



Kashmir

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- Kashmir is a state in the northwest of India bounded by Pakistan, India and China. It has three regions – India-controlled Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh with a population of 7.25 million which is 70% Muslim; Pakistan-controlled Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir with a population of 6 million (99% Muslim); and Chinese-controlled areas in the northeast – Aksai Chin and Trans-Karakoram Tract.
- In ancient times it was Hindu and Buddhist, then Muslim until 1819 when Sikhs took control, until they were defeated by the British in 1846.
- From 1847 to 1932 ethnic Dogras – upper-caste Hindus from the Jammu region – ruled Kashmir. Rights of Muslims were restricted.
- Muslim protests in 1931 led to widespread rioting and this has been cited by many as the beginning of a Kashmir “freedom struggle”.
- In June 1932, the All-India Kashmir Muslim Conference – later National Conference party – was founded, led by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the “Lion of Kashmir”.
- September 1944, the National Conference party adopted the programme of Naya Kashmir (New Kashmir), proposing a national assembly for Kashmir, Urdu as the common language, massive land reforms with the creation of peasant proprietors from the hundreds of thousands landless in the state.
- Until 1947, Kashmir was a “princely state”, and was expected to accede to either India or Pakistan after Partition. Following a revolt, rebels gained control and declared a pro-Pakistani area of “Azad Kashmir”. But soon afterwards, an incursion with Indian support quashed the rebellion and on 26 October, the instrument of accession to India was signed.
- The Indian government promised to hold a referendum – but it was never held. The UN required the withdrawal of Pakistan and Indian forces.
- Kashmir has since been the focal point of two wars and other major conflicts between India and Pakistan, principally in 1947, 1965 and 1999. In 1990, protests against an election process led to the shooting of 300 unarmed demonstrators.
- A ceasefire in 1949 created a “ceasefire line” known as the Line of Control – a de facto border between Indian-controlled and Pakistan-controlled areas.
- In 1954, Article 370 of the Indian constitution gave relative autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir.

- In the 1990s a number of armed splinter groups emerged in favour of an independent Kashmir, including the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and splinter groups influenced by neighbouring conflicts.
- On 5 August, 2019, the Indian government issued a presidential order to nullify the autonomy of the territory and ordered a curfew, with hundreds detained in protests. The UN security council will discuss the situation again in early 2020
- *William Gould is a professor at the school of history, Leeds University.*
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- His full fact sheet on Kashmir is here:



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Factsheet2.pdf

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- [Mridu Rai](#), Presidency University, Kolkata
- [Suvir Kaul](#), Department of English, University of Pennsylvania.
- [Christopher Snedden](#), Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Hawaii
- [Sumantra Bose](#), Department of Government, London School of Economics

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