

## **India-Pakistan Border Firing**

### **Background:**

India and Pakistan experienced a crisis resulting from a series of escalating ceasefire violations along the Line of Control separating the Pakistani- and Indian-controlled portions of the Kashmir region. The crisis began on 6 October 2014, and faded sometime in the later part of that month.

India and Pakistan have been involved in a protracted conflict, including several wars, over the disputed Kashmir region since 1947. In 2003, both states agreed to a ceasefire, though intermittent exchanges of fire continued. Relations between India and Pakistan experienced a brief thaw in early 2014, following the election of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

### **PRE-CRISIS:**

Tensions between the two countries increased in August 2014 after India canceled talks with Islamabad, citing objections to Pakistan's meeting with Kashmiri separatists. Around the same time, exchanges of gun and mortar fire along the Line of Control began to escalate. These clashes escalated further beginning sometime during the first three days of October.

### **Summary:**

Escalating clashes along the Line of Control culminated in heightened attacks during the first night of the Muslim holiday of Ed al-Adha on 6 October 2014, triggering a crisis for both India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan both reported civilian casualties that day for the first time since violence began to increase in August, although there were conflicting reports of Pakistani civilian deaths a day earlier.

Both sides initiated their major responses to the crisis on the same day as the crisis trigger. Indian troops retaliated with mortar fire. Pakistan also responded with violence, but its most important response consisted of the Pakistani foreign office lodging a protest through diplomatic channels that same day.

Officials of the Directorates General of Military Operations (DGMOs) from Pakistan and India discussed the ceasefire violations via a hotline on 7 October, but failed to resolve the issue. The following day Pakistan implemented the final part of its major response to the trigger when it requested that the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) deploy to the area where the fighting was occurring. In response to this request, UNMOGIP sent observers to the Pakistani areas hit by shelling on 14 October.

Each country issued public statements blaming the other for initiating the hostilities, and India charged that Pakistan was using gunfire to provide cover for Kashmiri militants crossing the border into India. Within each state, top officials met several times throughout the crisis. Both countries continued to exchange fire along the Line of Control and Working Boundaries through much of October. The violence that occurred during the crisis was described as the worst fighting since the 2003 ceasefire. Both sides' crises gradually faded in late October to early November as violence and hostile rhetoric decreased significantly. Shelling and firing continued across the Line of Control even after the crisis faded and into 2015, but by that point the armed exchanges were at normal levels, with each tracking and condemning perceived ceasefire violations.

Besides UNMOGIP's presence in the area, there was little external involvement in the crisis. Pakistan attempted to get the UN more involved, but India remained resistant to any efforts to "internationalize" the issue throughout the crisis. There was no mediation in the crisis. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement on October 9, urging both sides to resolve the issue through dialogue, but he also indicated that the UN would not intervene directly through its good offices to resolve the crisis. There was no regional organization activity in the crisis, and neither the United States nor Russia got involved.

Violence between the two sides increased again in summer 2015. India and Pakistan renewed their commitment to the ceasefire in September of that year. This was followed by additional meetings and discussion between the two states, which had been off the table during the crisis and prior to the September 2015 ceasefire agreement.

**References:**

BBC; Christian Science Monitor; Council on Foreign Relations; DAWN; Express Tribune; Guardian; Huffington Post; International Business Time; NYT; Public Radio International; Reuters; TIME.