against the Muslim community. The Jammu holocaust is a dark chapter of Kashmir's history as Maharaja Hari Singh personally headed the campaign. Horace Alexander's article published in *The Spectator* on 16 January 1948 estimated killing of 200,000 Muslims.

Whereas, *The Times* of 10 August 1948 reported that 237,000 Muslims were persecuted.[24]

The Jammu massacres not only transformed the demography of the region but also exposed the fault-lines between the two civilisations. It revealed that Muslims and Hindus were rival communities and shared no common ground for a harmonious society. A Jammu-based Hindu newspaper stated, "A Dogra can kill at least two hundred Muslims," which illustrated the deep-rooted hostility among the two communities.[25] By mid-September, Jammu city's Muslim population was halved. The persecution and dispersal of the Muslims from Jammu city exposed the worst example of ethnic cleansing of a locality. To escape the state-sponsored genocide, by late November, hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Muslims took refuge in the border cities of Sialkot, Gujrat, and Jhelum. In the first week of November, the Pakistan government sent a caravan to rescue the refugees into Sialkot. Near the Sialkot-Jammu road, a convoy of thirty Lorries was attacked by Dogra troopers, RSS activists, and other armed mobs. All the male members were annihilated, while the women were abducted.[26] The Hindu Maharaja of Patiala aided Hari Singh to eliminate the Muslim population. He not only supplied weapons but also sent a Sikh brigade of Patiala state troops to Jammu.

There was a conspiracy to change the demography of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Jawaharlal Nehru established the land link with Kashmir through gaining the three tehsils of Gurdaspur. Now the Hindu demographic majority was needed to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir. Therefore, the task was given to Maharaja Hari Singh and Prime Minister Mehr Chand Mahajan. When Mahajan arrived in Jammu, a group of delegates met with him and inquired recommended that since the power was being transferred to the people they should better demand parity. One member remarked that how could they demand parity when there was a huge difference in population ratio. Mehr Chand Mahajan pointed to the Ramnagar

natural reserve below, where some bodies of Muslims were still lying and said, "The population ratio too can change."[27] The above discussion unveils that the Jammu massacres were systematically planned to change the demography of the area, in which civilisational clash played a fundamental role.

Kashmir and the Indo-Pak Conundrum

The Indo-Pak conundrum over Kashmir started immediately after the independence of the two countries in 1947. The state of Jammu and Kashmir was vital for both dominions, so they started manoeuvring for annexation. New Delhi started to construct road links with the state as well as forced Maharaja to accede to India. Meanwhile, Pakistan pitched for accession and sent numerous delegations to Jammu. Yet, the war of words and allegations made matters worse. The indigenous revolt against the tyranny of Maharaja met with the brute force of state troops but re-invigorated with the aid of tribesmen from NWFP.[28] Once Maharaja realised the loss of the state, he appealed India to send the military in Kashmir. So, on 26 October 1947, Indian troops airlifted to Jammu based on a vague instrument of accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh.

Kashmir has always remained significant for British India and later its successor dominions, i.e., India and Pakistan. The importance can be explained in three inter-related dimensions. First, the ideological difference between India and Pakistan made the integration of Kashmir indispensable to prove their ideologies right. Being a Muslim-majority state, Pakistan claims that the agenda of the two-nation theory is incomplete without the accession of Kashmir. Kashmir is a natural part of Pakistan because an overwhelming majority of the Kashmiri population is Muslim. So, they cannot live under the control of a Hindu-majority state that usurps the rights of Muslims. To the contrary, India claims that being the largest Muslim polity within India, Kashmir endorses the Indian claim of secularism and equality for all minority groups. So, the ideological difference is

prominently contributing to the ongoing rift between India and Pakistan.[29]

Second, the geostrategic location of the region is vital for both Pakistan and India. It not only provides natural security to the dominion that controls the region but also revitalises the dream of connectivity with China, Central Asia, and the rest of Eurasia. If the entire Kashmir is controlled by Pakistan, it would cut-off India from China and the same is true for Pakistan if Kashmir goes to India. Therefore, the possession of Kashmir is most significant for both India and Pakistan. Third, Kashmir is endowed with natural resources including water and dense forests.[30] The Indus basin in Pakistan is mainly dependent on rivers originating from Kashmir. Meanwhile, the tourism industry, fruit orchards, and handicraft industry have the potential of billions of dollars. The irrigation system of Indian Punjab is also dependent on water flow from Kashmir. New Delhi is generating billions of dollars in revenue from Kashmiri tourism industry. It is considered to be an economic bonanza for Jammu and Kashmir as industrial development is limited. So, the ideological, strategic, and economic forces played an immediate role in the Indo-Pak rivalry over Kashmir, yet the most significant role is played by the ideological clash.

The first war over Kashmir in 1947, divided the state into two parts, which to this day are controlled independently by India and Pakistan. Pakistan controls one-third of its territory called the 'Azad State of Jammu and Kashmir', whereas rest is under the Indian control. Pakistan portrays the region as its *Shah-Rag* (Jugular Vein), whereas India calls it *Atoot-Ang* (integral part). Practically, however, both states have failed to integrate the entire region.

Against this background, it is important to investigate why the two neighbouring states are engaged in a protracted conflict and why they are directing their resources to build military doctrines rather than the well-being of their populations.

The two-nation theory played a crucial role in the partition of India. The theory argues that India is home to two distinct nations known as Muslims and Hindus. Both nations' religion, customs, values, and rituals are different. One's hero is the traitor of another, so life in a single political unit was impossible for Muslims of Indian Subcontinent. Therefore, India and Pakistan got independence and successive dominions started playing their cards to annex the territories based on the rules determined in the partition plan. The religious, economic, and cultural affinity made a rigorous case for Pakistan to integrate the entire Kashmir. 77 per cent of the Kashmiri population was Muslim with close affinity to areas joining Pakistan.[31] Hence, it was appropriate for Pakistan to integrate Kashmir into its dominion as the homeland of Muslims of South Asia. The leaders of the newly born state argued that their agenda of statehood was incomplete without the inclusion of Kashmir. On the other side, the secular identity increased the necessity for India to annex Kashmir. According to the Indian point of view, a Muslim majority area might flourish in the limits of a Hindu-dominated state, which would prove the country's secularism without any doubt.

Why, despite the passage of more than half a century, India and Pakistan are unable to conclude an agreement over Kashmir. Joseph Korbel, chairman of the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP) until 1949, argued in his book *Danger in Kashmir*:

> The real cause of all the bitterness and bloodshed, all the venomed speech, recalcitrance and the suspicion that have characterized the Kashmir dispute is the uncompromising and perhaps uncompromisable struggle of two ways of life, two concepts of political organization, two scales of values, two spiritual attitudes, that find themselves locked in deadly conflict, a conflict in which Kashmir has become both symbol and battleground.[32]

At the height of independence, India was divided into two components: the dominion directly controlled by the British and princely states under the empire's policy of 'paramountcy'. So, when India was divided into two new dominions, princely states were required to accede to either dominion. Independence option was absent in the partition plan.

The first Indo-Pak war broke out on 26 October 1947 with the airlift of Indian troops to Jammu. The forces of the two countries were fighting with each other to gain control of the area, until India took the dispute to the United Nations Security Council in January 1948. New Delhi transmitted a message to the UNSC President that Pakistan was meddling in the affairs of Kashmir, so the UN being an international peacekeeper needed to act. In January, the UNSC opened its floor to discuss the Kashmir dispute. From the Pakistani side, Sir Zafarullah Khan made a bold speech and highlighted the Indian and Dogra aggression. On 20 January 1948, the UNSC adopted a resolution that established a commission, to be known as the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP), to investigate facts and propose mediatory measures. On 21 April, another resolution was adopted by the UNSC, which called Pakistan to withdraw its forces and demanded of India to reduce its forces to a minimum level so that a plebiscite could be made possible. Finally, a ceasefire was enforced on 1 January 1949 and a temporary peace was restored.[33]

The first Indo-Pak war taught a harsh lesson to the Pakistani leadership that the state is facing a security dilemma from a five times bigger enemy and internal balancing strategy alone cannot ensure the security of the state. So, Pakistan sought external balancing strategy. Islamabad made military alliances with the United States and China. The alliance with the US provided enormous economic and military resources to Pakistan, which helped it build its nascent military and secured the insecure state.[34] In the decade of 1960s, Washington transferred state of the art military weapons and ammunition to

Pakistan, which ensured the defence of the country. Yet the alliance often saw a downward trend due to divergent geopolitical and geostrategic interests. Meanwhile, Pakistan and China enjoy an all-weather and time-tested friendship. In critical times, Beijing transferred military equipment and assistance to Pakistan, which restored the confidence of armed forces of Pakistan.

The dispute over Kashmir dragged India and Pakistan into the second war in 1965. A decade of failed bilateral and multilateral diplomacy frustrated Pakistan. Hence, Islamabad sought a military option to liberate Kashmir and a full-fledged war broke out on 6 September. The Pakistan air force had a decisive role in the war by shooting down seventy-five Indian aircraft. The United States immediately put an arms embargo on both states and urged them to restore peace. The ceasefire was put in place on 20 September 1965.[35] The third war broke out in 1971 when India invaded East Pakistan in support of secessionist forces. Consequently, Pakistan was dismembered and East Pakistan became Bangladesh. The 1971 war proved that Hindu dominated India never accepted Pakistan and will always pursue its malicious designs.

To the contrary, years of mismanagement, corruption, nepotism, suppression, and failed Indo-Pakistan peace efforts angered the Kashmiri population. Therefore, a mass uprising began in 1989 across the Kashmir valley. Different armed groups emerged on the forefront and proclaimed to free Kashmir from Indian occupation. The protracted curfews, lockdowns, extra-judicial killings, and kidnappings became a customary phenomenon in Kashmir. The occupying forces used brute force to stop agitators and introduced various draconian laws such as AFSPA and TADA. In 1990, Kashmir was placed under central government control. Once the insurgency exacerbated, a wave of bloodshed started in the valley between freedom fighters and Indian occupation forces. By 1994, there were 500,000 Indian troops combating militancy in the valley and during the Indian offensive,

massive human rights violations were perpetrated such as arbitrary arrests, detentions without trial, and custodial deaths. For instance, from 1987 to 1995, over 76,000 people had been arrested under TADA (Terrorism and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act) throughout India with less than 2 per cent of detainees being convicted. New Delhi passed the 'Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act' in July 1990 to provide sweeping powers to the army for arrest, interrogate and detain anyone without a warrant and provided legal immunity to their actions.

Once India mounted an offensive against agitators, many armed groups emerged in the Jammu and Kashmir region with the resolve to liberate Kashmir from the tyranny of India. Pakistan being a party to conflict extended the moral, diplomatic, and political support to the Kashmir cause and conveyed the Indian atrocities to the International Community. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Hizbul-Mujahedeen, Jaish-e-Muhammad, Harkat-ul-Mujahedeen, and Lashkar-e-Taiba were established in the period of the high uprising in Kashmir.[36] The cadres were of the view that the Indian occupation was illegal and the liberation of Kashmir was their fundamental duty. The clash of civilisations was obvious in the period when both sides were using arms to inflict each other. Kashmiri Mujahedeen were heavily influenced by the ideals of Islam, especially jihad. In the meanwhile, the conventional military superiority of India time and again encouraged the Indian leadership to wage a war against Pakistan. Therefore, a credible nuclear deterrence was necessary to offset the conventional pre-eminence of the Indian military machine. Consequently, in 1998, Pakistan responded to the Indian nuclear tests and declared herself a nuclear-capable state. Although the nuclear parity diminished the chances of a full-fledged war, both countries turned their guns towards a proxy war.

The international geopolitical and geostrategic environment underwent a fundamental change as a result of the terrorist incident

on 11 September 2001. The new international security environment caused many states to bring change in their security policies. The United States announced a unilateral war on terror, in which Pakistan soon found itself engulfed and its foreign policy towards India and Afghanistan underwent a strategic change. The war on terror caused Pakistan to alter its core security policies in the region. Hence, Islamabad had to abandon its support to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and backing of freedom fighters in Kashmir.[37] Initially, the policy reversals helped Pakistan to salvage its Kashmir policy, but the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament on 12 December 2001 made things more complicated. New Delhi termed it as the "Indian 9/11" mobilised its troops along the Indo-Pak border and vowed to attack Pakistan. The South Asian region was on the verge of nuclear war. Yet the diplomatic intervention by major powers saved the two antagonist neighbours.

After Indo-Pak military standoff in 2001-02, President Pervez Musharraf made a daring move to declare that no Pakistan-based organisation would be allowed to indulge in terrorism in the name of religion. He banned five Islamist organisations including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), the two prominent jihadi organisations fighting for the liberation of Kashmir.[38] He announced to use force against individuals and organisations involved in terrorism. Meanwhile, he asserted that Kashmir runs in our blood and we will continue to extend political, moral and diplomatic support to Kashmiri peoples. We will never budge an inch from our principled stand on Kashmir.[39] India appreciated the efforts of President Pervez Musharraf and resumed the bilateral negotiations. After a series of negotiations, President Pervez Musharraf presented his four-point formula in Agra Summit held in 2004. He proposed free movement of peoples along the Line of Control, self-governance or maximum autonomy given to locals, phase-wise withdrawal of armed forces from the region and a mechanism of joint management to monitor self-governance. India

refused his proposal and declined to continue peace talks on Kashmir. So, no further developments had been made over Kashmir in the following decade.

In 2014, Bharatiya Janata Party made inroads into the Prime Minister House by winning 336 seats in the Indian legislative assembly. India embraced an authoritative and assertive foreign policy under Hindu extremist Narendra Modi. From inception, Modi declared India a Hindu dominated country and began a systematic campaign against religious minorities. Armed mobs charged with Hindu nationalism frequently attacked minority groups and killed dozens. The slogan of Hindu supremacy received widespread recognition and BJP once again secured a victory in the Indian national elections of 2019, making Narendra Modi the Prime Minister for a second term. As promised during his election campaign, on 5 August 2019, Modi revoked the Articles 370 and 35-A of the Indian Constitution, which recognised the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan stridently rejected the unilateral act of India and reiterated its support for the suppressed people of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan's foreign ministry issued a statement claiming, "Jammu and Kashmir is an internationally recognized disputed territory."[40] Therefore, it was argued by Pakistan that India has no right to unilaterally change the status quo. After more than four decades, the United Nations Security Council called an emergency meeting and deliberately discussed the Kashmir issue. The member states expressed their anxiety about a nuclear war in the region due to Indian illegal action. Chinese ambassador to the UN rejected the Indian decision and urged New Delhi to respect the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council to implement the principle of the right to self-determination.

On the other side, Kashmir has been under siege, India invoked curfew in the area, suspended all kind of communication networks, caged some eight million Kashmiris, applied inhumane tactics of

mutilating civilians, arresting young boys, imprisoning political leaders, and sexually harassing women. Pakistan condemned the illegal occupation of New Delhi and urged the international community to play its role in implementing the Kashmiris' right to self-determination. The global community is worried about India's intentions to perform ethnic cleansing. Genocide Watch, a US-based pressure group, has issued a genocide alert for the Indian occupied Kashmir.[41] The revocation of Articles 370 and 35-A provided an opportunity to New Delhi to settle the Hindu population. So, it is appropriate to claim that India can launch an ethnic cleansing campaign similar to the Jammu massacres committed in 1947. Exclusive settlements and enclaves would be built for RSS activists and military soldiers. Once India secures a sensible Hindu majority in Jammu and Kashmir, it would call the United Nations to implement the plebiscite. Yet, the ethnic cleansing and genocide could result in the outbreak of a full-fledged war between India and Pakistan, as Islamabad has always claimed that its independence is incomplete without Kashmir's integration.

Conclusion

The dispute over Jammu and Kashmir is a nuclear flashpoint in South Asia. The two antagonistic neighbours equipped with nuclear arsenals are locked in a protracted conflict. Islamabad terms Kashmir its jugular vein, while New Delhi claims the region to be its integral part. The division of India was a result of the two-nation theory as Muslims argued that India was home to two distinct nations. Meanwhile, the Congress leadership presented the secular image of India home to multiple ethnic groups. Therefore, the integration of Kashmir became essential for either dominion. The conflict over the state of Jammu and Kashmir is neither political nor economic, rather it is a conflict between two rival civilisations. The complete integration of the region with either dominion is a question of survival, which encourages India and Pakistan to use force.

As Samuel P Huntington predicted that the clash of civilisations will be a driving force for future conflicts in the world where different cultural groups will be engaged in war. The present study also concludes that the Kashmir issue is a matter of cultural fault-lines between India and Pakistan. Despite geostrategic and geo-economic importance, the cultural identity of Kashmir intimidates India and Pakistan. Pakistan being home of Muslims always claims that appropriate option for Kashmir is to integrate with Pakistan. Meanwhile, New Delhi points out that a majority Muslim state being a part of the Indian Union enhances its claim of secularism. Competing concepts lock them into ensuing conflict and both states are reluctant to abandon their claim. Therefore, it can be concluded that cultural fault lines are a major cause in the Indo-Pak rivalry over Kashmir.

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