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Correspondence: Taha Nazir
PhD, Researcher, Worker, and
Journalist. Thomson Reuters -
ID N-5730-2015 | ORCID ID -
orcid.org/0000-0002-5308-6798
| <https://tahanazir.com>

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**THE KASHMIR DISPUTE AND PATHWAYS TO LASTING
PEACE**

Taha Nazir PhD

Research Scientist, Writer, Media Professional and Social
Worker. <https://tahanazir.com/>

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The **Kashmir dispute** is one of the most protracted and sensitive
geopolitical conflicts in South Asia.

Here is a **rational, evidence-based, and multi-dimensional**
outline of the potential **ultimate solution**:

The Kashmir dispute originated in 1947 when the princely
state of Jammu and Kashmir, with a Muslim majority, acceded to
India under contentious circumstances following tribal
intervention from Pakistan and political pressure from India. This
led to the first Indo-Pak war (1947–48) and division of the
territory along the UN-mediated Line of Control (LoC).
UN Security Council Resolutions 47 (1948) and 80 (1950)
clearly called for a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir after
demilitarization to allow the people to decide whether they want
to join India or Pakistan. India accepted these resolutions but
later refused to implement them, citing changing ground realities.
The region remains divided into Indian-administered Kashmir
(Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh) and Pakistan-administered
Kashmir (Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan). China
also controls parts of eastern Ladakh

(Aksai Chin), making this a complex tripartite territorial conflict.

Pakistan has consistently supported the UN-mandated right to self-determination and continues to raise the issue at international forums like the UN, OIC, and ICJ. However, its own democratic and constitutional treatment of Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir is sometimes questioned due to limited autonomy and representation.

In August 2019, India revoked Article 370 and 35A of its Constitution, ending Kashmir's semi-autonomous status without consulting local stakeholders. This decision was followed by a military lockdown, mass detentions, media blackouts, and widespread international condemnation.

According to Amnesty International, UN Human Rights Council, and Human Rights Watch, there have been systematic human rights violations in Indian-administered Kashmir, including arbitrary arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings, and restrictions on freedom of expression and religion.

Violence and armed resistance have increased since 1989, fueled by Kashmiri discontent, Indian military presence, and regional interference. Over 70,000 people (civilians, militants, and security forces) have died in Kashmir-related violence, per estimates by the South Asia Terrorism Portal and JKCCS (Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society).

Peaceful resolution requires demilitarization of Kashmir from both Indian and Pakistani sides.

Without reducing troop presence and suspending military operations, no genuine peace process can begin. Ceasefire agreements like the one reaffirmed in February 2021 must be sustained.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir must be treated as primary stakeholders, not merely subjects of Indian or Pakistani nationalism. A tripartite dialogue — India, Pakistan, and recognized Kashmiri representatives — is essential for legitimacy and long-term stability.

Any resolution must ensure protection of religious freedoms, linguistic rights, political autonomy, and economic equity for all Kashmiris, regardless of ethnic or sectarian affiliation (Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, etc.).

Models like confederal arrangements, joint sovereignty, or an independent demilitarized zone with international guarantees (UN or neutral states like Norway, Switzerland, Turkey) have been proposed by scholars and peace advocates as viable middle paths.

The revival of cross-border trade, people-to-people contact, and cultural exchange through routes like Muzaffarabad–Srinagar bus service and Poonch–Rawalakot trade (which have been suspended) can rebuild trust.

Indian civil society voices, such as those from Arundhati Roy, Gautam Navlakha, and Indian human rights activists, have also called for ending the military occupation and respecting Kashmiri self-determination. However, such voices are often silenced under sedition or anti-terror laws.

The economic costs of the conflict are huge. India spends billions annually to maintain its military in Kashmir. Pakistan also faces strategic, diplomatic, and financial pressures. Ending the dispute could unlock economic growth, regional trade, and infrastructure projects like CPEC and SAARC connectivity.

The US, China, EU, and OIC have all urged peaceful resolution. However, India rejects international mediation, claiming Kashmir as an internal matter. Pakistan insists on third-party mediation, citing UN resolutions and international law.

Any final settlement must be based on mutual respect, international legal norms, and consent of the Kashmiri people. Without this, the region will remain unstable, and both India and Pakistan will suffer the consequences of extremism, militarization, and diplomatic isolation.

What you think The Kashmir dispute is one of the most sensitive geopolitical conflicts? What is the ultimate possible solution? Tell us by reply in comment section.

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