

Question # 1

Discuss the Kashmir problem in its entirety; throwing light on its background and prospects of possible solutions to this core issue between India and Pakistan

1) Introduction

The Kashmir is the cause of long standing enmity between Pakistan and India. It was the aftermath of Partition which was biased against Muslims. It has resulted in wars, human rights violation, mass agitation and revocation of article 370 by India. This issue has also effected regional trade and peace. The possible solution for this issue include Plebiscity in Kashmir, Bilateral negotiations, third party mediation such as UN. Despite more than 70 years of Partition the Kashmir issue is still

Looming as a persistent threat.

2) Background of Kashmir issue

Following is the background of Kashmir issue

a) Partition and accession of Princely states

Before Partition there were a number of Princely states in India. Kashmir was also a princely state with Muslim majority. However, it was ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh who was a Hindu.

The Princely states were given the option to either side with Pakistan or India on the basis of will of majority. Hari Singh ignoring the will of the majority invited Indian forces into Kashmir. Pakistan protested against this decision and demanded that people of Kashmir should not be deprived of their right.

Partition of
Sub-continent

→ Raja Hari Singh
invited Indian
forces

→ Kashmir was
occupied through
military means
by India

b) War on Kashmir issue and involvement of UN

The issue aggravated and it led to war between Pakistan and India. The UN stepped in and frozen borders were established which are now known as line of control. According to Secretary general of UN Koffi Annan.

"There can be no military mean to Kashmir issue"

The UN and other global forums and organizations stressed that Kashmir issue should be solved through negotiations.

c) Human rights violation and mass agitation

The India government committed atrocities against Muslim in Kashmir. Extra judicial killing and kidnapping by Indian forces had become a norm of the day. More than 700,000 India soldiers were deployed in Kashmir. The heinous crimes conducted by Indian

government led to mass agitation against the India government in 1998.

d) Revocation of article 370 by Indian government

The India government in 2019 unilaterally revoked 370 regarding the special status of Kashmir. Pakistan protested that it was illegal and India has no right to revoke the article 370 by itself. Following the revocation of article 370 India deployed a number of soldiers in Kashmir resulting in military lockdown of Kashmir thus severely violating the human rights. It enhanced the enmity between Pakistan and India.

Possible solution for Kashmir issue

Following are the possible issues & solutions for Kashmir issue

a) Plebisity in Kashmir

Plebisity is one of the most

easy and widely supported solution of Kashmir issue. Pakistan also believes that plebiscite would allow the people of Kashmir to exercise their right. However India does not accept this solution. India has promised to hold plebiscite in Kashmir but it has always backed out of its promise.

b) Bilateral negotiations between Pakistan and India

Another solution for Kashmir issue is the bilateral negotiations between Pakistan and India. Both the countries have numerous platforms including UN, SAARC, SCO to solve this issue peacefully through negotiation. Talks were held between Pakistan and India regarding this issue but they were futile.

c) Third Party mediation

If no decision could be made through bilateral talks and negotiation both countries should seek third party mediation such as

United Nations. Both countries have already solved Indus Water dispute through third-party mediation.

d) Converting LOC into permanent border

Another probable solution of Kashmir issue is to convert Line of Control into permanent border thus ending the long standing enmity between both states. However, it is not acceptable by both Pakistan and India.

e) Making Kashmir an independent state

In order to end the conflict, Kashmir can be made an independent state making it free from the control of both Pakistan and India. Pakistan might accept this proposal but India would never accept it.

f) Combined governance

The least possible solution of Kashmir issue is that it should

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be governed jointly by Pakistan and India. It would require mutual trust from both sides. However this solution cannot last long and would eventually breed a new conflict.

Plebiscite in Kashmir	Accepted on a global level as well as Pakistan
Bilateral negotiation	Already proved futile
Third party mediation	Not accepted by India
Converting LOC into a permanent border	Not accepted by Pakistan and India
Making Kashmir an independent state	Accepted by Pakistan but not by India
Combined governance	Not practical

Conclusion

Kashmir is a long

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and persistent issue between Pakistan and India which is aggravated by atrocities committed by India. In order to solve it the most probable solution is to hold Plebiscite in Kashmir.

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