

Geo-political Significance of Kashmir: An overview of Indo-Pak Relations

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Abstract: Geopolitical significance is an important aspect of relation between states which have common borders. In case of India and Pakistan, geopolitical deliberations owe their significance to the very act of partition of India into two independent states and Kashmir as a disputed and divided territory between them. In this context, this paper will analyse the geo-political significance of Kashmir for India and Pakistan. There are strong evidences in the scholarly literature that the two states are creating an atmosphere of chaos, hostility and their citizens are battling with insecurities of poverty, illiteracy and underdevelopment. The duo states are acting as oppressor in Kashmir where thousands of people has been died and left their homes due to Indo-Pak hostility. The panorama of peace and human rights from last 24 years is in murky. Therefore, the geo-political, significance of Kashmir has put India and Pakistan on formidable wars from the last 65 years. The root cause of instability and hostility revolves around Kashmir, a landlocked territory, a bone of confrontation and a contributory cause of Indo- Pak hostility from the day one of their independence.

Keywords Geopolitics, Kashmir, Pre-Divide, Post-Divide, Militancy, India and Pakistan

I. Introduction

*The first tragedy of conflict is security of involved state, security of health, security of economics, security of education, security of food, security of energy and all.*¹

The concept of geopolitics since late 19th and early 20th century emerged as an important discourse in contemporary world. The states intended the expansionist policy in order to enlarge their geographical boundaries. The Geopolitics of India and Pakistan is contiguous with Jammu and Kashmir that resulted into its partition. Keeping in view the global geopolitics, the author intended to present the geo-political significance of such a heartland of South Asia i.e. Jammu and Kashmir who's geo-political and strategic importance has put India and Pakistan on formidable wars, hostility, and low intensity conflicts. Both are the military giant of South Asia apart from China and are members of the nuclear club since 1998. Pakistan emerged as political entity on the basis of Two-Nation Theory of Mohd Ali Jinnah from the same womb in 1947, if so why the two siblings are engaged in a rivalry from 1947 till date? Kashmir is a bone of confrontation between the two because for India it is the example of her secular identity, the only window open towards central Asia and has physical access with Afghanistan; Xinjiang (East Turkestan), hence is India's Integral Part as per Instrument of Accession signed by Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir in Oct. 1947. From Pakistan perspective, According to Two Nation Theory of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Kashmir should be a part of Pakistan due to its Muslim majority. Pakistan claims Kashmir as her lifeline; Jugular Vein.² Kashmir is not a zone of peace rather a zone of chaos, a militarised zone in the world, insecurity, tensions over where India and Pakistan claims. All this is because of its physical contiguity with the two. Its territory is wedged between three triangular Nuclear Weapons states of India, Pakistan and China.

Since 19th century state of Jammu and Kashmir has acquired a unique geo-political status in the Indian sub-continent. Its frontiers marching towards post soviet Central Asian Republics, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and Tibet that deserve constant vigil and as such it has made the State very important. Pakistan's occupation of Northern Areas of Kashmir gave it tremendous strategic advantages in South Asia as the region shares common boundaries with Xinjiang and Afghanistan, and the Central Asian countries. Besides its strategic and political importance, Pakistan and India both claim Kashmir because of cultural and social reasons. Kashmir has become ingrained in the minds of both Indians and Pakistanis as the single biggest issue facing the Indian subcontinent. The crying need of the hour is to make it a zone of peace, a zone of perpetual peace because offensive and defensive strategy of both nations has put peace in murky and is still a far sighted dream. Both the nations should come forward after putting their 65 years blame game and enmity into dustbin like France and Germany, with a spectacle of peace for future progress and prosperity of their regions.

In a sarcastic remark, both India and Pakistan are in a race of nuclear arms, military race, violating cease fire in different border sectors. Both are battling with guns and bullets while masses are battling with insecurity, poverty, illiteracy and underdevelopment. If the peace is not restored in the state by the two twin nations, there would be possibility nuclear war, full scale or all out war in future. The seed of hostilities were sown in 1947. The mid of 20th century was a juncture of the state as it was passing through ordeal situation, it was divorced before marriage. The pre-divide state of Jammu and Kashmir was the largest among the 562 princely states in India. Its area was 222,870 sq. Km or roughly double the area of Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium and Luxemburg combine.³ However; post-divide state is being controlled by triangular nuclear states of India, Pakistan and China. 45% of its area is under India's control, 35% is under Pakistan's control and 20% is claimed by China. India and Pakistan fought for Kashmir in 1947-48, 1965, limited war in 1985 (Siachen) and 1999 (Kargil). The mid of 20th century witnessed cold war and hostility between U.S.A and USSR at international level in general and India and Pakistan in particular, but indo-pak cold war was contested and revert to conflict and peace agreements. Cold war is no more but indo-pak situation still same with low intensity conflicts, regular ceasefire violations, cross border terrorism, human rights violations. For states military and national securities became important rather than food, health, economic and other core issues of securities. Until 'Oct 1947, Jammu and Kashmir was free from both India and Pakistan as defined by a thinker, "it was not a disputed territory or a zone of conflict, neither it was an integral part of India nor a Jugular vein of Pakistan".⁴

Political Status of Pre-divide Kashmir

Historically, the state of Jammu and Kashmir emerged as a political entity under Amritsar Treaty of 16th of March 1846 between Maharaja Gulab Singh and Britishers. According to the treaty Maharaja paid 75 lakh to Britishers and established his power as heir. Apart from fix sum, Maharaja has to present annually to the Britishers 'one horse, twelve shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female) and three pairs of shawls'.⁵ Maharaja Gulab Singh was the founder of dogra dynasty which ruled for 106 years by four hereditary rulers of 'Gulab Singh (1846-1857), Ranbir Singh (1857-1885), Pratap Singh (1885-1925) and Hari Singh (1925-1952).⁶ The last guard of dogra dynasty, Maharaja Hari Singh introduced State Subject for permanent residents as defined in Notification No. 1-L/84 of 1927. On one hand he gave citizenship rights to J & K residents, on the other hand laid punitive taxes on the people 'everyone was taxed, even prostitutes were not spared. The condition of people especially Muslims was unbearable as Prem Nath Bazaz a, prominent Kashmiri pandit and political activist remarked, the condition of Muslims was "appaling, dressed in rags and barefoot . . . Most of landless labourers working as serf for absentee [Hindu] landlords".⁷ People have no rights to voice against Maharaja and make any organisation or party. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, a teacher of a school formed, with the aid of some educated people, the first political party in the form of 'Reading Room Association' at Srinagar to address and discuss the grievances of the people.

The episode of 13 July 1931 gave a jolt to Maharaja's regime in general and people in particular. It is a historic day in annals of Jammu and Kashmir and was the first political activity against the dogra dynasty resulted in firing. Abdul Qadar and other young Muslims organised a deputation to present their grievances before Maharaja, but the attempt was ended with 'riots' there existed carnage as "twenty one persons were killed when Maharaja's police opened fire on protesters".⁸ On hearing this, British govt said Maharaja to appoint a grievance redresser committee. Maharaja appointed Galancy Commission (April 1932) headed by B.J Galancy, an English ICS Officer to enquire about the causes of unrest. Galancy commission in October suggested that a series of reforms to be made in administrative, education, land tenure, taxation structure in order to make life bearable for Muslim masses. In October 1932, Sheikh Abdullah formed first mass based political party named 'All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference' as opposition of Maharaja Regime. In 1939 at the annual conference, the party was renamed as 'All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference' in order to join non-muslim masses also, out of 176 delegates present, 173 voted to ratify the change.

In 1944 Abdullah launched 'Naya Kashmir' also called New Kashmir Manifesto which talks about National Economic Plan and Constitution for the State. Earlier, All India Muslim League under the leadership of Mohd Ali Jinnah passed 'Pakistan Resolution' in order to create a separate Muslim country. The creation of Pakistan on religious lines was the foremost foray of Jinnah. Jinnah's logic was that Hindu India and Muslim

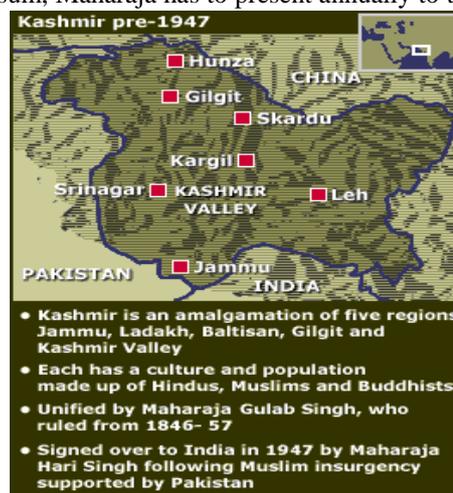


Figure 1.1: Map of Kashmir Pre-Partition Source:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/south_asia/2002/india_pakis

India must be separated. To achieve this he devised Two Nation Theory and explained, "Islam and Hinduism are not religions . . . But are in fact distinct social orders . . . Hindus and Muslims are two different religious philosophies, social customs and literatures".⁹ In order to win the hope of Kashmir people, who already were against the despotic rule, Jinnah visited valley with his Two Nation Theory but his hope was destroyed in one stroke. Abdullah and people of Jammu and Kashmir 'had decisively rejected the theory and the very concept of Pakistan'.¹⁰ Basically Abdullah was close friend of Nehru and was in favour of India. Abdullah's major priority was to free people from, dogra yoke.

Abdullah in April 1946 launched, 'Quit Kashmir', an all out agitation against Maharaja Hari Singh on the same tune of Mahatma Gandhi's, 'Quit India' of 8th October 1942. Abdullah's movement was to rend the Amritsar Treaty of 1846, and declared, "the time has come to tear the Treaty of Amritsar . . . sovereignty is not the birth right of Maharaja Hari Singh. Quit Kashmir is not a question of revolt, it is a matter of right".¹¹ At the time of partition, Abdullah was in favour of India but Hari Singh wants to remain independent even he concluded so called 'standstill agreement' with both India and Pakistan, India rejected it and Pakistan's government assumed charge of Jammu & Kashmir's post and telegraphs system and undertook to supply the state with foodstuffs and other essential commodities. Jinnah on the other hand left no plan untried to persuade Abdullah for the accession with Pakistan. Dr. Mohd. Din Taseer and Sheikh Sadiq Hussain were hand-Picked for mission to discuss with Abdullah but the discussion proved fruitless at Srinagar.

The independence of India and Pakistan was not a chaplet rather the birth of conflicts, chaos, and hatred among those who once joined hand to fight against colonial rule. The two independent dominions of Pakistan and India were born on 14th and 15th of August respectively. Princely states were a peculiar issue, they were technically free to accede to either dominion or to remain independent, the idea of independent according to Lord Mountbatten, the first and last British Governor General of free India, was merely a 'theoretical option' he urged to merge either India or Pakistan. Except Junagarh, Hyderabad and Jammu and Kashmir all other have chosen their dominions. Junagarh and Hyderabad were annexed in the Indian Union subsequently. Jammu and Kashmir till October 1947 was independent from both nations as mentioned earlier. The preference to remain independent by Hari Singh was the major mistake which put the future of the state at stake and till date the state is being chewed in the strong jaws of India and Pakistan. The episode of mid 20th century in the state was so devastative that millions of innocent persons including men, women, children and even unborn babies still in the womb of their mothers were mercilessly killed in the massacre especially in Jammu, Udhampur, Poonch, and Mirpur.

Divide of Kashmir

The Kashmir crisis erupted in October 1947 was the product of ambivalence feeling of Poonch masses when the punitive taxes imposed by Maharaja forced the people to revolt against the regime. It should be noted that the taxation policy was not imposed on Hindus and Sikhs. The fiscal situation of Poonch was found that there was a "tax on every hearth and every widow. Every cow, buffalo and sheep was taxed and even every wife . . . Dogra [Hindu] troops were billeted on the [Muslim] Poonchis to enforce collection".¹² Poonch was an 'autonomous principality' within the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir until Second World War, when the local ruler was deposed by dogra kingship and imposed heavy taxes. The local revolt which begun in Poonch against taxation policy on Muslim peasantry, later wrapped the entire state with chaos, carnage, appalling, massacre etc. The estimated killings were more than two million. The British Daily, The London Times in Oct. 10 1947 wrote that "Maharaja under his own supervision, got 237,000 Muslims assassinated, using military in Jammu area".¹³ In Mirpur out of 25,000, about 18,000 were killed mercilessly, 35, 00 made captive'.¹⁴ On 3rd October 1947, the pro-Pakistan chieftains of western districts of Jammu- Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Mirpur proclaimed the formation of Azad Jammu and Kashmir government in Rawalpindi. Jammu and Kashmir govt cabled Pakistan for violation of standstill agreement and on 18th of October delivered an acrimonious message signalling the breakdown of future relations. Four days later an unfolding drama wrapped the state with carnage. C Dasgupta portrait as, the raider in Kashmir started on 22nd of October in 1947 at 4:30 am, they 'crossed the Muzaffarabad bridge and sacked the town provided with mortars transport, they moved swiftly up the Jhelum Valley Road to Uri, from Uri they turned towards Baramulla. After an orgy of massacre, pillage and rape, in which the sisters of European Convents were not spared, the invaders continued their march',¹⁵ some raiders were motivated by the prospect of pillage, rape and loot.

Mahatma Gandhi on December 25, 1947 said that Maharaja is responsible for what is happening in the state. Maharaja's crumbling force failed to combat and maharaja has no option except the Indian help, so he send an emergency request to New Delhi for military assistance, but Lord. Mountbatten refused to send the troops without signing the 'Instrument of Accession'. Maharaja then has two options, either to sign the accession with India and take Military assistance to combat the raiders or to let the raider to devastate the state. He signed the Instrument of Accession and took military help from India. He appointed Sheikh Abdullah as 'Emergency Administrator' of the state on the advice of Nehru. Next day, on 27th of October Indian army landed

on Jammu and Kashmir soil in the early morning to overthrow the raiders. Jinnah on the same day, on the other side was giving cautions to the winds and ordered General Gracy to launch Pakistan's regular army into Jammu and Kashmir to launch a full scale war but his plank was also failed as General Gracy refused to carry out orders after conformity with field Marshal Auchinleck, that 'all British soldiers would be withdrawn if Pakistan army was sent into territory which now belonged to India by the virtue of Accession'.¹⁶ Pakistan has also occupied major areas of Poonch except Poonch town. Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan refused to accept the Accession and declared on 4th November, 1947, 'we do not recognize this accession, the accession of Kashmir to India is a 'fraud' perpetrated on the people of Kashmir by its cowardly ruler'.¹⁷

Nehru took the 'Kashmir Issue' to United Nations with the prospects of an immediate step from UN, but UN also failed to solve it properly. United Nations set up a commission i.e. United Nation Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP), passed a resolution and asked Pakistan to withdraw its forces from the areas occupied and recommend for plebiscite but neither plebiscite nor forces were withdrawn from the state. Nehru also pointed that after restoration of peace, the future of the state would be determined by the people but nothing happened. A Line of Divide (LOD) in zigzag shape from Chicken Neck(Jammu) to Northern Areas was made in 1st January 1949, rend the state into two parts, one is administered by India by the virtue of Instrument of Accession and other occupied and administered by Pakistan. This altered in 1972 as Line of Control (LoC) under Shimla Agreement. Pakistan calls Jammu and Kashmir an 'unfinished agenda' of partition. Since 1989 Pakistan has embraced Mao's dictum of 'guerrilla warfare' and low-intensity conflicts, cross-border terrorism, infiltration, cease fire violation etc to keep the issue of Kashmir alive. Colonel Akbar Khan of Pakistan was the pioneer of engineering an armed revolt in Kashmir, he thought, the best option available to Pakistan was to support proxy forces. His logic was to keep Kashmir a boiling pot through guerrilla warfare which mounted in 1989.¹⁸

Since 1989, the situation of Indian held Kashmir is something different which we may call, era of extremism and militancy'. It will be hard to say that the present-day growth of extremism and militancy in Kashmir has roots in India's treatment to Kashmiris, only aided and guided by Pakistan's self interests. India has badly mishandled the Kashmir case from the beginning. The oppressive approach by the Indian security forces to a large is responsible to what the Kashmiris calls, 'Azaadi' (Independence). The offensive and defensive approaches of Pakistan and India have kept the peace and human rights Kashmir in murky. Indian security forces treated badly which force the people to fight with empty hands. They are fighting with stones. They are fighting with processions, hartals, strikes, and with every means available to them, but not with gun s. They are aided, guided and backed by extremist groups whose base is Pakistan. If there is any Indian government presence in Kashmir, it is the Indian police, BSF, CRPF, and the Indian army. During the uprising of Kashmir between 1990 and 2009, thousands of Kashmiri youth became the victim of extremism. The reason offered was they were militants, separatists, and now terrorists. Due to the killing of Kashmiri people by the army in the last two decades, the demographic picture of Kashmir has changed radically. Finding a bridegroom for a Kashmiri girl has become difficult. The army has killed several youngsters under the guise of militancy.¹⁹

The approach of both countries is based on 'zero-sum game' Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA) of 1990 and Public Safety Act has failed to restore peace rather accelerated the tempo of militancy and Violence in the state. Many Human Right Organisations criticizes India for human rights violations in Kashmir. The central forces with AFSPA under the umbrella of 'special powers' are instead of protecting the state assassinates the peace, violates human rights, sees the people with a jealous eye, searches the villages, tortures the people and creates a psychological fear in the minds of people which leads to clash with security forces everywhere in vale. Instead of strengthen AFSPA, proper management of border from where according to the army chief '90% of infiltration' is going on, is to be required and is to a great extent can contribute to save the state in general and Kashmir valley in particular from the cross border terrorism. My argument is that demilitarisation is an option for revival of peace in Valley in future. Pakistan claims herself incomplete without Kashmir, waged a guerrilla mode of warfare in the state which shows that there is a clash of interest and identity between the two nations on the territory only by keeping peace and rights of the people in murky.



Map1.2. Shows the line of Control/divided of the state of Jammu and Kashmir available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/south_asia/03/kashmir_future/html.

Kashmir: An Indian Perspective on Kashmir

As far Indian perspective is concerned, Instrument of Accession signed by Hari Singh is the chief source of it, an Integral part of India. Sheikh Abdullah, the popular leader of the state confirmed the accession as final. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on Independence Day address, August 15, 2002 said that Kashmir is not a piece of land; it is a test case of secularism in India. India has always stood the test of a secular nation. Jammu and Kashmir is a living example of this. Mr Gopal, a writer in his article in Indian Periodical “Carvan” published in February 1950 offered; India without Kashmir could cease to occupy a pivotal position on the political map of Central Asia. The caravan trade routes from Central Asia to India pass through Kashmir. Strategically, Kashmir is vital to the security; it has been so ever since the dawn of history. Its northern provinces give direct gateway to the North West province of Pakistan and Northern Punjab. It is India’s only window to the Central Asian Republics of USSR in the north, China on the East and Afghanistan on the West. As India’s northernmost territory, the state of Jammu and Kashmir provides a valuable window on the other regional powers, including China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the nearby former Soviet republic of Tajikistan. According to the India, the state of Kashmir since its accession to India is an integral part of the union of India. The official Indian position argues that the future status of the state otherwise is a domestic problem, and the talks between India and Pakistan should occur in a strictly bilateral framework.

India has a geo-political importance of the region especially Gilgit-Baltistan, a part of princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, presently under Pakistan’s control, because it has physical contiguity with Afghanistan, East Turkistan and close to central Asian states. Thus, has a great economic and strategic importance for India. The people of Gilgit-Baltistan are not satisfied by Pakistan govt, 60% of them want Independent Jammu and Kashmir, 30% to Pakistan and 10% people of that area wants to join India.²⁰ There are many other areas in Kashmir that have major geo-political significance. One such area is the Siachen Glacier in the Karakoram Pass. It is the only barrier preventing Pakistani and Chinese forces from linking up in Kashmir. If Pakistan and China were allowed to link up their militaries at Siachen, India’s national security over the entire northern frontier would be greatly undermined. Such a link up would create a very powerful military force, consisting of India’s two biggest rivals who have fought with India. This force would be capable of joint and potentially decisive military action against India. That is why India spends huge funds to the forces deployed in Siachen since 1984. Since 1984, the troops of both sides have been entrenched in what is described as the highest and most inhospitable battlefield in the world... The expenditure of maintaining troops at the Siachen glacier alone is approximately US \$ 2 million a month. From 1984 to 2009 India and Pakistan’s military expenditure on Siachen Glacier is \$5 billion each with 1025 and 1344 deaths respectively.²¹ Strategic importance of Kashmir which is essentially a place of natural beauty lies in its being a vast stretch of plain land surrounded by the high Himalayan ranges which make it an ideal supply and air base for the defence of India’s Northern frontier.

Kashmir in Pakistani perception

Strategically, Kashmir is located between three triangular nuclear weapons states of India, Pakistan and China. From Pakistan’s perspective, Kashmir is strategically located and can be used to ‘cripple Pakistan’s economically and militarily’. The strategic location of Kashmir has engage Pakistan in low-intensity conflicts, guerrilla mode of warfare with India. The presence of Indian troops in J&K could constitute a direct threat from the rear to North West Frontier Province (NWFP), thus Jammu and Kashmir can be used as an offensive

strategy by the Indian . . . many also believe that Pakistan's military would be jeopardized if Jammu and Kashmir went to India.²² Pakistan claims Kashmir as her jugular vein, her lifeline, an unfinished agenda of partition and core of Pakistan's ideological survival. Historically Pakistan has viewed its dispute with India as a key determinant of its strategic behaviour in the international arena. Kashmir has a geo-strategic, economic and military significance for Pakistan. As for military importance is concerned, there are thirteen routes to Siachen Glacier, the highest military base of India and Pakistan. There is only one route for India.²³ Without Kashmir, Silk route to China will be greatly endangered and there will be no link with China-a time tested ally and friend of Pakistan. In 1963 Pakistan ceded illegal the Kashmir territory of 5,180 sq. km. in Gilgit to China to seek nuclear know-how from that country. The Chinese have turned the ancient Silk-Route which passes through this area into modern road that connects Gilgit with China which is already linked with Abbottabad and Muree in Pakistan. There will be no ground defence of Pakistan if the rivers and canals of Pakistan are dried up. The Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1951, described the strategic value of Kashmir to Pakistan as, Kashmir is very important . . . it is a vital necessity for our survival. Kashmir as you will see from this map is like a cap on the head of Pakistan. If I allow India to have this cap on our head then I am always at the mercy of India the strategic position of Kashmir is such that without it Pakistan cannot defend itself against an unscrupulous government that might come in India.²⁴

The importance of Kashmir to Pakistan as the lifeline can be well -understood by having a look at the map of Pakistan. Three out of six rivers, which run through Pakistan, originates from Kashmir namely Rivers Indus, Jhelum and Chenab where as remaining three namely Rivers Ravi, Sutlej and Bias originate from India. Pakistan's agricultural life to a great extent depends on Kashmir. Economically, the waters of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab, which originate through Kashmir, are vital to the agricultural life of Pakistan. Kashmir and Canal water are Pakistan's life line as Military ruler Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan was of the opinion that both the Kashmir and Canal water Disputes are matters of life and death to Pakistan.²⁵ In 1979, Pakistani Prime Minister Z.A. Bhutto pledged to fight for a thousand years for the cause of oppressed Kashmiri Muslims. Gilgit-Baltistan is strategically very important region because the Karakoram Highway, the highest paved international road in the world, links Pakistan with china. In 2009, Islamabad signed an agreement with Beijing for mega energy project in Gilgit-Baltistan, a Neighbour of China's Xianning province. Burzila pass which links Kashmir valley-gilgit retained with Pakistan. This is a strategic advantage for Pakistan if her army could descend into Kashmir Valley from Gilgit side in case of resumption of hostilities. Kashmir is an important strategic location from where it is easy for both the countries to attack on each other that is why both the countries have deployed heavy forces at Kashmir's border.

Geopolitics of Resources: The Secret of Pakistan Policy

Perhaps the most vital interest of Pakistan in Kashmir is for water resources. From economic point of view, Kashmir, as mentioned earlier, is the lifeline of Pakistan. Pakistan has continuously focussed upon the importance of water. The fact is understood by the speech of Hafiz Saeed, the chief of Jamat-ud-Dawa, in September 16, 2003 said, "All the deposits of water are in Indian Kashmir. The only way by which the economic prosperity of Pakistan can be granted and its farms can be prevented from getting barren is to increase its efforts in wresting control of Indian occupied Kashmir, only if Kashmir is freed from Indian control, can Pakistan's interest be safeguarded".²⁶ President of POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir) Sardar Mohammad Anwar Khan a decade earlier said that Pakistan's economy is dependent upon Kashmir he further said in a public forum, Kashmiris are fighting for security, strength and prosperity of Kashmir . . . Kashmir is important as Pakistan's water resources originate in Kashmir. Sardar Sikander Hayat, Prime Minister of POK said in a seminar on March 6, 2003, "without the rivers of Kashmir Pakistan will become desert. The freedom fighters of Kashmir are in reality fighting for Pakistan's water security".²⁷ The Rivers of Sind, Jhelum, Chenab and Ravi provide the main drainage system for Pakistan. All these rivers originate in Kashmir and run into Pakistan because that is the natural lay of the land. All major valleys also open towards Pakistan as well. Agriculture in Pakistan is dependent on waters of these rivers and, therefore, Kashmir provides the life-line to Pakistan. Founder of Pakistan Mohammad Ali Jinnah termed Kashmir to be the Jugular vein of Pakistan. First of all, the issue goes back to the year 1947. But more important than anything else is its strategic location.

Kashmir is located at a place from where out of five rivers that flow into Pakistan four of them originate from Kashmir. It is true that a treaty has been signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, which divided the distribution of the waters coming from these rivers. But Pakistanis feel that in a major conflict, India could shut off the waters from the rivers. It is interesting to note that during the 1965, 1971 wars, limited wars of 1985 and 1999; India did not shut off water as it very easily could do. The famous Indus Water Treaty of 1960 between India and Pakistan divide the Indus river basin with Pakistan having effective control of three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) and India having an effective control on three eastern rivers (Ravi, Sutlej and Beas). Indus water treaty has favoured Pakistan. This division provided Pakistan with 56% of the catchment area and only 31% to India. In Pakistan over 80% of the cropland is

irrigated. The country has the world's largest contiguous irrigation network. The river of Indus basin provide 60% of the water utilized for irrigation while ground account for the rest. Indus water treaty has benefited Pakistan. Keeping in view, Pakistan cannot ignore this region, interesting but sad is that Pakistan is not dealing this region with soft hand and their strategy shows that they are concerned with the resources and tries to hijack Kashmir only through the veil of cross border terrorism, guerrilla fighters, if it is not so why Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) is supporting Jihad in Kashmir. Why Pakistan's Army violates cease fire perpetually on border sectors. This shows that Pakistan does not want peace in Indian held Kashmir. ISI and Army are two sides of the same coin.²⁸ If Pakistan stops breeding terrorism, violating ceasefire on border sectors, gun culture, cross border terrorism, and joins hand with India for future prosperity of their state in socio-economic-cultural perspectives, surely the two siblings of South Asia would be the economic giants of the continent in future.

Militancy: Human and Economic Loss

From the last 24 years, the problem is in Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir, there witnessed a mushrooming growth of terrorism and militancy in the state supported by Pakistan's born terrorist organisations like, HuM, JeM, etc. These organisations have nexus with the Kashmir's groups like Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Mahaz-e-Azaadi, Kashmir Liberation Army, Muslim United Front (MUF) Al-Fateh, etc. These organisations have two divergent approach, some wants Azaadi (independence) while others are pro-Pakistan. Riggings in 1987 election in Jammu and Kashmir, President Rule from 1990 to 1996 and distrust in Indian government is highly responsible for alienation and militancy in Kashmir. With the help of Hasim Qureshi, an Indian airline hijacker, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) began to circulate the pamphlet with the prospects of Kashmir Independence from India.²⁹ Their publicity emerged from kidnappings of kith and kin of top leaders with the prospects of securing their arrested counterparts. Rubiya Sayeed and Nadia Soz, the daughters of Mufti Sayeed and Saif Ud Din Soz respectively are the living examples of their strategy. One of the devastating turmoil in Kashmir was that insecurity forced the Kashmiri pundits to left their homes. Panun Kashmir wrote that 350,000 Kashmiri Pandits expelled from the valley when militancy emerged. Women and Kashmiri Pandits were the frequent victims of such movement.

Since 1989 around 2156 unidentified bodies were buried in unmarked graves, nearly 50,000 people have been killed. The parents of Displaced Persons have claimed that around 10,000 people have been missing since the separatist revolt from 1989.³⁰ All Party Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir disclosed that from 1989 to 15 Oct. 2012, 93,274 Kashmiris died, 6,969 custodial killings, 1,17,345 arrest and destruction of 1,05,861 houses, Indian security forces orphaned over 1,07,351 children, widowed 22,728 women and 9,920 women were gang-raped.³¹ Many moderates were also the victims of the separatist movement. Separatists are trying every trick up their sleeve to galvanize the public to create a state of chaos and uncertainty in the valley, and the tussle between the separatist and the centre is likely to continue for long.³²

The JKLF remained very active in the first decade of the movement and their objective was, "freedom is our birth right, we will all die, but we will never give it up. We refuse to remain in India as subjugated slaves . . . our struggle is for one thing only: Azaadi."³³ In such a situation, Pakistan played an overt role and get an opportunity to make hay while the sun shines. Armed Forces Special Power (Jammu and Kashmir) Act (AFSPA) of 1990, till date, gave certain special powers to the forces. People of Kashmir are not in favour of AFSPA as AFSPA gave extraordinary powers to "arrest, without warrant, any persons who has committed a cognizable offence or against whom a reasonable suspicion exists . . . the power to break, open the lock of any door, almirah, safe, box, cupboard, drawer, package or other thing, if the key thereof is withheld"³⁴ The tourism, the economic source of the valley since the emergence of extremism crippled. The number of tourists visiting the state per year had gone down from 6, 00,000 - 7, 00,000 in the pre-militancy days to a few thousands in the following years. It is estimated that the state lost 27 million tourists from 1989-2002 leading to tourism revenue loss to the tune of US \$ 3.6 billion. The state has also felt the direct impact of conflict in terms of huge damage caused by violent incidents, taking its toll on both public as well as private properties including gutting of hundreds of government buildings, educational buildings, hospitals, bridges, private houses and shops. Reportedly from 1989 to 2002, over 1,151 government buildings, 643 educational buildings, 11 hospitals, 337 bridges, 10,729 private houses and 1,953 shops have been gutted in some 5,268 attacks on infrastructure. The enormity of economic damage due to militancy can be gauged by the fact that the estimates of damage till December 1996 were approximately INR 4 billion.³⁵

The economic condition of the state told that 21.63% (24.21 lakh) population of Jammu and Kashmir is Below Poverty line (BPL) out of which 98% (22 lakh) and 2% (2.21 lakh) live in rural and urban areas respectively.³⁶ India and Pakistan due to their hostile relations are suffering from economic benefits in the South Asian sub continent. Strategic Foresight group's study predicts that India and Pakistan have the potential to enjoy a trade of about US \$1 billion if the past hostile environment continues and US \$13.25 billion if peace prevails on a cumulative basis for the next five years (2004-08). The opportunity cost or loss is thus about US

\$12 billion.³⁷ Jammu and Kashmir is one of the most militarized zones in the world. In Kashmir there is presence of the military and Para-military forces approximating 600 000 to 700 000 enforce a coercive regime on the people.³⁸ The treatment of Indian Forces to the people of Kashmir during extremism was quoted by Sumantra Bose. Bose in his book, 'Kashmir: Roots of Conflict Paths to Peace' pp-109-10, quoted the experience of one Farooq Wani, a Govt. Employee who was wounded in the protest by the security forces as:

"I fell down on the road [after being hit by gunfire]. I saw small boys being shot. I remained lying. Then I saw a paramilitary officer coming. I saw him pumping bullets into the bodies of injured people lying on the road. A young boy trying to hide under the bridge (over Jhelum River) was killed . . . As I lifted my head a CRPF man shouted, "He is still alive" I pleaded: I am a government employee, please do not shoot." The officer shouted abuses at me and said Islam mangta hai? (You want Islam), and fired at me. My back and hands were hit. Another paramilitary moved up to me and shouted- tum saala zinda hai abi mara nahi [you bastard, you haven't died yet?]. He left after kicking my back . . ."

The Recent Kashmir Unrest in 2010 started in which Pro-Azaadi slogans were chanted. Health Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Sham Lal Sharma while addressing a public gathering at Bani in Kathua District said, "Kashmir be granted Azaadi, Jammu be made a separate state and Laddakh be given Union territory status"³⁹ The two states due to their covert strategy and mutual distrust are lagging behind from ardent economic and socio-political communications.

Restoration of peace

The above analysis does not mean that peace and reconciliation methods do not adopted. Right from partition various agreements, mediations and talks have been articulated between the two nations. Tashkent Agreement, Shimla Agreement, Lahore Declaration, Agra Summit, Peace Process and Confidence Building Measures are the glaring examples. One of the important steps was taken by Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2003 when he visited Pakistan. Vajpayee's extension of a "hand of friendship" with Pakistan was not only appreciated by the two states but International community also. During Musharraf visit to Agra in summer 2001 he assured reassured his counterpart that he had come to meet with open mind and proposed reciprocal action plan to defuse tensions and promote peace. Called upon India to stop atrocities in Indian held Kashmir, he stated that Pakistan might recommend the freedom fighter to moderate their struggle.⁴⁰ In October 2003, India proposed ten confidence-building measures for improving people-to-people contact and communication with Pakistan. The peace process whose major objective was people to people contract has embraced the disconnected communities. Srinagar-Muzzafarabad, Amritsar-Lahore, Poonch-Rawlakote are the glaring achievements for the two nations. Jammu-Sialkot is the recent proposal. Both the states should open further routes and economic linkages in order to boost their relations. It is possible when Pakistan pledge to stop terrorism, cease fire violation. Since 2008, when Indian metropolitan city was targeted in which 173 innocent including 35 foreigners were killed, the peace process got a jolt. Both the nation should revive their socio-economic and cultural relations and should come forward for such a solution of Kashmir which is peacefully acceptable to India, Pakistan and Kashmir as a whole.

II. Conclusion

Kashmir due to its physical contiguity with India and Pakistan, water resources, physical access with the Great Silk Route (Ancient Economic trade route, Starts from China, runs to Europe via Central Asia) has a great geo-political, economic, strategic and military importance for both countries. The present situation in Kashmir since 1989 has dual dimension for India; i.e. internal which exist between India and Jammu and Kashmir and external between India and Pakistan. Kashmir is preyed by the merchants of death who continuously breaking its bones. It is neither death nor suicide. The enemy tries to sink it into the sea, make it desert, the blood.

India and Pakistan should project it in such a way that future generation should not took arms rather work for *Kushaal Kashmir* (prosperous Kashmir). The two should learn a lesson from Germany and France who was once bitter neighbour, fought against each other in the two global wars now are the part of strong European Union, sharing a free border, both using the same Euro. Their previous conflicts have forgotten and their citizens enjoy better quality of life than their predecessors. The people of Indo-pak before partition fought against British Colonialism but after partition are fighting with each other. India and Pakistan can live like France and Germany but the problem is that both are in race in military and arms which made the buffer as highest militarised zone in the world.

India and Pakistan should repair the damage they have done from past 65 years and pledge to cooperate in economic, technological and social areas. This can be achieved by soft hand, making Line of Control irrelevant or Line of cooperation to diminish and eliminate their mistrust and stubbornness. Pakistan needs generally a democratic state and stop breeding terrorism. India on the other should demilitarise, chide into respecting human rights of Kashmir and should give the pre 1953 status to J&K. Kashmiris should give up supporting Independence and pro-Pakistan sentiments and keep in mind that if they get independence, their

future will be connected with three triangular nuclear weapons states and any future conflict between the nuclear states will have direct and intimate impact on Kashmir. If they whole heartedly lend their support to merger with India, they too will find that all doors of progress will open for them and one day India will have a democratic elected Kashmiri Prime Minister.

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