



RESEARCH PAPER

War of Narrative on Kashmir: Changing Dynamics of India-Pakistan Traditional Rivalry

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: June 29, 2021</p> <p>Accepted: September 20, 2021</p> <p>Online: September 23, 2021</p> <p>Keywords: India, Kashmir Dispute, Narrative, Pakistan, South Asia</p> <p>*Corresponding Author: nadia.ravian@gmail.com</p>	<p>The Kashmir dispute is a multifaceted issue between Pakistan and India that exists as an insurmountable obstacle to contemporary techniques and approaches to conflict resolution in South Asia. For decades, the issue has remained one of the key irritant factors in their bilateral relationship while constantly putting peace at stake in South Asia. However, after achieving the evidence of nuclear capability in 1998 by both states, comparatively fewer instances are observed of the prospects of a full-fledged war between them on the bases of their conflicting claims over the Kashmir region. In the backdrop of a strategic partnership with the US and aspiration of an assumed global role, India seems no more interested to keep its foreign policy significantly Pakistan-centric. This led to a significant shift in the means and ways by which India projected her stance on the Kashmir dispute. The enhanced emphasis on means and ways to contest a war of narrative over Kashmir rather than waging a ground battle is comprised of running a relentless machine of disinformation for manufacturing truth.</p>

Introduction

The Kashmir dispute is a regional dispute largely involving India and Pakistan about the Kashmir area, including China as a third party. The territory is rugged and has a strategic geopolitical position. The territory is known for its breathtaking unique scenery and abundant resources. Pakistan currently controls the western and northern areas of the state, while the Indian Union controls the southern and eastern sectors. The dispute began when the partition of Subcontinent took place in 1947, when individually India & Pakistan demanded the former state of Jammu and Kashmir in its totality. Conflicts in between the two nations have wreaked havoc on the territory for over six decades. Both states are nuclear states, and another military conflict between them could devastate the whole continent, especially Kashmir. The bilateral relationship between the two states is currently at a diplomatic high point. Along with Pakistan's diplomatic and moral support for the right of freedom, Kashmiri's resistance to Indian control over a certain part of Kashmir has always remained one of the key features of Kashmiri politics with varying intensities.

This research provides a descriptive and analytical insight into the Indian narrative over Kashmir and its related tactics to overshadow Pakistan's diplomatic and moral standing with her claim of the right of self-determination of Kashmiris against India.

Colonial Roots of Kashmir Dispute and Leading Religious hatred in Traditional Rivalry

Kashmir region is a Muslim majority territory that under United India remained as a princely state. The origin of conflict is deeply rooted in the colonial past of the Sub-Continent. Most areas of the Sub-Continent from 17th to 20th century were ruled first indirectly by Britain through East India Company and from 1857 onwards British crown directly controlled the territory. In the backdrop of the Second World War, strong nationalist movement arose in United India which crippled the British control of the Sub-Continent. Furthermore, emergent acute propensities of religious hatred and communal violence between two major religious communities; Hindus and Muslims also augmented pressure on Britain to proceed with the partition of United India which led the British Parliament at the end of World War II to pronounce the end of British rule in possibly in 1948. However, the decision of partition of United India was commenced before the expected time period of 1948 due to increased intensities of communal violence. The hasty partition of United India gave birth to the several issues related to the 564 princely states associated with colonial India which were not directly under the control of British however they had to either join any of two newly born states of India and Pakistan or to sustain as independent entities. Almost 40 % territory of United India was consisted of these princely states while respective states constituted the 23 % of population of United India. The choice of these princely states to join either India or Pakistan was based on twin principles of right of self-determination and geographically contiguity.

The Kashmir dispute commenced when the partition of Subcontinent took place in 1947 as individually India & Pakistan demanded former state of Jammu and Kashmir in its totality. Kashmir; a Muslim majority princely state was ruled by a Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh. Unlike rulers of other princely states of United India, Hari Singh was not intended to join either India or Pakistan but attempted to assert independence of state of Kashmir. In a typical practice in the wake of significant religious identities representing both newly born states, Muslim princely states joined Pakistan whereas Hindu majority princely states joined India. Though in the course of Hari Singh's efforts to keep the princely state of Kashmir independent⁷⁷, he made a standstill agreement with Pakistan which was meant to continue the trade and travel activities between Kashmir and Pakistan. India did not sign a similar kind of standstill agreement with Kashmir. Role of last British viceroy; Lord Mountbatten is very significant to shape the Kashmir dispute. In the similar cases of state of Junagadh (Hindu Majority) and Kashmir (Muslim majority) where rulers in both princely states were of the opposite religious belief of population of respective princely states, Lord Mountbatten sided with India in both cases. The partition of United India accompanied the massive killings based on religious hate causing almost the deaths between one to two million while uprooting 15 million people (Dalrymple, 2015). The violence instigated in the backdrop of partition of United India also triggered the upsurge of riots in some parts of Kashmir. Additionally, in September 1947, pro- Pakistan rebels in Kashmir and tribesmen largely from North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan took the control the western part of Kashmir. The rebellion against the Maharaja was quite successful as they advanced deeply and were four miles away the capital of Princely state. This resistance while capturing several towns also caused killings of civilians. This made Maharaja Hari Singh somewhat insecure and against the tribesmen 's invasion of Kashmir, he asked assistance from India. India in response to Hari Singh 's request provided conditional military assistance while demanding the accession of Kashmir to Indian state. It is primarily claimed by India that on October 26, 1947 Maharaja Hari Singh, acceded to India by signing the "instrument of accession" however the respective documents were not disclosed for years. Later, this claim of India was authenticated by son of Maharaja Hari Singh; Dr. Karan Singh who also claimed to recognize the handwriting and signature of his father on the said document. However,

Pakistan while denying these claims called the accession of Kashmir with India as a myth (Pandey, 2016).

Pakistan's narrative of Kashmir primarily strengthened on its assumption of being a Muslim state and the fact that Kashmir is comprised of Muslim population. Many in Pakistan view Indian apparent secularism as a vital threat to their Islamic theocratic realities. Pakistan governments throughout the years asserted that Muslim majority princely state of Kashmir lawfully belonged to Pakistani state. The critical accession while aligning princely state of Kashmir with India ushered years of conflict and hatred between Pakistan and India. Later, under the Indian Constitution a special autonomous status was guaranteed to Indian-held Kashmir regarding its local scope of governance over all items except defense, foreign affairs and communications which were retained by Indian state. (Blakemore, 2019) & (Masood & Muzaffar, 2019) The significant autonomy was characterized by Kashmir's own constitution and separate flag.

Map of Kashmir



Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/10537286>

Kashmir dispute caused a war between the two countries regarding the accession of Kashmir in 1948, India spoke with the UN, requesting that it interfere on supposed Pakistani aggression. The UN recommended having a plebiscite to resolve if the region should merge with India or Pakistan. Unfortunately, before the plebiscite, the two nations were incapable of reaching a settlement on demilitarizing the region. Later on January 1, 1949 ceasefire line was established between the two states as a result of an agreement signed under UN.

The unresolved issue of Kashmir again in 1965 led India and Pakistan fought another war over the disputed territory which did not bring any conclusion to the conflict. The war of 1965 paved grounds for engaging key powers like Soviet Union and US in a way that later brought major consequences for regional security. It is generally claimed that before the commencement of War of 1965, Pakistan allegedly sent 25000 Pakistani military men disguised as Kashmiris under the operation Gibraltar Plan. However, Pakistani strategy was backfired and India opened a new front in eastern boarder Punjab; part of West Province of Pakistan. (Kashmir and the 1965 Indo-Pakistani War, 2014) India in response internationalized the issue while asking UN to play its role. UN resolution 211 ended the fighting and later both states accepted the ceasefire. The mediation provided by Soviet Union in form of conclusion of Tashkent Declaration did not lasted for long. Additionally, as a result of respective war, line of control was divided into four political units. These areas are generally identified as following

- Indian Held-Kashmir comprised of Jammu and Kashmir Valley and Ladakh

- Pakistani controlled Kashmir consisted of Azad Kashmir
- Northern areas administered by Pakistan
- Chinese controlled territory of Aksai Chin. (Resolving the Kashmir Dispute: Blending Realism with Justice, 2009)

In the wake of ongoing Kashmir conflict, India and Pakistan confronted each other again in battle ground in 1999. Kargil conflict was limited though intense war between the Pakistan and Indian troops. The military conflict started when India military realized in summer of 1999, at Drass; a rocky and Himalayan peak of Kargil district, Kashmiri rebels and Pakistani military occupied the strategic positions alongside the line of control. The most devastating reality of the military conflict was that both states had also proclaimed themselves as nuclear states in 1998. Despite the fact that Kargil is the second coldest inhabited area in the world with altitude of 10,760 feet in India-held Kashmir, the military conflict between the two states lasted for almost three months (May-July 1999) while at the cost of lives 500 Indian soldiers and 400 Pakistani fighters. Indian military though recaptured all the area which was previously under her control on July 26, 1999 however the price was quite high in terms of human loss. Additionally, in post-Kargil year, India increased its defence spending. It is provided that from December 2001 to January 2002, India spend almost \$ 600 million whereas Pakistan disbursed \$400 million.(Pandey, 2016) There was always a grave threat of escalation of a full-blown war between the two nuclear countries in case India crossing the line of control in response to Kargil debacle. It has been also provided that 3% of economic potential reduced due to India Pakistan conflict and even the low-intensity conflicts between Pakistan and India have financial and human cost. Although the exact data on civilian casualties is not available however it is estimated that almost one lac families directly suffered on the account of four wars between the two states.

Phases of Kashmir Movement

Kashmir resistance movement can be categorized into three major phases in the backdrop of India-Pakistan traditional rivalry and their conflicting narrative over the region. The first phase was characterized by key wars fought in 1948, 1965 and 1971 between the two countries. During this period, both countries' policies were quite obsessed with each other while shaping many of their foreign policy choices in reaction to one another. The second phase had begun with the violent secessionist outbreak in Indian-held Kashmir in 1989 in the backdrop of the rigged elections of 1987. This led to the commencement of counter-insurgency operations by Indian government including arrest and killing of locals Muslim Kashmiris while suspecting them as militant, crackdowns against the local population and enforcement of the armed forces special power act (AFSPA) and public safety act (Desai, 2018). Pakistan clearly supported the Independence movement and demanded to resolve the Kashmir issue by United Nations resolutions. However, India responded with the allegation of cross-border terrorism inflicted by Pakistan. Unlike Indian claims, the movement was quite indigenous as evident by the chain of incidents in Indian-held Kashmir. Despite the significant violent face of the movement and resultant tensions between the two states, India and Pakistan did not wage a war against each other. The rationale for their policy was a realization of nuclear capabilities as demonstrated in 1998. Whereas, India also provided its policy of 'no first use of a nuclear weapon.' Apart from this pronouncement by India, neither India nor Pakistan possesses a nuclear-weapons first-strike ability. Whoever attacked first would be met with a similarly lethal nuclear retaliation. Still, several border clashes and limited conflicts occurred during this period and the strain between the two states were significantly augmented by a terrorist attack on Indian parliament building in December 2001 which led to the massive deployment of troops on Indo-Pak borders. This is important to note that in this phase, Islamic identity of the movement was more highlighted rather than its previous nationalistic, secular standing and ethnic identity of Kashmiris.

The third phase of the resistance movement in Indian-held Kashmir was asserted in 2014 when Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into power in the Central government. The anti-Indian feelings in Indian-held Kashmir were much intensified during this phase and were rather perceptible due to several reasons mainly being excess of Kashmiris on social media platforms, heavy deployment of Indian forces in the region, and imposition of lockdown since 5th August 2019 (BBC, 2019). There was a gradual decline in violence in 2012 which led New Delhi to articulate the narrative that Kashmir was coming towards normalcy however this did not sustain. The series of mass uprisings were quite visible in 2016 in the backdrop of a young Kashmiri 'Burhan Wani' being suspected by Indian Govt, as militant and being brutally killed. This phase is characterized by 'mass quasi violence' involving the direct confrontation of civilians with the Indian Armed Forces and their prolonged risk exposure. This also included stone-pelting, offensively resisting security operations and participation in the militant funerals by ordinary Kashmiris (Gayner, 2020). Pulwama attack, on February 14th, 2019 again brought India and Pakistan closer to the brink of another war.

Previous phases of the Kashmir resistance movement against India were somehow related to Pakistan as annexation and merger of Kashmir with Pakistan was a popular idea among Kashmiris. However, in the contemporary situation, a significant ideological drift has been noticed due to the divergent aspiration of groups involved in fighting against India based on their nationalistic and Islamic orientations (Shah, 2020). People in Jammu and Kashmir have been enslaved by a transportation blockade, media blackout, and protracted detention as a part of BJP's policy to address the issue. Pakistan and India are in a diplomatic battle over Kashmir, trying to persuade the global community of their respective positions on the disputed territory.

Limitations of Pakistani Narrative on Kashmir

Pakistan's narrative on the Kashmir conflict is comparatively weak. Despite the fact that in the current state of oppression in Indian-held Kashmir where now a substantial part of the local population either actively participates in the movement against Indian state or supports it by some means, Pakistan is not adequately utilizing these anti-Indian sentiments to strengthen her narrative on Kashmir. Pakistani governments in recent past remained more occupied with imbalanced civil-military relations, socio-economic challenges, internal strife largely resultant of sectarianism and emergent religious extremism in the country. Pakistan's efforts to support Kashmiri struggle against India is largely confined to symbolic measures and gestures (Elharathi, Falki, & Shahzad, 2020).

Moreover, in comparison to India's steady narrative on Kashmir as its integral part, Pakistan's position on Kashmir has also changed throughout time. It has shifted from a plebiscite vow to autonomy for Kashmir. In this aspect, Pakistan's attitude has never been consistent, making the country's position vulnerable. With the change in Kashmir's status from state to union territory by Indian government, Pakistan has lost the support and assistance of several international humanitarian groups, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Pakistan's stance at the international level has been undermined by shrinking spaces for International Human Rights Organizations to pressurize India into agreeing for an amicable solution. In short, Pakistan has lost most part of the moral support she had internationally.

Changing Dynamics of Indian Narrative on Kashmir

In India, on the other hand, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP successfully reshaped a seven-decade-old political solution with the region in just two days in Parliament. Even those who did not support the BJP government, broke forces to endorse the resolution. The Indian media, particularly television news stations, embraced it with unmasked delight. Hundreds of videos have appeared on YouTube and TikTok to applaud

Modi's "brave gesture." The BJP definitely used state elections in northern and western India last year to highlight its decision. Why is it that conduct that is highly condemned around the world is so famous in India? Let's start with Modi's own reasoning for the course of action: He argued that it would enhance industrial prosperity, eliminate corruption, and abolish gender, caste, and religious intolerance in the former state. The voiding of provisions of the constitution had "delivered nothing but secessionism, terrorism, favoritism, and rampant corruption on a vast scale" to Kashmir, as the prime minister put it. Kashmir, according to Modi, had been a wilderness for far too long, devastated by war and dominated by dishonest aristocratic leaders who syphoned off federal funding intended for the people. He suggested that tighter integration with the rest of India would result in the creation of new jobs as both state-owned and private Indian businesses rush to invest. More governmental scholarships are on the way for students. The iconic Kashmir Valley, which was previously a Bollywood favorite, will be revisited by film makers. In the warm embrace of Mother India, a new generation of Kashmiri leaders will rise to lead their people toward a bright future. Considering Modi's Hindu-nationalist posture and BJP's Hindu-nationalist approach, it's easy to see why the abrogation of Article 370 was initiated: to appear fairer to supporters. Nevertheless, it is critical to recognize that the delicate balance between India, Pakistan, and Kashmir cannot be taken lightly. The three entities have been stuck in a deadlock for quite some time. In practice, unification would benefit India because it would remove autonomy, giving the military a stronger footing from which to secure Kashmir while also providing Indian citizens with certain benefits in the territory. For humanitarian considerations, several past Prime Ministers would not have revoked Kashmir's constitution. Within the last seven decades, India has had right-wing leaders who, if given the opportunity, would have seized the ability to integrate Kashmir. However, they were unable to achieve their objectives due to lack of possibilities. Modi, on the other hand, appears to have been lavished with possibilities. While the apparent Hindu-nationalist incentives for the merger of Kashmir are plain, there is some strategic reasoning behind the move. Modi has probed the boundaries in his relations with Kashmir and Pakistan during his presidency and has come out on top each time. In addition to Modi's individual perspective, India has seen the US play a more constrained role in foreign policy for the first time. This has certainly made Modi's lengthy and arduous work of abolishing Kashmir's special status a little simpler. Modi's support means he isn't under any domestic pressure to take a more moderate approach. Despite a rush of indignant op-eds in English-language newspapers, popular opinion in India remains firmly in favor of the BJP (Masood, Sultana & Muzaffar, 2020).

Responses to India-Pakistan Narrative on Kashmir

With the exception of Islamabad's protests, the global media response to India's Kashmir strategy has been shockingly cautious, especially considering the implications. Only three countries went out of their way to criticize India's conduct: China, Turkey, and Malaysia, with the majority of everyone else voicing worry about the method (rather than the content) of India's conduct. Pakistan's efforts to internationalize the situation have largely failed owing to the absence of legitimacy in areas of security and stability. Pakistan's record of inciting violence, whether in Afghanistan, Kashmir, or at home, is now widely known, if not publicly admitted. There exists a general perception internationally in agreement with India's stance that Pakistan is the main disrupter of the subcontinent's tranquility and that India has the opportunity to arm itself from cross-border militancy. India has effectively convinced the global community throughout the past, particularly after 9/11, that Pakistan is associated with violent episodes in India and the Kashmir valley. The Kashmiri campaign for basic human rights was already clouded by the valley's bloodshed. The sabotaging of an Indian airline in December 1999, the strike on India's parliament in December 2000, the Mumbai terrorist incident in November 2008, the Pathankot breaches in January 2016, the Uri invasion in September 2016, and the most recent suicide bombing

in Pulwama in February 2019 have not assisted Pakistan's situation. While Pakistan was internationally alienated, financially crippled, and philosophically fragmented at home, Modi's government accomplished something in Kashmir that no other Government of India had done before. They legally eliminated Jammu and Kashmir's artificial and cosmetic independence provided under Articles 370 and 35-A of the Indian constitution. And if that isn't sufficient, the Delhi government imposed a lockdown and cut off all contact lines with the outside community, thereby turning the entire valley and its eight million inhabitants into a large jail. Certain foolish politicians in Imran Khan's government continue to make nuclear threats, oblivious to the international implications of their boldness internationally on the New York Times. Several people are worried if a nuclear-armed country's leadership was conveying warnings through one of the world's foremost publications (Times, 2019).

The conflict's participants do not claim to be able to settle their issues over Kashmir among them. Is it important to consult a third party? If that's the case, one alternative is to have the disagreement resolved by a neutral arbitrator, like the United Nations. Essentially, the conversation between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir problem has lacked any concrete results. Although massively popular in certain parts of Kashmir, the plan for Kashmiri autonomy has failed to attract a huge amount of support across the territory, and there is no reason for India or Pakistan to endorse it. In terms of the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination, a plebiscite on a small scale but under close supervision and management would be the best and most successful approach. Because India is now vehemently opposed to the notion, significant planning at all levels of government will be required to lay the groundwork for such a proposal. Given India's strong opposition, both countries will likely continue their firm positions, and the current Line of Control will be transformed into an international border.

It's a different story beyond India as the Kashmir dilemma is not a phenomenon exclusive to South Asia. It is past time for South Asia to regain its security and harmony. To do so, the global community, particularly the United States, should play its part (Ahmad, 2010). It's entwined with international security threats including the war against terror, the existence and administration of atomic warheads, and the involvement of superpowers in conflict circumstances (Malik, 2020). Excluding China, global powers have generally avoided criticizing India. The global community, particularly the United States, faces a difficult task in settling the conflict in compliance with appropriate Security Council decisions and also in line with the aspirations of the Kashmiri Inhabitants. The United States has returned to its previous attitude regarding Kashmir as a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan. India is seen as a prospective barrier against Chinese hegemony in Asia by many in Washington. In addition, Pakistan's alleged assistance to terrorist groups in the valley has drained international support for the Kashmir conflict. Even Arab countries attracted to India by financial benefits, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have declined to support Pakistan in the conflict. After the repeal of Article 370 in 2019, which guaranteed Kashmir's quasi-autonomy, an older player, China, has taken a bigger role. Immediately after Delhi's decision, China counseled both India and Pakistan to avoid further hostilities and solely objected to the proclamation of Ladakh as a union territory, claiming that it violated "Chinese national sovereignty." Pakistan has attempted to draw attention to the matter with the support of China by having it addressed in a closed-door informal summit of the UN Security Council. The international community, on the other hand, made no comment. Although China is the world's only superpower backing Pakistan, it has amplified and limited its condemnation of India to Ladakh. Although China has the capability to play a larger role in regional stability, but it has been consigned to the position of occasional crisis management and has not actively campaigned for Kashmir's settlement. Although Beijing would prefer that no war break out, it profits from some level of Indo-Pakistani friction since it diverts India's strategic attention away from China. "China's stance on Kashmir is constant and unambiguous. As per a Foreign Ministry remark, "it is a political matter between India

and Pakistan that should be settled appropriately and amicably in accordance with the UN Charter, relevant Security Council resolutions, and bilateral agreements," said Zhao Lijian, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman, speaking at a news conference in Beijing. He also stated that he was keeping an eye on the situation in Kashmir and that he would stand behind Pakistan in matters pertaining to its basic interests. "China respects Pakistan's legitimate rights and hopes that the relevant parties can resolve their differences via peaceful dialogue," he added (Solangi, 2019).

Outside of those public remarks acknowledging the popular demands of the Kashmiris, U.S. policy has displayed an insufficient grasp of the multi-layered and complicated dynamics of the Kashmir issue. The Jammu and Kashmir territory, containing Jammu, the Valley, and Ladakh (on the Indian side) and Azad Kashmir and Northern Areas (on the Pakistani side), is typically associated with the Kashmir Valley, and the Valley with Kashmiri Muslims. The United States has long held the stance that the issue of Kashmir should be decided through discussions between India and Pakistan, keeping in mind the desires of the People of Kashmir (Behera, 2002). The Trump administration had advocated for regional stability and protection of human rights, but its objections had been limited. Some analysts fear that the US government's capacity to confront South Asian instability is dwindling, and the US President's offer to "mediate" on Kashmir may have influenced the timing of New Delhi's efforts. The US has attempted to strike a balance between pursuing a broad US-India engagement while defending human rights and maintaining cooperative relations with Pakistan (Kronstadt, 2020).

Representation of Pakistani and Kashmiri Diaspora

The existing situation in Kashmir has shifted the focus of global press coverage owing to India's abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian constitution and the imposition of a lockdown in the occupied territory on August 5, 2019. At the state of public diplomacy, Pakistanis have shown their support for Kashmir by participating in Kashmir hour rallies held around the country. The Pakistani diaspora has also joined the Kashmiri diaspora in public rallies in major powers' capitals, in order to sensitize world media and social media in order to shape public opinion in response to India's fifth-generation war propaganda on Kashmir. Pakistani civilians have made these efforts in order to create a strong narrative on the Kashmir issue in order to pressure India to resolve it under international law by removing the curfew in IOJK forthwith. The Kashmiri diaspora has advocated that Jammu and Kashmir be demilitarized to allow for a plebiscite in the controversial Himalayan territory. In a united press release issued on the one-year marking of India's removal of the region's particular constitutional status, 56 organizations supporting Kashmiris living abroad slammed New Delhi's malevolent oppression and imperialist goals. "The Indian government has unleashed a well-designed imperialist plan that seeks to forever change the political nature of the Kashmir dispute through demographic changes, political maneuvering, and administrative machinations," the World Kashmir Awareness Forum of the United States said in a statement (Sajid, 2020). Such claims are authenticated by the evidence that is happening in the disputed territory. After the changing of status from State to Union Territory, India is slowly maneuvering the politics of Kashmir by deploying armed forces in Kashmir region, sending local Rajas to rule the territory and slowly balancing out the Muslim population with Indian population. This maneuvering has caused demographic changes which in turn is a backdrop for Pakistan since her stand view of Kashmir being Muslim populated is being slowly diminished. India positioned thousands of soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir prior to repealing the law that preserved the region's independent position on August 5, 2019, to quell any anger over the controversial decision. And over 7,300 officials and activists were arrested after their phone service access were cut. "Pacify and retract all Indian military and paramilitary personnel from the occupied territories so

that all people in Jammu and Kashmir can exercise their unrestricted right to self-determination through a free and fair referendum, as agreed to by both the Indian and Pakistani governments, as well as the United Nations Security Council as early as 1948," the Kashmiri diaspora groups said. "India must allow credible international bodies such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Federation for Human Rights, the World Organization Against Torture, Doctors Without Borders, Physicians for Human Rights, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other UN thematic rapporteurs unrestricted access to monitor and report on human rights violations," the group said (Khaliq, 2020). "All legislation, especially domicile laws, that have been imposed to speed up demographic changes and promote the ethnic, cultural, and political cleansing of the people of Jammu and Kashmir must be halted and rescinded," they demanded. "The Indian government's new coercive methods may elicit temporary silence from Kashmir's trapped inhabitants and allies, but they will never buy their devotion to India. Prolonging the resolution of the Kashmir problem would not bring peace to India or South Asia, but will instead prolong the misery of thousands of innocent civilians." The offices of relief and activist organizations Athrout, GK Trust, Falah-e-Aam Trust, JK Yateem Foundation, Salvation Movement, J&K Voice of Victims, and the Delhi-based Charity Alliance and Human Welfare Foundation were also seized, according to the forum. This has created resilience among the Kashmiris causing majority of the population to resist India as well as Pakistan. The situation is neither in favor of Pakistan nor India as now the Kashmiri demanded freedom of the region as a state free from control of both countries (CounterView, 2020).

Results of Study

Kashmir region is characterized as highland territory with a diverse indigenous populace that is acknowledged for the grandeur of the waterfalls, pastures, and glaciers. The region was heavily wanted already afore India and Pakistan gained freedom in August 1947. The region had the decision of piecing together with whichever: India or Pakistan. When a war broke out among the two countries regarding accession of Kashmir in 1948, India spoke with the UN, requesting that it interfere. The UN recommended having a plebiscite to resolve if the region should merge with India or Pakistan. Unfortunately, before the plebiscite, the two nations were incapable of reaching a settlement on demilitarizing the region. In 1965, an additional battle broke out. At that time, in 1999, India was involved in a temporary but intense war with Pakistani troops. Both states had also proclaimed themselves as nuclear states through at the time. Currently, both states profess absolute authority of Kashmir, nonetheless merely govern portions of it, which are denoted as "Indian-administered Kashmir" and "Pakistan-administered Kashmir" worldwide. India detached the seventy years long special status on August 5, as the ruling Party (BJP) guaranteed in its 2019 voting outline. The Hindu nationalist BJP has consistently conflicted with Article 370 and has pursued for its abolishment on frequent instances. Pakistan slammed the move, claiming it "unlawful" and promised to "take all available tools" to stop it. It cut ties with India tactfully and ceased all commerce. India countered by voicing "remorse" over Pakistan's remark and emphasizing that Article 370 remained an internal affair which did not disturb the region's parameters. The vicious summertime of 2016 in Indian-held Kashmir previously has shattered prospects for durable peace and stability. The suicidal strike on 14 February 2019 that killed over 40 Indian soldiers put a stop to any possibility of a thaw in the coming years. India accused militant organizations based in Pakistan for the bloodshed, which was the worst in Kashmir because the uprising began three decades ago. The Parliament of India has now enacted a bill that divides Indian-held Kashmir into two territories: Jammu and Kashmir and isolated, rugged Ladakh, both of which are controlled solely by Delhi. China, who shares a contentious border with India in Ladakh, had opposed to the re-organization, accusing Delhi of infringing on its territorial integrity. However, Delhi claimed that its choice to restructure the region had no "external implications" because the region's Line of Control

and borders had not been altered. President Donald Trump had also volunteered to intercede in the dispute, but Delhi had declined the offer.

Recommendations

In this framework, a range of suggested dispute resolutions are given and the aim is to analyse their political plausibility. Many ideas, while appealing on the surface, miss the mark in the end on a determinant factor: political practicality. Some of the suggestions are inspirational, while some are contentious and opinionated. In terms of addressing the conflict's fundamental causes, a long-term resolution of the Kashmir dispute must consider key structural elements of South Asia's political atmosphere. Pakistan demands a plebiscite for Kashmir through UN Resolution, but India maintains that Kashmir issue is exclusively a bilateral problem involving India and Pakistan, to be settled under the principles of the 1972 Shimla agreement reached by both states. India was the first to advocate for a plebiscite, but it has subsequently broken free from its early promise. Instead of bringing Jammu and Kashmir underneath Pakistani or Indian administration, another alternative is to declare the state autonomous. This plan would grant the once princely state worldwide legal standing by combining two portions of Kashmir (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir [Azad Kashmir] and Indian-held Kashmir). Regrettably, India and Pakistan never once have accepted this alternative, and China remains deeply opposed towards the establishment of an independent Kashmir." China worries that the occurrence of an independent Kashmir would serve as a warning to its discontented Tibetan minority, as well as an origin of separatist inclinations between Muslim minorities throughout Province of Xinjiang. Some experts advocate the division of Jammu and Kashmir into multiple parts, believing that agreement seems to be the only solution to fix the Kashmir conflict. This partition alternative has some promise to India since the rebellion is backed by the state's Muslim majority, which is concentrated in the Kashmir Valley. As a result, handing up the valley to Pakistan would solve a huge problem for India. The "Cohen and Mehbubul Haq Plan" was proposed as a solution to the Kashmir problem in the 1980s. The whole Kashmir region (excluding the Jammu region, which is part of India) would've been placed under UN authority for a five-year term under this proposal. From both areas of the Line of Control, Pakistan and India would be ordered to evacuate their troops. A referendum would be held at the end of the fifth year of the period to allow Kashmiris to choose their own fate if they choose to join Pakistan or India or exist independently. Pakistan had already dismissed this suggestion as being incompatible with Pakistan's firm stance on Kashmir. India and Pakistan's governments must decide whether they need to remain on the hazardous course of a missile and nuclear war or seek rapprochement and peaceful settlement of their differences.

The black clouds which might herald the start of a mini nuclear conflict in the region are accumulating above Kashmir's picturesque valley, which has been immortalized in song and legend.

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