

## India – Pakistan – Kashmir

Ever since the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, India and Pakistan have been bitter rivals. During the past five decades, they have fought multiple wars, two of which directly over the disputed region of Kashmir.

China and Nepal assert territorial claims in this region too.



# Early History of Kashmir

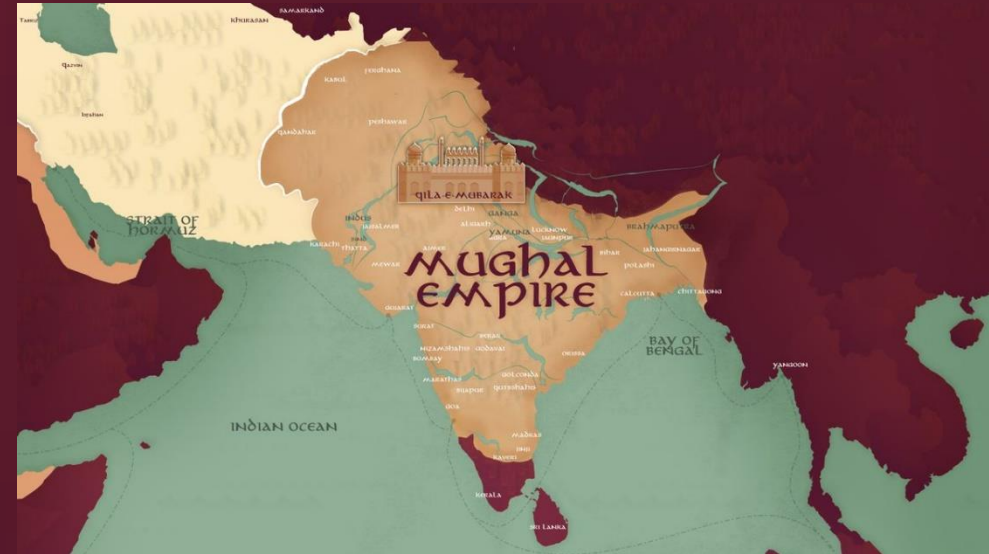
In the late-14<sup>th</sup> century, after years of Buddhist and Hindu rule, Kashmir was conquered by Muslims who converted most of the population.

It became part of the Mughal Empire in 1586, but by 1751 the local ruler was independent.

↳ The Mughal Empire was led by a descendant of Genghis Kahn of Mongolia, who was Muslim but was tolerant of Hinduism.

A century of disorder followed

↳ How did the British beat the Mughal Empire? It started in 1757, when the British secured some victories. Then the East India Tea Company came to exert control over parts of the subcontinent. Although the Mughal emperors maintained their thrones, they had little real power. A major battle in 1857 occurred



In 1846, the British pacified Kashmir

To the British, it was like a colony.

The British installed a Hindu prince as ruler of the predominantly Muslim region.

This British influence will extend into 1947

# Partition of 1947

In 1947, the British leave the Middle East

Everyone knew that “partition” of the region into new countries would take place, but no one quite knew how precisely.

The thorniest problem the British faced during partition was this:

What should be done with the 580 princely-states?

↳ Princely-states controlled 43% of British India’s territory and contained nearly 100 million people

To resolve this problem, Lord Mountbatten (Britain’s last Viceroy of India) decided that the ruler of each princely-state should decide – taking into account geography and peoples wishes – whether to merge his state with neighboring India or Pakistan

➤ The leaders of India convinced most of the Hindu princely-states to accede to India, while most Muslim rulers joined their states to Pakistan

↳ One of the largest mass migrations in human history followed: Muslims left India for Pakistan, while Hindus and Sikh’s made the opposite journey. As many as 20 million fled. Devastation was left in the wake by both groups - riots, arbitrary violence – as hundreds-of-thousands-to-two-million were killed.

# Violence in India / Pakistan during the 1947 Partition

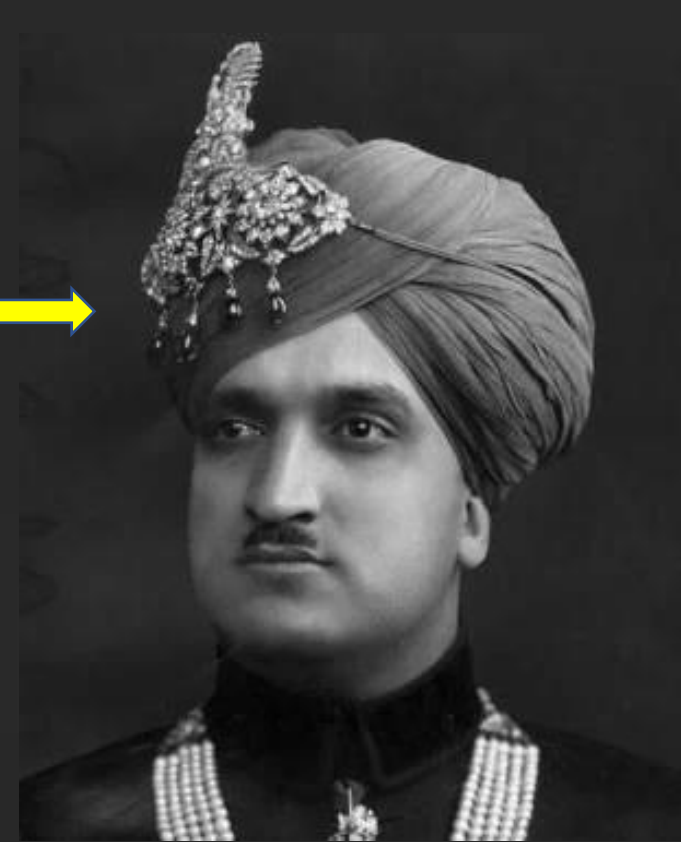


March 1947, city of Punjab



## Kashmir in 1947

Just pre-partition, Muslim Kashmir was a princely-state ruled by a Hindu maharaja (Hari Singh).



When the British left, Kashmir had a decision to make. Singh thought that by delaying the decision he could maneuver for Kashmir independence.

↳ As he was Kashmir was deliberating, Muslim insurgents in favor of joining Pakistan rose up, joined by fighters from Pakistan

The maharaja turned to India for military help

↳ He soon gave authority/power over Kashmir's defense, foreign affairs and communications to India.

Each "half" of Kashmir is now armed, receiving foreign support, and antagonistic toward one another. Fighting raged

1 January 1949: both Pakistan and India appealed to the United Nations.

The United Nations sent in a peacekeeping force. A ceasefire line was agreed to by both countries, yet the Kashmir issue remains unresolved.

# Pakistan – India – East Pakistan / Bangladesh



East Pakistan will become Bangladesh  
(it was East Bengal before partition)

West and East Pakistan shared a common religion, but were otherwise different in terms of language, ethnicity and culture.

1971, the Pakistani military based in west Pakistan launched Operation Searchlight against the people of East Pakistan, initiating the Bangladesh genocide.

This becomes the Bangladesh Liberation War

- India and the Soviet Union support East Pakistan / Bangladesh,
- US supports Pakistan (Why? Sought military alignment due to communism)

East Pakistan wins.

Bangladesh secures independence

## China's involvement

The situation was complicated in 1959, when Chinese troops occupied a portion of the region

Why did China invade the eastern corner of India?

↳ They sought to secure control is an important road link which connects the Chinese regions of Tibet and Xinjiang

↳ China will win a war in 1962, gaining control of nearly 15,000 square miles. India was not equipped for warfare in the harsh terrain and weather of the Himalayan region, while China was well-versed in mountain warfare.

↳ India will win several battles in the 1967 war

A Chinese-Pakistan agreement in 1963 will further enflame tensions.

And there's more . . . !

Why do India and Nepal dispute land?

The dispute is mainly because of the varying interpretation of the origin of the Kali River and its various tributaries that slice through the mountains. Both countries produce (different) maps which support their own claims over the region



## The Region Today . . .

Today Pakistan and India are nuclear-armed neighbors with an adversarial history.

In 2002, a ceasefire was declared between India and Pakistan

They have even resumed air, rail, and bus links!

Peace negotiations have yielded grudging tolerance of one another.

↳ February 2021: India and Pakistan released a joint statement saying they agree to “strictly observe” all peace and ceasefire agreements

But Kashmir continues to be a contentious topic.

India and China engaged in a violent skirmish in 2020, their first mutual hostilities in nearly 50 years,

# Commonly Asked Questions

Why do India and Pakistan both want Kashmir?

- Kashmir is a place of legendary beauty, but the dispute has less to do with tourism, natural resources or even national defense, than with each country's sense of identity.
  - ↳ Pakistan was conceived by its founders as a nation for the Indian subcontinent's Muslim's, and Kashmir – which is mostly Muslim – is seen as the missing piece.
  - ↳ For India, this region is its only state with a Muslim majority, so Kashmir shows that India is a secular, multi-ethnic nation (even though most Indians and Hindu)

What role does the United Nations play in Kashmir?

- The UN has monitored the ceasefire line with peacekeepers, but it has not deterred violence.
  - ↳ As of November 2001, a UN Observer Group monitored the border between India and Pakistan. (c.2017: 45 military personnel plus 90 civilian personnel)

India and Pakistan have NOT engaged in any water-access disputes since 1960.

Is the US involved in the conflict over Kashmir?

- For decades, Kashmir was a lesser concern of US foreign policy. But this changed in 1998 after India and Pakistan both tested atomic bombs. Nuclear capacity followed.

What is the US position on Kashmir?

- US State Department: “The US considers all of the former princely-states of Kashmir to be disputed territory”
- The US advocates for a peaceful resolution that involves input from the people of Kashmir
- The US State Department lists three Islamic groups active in Kashmir as foreign terrorist organizations. (al Qaeda would be nr.4 if confirmed)