

The British government appointed a new governor-general, Lord Louis Mountbatten, who arrived in India in March 1947. When both sides still refused to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan, Mountbatten saw no other choice but partition. Fearing the possibility of civil war, he decided to act quickly and set August 15 as the date for independence.

Pakistan would be what Jinnah had feared—what he had earlier called “maimed, mutilated, and moth-eaten.” The non-Muslim areas of eastern Punjab and western Bengal voted to separate from their provinces and join India, while the Muslim-majority sections would help form Pakistan. Two boundary commissions, both headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, a British lawyer, had only a few months to decide the borders between the new nations. Meanwhile, Mountbatten encouraged the princes to join their states either to India or Pakistan.

Both Congress and the Muslim League agreed that their nations would be granted dominion status—becoming self-governing nations within the British Commonwealth. This gave them access to British military officers to help create the new armed forces.

What happened after the borders were announced?

The new borders were kept secret until after independence was announced. Once announced, the Punjab exploded into violence. Either voluntarily or through intimidation, Hindus and Sikhs left their homes and moved east, just as Muslims moved west. Often they were attacked by those who had been their neighbors. Entire trains were set upon, the occupants murdered, then the trains sent along their way as a warning to others.

No one is certain of the total casualties, but the two months following independence saw the largest mass migration in world history. Perhaps ten million people moved from one part of the Punjab to the other. The total for northern India exceeded twelve million. As many as one million people were murdered.

To add to this tragedy, Mohandas Gandhi

was assassinated by a Hindu extremist, who opposed Gandhi’s attempts to help Muslim victims of the violence.

India After Independence

Under Jawaharlal Nehru, its first Prime Minister, India dedicated itself to democracy and secularism. Its new constitution created a parliamentary government similar to Great Britain’s.

Nehru remained India’s leader until his death in 1964. As a socialist, he created five year plans to increase industrial production. The government controlled the airline, railroad, and energy industries. At first, industrial and agricultural production rose significantly, but a growing bureaucracy hurt capital investment.

What problems did Nehru face?

Nehru faced other problems both within and without. Sikhs pressed for their own state in the Punjab. Besides Hindi and English, fourteen other state languages were made official (they are all listed on India’s currency notes). In foreign affairs, Nehru tried to be a leader of non-aligned nations, those siding with neither the United States nor the Soviet Union. At first China responded favorably, but later attacked and humiliated India in a 1962 border war.

What role did Indira Gandhi play in India’s development?

A year after Nehru’s death, his daughter, Indira Gandhi (no relation to Mohandas Gandhi), became Prime Minister during a period of monumental change for India. The Green Revolution created high yield seeds which helped India’s agricultural production, but large landowners who could afford the necessary irrigation and fertilization fared better than small farmers. Indira Gandhi nationalized India’s largest banks and, later, its insurance companies and coal mines. The country’s economy stagnated and corruption sapped the government’s strength to deal with economic concerns. In spite of these problems, India tested its first nuclear device in 1974.

Indira Gandhi early on broke with the party bosses of Congress who thought they could control her. She formed the Congress (I) Party and won reelection in 1971. That year India supported Bengali rebels who split Pakistan in two by creating the nation of Bangladesh. A 1975 court decision declared Gandhi's 1971 election victory had been illegally managed by a government employee. In response, she declared a state of emergency, suspended civil liberties, and jailed thousands of opponents.

Indira Gandhi lost the general election of 1977, but was victorious in 1980. In 1984, Sikh extremists, who wanted a separate state, took over the holiest Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple in Amritsar (Punjab). Gandhi used massive military force to expel these extremists. In retaliation, two of Gandhi's own Sikh bodyguards gunned her down.

What were the effects of communal violence?

Gandhi's son Rajiv led the Congress Party to victory in 1985 and became prime minister (he served until 1989). Influenced by capitalism, Rajiv supported the growth of private enterprise. Bureaucratic regulations and taxes were reduced. Rajiv also had to deal with political extremists, in this case Hindu Tamils and Buddhist Sinalese on the neighboring island of Sri Lanka. He had attempted to impose a peace settlement there in 1987. While campaigning during the 1991 elections, he was assassinated by a Tamil terrorist.

In 1989, at least five hundred people died from communal violence. Three years later, Hindu militants destroyed the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya. Nearly six hundred Muslims and three hundred Hindus were murdered. Much of this communal violence was a result of economic insecurity.

In the 1990s, the India government moved toward a liberalization of the economy. Such reforms have included lower tariffs, fewer required government licenses, the creation of a stock market, and the development of a computer software industry. A small but growing middle class, Western in outlook, has benefited from such reforms. Many of the more than

one billion Indians have seen little improvement. Forty per cent of the nation's adults are illiterate (over half of women are illiterate). Often economic conflict is seen in terms of basic values; traditional Indians oppose what they perceive as Western values "infiltrating" their homeland. One example was the conflict over Coca Cola, which was banned from India in the late 1970s but allowed to return in 1995.

Mohandas Gandhi envisioned a nation of small villages, with his people growing their own food and making their own clothing. For him the spinning wheel was the symbol of a free India. Jawaharlal Nehru envisioned a democratic and socialist nation, with a strong government using its influence to make a strong nation. Nehru's grandson, Rajiv Gandhi, envisioned capitalism and a free market economy to rescue his nation from poverty. Perhaps it should not be surprising that a nation as large, diverse, and young as India should still be seeking a common vision. What is remarkable is that, despite its internal conflicts, the concept of democracy not only has persisted but thrived.

Pakistan After Independence

From the beginning, Pakistan had to struggle for its very life. It began as a nation of two parts—West and East, each separated from the other by one thousand miles of territory belonging to India. In creating a government, Pakistan had little funding; its original share of assets from the British was quite small. The on-going conflict with India cut off Pakistan's major market. For example, in the past cotton from West Pakistan was processed in Bombay, India. Most of the commercial leaders of West Pakistan were Hindus or Sikhs who fled the area. In addition, Pakistan had a border dispute with its fellow Muslim nation of Afghanistan (the only nation to vote against Pakistan's admission to the United Nations in 1947).

What two questions continue to haunt Pakistan?

The Muslim League, which had fought so

hard for the creation of Pakistan, had spent little time preparing to govern a nation. Two major questions continue to haunt Pakistan. The first is the role of Islam—is Pakistan a secular state for Muslims of the subcontinent or an Islamic state governed by religious law? The second deals with the distribution of power between the central and provincial governments. Jinnah, the first Governor-General of Pakistan, died in September 1948, too soon for him to influence his nation’s political framework. Shortly after independence, he called for a Pakistan that would protect all of its citizens, no matter what religion. Liaquat Ali Khan, Jinnah’s close associate and their country’s first Prime Minister, advocated a constitutional parliamentary democracy, like Great Britain’s. His attempts to create such a political system failed. He was assassinated in 1951.

Rather than democracy, leaders who followed Jinnah and Ali Khan often used repressive measures. In 1953, Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad dismissed the Prime Minister and the Constituent Assembly and set the precedent of bringing in the military to help rule. Later, several generals ruled directly—General Ayub Khan (1958-69), General Yahya Khan (1969-71), and General Zia ul-Haq (1977-88). It was common for them to use martial law and imprison their political opponents. Two civilian prime ministers, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the 1970s and his daughter Benazir Bhutto in the 1990s, relied on their personal power, often engaging in patronage and nepotism.

Since the inception of Pakistan, many Bengalis in the East felt that the West (dominated by Punjabis) had too much power and did not share the nation’s resources fairly. In

India and Pakistan at a Glance		
	India	Pakistan
Population	1.08 billion	162 million
Number of Languages	15	10
GDP per capita	\$3100	\$2200
Life Expectancy	64 years	63 years
Internet Users	18.5 million	1.5 million
Imports	\$89.3 billion	\$14.0 billion
Exports	\$69.2 billion	\$15.1 billion
Military expenditures as percent of GDP	2.5%	4.9%

Data from the CIA World Factbook.

the 1970 elections, the Awami League of East Pakistan ran on a platform calling for a federal and parliamentary structure on the national level with more local autonomy for each “wing” of Pakistan—including its own currency, fiscal accounts, earnings from foreign exchange, and militia. Although the Awami League won a majority of seats in the National Assembly, Yahya Khan, Pakistan’s ruler, postponed indefinitely convening the Assembly. This led to a revolt in East Pakistan in 1971.

Members of the Awami League set up a government-in-exile in India, which helped the rebels. After border shelling between the two nations, India invaded East Pakistan and defeated Pakistani troops. Bangladesh became independent, and Pakistan lost its eastern wing.

What are the challenges faced by Pakistan?

Today, many in Pakistan are as poor as their neighbors in India. One third of Pakistanis live below the poverty line. The national literacy rate is 45 percent (only 30 percent for women). Meanwhile, the government struggles with a \$32 billion foreign debt and a lack of foreign investment.

Pakistan has yet to resolve the relationship of religion and state. In 1956 Pakistan was declared an Islamic Republic, but the meaning of those words were debated among

three groups—liberals who believed Islam and Western democratic political beliefs could co-exist; *ulama*, traditional religious leaders who wanted the government to recognize the right of religious leaders to help interpret the law; and fundamentalists. The 1956 constitution did include prohibition against the consumption of liquor and the practice of usury. In 1991, the Shariat Bill was passed; the nation's laws would be based on the Quran and *sunna* (words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad). Yet the debate continued. For example, how could a modern economy exist with a religious prohibition against the charging of interest?

Like India, Pakistan still searches for its vision. Unlike India, Pakistan has not had much opportunity to practice democracy. Whether it will become a state for Muslims, as Jinnah had wished, or an Islamic state, as many fundamentalists would prefer, remains to be seen.

Why did Pervez Musharraf overthrow the government?

The year 1999 brought Pakistan yet another military dictator, Pervez Musharraf, a veteran of two wars in the Kashmir. Musharraf justified his take-over as ending corrupt government, a move approved by the government's supreme court. In a July 12, 2002 speech, Musharraf listed the weaknesses of democracy, including corruption and the lack of law and order. Twenty-nine new amendments added to Pakistan's constitution in August, 2002 allow a new National Security Council, headed by Musharraf, to appoint and fire the prime minister and cabinet. The Council may also dismiss any elected legislature.

The Problem of Kashmir

Recent events have increased tensions between India and Pakistan. In May 1998, Pakistan detonated its first nuclear device. In 1999, a fourth conflict in Kashmir, the Kargil War, ended in stalemate.

Kashmir has been at the center of the tensions between India and Pakistan since 1947. Today, some experts believe that it could be a flashpoint for a nuclear war.

What are the origins of the conflict over Kashmir?

Kashmir shares a border with both India and Pakistan, but in 1947, its maharajah, Hari Singh (a descendent of Gulab Singh), refused to reach an agreement with either nation. He hoped to keep his state independent.

In October 1947, two months after partition, Pathan tribesmen from Pakistan entered Kashmir, routed the maharajah's troops and moved towards the capital, Srinagar. Hari



Singh asked India's assistance, which was granted only after he agreed to annex his state to India. The Pathans, as undisciplined as they were warlike, stopped to loot the local population, giving India an opportunity to airlift reinforcements to Srinagar. Pakistani troops entered the war in support of the Pathans. Fighting went back and forth. At India's request, the United Nations called for a ceasefire. When fighting stopped, Pakistan controlled the western third of Kashmir, which Pakistan called "Azad (Free) Kashmir." India ruled the eastern two-thirds.

How did both sides justify their claims on Kashmir?

Both sides claimed all of Kashmir. Pakistan believed that because Kashmir was overwhelmingly Muslim, it belonged to the great Muslim community of which Pakistan envisioned itself. Pakistan pledged to withdraw its troops if the Kashmiri people were allowed to vote on their status.

In contrast, India claimed that, as a secular nation, it could encompass all of its ethnic and religious communities. India also argued that Kashmiri peasants, although Muslims, were drawn to India's promise of land reform. The most popular political party, led by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, was sympathetic to Indian goals of economic change. India demanded Pakistani withdrawal from western Kashmir first, then the Kashmiri people could vote on their status.

What were the causes of the 1965 war?

A second war broke out in 1965. India had begun to exercise more direct authority over Kashmir. Pakistan feared this was in preparation for integrating the state fully into India. Pakistani troops infiltrated into Indian-controlled Kashmir. India also crossed

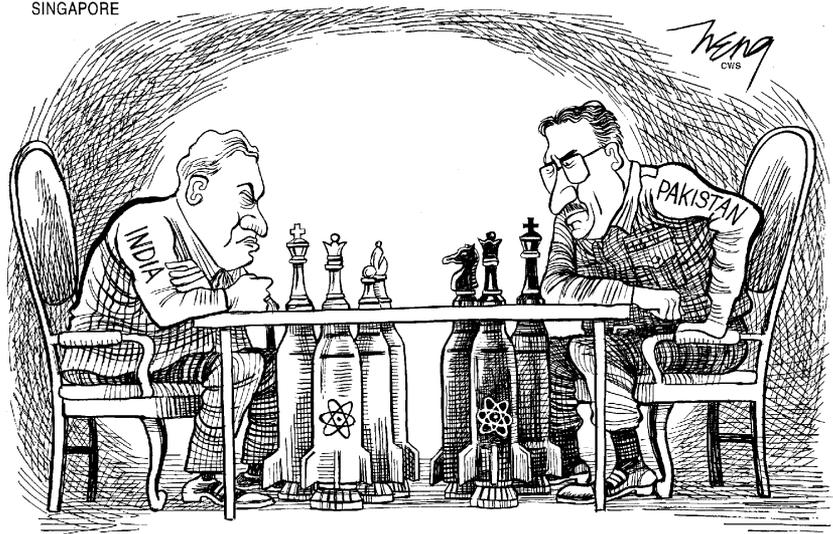
the recognized international frontier in Punjab. Fighting escalated; both sides' infantry and fighter planes crossed the 1948 ceasefire line. Again the United Nations called a halt to the fighting. The Soviet Union brokered an agreement in which both nations not only promised to respect the old ceasefire line, but also not to use force to settle their differences.

Why was there war over East Pakistan?

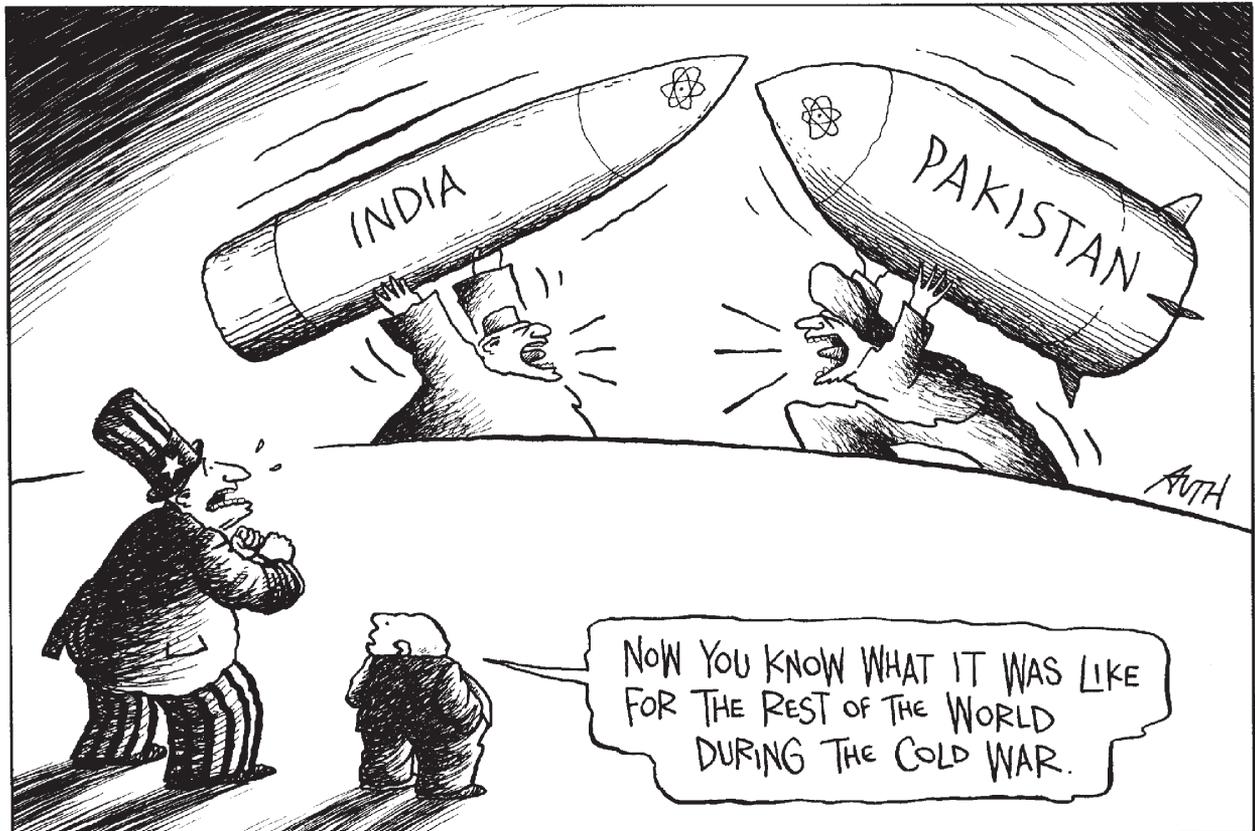
Originally Pakistan consisted of two sections, West and East, separated by a thousand miles of Indian territory. Bengalis, the predominant people of East Pakistan and a majority of the entire nation, resented what they believed to be discrimination by Western Pakistanis, who they felt dominated the government and military leadership and had more medical and educational facilities. In 1971, political disputes resulted in strikes, demonstrations, and violence in East Pakistan. Government troops reacted brutally. Ten million refugees fled to India.

In response to this flood of refugees and seeing an opportunity to weaken Pakistan both politically and ideologically (denying its claim as a community for all Muslims of South Asia), India supported Bengali guerrilla forces. When Pakistan attacked India's northern air force bases, the Indian navy bombarded

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Karachi, Pakistan's largest port. Indian troops captured Dacca (now Dhaka), East Pakistan's major city. As a result, East Pakistan became the independent nation of Bangladesh.

As to Kashmir, India and Pakistan once again agreed not to use force to settle the Kashmir problem. The name of the 1948 ceasefire line became the Line of Control (LoC).

How did nuclear weapons raise the stakes over Kashmir?

In the late 1980s, well-founded suspicions of electoral fraud in India's Congress Party caused protests and demonstrations in Kashmir. Violence, including kidnapping, ensued. Both India and Pakistan sent troops to the Line of Control. By the end of the 1990s this tense situation became even more dangerous due to the threat of nuclear warfare.

India conducted its first nuclear test in 1974. In response, President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto stated that Pakistanis would "eat grass"

in order to develop nuclear weapons of their own. On May 11 and 13, 1998 India tested five nuclear devices. On May 28 and 30, 1998 Pakistan successfully conducted its first nuclear tests.

The next year India and Pakistan fought their fourth conflict, known as the Kargil War (named after a small town located in a mountainous district). Once again Pakistani troops infiltrated the Line of Control. The Indian Air Force and Army struck at these troops hidden among the high mountains. These troops were dislodged with heavy casualties on both sides.

During 2001-2002, tensions continued to rise. At one point, India and Pakistan arrayed a total of one million troops along the Line of Control. Militants killed thirty-eight people in an attack on the Kashmir Assembly in Srinagar, fourteen more in Delhi in an attack on the Indian Parliament, another thirty in an Indian army camp in Kashmir, and two Hindus making a pilgrimage near Srinagar. In addition, the

moderate Kashmiri politician Abdul Ghani Lone was assassinated. India claims that Pakistan is behind these acts of terrorism. Pakistan, in turn, argues that India's rule of Kashmir grows more oppressive each day. Innocent Muslims have been harassed, beaten, and even murdered.

In 2004, India and Pakistan instituted a cease-fire, and since then the two countries have made some progress toward peace, but periodic attacks continue. Whether India and Pakistan can resolve the problem of Kashmir remains to be seen. One thing is certain, for the people of Kashmir, India, and Pakistan, the stakes are very high.