

Indian Air Force Wars, Operations & Missions



This article is a review of the part played by the Indian Air Force (IAF) in, and the background to, conflicts across the sub-continent (mainly post-independence). It is written from an Indian viewpoint. The early history of the IAF started with its formation in 1932 and continued through to its contribution to the Second World War supporting Slim's 14th Army. On Indian independence the Air Force was restructured and supported land operations in the aftermath. Lack of an accurate intelligence picture preceding the Sino-Indian War 1962 led to significant logistics problems for the Indian Army and subsequently to a large proportion of IAF effort being directed to air transport at the cost of the deployment of combat air power. The War for Kashmir 1965 saw the use of Mystere and Vampire aircraft in anti-armour and – infantry sorties, with air superiority being sought by dominating the skies rather than attacking airfields. India and Pakistan again went to war in 1971 with India initially operating to limited objectives set prior to the opening of hostilities. The IAF flew more combat sorties compared to their opponents but both air forces lost similar numbers of aircraft. In 1999, in Kashmir, the IAF provided high-altitude helicopter and tactical airlift logistics and communication support, with Canberra, Mig and Mirage providing recce and close air support. The IAF is modernising with 40% of its combat force being 4th generation aircraft and has set its sights on becoming a strategic force. The Indian Air Force in Wars AIR POWER REVIEW PAGE 84 Introduction

The Indian Air Force was “mothered” by the RAF and many of the first commanding officers of the newly raised squadrons were British. The first three chiefs were British; and the linkages remain deep and professionally sound. The first war in which the then fledgling Indian Air Force (IAF) was to be employed was the Second World War in support of the Burma Army during its famous retreat from South East Asia in early 1942. While established on 8th October 1932, its first squadron, No. 1 AC Squadron (IAF), had reached its full strength only in 1939 by which time it was employed in “Watch and Ward” duties along with RAF squadrons in NWFP (North West Frontier Province, now in Pakistan). But, with the Japanese rapidly advancing in Southeast Asia, No. 1 Squadron equipped with Lysander aircraft was moved from Kohat (in NWFP) right across India to Tongou airfield on Burma's eastern border with Thailand on 2nd February, 1942 in company with No-28 Squadron (RAF). The Japanese promptly bombed the base the same day. Getting his aircraft locally modified during the night to carry two under-wing 250lb bombs each, the young squadron commander led the squadron to bomb the Japanese base of Mae-Haungsaun from where the Japanese had launched their strike the previous day and destroyed a hangar and damaged the flying control. This “counter-air” operation (with slow recce aircraft) marks the beginning of the operational history of IAF in wars, and the tussle within the service about its primary role. Two years from that date the squadron was back in Imphal under the command of Squadron Leader Arjan Singh (now Marshal of the IAF) and stayed there during the siege, providing offensive air support to the 14th Army which was defending India against Japanese invasion. In March 1945 the title of Royal was added to the Air Force. Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Commander South East Asia Command, flew into besieged Imphal to pin the DFC on Arjan Singh in person.¹ In the final years of the war in the East, IAF had been built up to nine squadrons and at one time all of them were deployed in Burma alongside Slim's XIVth Army. With victory in the East also came the demobilization of the Air Force soon to be followed by Indian independence and partition where the RIAF was reduced from nine squadrons to six plus a half squadron equipped with transport aircraft. The RIAF lost all its permanent stations to Pakistan along with all maintenance and equipment depots. Thus began the raising of IAF (the title of Royal being dropped when India became a Republic on 26th January, 1950) to 10-squadron force. This was being undertaken concurrently with the war launched by Pakistan into Jammu & Kashmir on 22nd October gaining rapid success which forced the Maharaja and political leaders of the State to seek accession to India.² Based on the principles laid down in the Transfer of Power to India (and Pakistan), the accession of Jammu & Kashmir was approved by the Cabinet on 26th October and with the approval of Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General, the Indian Army was launched into Kashmir by air lift in

IAF Dakotas followed by requisitioned transport aircraft from the civil PAGE 85 AIR POWER REVIEW airlines to rapidly reinforce the troops. This was the first operation of IAF after independence conducted while it was still engaged in airlifting refugees from both sides of the border to safer places. Considering that there was no land route into Kashmir and the enemy forces were on the outskirts of Srinagar, without this rapid and "just in time" airlift by the IAF, the map of the subcontinent would well have been different. Through the war IAF transport aircraft continued to support the land operations, of special mention being the first ever flight to Leh by crossing the Himalayas higher than the Dakota's service ceiling, without oxygen and pressurization, to land troops on a strip cleared along the river bed. Dakotas landed troops and arms at Punch, a football-size ground hurriedly prepared. In fact two Dakotas carrying mountain guns even delivered them to the Punch garrison at night without any airfield lighting! The handful of Tempest kept up pressure from the air supporting the Indian Army at crucial stages and even dropped ammunition for the garrison at Skardu besieged by Pakistan Army in mid-1948. The war was almost won when the government decided to go to the UN for a peaceful settlement of the dispute; and this actually perpetuated the dispute! Sino-Indian War 1962 Relations between the PRC and India had begun to deteriorate after 1959 when on one side Chinese military had killed a dozen Indian policemen manning the border in the High Himalayas, and the Tibetan revolt which led to the Dalai Lama fleeing to India. As of now there are nearly 150,000 Tibetan refugees living in India most of them in the Himalayan regions alongside the Dalai Lama. Indian defence minister Krishna Menon, a brilliant man who strongly believed that China was not a threat and whose personalized style of functioning often cut through military command chains, had left the higher defence organization in disarray when the Chinese struck on 20th October, 1962.³ The Indian Army had assumed responsibility for the borders only the previous year. There were clear failures of assessment of intelligence about the Chinese capabilities and intentions beyond generalised conclusions based on simplistic extrapolations. What perhaps tilted the final balance in defence decision making at the top was that not only did Prime Minister Nehru did not expect the Chinese to launch a major offensive, but he seems to have a great belief that the Indian army was well prepared and could handle any situation. An objective study of Indian foreign and defence policy of that period by an Israeli scholar concluded that "Nehru was oblivious to the relative weakness of the Indian Army, to the inadequacies of its logistics, numbers, and training, and the impact of all these factors on its ability to carry out India's Forward Policy in the face of massive Chinese military reaction."⁴ He seems to have not included the Air Force in the calculations one way or the other; and it is not clear if he consulted the air chief at any time. The Defence Minister who should have briefed him correctly perhaps did not. This was a different Nehru from that who directed the military strategy so effectively in the Defence Committee of the Cabinet during the 1947-48 war. Nehru's "faith that even if he was underestimating the Chinese threat, the Indian Army could successfully cope with any resulting scenario" only tended to work against looking at alternatives in case the Chinese did not act as they had in the past.⁵ AIR POWER REVIEW PAGE 86 The most critical factor adverse to Indian Army operations was of logistics requirements. There were really no roads beyond the few leading to a couple of hill stations built by the British. Building roads in the Himalayan Mountains would take time and the construction work had started only after 1959. The army was thus dependent on air supply only; and air supply had its own problems. "The paucity of road communications on the Indian side of the border was such that the deployment, maintenance and even the very survival of ground forces was dependent upon air supply. This was especially true of Ladakh, as right up to August 1962, Leh was still to be connected by a road."⁶ Meanwhile the Chinese were pushing their claim line further into Indian territory. The nature of the challenge may be grasped by the fact that in June 1962 the Army required a total of 44,000 tons to be airlifted by the end of the year in Ladakh, while total capacity was less than half (21,600 tons) of this requirement. The situation in the eastern sector was worse. The IAF put in a Herculean effort to

supply the army by air in spite of shortages of aircraft and aerial delivery equipment. The classical example that stands out is the airlift of three AMX light tanks from Chandigarh to Chushul airfield in Ladakh which was under heavy attack by the Chinese army. The urgency of the task did not allow time for dismantling the tank's turret to bring the weight down to permissible levels. The An-12 aircrew decided to reduce the fuel to the barest minimum (which would not permit any diversion) and the tanks were manhandled into the aircraft and ferried to Chushul and immediately went into action. Chushul was saved. On the other hand the hazards of aerial dropping aside, dropping zones were few and far between, and any minor error in air drop in the Himalayan regions (in west and east) would result in significant loss of dropped supplies. A handful of light transport squadrons and a few helicopters in service performed far beyond their capabilities. The worst handicap for the army was the deficit in force levels and reinforcements that did not possess winter clothing. The rapidly moved up troops, (to heights of 10,000 to 18,000 ft) were not acclimatized and hence were fighting under severe adverse physical limitations. Given the institutional as well cultural weaknesses to analyse and assess the enemy's capabilities and intentions beyond the "bean count" this created a serious deficiency in our ability to make an objective assessment so vital to military operational planning. This inherited weakness came from the infirmities that had developed over the previous decade at the higher inter-service levels and even above that at the higher defence management institutions. The most adverse factor that contributed to the defeat of Indian Army in 1962 was the nonuse of combat air power of the IAF. This was no doubt due to the dissipation of a coherent functioning of the higher defence organization due to the personalized way of functioning of Krishna Menon as the defence minister. Looking back, one can identify multiple reasons for this serious lapse which might have made the critical difference since the Chinese Air Force, though reported to possess over 2,600 combat aircraft, would have had serious problems of operating from airfields in Tibet (at an average altitude of 10,000 ft) and would have been handicapped in payload and fuel supplies. The information about airfields in Tibet was even PAGE 87 AIR POWER REVIEW more sketchy and vague even on the number of airfields let alone the deployment of Chinese air force on them. The only reference available in the official history is to the use of the air force to bomb and strafe Tibetan forces in the early 1950's and to 102 air violations in the Ladakh sector 52 of which took place during a six month period in early 1962. The most likely causes of not employing combat air power can be traced to multiple factors. Firstly, at the political level there were serious concerns about the Chinese likelihood of bombing Indian cities. It needs to be noted that most of the political leaders were conscious of the city bombing of the Second World War and the havoc it had created among people; and more so the Japanese fleet having bombed Indian cities (though only with a handful 250lb bombs) from Madras to Calcutta on India's east coast in early 1942 which had led to the British governor ordering the evacuation of Madras city. Secondly, Indian army leadership was deeply worried that the use of IAF combat squadrons for close air support in the high Himalayas would not be effective particularly since the army organization for close air support was nonexistent at that time. Thirdly, the Army leadership was concerned that the Chinese air force may retaliate to IAF being employed in a combat role and could disrupt the air drop campaign which was considered more important. The IAF apparently had not thought through the potential of interdiction and did not recommend close air support, the only mission the army was interested in. Lastly, it appears that the US embassy also advised that combat air power should not be used on the grounds of its being "escalatory." We lost the war, especially near dramatically in the eastern sector where the Chinese finally declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew even from the territory they still claim. The War for Kashmir 1965 Pakistani leadership, especially its then foreign minister, ZA Bhutto, had been keen to take advantage of India's preoccupation with the Sino-Indian War, which resulted in an Indian defeat, to try to grab Kashmir. By any logic the timing looked right: Nehru was sick and died in May 1964 to be replaced by Lal Buhadar Shastri, known for his strong leaning toward nonviolence. The

nation was demoralised with the trauma of the defeat, the Indian military was in a state of near-disorganisation because of the major expansion and reorganisation having to be generated mostly from existing resources, and the expected military equipment from the US had not materialised. Such a situation would not present itself again and Kashmir could not be captured militarily once Indian military expansion had stabilised. Finding little support from the army leadership and President Ayub, Bhutto started in 1964 to prepare for an irregular war in Kashmir with a properly trained and organised militia given the name of Force Gibraltar. China's change of position on Kashmir in favour of Pakistan further encouraged Bhutto. However, in order to clear up two uncertainties, the war was planned in three phases in 1965. Apparently, Pakistani strategy was to test: one, whether India would cross the international border to launch a counter-attack or opt for arbitration (India opted for the latter), and, two, whether the US would take stern action against Pakistan for using its US-supplied weapons (meant for defence against Communist bloc offensive as part of CENTO, SEATO and bilateral defence agreements) against India since the US President had also assured India that the AIR POWER REVIEW PAGE 88 conditions of the massive arms aid was that US weapons would not be used against India. The first phase began in March 1965 with skirmishes in the area of the Rann of Kutch with contesting claims on small villages and border posts with Pakistan army attacks in divisional strength against a battalion level Indian force stretched across nearly 150-km border. The large tract of the Rann of Kutch located in India (east of India-Pakistan border toward its south) gets flooded around early-mid May every year thus limiting the size of land forces that India could deploy in response to the Pakistani attacks. After holding out, India accepted the British proposal for arbitration and a cease-fire came into being. But meanwhile Pakistan, curiously under the control of Mr Bhutto and the foreign ministry, had started planning (after 1962) and continued to train and build up Force Gibraltar which was planned to be infiltrated into the Indian side of the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). By the beginning of August 1965 the infiltration of trained militia had started in batches of around 1,000 men each with the aim of carrying out sabotage, terrorism and inciting the local population to rise in a revolt against the government of the state. In reality there was no such revolt and in fact it was the people who started to capture these infiltrators and reporting their movements to the police. By mid-August a total of 8,000 jihadi infiltrators (out of the 30,000 trained) had crossed into the state. These guerrilla fighters were also being supplied by the Pakistan Air Force with its C-130 Hercules aircraft. According to the official history of the Pakistan Air Force, its C-in-C, Air Marshal Nur Khan, himself flew in at least one such mission dropping supplies at night in Bandipur area in the valley not far from Srinagar!⁷ Unfortunately, the IAF had no fighters or radar stationed in J&K in accordance with the restrictions imposed by the UN resolutions.⁸ The Indian Army quickly moved to block the infiltration routes on the cease-fire line by the third week of August and the Pakistani jihadis were progressively rounded up or killed. This triggered the third phase of the war - a surprise armour offensive code named 'Grand Slam'. Based on an appreciation, Pakistan's GHQ (the Army Headquarters) had expressed its unhappiness with the plan for Operation Gibraltar. The Chief of the General Staff had put up the conclusion of the general staff to the C-in-C, General M Musa that India was bound to react strongly and that the Pakistan Army was not in a position to hold its advance. Musa agreed with this and put up the file to the president, Field Marshal M Ayub Khan who noted that he would not let the Gibraltar plan be implemented. The public euphoria after Rann of Kutch affair changed the thinking. Pakistan planned the war and invasion meticulously; PAF War Plan No. 6/65 was issued on 29th June, 1965, before Force Gibraltar was launched. The actual Pakistani offensive across the international border began in the early hours of 1st September with one Infantry Division, two regiments of Patton tanks and all the firepower of the Corps Artillery aiming to take Akhnur, 40-km away, where a crucial bridge over River Chenab was the central line of communication into Kashmir. The Indian Army, in the words of its commander, had a truncated infantry brigade in the area and the Pakistani advance

reached Chhamb by the evening. PAGE 89 AIR POWER REVIEW It is at this stage that the IAF was called in. The Air Force flew 26 sorties – 14 Mystere and 12 Vampire --- and played havoc among Pakistani armour and infantry at Chhamb “in the open in close formation and very vulnerable to air attack” according to Brigadier Amjad Ali Khan Chaudhry, Pakistani 4 Corps Commander Artillery.⁹ PAF had two F-86 and one F-104 airborne over Chhamb. IAF lost three Vampires to F-86s and one to ground fire the pilot ejecting to safety. In the swift and fierce action, ten tanks, 2 ack-ack guns and 30-40 vehicles were destroyed. The loss of a quarter of its tank force had an enormous impact on morale and fighting capabilities. General Musa told Chaudhry that “there was no point of taking Akhnur.”¹⁰ Musa acknowledged later that “Taking Akhnur had become a difficult proposition after India used its Air Force in the Chhamb-Jaurian sector.”¹¹ PAF doubled its air defence CAPs over the area. On 3rd September an IAF Gnat shot down an F-86 Sabre and the PAF went on the defensive even further. With Pakistan mobilising for a larger response, the Government issued instructions to the Armed Forces that they could choose the time and place of any counter-attack required. On 3rd September the Indian government laid down the war aims as follows which clearly confirm the intention to exercise restraint achieving minimum goals:¹² 1. To defend against Pakistan’s attempts to grab Kashmir by force and to make it abundantly clear that Pakistan would never be allowed to wrest Kashmir from India; 2. To destroy the offensive power of Pakistan’s armed forces; 3. To occupy only the minimum Pakistani territory necessary to achieve these purposes and which would be vacated after the satisfactory conclusion of the war. The Indian Army launched its two-pronged counter attack on 6th September, 1965 to relieve pressure in the Chhamb sector and to threaten the Lahore sector. The IAF planned to strike at the PAF only when it was attacked and was tasked to undertake offensive support to the army and carry out fighter sweeps in an area around 30-km deep into Pakistan. It was ordered by the government not to take any offensive action in the East. PAF attacked in what was expected to be its major air strike against three main IAF airfields in the West. It was very successful in catching the IAF on the ground at Pathankot and destroyed 11 combat aircraft. On the morning of the 7th September it managed to destroy another 9 aircraft in the airfields in the East. The IAF’s concept of air operations in the context of the war aims of the government was to gain and maintain air superiority; but the method was through dominating the skies rather than seeking to attack airfields. At the same time, air interdiction, yielded enormous dividends, due to trains carrying ammunition, stores and fuel were destroyed in air attacks. This resulted in Pakistan Army Patton tanks having a very limited number of rounds and led to 18 tanks being captured intact on 12th September alone. Contrary to many accounts the IAF had only 25 combat squadrons in September 1965 (although a force level of 35 combat squadrons had been authorised in 1963). Of these, ten squadrons had remained in the East in case China started something. Hence the force ratio AIR POWER REVIEW PAGE 90 in the West between Pakistan and India was 1.5:1 in India’s favour which was compensated substantially by the technological superiority of US-supplied Pakistani arms, compared to the IAF still relying on aircraft like the Vampires acquired in 1949. The overall exchange ratio in air to air warfare losses between PAF and IAF during the war was nearly 3:1. The IAF had flown a total of 3,937 sorties in the Western sector and lost 59 aircraft both in the air and on the ground in both sectors thus resulting in an attrition rate of 1.4986 per hundred sorties. PAF, according to its official history had flown a total of 2,364 sorties.¹³ It was estimated to have lost 43 aircraft resulting in an attrition rate of 1.8189 aircraft per hundred sorties. Looking at the losses in the air alone, the IAF attrition (with 24 aircraft lost in air to air combat and ground fire) comes to 0.6096% as compared to PAF attrition of 1.7766% (with 42 aircraft lost in air). The War in 1971 The India-Pakistan war in 1971 grew out of an obviously destructive and anti-Pakistan set of circumstances like the unwillingness to call the National Assembly after what was clearly the first fair and national elections which led to increasing political dissent in East Pakistan reeling under a series of grievances and gross discrimination over the previous quarter century and Pakistan army’s military

repression of East Pakistan while arresting the political leaders. One of the objective studies by a Pakistani Lt. General Kamal Matinuddin, who had earlier headed Pakistan's premier strategic studies think tank says it all in the title of the book he wrote: "Tragedy of Errors."¹⁴ The longer the Martial Law Administrator General Yahya Khan (under the strong pressure of ZA Bhutto who held the majority position in West Pakistan) ignored the demands by Mujib ur Rehman (the undisputed leader of East Pakistan's Awami Party which held clear majority in the National Assembly after the 1970 elections) and the political leaders from East Pakistan to call the National Assembly and form an elected government, the greater was the rise of political dissent in East Pakistan against the leadership in West Pakistan. It is in this milieu that Pakistan deployed the army to apply pressure and very soon the army action became extremely repressive particularly targeting the intellectual and students and professors at Dhaka University. This in turn blew up into a full-fledged insurgency which the Pakistani army tried to control with ever increasing and indiscriminate violence which many Western observers described as "genocide" during the ensuing weeks and months leading to reportedly 3 million civilians being killed. Over ten million Bengalis of diverse religions fled to India as refugees. The Commander of the army in East Pakistan even planned an invasion of India in April 1971 which was turned down by Yahya Khan. It is in this context that Pakistan launched its pre-emptive air strike on 3rd December, 1971 and a regular full-scale war started on both east and west. As the situation in the east kept deteriorating, Pakistan mobilised its forces in the west. In October 1971, India laid down the following limited objectives for its possible military operations which it did, with some to spare:¹⁵

1. To assist the Mukti Bahini in liberating a part of Bangladesh, where the refugees could PAGE 91 AIR POWER REVIEW be sent to live under their own Bangladesh government.
2. To prevent Pakistan from capturing any Indian territory of consequence in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan or Gujarat. This was to be achieved by offensive defence and not merely passive line-holding.
3. To defend the integrity of India from a Chinese attack in the north.

It is clear that the capture of Dhaka was not one of the aims of the war at its start. The IAF had deployed 15 (out of its 35) combat squadrons on the eastern sector, largely to allow for a possible intervention from China (as in 1965) though it never came. In East Pakistan the IAF made short shrift of the solitary F-86 squadron within the first day or so. From then onward, with total air superiority, the IAF went in to provide massive close support to the army, used its helicopters to provide "heli-bridges" for the advancing troops across the innumerable water obstacles and rivers in East Pakistan. The original war plan was to undertake limited action and occupy some bridgeheads across the borders while supporting the Mukti Bahini (the Bengali militia fighting now for independence). This was to be used for pressing both sides to arrive at a political solution and move toward a democratically elected government. The unwillingness of West Pakistan and lack of interest by the international community left no option but to carry forward the military advance. At that stage a reduced Para drop by IAF C-119G Packet aircraft as undertaken in East Pakistan which by then had declared independence as sovereign state named Bangladesh. Ultimately, based on signal intelligence picked up by an IAF unit about the likely meeting the following day in Dhaka in the Governor's residence a formation of four MiG-21FL undertook a strike when the meeting was in progress and achieved direct hits that disrupted the meeting. The Governor along with other members of the government quickly agreed to accept surrender ultimately leading to 94,000 POWs in Indian custody (at the request of the Pakistani army's Eastern Command to save them from the Mukti Bahini's likely reprisals which were likely to lead to massive killings). On the western front Pakistan planned an all out war in order to improve its negotiating position. During the eight months between the army crack down in the east to the preemptive air strike on the evening of 3rd December in the West, Pakistan had worked out a bold and ambitious war plan. The Pakistan army was to launch a coordinated offensive by both the Army Reserve North and the Army Reserve South under one command to be held by Lt General Tikka Khan, reputed to be an outstanding commander. The two-pronged thrust was expected to cut

through Indian defences south of the Sutlej River and achieve substantive forward movement in the first week. The PAF was fully involved in this plan and would undertake air strikes primarily on Indian forward airfields to try and cut down the air effort it could provide to its army. The official history states that:¹⁶ "The overriding priority of the PAF was to give maximum support to General Tikka Khan's AIR POWER REVIEW PAGE 92 proposed offensive into India; every other air force objective was to be subordinated to this requirement. The air chief considered this commitment to be pivotal because the success or failure of the PAF's support would in all likelihood determine the fate of Pakistan's crucial offensive. When the estimated 'cost' of fulfilling this commitment was calculated at his behest by the planning staff in July 1971, it worked out at a loss of 100-120 combat aircraft and pilots over the projected 7-10 day period. (Air chief) Rahim Khan was aware that this would amount to losing one-third of his force but he had the full support of his senior commanders when he directed them in August to prepare their units to pay this price for ensuring the success of the army's offensive." (Emphasis added) However in the opening stages when the Pakistan army was probing and trying to find the most suitable thrust lines, the IAF had started extensively destroying Pakistani armour and vehicles in the launch areas of the Tikka Offensive. Consequently the ambitious Tikka Offensive could not even start although he (Lt Gen Tikka Khan) flew down to the GHQ to persuade them to "let him go" without success. IAF had once again thwarted an intended armour offensive which if successful could have had serious implications for the region. The war also saw a not-so-common phenomenon of a pure fighter aircraft versus tank battle. The PAF had kept asking for months to let them know if any offensive move was planned further south in the Rajasthan sector since it would take a week to prepare Jacobabad, the nearest airfield, for air operations. The army headquarters had kept informing PAF headquarters that no such plans had been made. But 18 Division deployed east of Jacobabad and west of the IAF base at Jaisalmer started an offensive into India at night and encircled a small post at Longewala in Indian territory manned by a company of 23 Punjab regiment. The gallant company kept up fire and noise to mislead the Pakistani tank regiments into believing that the area was heavily defended. By early morning Hunter aircraft from Jaisalmer began to destroy the two regiments of Pakistani tanks and finally only a few got away by retreating at night. Air power had once again proved its potency for air to surface dominance. The Indian Air Force flew a total of 11,549 (combat and airlift) sorties during the war. It lost a total of 56 aircraft (including three aircraft on the ground due to enemy action) during the war due to combat factors (another 15 were lost due to flying accidents). This works out to an overall attrition rate of 0.48 per cent in respect of combat losses. A total of 6,604 combat sorties were undertaken by the IAF in both sectors, losing 56 aircraft. Taking combat losses into account, this corresponds to an attrition rate of 0.85 per cent during the 14-day war. Compared to this, the Pakistan Air Force carried out a total of 3,027 sorties on combat aircraft.¹⁸ It lost a total of 55 aircraft (44 in the western sector and 11 in East Pakistan) to IAF action besides another 6 (in the western sector), claimed by the IAF to have been shot down, though not confirmed, which are not included in this total. This figure also does not include the 12 aircraft (9 F-86 and 3 RT-33) which were "de-commissioned" on the ground by the PAF itself when the airfields in Dhaka and other places became unusable due to incessant air attacks by the IAF.¹⁹ With a loss of 55 aircraft due to direct IAF combat action, the Pakistan Air Force PAGE 93 AIR POWER REVIEW attrition rate comes to 3.2 per cent (compared to 0.85% of IAF) during the war. The Pakistan Air Force, unlike its 1965 aggressiveness, carried out only 9.58 per cent of its total sorties against Indian airfields and radar units during day and night, compared to the 11.21 per cent of its total sorties on similar missions. In practical terms, it did not penetrate Indian air space beyond about 30-50 km. For example, Pathankot was hit 30 times in 14 days, though Adampur – a major airbase – to its south was not even hit once, while Halwara, another major airbase, was attacked only once, with limited effect. When we look more closely at attrition rates, we find that the PAF with 13 combat squadrons (plus one F-104 and two F-86 squadrons received from Jordan and Iran)

undertook a total of 1,279 sorties on offensive missions, with a loss of 33 aircraft leading to an attrition rate of 2.6 per cent. The Indian Air Force loss rate on offensive missions in the western sector was 1.2 per cent. In response, the IAF flew a total of 280 sorties in both sectors on counter-air missions in the first 24 hours after the war started at last light on December 3, compared to 35-odd by the PAF. The sheer weight of attack forced the Pakistan Air Force to go on the defensive immediately, conceding air dominance to the IAF in substantive terms which also reduced the necessity of air effort required for counter-air in the following days. The abiding principle of war – that of concentration of force – and that of concentration of firepower endemic to the optimum employment of air power, were validated once again. Counter-air operations continued over the following days but at a progressively reducing level and were basically intended to keep the PAF off-balance and on the defensive. The most successful IAF counterair strike was by a Hunter aircraft on the fifth day of the war on December 8, resulting in the total loss of five F-86 aircraft on the ground at Murid airfield in Pakistan. Overall, the Indian Air Force devoted 8.9 per cent of its combat air effort to counter-air operations. The end result was that the PAF devoted a much higher proportion of its air effort and was forced to employ as much as 57.8 per cent of its total air effort for air defence. Air Chief Marshal P.C. Lal, then CAS, has covered the war in Chhamb area in some detail in his book.²⁰ He says that the army commander “General Candeth confirmed that tactical air support was given to the army in the Chhamb area whenever it was required. There was never any shortage of aircraft, they were always readily available and they did whatever they were asked to do.” The Summer of ‘99

The 1971 war had a profound impact on the military conflict situation in the subcontinent. Pakistan, in gross contravention to the framework of Transfer of Power under which Pakistan was also created, reverted to its strategy of covert war, but now under the nuclear umbrella.²¹ Pakistan decided to acquire nuclear weapons to offset Indian conventional capabilities. India, on the other hand, put all its faith in the 1972 Simla Agreement which stipulated that the Line of Control emerging after the 1971 war “would not be disturbed by the use of force or any other means” making it a de-facto accepted frontier. Within a decade it started its cartographic aggression by claiming rights over Siachen Glacier in violation of the 1949 Agreement on Cease-fire in J&K brokered by the UN which specified that the accepted line demarcated up to Point NJ9842 would run due northward from this point to the glaciers (that is between the two main glaciers in the region – the Siachen to the east of the crest line of the mountain range, and the Baltoro glacier to its west), and the line was to be demarcated later. Pakistan, after its first test of a nuclear device at Lop Nor with Chinese assistance in 1983, planned to take over Siachen Glacier and adjoining areas up to the Karakoram Pass (not to be confused with the Chinese built highway of the same name far to the west in Gilgit region of Kashmir).²² The Indian Army, in a pre-emptive move in early 1984 was able to just occupy the high crest marking the watershed before the Pakistan army could get to it the same day. Here at an altitude of 14,000 to 22,000 ft continues a small war on the world’s highest battlefield since then though after successive attempts Pakistan Army failed to dislodge the Indian Army from the high crest and the Indian Army limited its positions to the approximate alignment mandated in the Karachi Agreement. Combat air power was not employed; but IAF helicopters performed – and over the past 27 years continue to perform a Herculean task day after day of supplying the troops and reinforcements to the ridge held by the Indian Army. Failing in its clandestine repeated attempts to take over a part of Kashmir in the Siachen region, Pakistan devised another approach planned in 1987 but executed in the summer of 1999. This was to clandestinely occupy the peaks in and around the Kargil area in J&K state after the Islamist terrorism propagated first in Punjab’s border states (1983-1993) and in J&K since 1988 with the aim to trigger a violent anti-India insurgency failed to produce the desired results largely due to the disillusionment of the people of the state with Pakistan and its expanding use of terror as a foreign policy tool. Occupation of the heights in an area nearly 120x9 kilometres across the agreed upon Line of Control which

Pakistan had committed not to disturb in the 1972 Simla Agreement placed the only road from Srinagar to Leh and Ladakh and Siachen under Pakistani army firepower. The Indian Army was completely taken by strategic surprise when the scale and density of intrusion was found in May 1999. The Indian Army from then on demonstrated heroic combat capabilities in dislodging the Pakistani army from their protected bunkers at, and close to the peaks. The IAF had been pressed into service for logistics and communication duties with its helicopters and tactical airlift into the valley for reinforcement. Given the strong opposition in adverse terrain at altitudes of 12,000-18,000 ft, the IAF was called in after an IAF helicopter was shot down and a Canberra on a recce mission was damaged by hostile shoulder-fired SAMs. IAF MiG-21/27 and Mirage 2000 provided exceptional support to the army in spite of being heavily restricted by government orders not to cross the Line of Control. Mirage 2000 strikes destroyed the supply dumps of the Pakistani troops (belonging to 12th Northern Light Infantry which was finally decimated). The Pakistani army was pushed back on all sectors close to the Line of Control and the final withdrawal across the LOC was brokered by the US president. Conclusion Given the above brief background, the central role of the Indian Air Force rests on conventional PAGE 95 AIR POWER REVIEW deterrence, while at the same time that of being the key component of nuclear deterrence. For a variety of reasons the IAF is in the process of a historical transformation in moving toward a philosophy of air power based on the principle of “air dominance” both in terms of air-to-air dominance (classical air superiority) as well as air-to-surface dominance so as to play a strategic role. It is pertinent to recall that Lord Trenchard had stated that “A strategic force can be defined as a military force capable of assuming command of its own medium by its own resources. Until the advent of the airplane, the army and navy were valid expressions of the nation’s ultimate military power on land and sea, respectively. With the development of aircraft, however, that ceases to hold true.” Toward that end, over 40% of the IAF’s combat force is already composed of 4th generation aircraft and this proportion will increase to almost 80% in another decade. India has already undertaken a joint venture with Russia to design and develop a 5th generation fighter. Force multipliers like the AWACS and aerial refuelling is already part of routine employment. India is negotiating with the US for the acquisition of ten C-17 with an option to double this figure. The stretched and mission-specific C-130J Super Hercules has already entered service. Many more advanced weapons and systems are in the pipeline. In short, in keeping with the dominant trends in Asia, the IAF has set its sights to really become a strategic force which can win the nation’s wars jointly, as well as singly in certain circumstances and for out-ofcountry contingencies.

The **Indo-Pakistani war of 1947–1948**, also known as the **first Kashmir war**,^[30] was a war fought between [India](#) and [Pakistan](#) over the [princely state](#) of [Jammu and Kashmir](#) from 1947 to 1948. It was the first of four [Indo-Pakistani wars](#) between the two [newly independent nations](#). Pakistan precipitated the war a few weeks after its independence by launching tribal [lashkar](#) (militias) from [Waziristan](#),^[31] in an effort to capture [Kashmir](#) and to preempt the possibility of its ruler joining India.^[32]

[Hari Singh](#), the [Maharaja](#) of Jammu and Kashmir, was facing an [uprising by his Muslim subjects](#) in [Poonch](#), and lost control in portions of the western districts. On 22 October 1947, Pakistan's [Pashtun tribal militias](#) crossed the border of the state. These local tribal militias and irregular Pakistani forces moved to take the capital city of [Srinagar](#), but upon reaching [Baramulla](#), they took to plunder and stalled. Maharaja Hari Singh made a plea to India for assistance, and help was offered, but it was subject to his signing of an [Instrument of Accession](#) to India.

The war was initially fought by the [Jammu and Kashmir State Forces](#)^{[33][34]} and by militias from the [frontier tribal areas](#) adjoining the [North-West Frontier Province](#).^[35] Following the [accession of the state to India](#) on 26 October 1947, Indian troops were airlifted to [Srinagar](#), the state capital. British commanding officers initially refused the entry of Pakistani troops into the conflict, citing the accession of the state to India. However, later in 1948, they relented and Pakistan's armies entered the war shortly afterwards.^[35] The fronts solidified gradually along what later came to be known as the [Line of Control](#). A formal ceasefire was declared effective 1 January 1949.^[36] Numerous analysts state that the war ended in a stalemate, with neither side obtaining a clear victory. Others, however, state that India emerged victorious as it successfully gained the majority of the contested territory.

Background

Further information: [History of Kashmir](#) and [Jammu and Kashmir \(princely state\)](#)

Prior to 1815, the area now known as "Jammu and Kashmir" comprised 22 small independent states (16 Hindu and six Muslim) carved out of territories controlled by the Amir (King) of [Afghanistan](#), combined with those of local small rulers. These were collectively referred to as the "Punjab Hill States". These small states, ruled by [Rajput kings](#), were variously independent, vassals of the [Mughal Empire](#) since the time of [Emperor Akbar](#) or sometimes controlled from [Kangra state](#) in the Himachal area. Following the decline of the Mughals, turbulence in Kangra and invasions of Gorkhas, the hill states fell successively under the control of the Sikhs under [Ranjit Singh](#).^[37]

The [First Anglo-Sikh war](#) (1845–46) was fought between the [Sikh Empire](#), which asserted sovereignty over [Kashmir](#), and the [East India Company](#). In the [Treaty of Lahore](#) of 1846, the Sikhs were made to surrender the valuable region (the Jullundur Doab) between the [Beas River](#) and the [Sutlej River](#) and required to pay an indemnity of 1.2 million rupees. Because they could not readily raise this sum, the East India Company allowed the [Dogra](#) ruler [Gulab Singh](#) to acquire Kashmir from the Sikh kingdom in exchange for making a payment of 750,000 rupees to the company. Gulab Singh became the first [Maharaja](#) of the newly formed [princely state](#) of [Jammu and Kashmir](#), founding a [dynasty](#) that was to rule the state, the second-largest principality during the [British Raj](#), until India gained its independence in 1947.^[citation needed]

From February 1944 to January 1947, Afghanistan [faced a series of tribal revolts](#). These revolts influenced Afghanistan to take a pro-Pakistan stance during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947–1948. A pro-India stance in this case would necessitate stopping Pashtuns from joining Pakistan's war against India, which was expected to cause a resurgence in rebel activity when the government was hoping to focus on national reform.^[38]

Partition of India



Partition of India and the movement of refugees



Field Marshal [Claude Auchinleck](#), Supreme Commander of

Indian and Pakistani armed forces

Main article: [Partition of India](#)

The years 1946–1947 saw the rise of [All-India Muslim League](#) and [Muslim nationalism](#), demanding a separate state for India's Muslims. The demand took a violent turn on the [Direct Action Day](#) (16 August 1946) and inter-communal violence between Hindus and Muslims became endemic. Consequently, a decision was taken on 3 June 1947 to divide [British India](#) into two separate states, the [Dominion of Pakistan](#) comprising the Muslim majority areas and the [Dominion of India](#) comprising the rest. The two provinces [Punjab](#) and [Bengal](#) with large Muslim-majority areas were to be divided between the two dominions. An estimated 11 million people eventually migrated between the two parts of Punjab, and possibly 1 million perished in the inter-communal violence.^{[\[citation needed\]](#)} Jammu and Kashmir, being adjacent to the Punjab province, was directly affected by the happenings in Punjab.^{[\[citation needed\]](#)}

The original target date for the transfer of power to the new dominions was June 1948. However, fearing the rise of inter-communal violence, the British Viceroy [Lord Mountbatten](#) advanced the date to 15 August 1947. This gave only six weeks to complete all the arrangements for partition.^{[\[39\]](#)} Mountbatten's original plan was to stay on as the joint [Governor General](#) for both of the new [dominions](#) till June 1948. However, this was not accepted by the Pakistani leader [Mohammad Ali Jinnah](#). In the event, Mountbatten stayed on as the Governor General of India, whereas Pakistan chose Jinnah as its Governor General.^{[\[40\]](#)} It was envisaged that the nationalisation of [the armed forces](#) could not be completed by 15 August^{[\[b\]](#)} and hence British officers stayed on after the transfer of power. The service chiefs were appointed by the Dominion governments and were responsible to them. The overall administrative control, but not operational control, was vested with Field Marshal [Claude Auchinleck](#),^{[\[c\]](#)} who was titled the 'Supreme Commander', answerable to a newly

formed Joint Defence Council of the two dominions. India appointed General [Rob Lockhart](#) as its Army chief and Pakistan appointed General [Frank Messervy](#).^[45]

The presence of the British commanding officers on both sides made the Indo-Pakistani war of 1947 a strange war. The two commanding officers were in daily telephone contact and adopted mutually defensive positions. The attitude was that "you can hit them so hard but not too hard, otherwise there will be all kinds of repercussions."^[46] Both Lockhart and Messervy were replaced in the course of war, and their successors [Roy Bucher](#) and [Douglas Gracey](#) tried to exercise restraint on their respective governments. Bucher was apparently successful in doing so in India, but Gracey yielded and let British officers be used in operational roles on the side of Pakistan. One British officer died in action.^[47]

Developments in Jammu and Kashmir (August–October 1947)



[Maharaja Hari Singh](#) of [Jammu and Kashmir](#) in military uniform

With the independence of the Dominions, the [British Paramountcy](#) over the princely states came to an end. The rulers of the states were advised to join one of the two dominions by executing an [Instrument of Accession](#). [Maharaja Hari Singh](#) of Jammu and Kashmir, along with his prime minister [Ram Chandra Kak](#), decided not to accede to either dominion. The reasons cited were that the Muslim majority population of the state would not be comfortable with joining India, and that the Hindu and Sikh minorities would become vulnerable if the state joined Pakistan.^[48]

In 1947, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir had a wide range of ethnic and religious communities. The [Kashmir province](#) consisting of the [Kashmir Valley](#) and the [Muzaffarabad district](#) had a majority Muslim population (over 90%). The [Jammu province](#), consisting of five districts, had roughly equal numbers of Hindus and Muslims in the eastern districts ([Udhampur](#), [Jammu](#) and [Reasi](#)), and a Muslim majority in the western districts ([Mirpur](#) and [Poonch](#)). The mountainous [Ladakh](#) district (*wazarat*) in the east had a significant Buddhist presence with a Muslim majority in [Baltistan](#). The [Gilgit Agency](#) in the north was overwhelmingly Muslim and was directly governed by the British under an agreement with the Maharaja. Shortly before the transfer of power, the British returned the Gilgit Agency to the Maharaja, who appointed a [Dogra](#) governor for the district and a British commander for the local forces.^[citation needed]

The predominant political movement in the Kashmir Valley, the [National Conference](#) led by [Sheikh Abdullah](#), believed in secular politics. It was allied with the [Indian National Congress](#) and was believed to favour joining India. On the other hand, the Muslims of the Jammu province supported the [Muslim Conference](#), which was allied to the [All-India Muslim League](#) and favoured joining

Pakistan. The Hindus of the Jammu province favoured an outright merger with India.^[49] In the midst of all the diverging views, the Maharaja's decision to remain independent was apparently a judicious one.^[50]

Operation Gulmarg plan



- Muzaffargarh

- Poonch

- Bhimber

- Abbottabad

- Swat

- Dir

- Chitral

- Bannu

- Wana

- Kohat

-

Thall

-

Nowshera

-

Indus river

-

Ravi river

[class=notpageimage|](#)

Operation Gulmarg locations

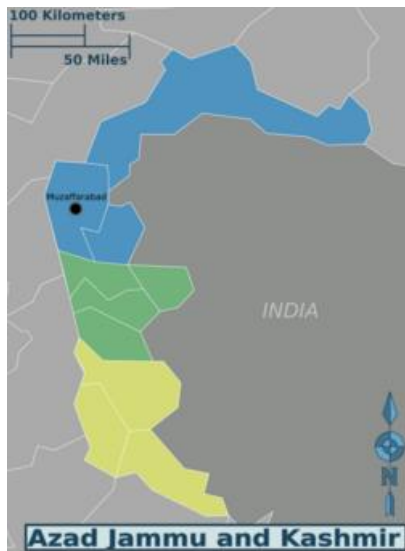
According to Indian military sources, the Pakistani Army prepared a plan called Operation Gulmarg and put it into action as early as 20 August, a few days after Pakistan's independence. The plan was accidentally revealed to an Indian officer, [Major O. S. Kalkat](#) serving with the [Bannu Brigade](#).^[d] According to the plan, 20 *lashkars* (tribal militias), each consisting of 1,000 [Pashtun tribesmen](#), were to be recruited from among various Pashtun tribes, and armed at the brigade headquarters at [Bannu](#), [Wanna](#), [Peshawar](#), [Kohat](#), [Thall](#) and [Nowshera](#) by the first week of September. They were expected to reach the launching point of [Abbottabad](#) on 18 October, and cross into Jammu and Kashmir on 22 October. Ten *lashkars* were expected to attack the [Kashmir Valley](#) through [Muzaffarabad](#) and another ten *lashkars* were expected to join the rebels in [Poonch](#), [Bhimber](#) and [Rawalakot](#) with a view to advance to [Jammu](#). Detailed arrangements for the military leadership and armaments were described in the plan.^{[52][53]}

The regimental records show that, by the last week of August, the [11th Prince Albert Victor's Own Cavalry \(Frontier Force\)](#) (PAVO Cavalry) regiment was briefed about the invasion plan. Colonel Sher Khan, the Director of Military Intelligence, was in charge of the briefing, along with Colonels Akbar Khan and Khanzadah. The Cavalry regiment was tasked with procuring arms and ammunition for the 'freedom fighters' and establishing three wings of the insurgent forces: the South Wing commanded by Major General [Zaman Kiani](#), a Central Wing based at Rawalpindi and a North Wing based at Abbottabad. By 1 October, the Cavalry regiment completed the task of arming the insurgent forces. "Throughout the war there was no shortage of small arms, ammunitions, or explosives at any time." The regiment was also told to be on stand by for induction into fighting at an appropriate time.^{[54][55][56]}

Scholars have noted considerable movement of Pashtun tribes during September–October. By 13 September, armed Pashtuns drifted into Lahore and Rawalpindi. The Deputy Commissioner of [Dera Ismail Khan](#) noted a scheme to send tribesmen from [Malakand](#) to [Sialkot](#), in lorries provided by the Pakistan government. Preparations for attacking Kashmir were also noted in the princely states of [Swat](#), [Dir](#), and [Chitral](#). Scholar Robin James Moore states there is "little doubt" that Pashtuns were involved in border raids all along the Punjab border from the [Indus](#) to the [Ravi](#).^[57]

Pakistani sources deny the existence of any plan called Operation Gulmarg. However, Shuja Nawaz does list 22 Pashtun tribes involved in the invasion of Kashmir on 22 October.^[58]

Rebellion in Poonch



Poonch district of Pakistan-administered Azad Kashmir (in green) along with Muzaffarabad (blue) and Mirpur (yellow) districts in 1947

Main article: [1947 Poonch rebellion](#)

Sometime in August 1947, the first signs of trouble broke out in [Poonch](#), about which diverging views have been received. Poonch was originally an internal *jagir* (autonomous principality), governed by an alternative family line of Maharaja Hari Singh. The taxation is said to have been heavy. The Muslims of Poonch had long campaigned for the principality to be absorbed into the Punjab province of British India. In 1938, a notable disturbance occurred for religious reasons, but a settlement was reached.^[59] During the [Second World War](#), over 60,000 men from Poonch and Mirpur districts enrolled in the British Indian Army. After the war, they were discharged with arms, which is said to have alarmed the Maharaja.^[60] In June, Poonchis launched a 'No Tax' campaign.^[61] In July, the Maharaja ordered that all the soldiers in the region be disarmed.^[6] The absence of employment prospects coupled with high taxation drove the Poonchis to rebellion.^[60] The "gathering head of steam", states scholar Srinath Raghavan, was utilised by the local Muslim Conference led by [Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan](#) (Sardar Ibrahim) to further their campaign for accession to Pakistan.^[63]

According to state government sources, the rebellious militias gathered in the Naoshera-Islamabad area, attacking the state troops and their supply trucks. A battalion of state troops was dispatched, which cleared the roads and dispersed the militias. By September, order was reestablished.^[64] The Muslim Conference sources, on the other hand, narrate that hundreds of people were killed in [Bagh](#) during flag hoisting around 15 August and that the Maharaja unleashed a 'reign of terror' on 24 August. Local Muslims also told Richard Symonds, a British Quaker social worker, that the army fired on crowds, and burnt houses and villages indiscriminately.^[65] According to the Assistant British High Commissioner in Pakistan, H. S. Stephenson, "the Poonch affair... was greatly exaggerated".^[64]

Operation Datta Khel

Main article: [Operation Datta Khel](#)

Operation Datta Khel was a military operation and coup planned by [Major William Brown](#) along with the [Gilgit Scouts](#), aimed at overthrowing the rule of the [Dogra dynasty](#) of [Kashmir](#). The operation was launched shortly after the independence of Pakistan. By 1 November, [Gilgit-Baltistan](#) had been annexed from the Dogra dynasty, and was made part of Pakistan after a brief provisional government.^[66]

Pakistan's preparations, Maharaja's manoeuvring



[Liaquat Ali Khan](#), Prime Minister of Pakistan

Scholar [Prem Shankar Jha](#) states that the Maharaja had decided, as early as April 1947, that he would accede to India if it was not possible to stay independent.^[67] The rebellion in Poonch possibly unnerved the Maharaja. Accordingly, on 11 August, he dismissed his pro-Pakistan Prime Minister, Ram Chandra Kak, and appointed retired Major [Janak Singh](#) in his place.^[68] On 25 August, he sent an invitation to Justice [Mehr Chand Mahajan](#) of the Punjab High Court to come as the Prime Minister.^[69] On the same day, the Muslim Conference wrote to the Pakistani Prime Minister [Liaquat Ali Khan](#) warning him that "if, God forbid, the Pakistan Government or the Muslim League do not act, Kashmir might be lost to them".^[70] This set the ball rolling in Pakistan.^[citation needed]

Liaquat Ali Khan sent a Punjab politician [Mian Iftikharuddin](#) to explore the possibility of organising a revolt in Kashmir.^[71] Meanwhile, Pakistan cut off essential supplies to the state, such as petrol, sugar and salt. It also stopped trade in timber and other products, and suspended train services to Jammu.^{[72][73]} Iftikharuddin returned in mid-September to report that the National Conference held strong in the Kashmir Valley and ruled out the possibility of a revolt.^[citation needed]



[Murree](#), overlooking Kashmir

Meanwhile, Sardar Ibrahim had escaped to West Punjab, along with dozens of rebels, and established a base in [Murree](#). From there, the rebels attempted to acquire arms and ammunition for the rebellion and smuggle them into Kashmir. Colonel [Akbar Khan](#), one of a handful of high-ranking officers in the Pakistani Army,^[f] with a keen interest in Kashmir, arrived in Murree, and got enmeshed in these efforts. He arranged 4,000 rifles for the rebellion by diverting them from the Army stores. He also wrote out a draft plan titled *Armed Revolt inside Kashmir* and gave it to Mian Iftikharuddin to be passed on to the Pakistan's Prime Minister.^{[75][76][7]}

On 12 September, the Prime Minister held a meeting with Mian Iftikharuddin, Colonel Akbar Khan and another Punjab politician Sardar [Shaukat Hayat Khan](#). Hayat Khan had a separate plan, involving the [Muslim League National Guard](#) and the militant Pashtun tribes from the [Frontier regions](#). The Prime Minister approved both the plans, and despatched [Khurshid Anwar](#), the head of the Muslim League National Guard, to mobilise the Frontier tribes.^{[76][7]}



[Jawaharlal Nehru](#), Prime Minister of India

The Maharaja was increasingly driven to the wall with the rebellion in the western districts and the Pakistani blockade. He managed to persuade Justice Mahajan to accept the post of Prime Minister (but not to arrive for another month, for procedural reasons). He sent word to the Indian leaders through Mahajan that he was willing to accede to India but needed more time to implement political reforms. However, it was India's position that it would not accept accession from the Maharaja unless it had the people's support. The Indian Prime Minister [Jawaharlal Nehru](#) demanded that Sheikh Abdullah should be released from prison and involved in the state's government. Accession could only be contemplated afterwards. Following further negotiations, Sheikh Abdullah was released on 29 September. ^{[77][78]}

Nehru, foreseeing a number of disputes over princely states, formulated a policy that states

"wherever there is a dispute in regard to any territory, the matter should be decided by a referendum or plebiscite of the people concerned. We shall accept the result of this referendum whatever it may be." ^{[79][80]}

The policy was communicated to Liaquat Ali Khan on 1 October at a meeting of the Joint Defence Council. Khan's eyes are said to have "sparkled" at the proposal. However, he made no response. ^{[79][80]}







Indo-Pakistani war of 1947–1948

Part of the [Indo-Pakistani wars](#), [Kashmir conflict](#), and the [Partition of India](#)



Indian troops landing on Srinagar airfield

Date	22 October 1947 – 1 January 1949 (1 year and 10 weeks)		
Location	Jammu and Kashmir		
Result	See aftermath		
Territorial changes	One-third of Jammu and Kashmir controlled by Pakistan. Indian control over remainder. ^{[2][3]}		
Belligerents			
<div><div></div><div>India</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Jammu and Kashmir^[a]</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>Pakistan</div></div>		
Commanders and leaders			
<div><div></div><div>Louis Mountbatten</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Jawaharlal Nehru</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Roy Bucher^[4]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>K. M. Cariappa^[4]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Subayya Thimayya^[5]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Hari Singh</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Mehr Chand Mahajan</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Sheikh Abdullah</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>Muhammad Ali Jinnah</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Liaquat Ali Khan</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Frank Messervy^[4]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Douglas Gracey^[4]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Akbar Khan^[6]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Khurshid Anwar^[7]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Zaman Kiani^[7]</div></div> <div><div></div><div>William Brown^[8]</div></div>		
Units involved			
<div><div></div><div>Indian Armed Forces</div></div> <div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><div><div></div><div>Indian Army</div></div><div><div></div><div>Indian Air Force^{[9][10][11]}</div></div><div><div></div><div>Jammu and Kashmir State Forces</div></div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div>Pakistan Armed Forces</div></div> <div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><div><div></div><div>Pakistan Army</div></div><div><div></div><div>Pakistan Air Force (supply support only)</div></div><div><div></div><div>Pakistani paramilitaries<ul style="list-style-type: none"><div><div></div><div>Gilgit Scouts^{[8][12]}</div></div><div><div></div><div>Kurram Militia^[13]</div></div><div><div></div><div>Frontier Scouts^[13]</div></div><div><div></div><div>Pashtun tribal militias^[14]</div></div></div></div><div><div></div><div>Muslim League National Guard^[15]</div></div></div></div>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Kashmir Liberation Forces^[16]  Furqan Force^[17]  Swat Army^[13]  Hunza state forces^[18]  Nagar state forces^[18]  Chitral state forces^[19]
Casualties and losses	
<p>☐ 1,103–1,500 Indian Army personnel killed^{[20][21][22][23][24][25]}</p> <p>☐ 1,990 J&K state forces killed or missing^[22]</p> <p>☐ 32 RIAF personnel killed^[22]</p> <p>☐ 3,154–3,500 Indian wounded^{[20][21][23][26][27]}</p> <p>☐ Unknown J&K troops wounded</p>	<p>☐ 1,000 Pakistani and Azad Kashmiri forces killed^{[20][21]}</p> <p>☐ 5,000 tribesmen killed^{[20][21][26][27][28]}</p> <p>☐ ~14,000 wounded^{[26][29]}</p>
<p>Conflict began when Pashtun tribesmen and Tanoli from Pakistan invaded the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, prompting the armies of India and Pakistan to get involved shortly afterwards.</p>	

Operations in Poonch and Mirpur

Main article: [1947 Poonch rebellion](#)

Armed rebellion started in the Poonch district at the beginning of October 1947.^{[81][82]} The fighting elements consisted of "bands of deserters from the State Army, serving soldiers of the Pakistan Army on leave, ex-servicemen, and other volunteers who had risen spontaneously."^[83] The first clash is said to have occurred at [Thorar](#) (near [Rawalakot](#)) on 3–4 October 1947.^[84] The rebels quickly gained control of almost the entire Poonch district. The State Forces garrison at the [Poonch city](#) came under heavy siege.^{[85][86]}

In the [Kotli tehsil](#) of the Mirpur district, border posts at Saligram and [Owen Pattan](#) on the Jhelum river were captured by rebels around 8 October. [Sehnsa](#) and [Throchi](#) were lost after some fighting.^{[87][88]} State Force records reveal that Muslim officers sent with reinforcements sided with the rebels and murdered the fellow state troops.^[89]

Radio communications between the fighting units were operated by the Pakistan Army.^[90] Even though the Indian Navy intercepted the communications, lacking intelligence in Jammu and Kashmir, it was unable to determine immediately where the fighting was taking place.^[91]

Accession of Kashmir

Following the rebellions in the Poonch and Mirpur area^[92] and the Pakistan-backed^[93] Pashtun tribal intervention from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,^{[94][95]} the Maharaja asked for Indian military assistance. India set the condition that Kashmir must accede to India for it to receive assistance. The Maharaja complied, and the [Government of India](#) recognised the accession of the princely state to India. Indian troops were sent to the state to defend it.^[96] The [Jammu & Kashmir National Conference](#) volunteers aided the [Indian Army](#) in its campaign to drive out the Pathan invaders.^[99]

Pakistan refused to recognise the accession of Kashmir to India, claiming that it was obtained by "fraud and violence."^[100] Governor General [Mohammad Ali Jinnah](#) ordered his Army Chief General Douglas Gracey to move Pakistani troops to Kashmir at once. However, the Indian and Pakistani forces were still under a joint command, and Field Marshal Auchinleck prevailed upon him to withdraw the order. With its accession to India, Kashmir became legally Indian territory, and the British officers could not play any role in an inter-Dominion war.^{[101][102]} The Pakistan Army made available arms, ammunition, and supplies to the rebel forces who were dubbed the "Azad Army". Pakistan Army officers "conveniently" on leave and the former officers of the [Indian National Army](#) were recruited to command the forces.



A Pakistan Army convoy advances in Kashmir

In May 1948, the Pakistan Army officially entered the conflict, in theory to defend the Pakistan borders, but it made plans to push towards Jammu and cut the lines of communications of the Indian forces in the Mehndar Valley.^[103] In [Gilgit](#), the force of [Gilgit Scouts](#) under the command of a British officer Major William Brown mutinied and overthrew the governor Ghansara Singh. Brown prevailed on the forces to declare accession to Pakistan.^{[104][105]} They are also believed to have received assistance from the [Chitral Scouts](#) and the [Bodyguard](#) of the state of [Chitral](#), one of the [princely states of Pakistan](#), which had acceded to Pakistan on 6 October 1947.^{[106][107]}

Stages of the war

Initial invasion



Pashtun warriors from different tribes on their way to

Kashmir

On 22 October 1947, [Khurshid Anwar](#) entered Kashmir near [Muzaffarabad](#) heading a lashkar of 4,000 tribesmen.^[108] The Pashtun tribal attack was launched in the Muzaffarabad sector. The state forces stationed in the border regions around [Muzaffarabad](#) and Domel were quickly defeated by tribal forces (Muslim state forces mutinied and joined them) and the way to the capital was open. Among the raiders, there were many active Pakistani Army soldiers disguised as tribals. They were also provided logistical help by the Pakistan Army. Rather than advancing toward Srinagar before state forces could regroup or be reinforced, the invading forces remained in the captured cities in the border region engaging in looting and other crimes against their inhabitants.^[109] In the [Poonch valley](#), the state forces retreated into towns where they were besieged.^[110]

Records indicate that the Pakistani tribals beheaded many Hindu and Sikh civilians in Jammu and Kashmir.^[111]

Indian operation in the Kashmir Valley

After the accession, India airlifted troops and equipment to Srinagar under the command of Lt. Col. [Dewan Ranjit Rai](#), where they reinforced the princely state forces, established a defence perimeter and defeated the tribal forces on the outskirts of the city. After Khurshid Anwar and some of the tribesmen advanced again, about 1,000 of them reached [Budgam](#) by 3 November, which was within striking distance of the Srinagar airfield. Here they were [confronted by Indian troops](#).^[112]

The Indians managed on holding both the capital and airfield overnight against extreme odds. The successful defence included an outflanking manoeuvre by Indian [armoured cars](#)^[113] during the [Battle of Shalateng](#). The defeated tribal forces were pursued as far as [Baramulla](#) and [Uri](#) and these towns, too, were recaptured.^[citation needed]

In the Poonch valley, tribal forces continued to besiege state forces.^[citation needed]

In [Gilgit](#), the state paramilitary forces, the [Gilgit Scouts](#), under the command of [Major William Brown](#), joined the invading tribal forces, who thereby obtained control of this northern region of the state. The tribal forces were also joined by troops from [Chitral](#), whose ruler, [Muzaffar ul-Mulk](#) the Mehtar of Chitral, had acceded to Pakistan.^{[114][115][116]}

Attempted link-up at Poonch and fall of Mirpur

Indian forces ceased pursuit of tribal forces after recapturing Uri and Baramulla, and sent a [relief column](#) southwards, in an attempt to relieve Poonch. Although the relief column eventually reached Poonch, the siege could not be lifted. A second relief column reached [Kotli](#), and evacuated the garrisons of that town and others but were forced to abandon it being too weak to defend it. Meanwhile, Mirpur was captured by the tribal forces on 25 November 1947 with the help of Pakistan's [PAVO Cavalry](#).^[117] This led to the [1947 Mirpur massacre](#) where Hindu women were reportedly abducted by tribal forces and taken into Pakistan. They were sold in the brothels of Rawalpindi. Around 400 women jumped into wells in Mirpur committing suicide to escape from being abducted.^[118]

Fall of Jhanger and attacks on Naoshera and Uri

The tribal forces attacked and captured [Jhanger](#). They then attacked [Naoshera](#) unsuccessfully, and made a series of unsuccessful attacks on [Uri](#). In the south a minor Indian attack secured [Chamb](#). By this stage of the war the front line began to stabilise as more Indian troops became available.^[citation needed]

Operation Vijay: counterattack to Jhanger

The Indian forces launched a counterattack in the south recapturing Jhanger and Rajauri. In the Kashmir Valley the tribal forces continued attacking the Uri [garrison](#). In the north, [Skardu](#) was brought under siege by the Gilgit Scouts.^[119]

Indian spring offensive

The Indians held onto Jhanger against numerous counterattacks, who were increasingly supported by regular Pakistani Forces. In the Kashmir Valley the Indians attacked, recapturing Tithwail. The Gilgit scouts made good progress in the High Himalayas sector, infiltrating troops to bring [Leh](#) under siege, capturing [Kargil](#) and defeating a relief column heading for Skardu.^[citation needed]

Operations Gulab and Eraz

Main article: [Siege of Skardu](#)

The Indians continued to attack in the Kashmir Valley sector driving north to capture Keran and Gurais ([Operation Eraz](#)).^[120] They also repelled a counterattack aimed at [Teetwal](#). In the Jammu region, the forces besieged in Poonch broke out and temporarily linked up with the outside world again. The Kashmir State army was able to defend Skardu from the Gilgit Scouts impeding their advance down the Indus valley towards Leh. In August the [Chitral Scouts](#) and [Chitral Bodyguard](#) under Mata ul-Mulk besieged Skardu and with the help of artillery were able to take Skardu. This freed the Gilgit Scouts to push further into [Ladakh](#).^{[121][122]}

Operation Bison

Main article: [Military operations in Ladakh \(1948\)](#)

During this time the front began to settle down. The siege of Poonch continued. An unsuccessful attack was launched by [77 Parachute Brigade](#) (Brig Atal) to capture [Zoji La](#) pass. Operation Duck, the earlier epithet for this assault, was renamed as Operation Bison by [Cariappa](#). [M5 Stuart light tanks](#) of [7 Cavalry](#) were moved in dismantled conditions through Srinagar and winched across bridges while two field companies of the [Madras Sappers](#) converted the mule track across Zoji La into a jeep track. The surprise attack on 1 November by the brigade with armour supported by two regiments of [25-pounder gun-howitzers](#) and a regiment of [3.7-inch mountain guns](#), forced the pass and pushed the tribal and Pakistani forces back to [Matayan](#) and later [Dras](#). The brigade linked up on 24 November at [Kargil](#) with Indian troops advancing from [Leh](#) while their opponents eventually withdrew northwards toward [Skardu](#).^[123] The Pakistani attacked the Skardu on 10 February 1948 which was repulsed by the Indian soldiers.^[124] Thereafter, the Skardu Garrison was subjected to continuous attacks by the [Pakistan Army](#) for the next three months and each time, their attack was repulsed by the Colonel [Sher Jung Thapa](#) and his men.^[124] Thapa held the Skardu with hardly 250 men for whole six long months without any reinforcement and replenishment.^[125] On 14 August, Thapa had to surrender Skardu to the Pakistani Army^[126] and raiders after a year long siege.^[127]

Operation Easy; Poonch link-up

Main article: [Military operations in Poonch \(1948\)](#)

The Indians now started to get the upper hand in all sectors. [Poonch](#) was finally relieved after a siege of over a year. The Gilgit forces in the High Himalayas, who had previously made good progress, were finally defeated. The Indians pursued as far as Kargil before being forced to halt due to supply problems. The [Zoji La](#) pass was forced by using tanks (which had not been thought possible at that altitude) and Dras was recaptured.^[citation needed]

At 23.59 hrs on 1 January 1949, a United Nations-mediated ceasefire came into effect, bringing the war to an end.^[36]

Aftermath



The [Line of Control](#) between India and Pakistan agreed in the Simla Agreement (UN Map)

The terms of the ceasefire, laid out in a [UN Commission](#) resolution on 13 August 1948,^[128] were adopted by the commission on 5 January 1949. This required Pakistan to withdraw its forces, both regular and irregular, while allowing India to maintain minimal forces within the state to preserve law and order. Upon compliance with these conditions, a [plebiscite](#) was to be held to determine the future of the territory. Owing to disagreements over the demilitarisation steps, a plebiscite was never held and the cease-fire line essentially became permanent. Some sources may refer to 5 January as the beginning of the ceasefire.^[129]

During the war, a total of 1,104 to 1,500 Indian soldiers were killed and 3,154 to 3,500 were wounded, along with 1,990 Jammu and Kashmir state forces killed and an unknown number wounded.^{[23][21][20][22]} On the Pakistani side, about 1,000 Pakistani and Azad Kashmiri forces were killed, as well as 5,000 tribesmen, with a total of 14,000 wounded.^{[21][26][20]}

Numerous analysts state that the war ended in a stalemate, with neither side obtaining a clear victory.^[130] Others, however, state that [India](#) emerged victorious as it successfully gained the majority of the contested territory.^[131]

India gained control of about two-thirds of the Jammu and Kashmir princely state, including the [Kashmir Valley](#), the [Jammu province](#) and [Ladakh](#). Pakistan had control of one-third of the state: three western districts later named [Azad Jammu and Kashmir](#), and the northern areas including the Gilgit district, the Gilgit Agency and the [Baltistan](#) tehsil of the Ladakh district (later renamed Gilgit-Baltistan).^{[132][133][134][135]}

India and Pakistan signed the [Karachi Agreement](#) in July 1949 and established a ceasefire line to be supervised by observers. After the termination of the [UNCIP](#), the Security Council passed [Resolution 91](#) (1951) and established a [United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan](#) (UNMOGIP) to observe and report violations of [ceasefire](#).^{[136][137]}

The resentment over Pakistani defeat in the war resulted in a [failed coup](#) led by General [Akbar Khan](#) in 1951 against the government of Prime Minister [Liaquat Ali Khan](#). Army officers thought the government's acceptance of UN mediation and ceasefire was weak and squandered an opportunity to capture the entirety of Kashmir.^{[138][139][140][141]}

After two further wars in [1965](#) and [1971](#), only minor changes in the ground situation had been effected. After the last war, the two countries reached the 1972 [Simla Agreement](#), converting the cease-fire line into a [Line of Control](#) and disavowing the use of force across it. In 1984, India gained [Siachen](#) after launching a [short military action](#).^[142]

Military awards

Battle honours

After the war, a total of number of 11 [battle honours](#) and one [theatre honour](#) were awarded to units of the Indian Army, the notable amongst which are:^[143]

- Jammu and Kashmir 1947–48 (theatre honour)
- Gurais
- Kargil
- Naoshera
- Punch
- Rajouri
- Srinagar
- Teetwal
- Zoji La

Gallantry awards

For bravery, a number of soldiers and officers were awarded the highest gallantry award of their respective countries. Following is a list of the recipients of the Indian award [Param Vir Chakra](#), and the Pakistani award [Nishan-E-Haider](#):

India

- Major [Som Nath Sharma](#) (Posthumous)
- [Lance Naik Karam Singh](#)
- [Second Lieutenant Rama Raghoba Rane](#)
- [Naik Jadu Nath Singh](#) (Posthumous)
- [Company Havildar Major Piru Singh Shekhawat](#) (Posthumous)

Pakistan

- [Captain Muhammad Sarwar](#)
- [Naik Saif Ali Janjua](#)

SINO INDIAN WAR 20 October 1962 On 20 October 1962, the Sino-Indian war started with simultaneous Chinese offensives in Ladakh and along the McMahon Line. The war ended with a Chinese ceasefire a month later and a defeat for India. Sino-Indian War (1962 War with China) — The Himalayan border dispute was the chief pretext of the war. China claimed the Aksai Chin area in Ladakh, Kashmir and the Tawang area in Arunachal Pradesh as its own (Aksai Chin as part of its Xinjiang and Tawang as part of Tibet). — The Aksai Chin is a desert of salt flats that is about 5000 m above sea level. The eastern front where the war took place, i.e., Arunachal Pradesh is a mountainous region having many peaks above 7000 m above sea level. So, the war was fought under extreme harsh conditions of terrain and freezing climate. Many soldiers died due to these conditions as well. — After independence, India maintained a cordial relationship with its northern neighbour which is also a country with which India has had historical and cultural ties for centuries. — In 1954, the Panchsheel or the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was signed between India and China. India even supported China in international representation. However, things took a turn for the worse when China announced its occupation of Tibet. India proposed negotiations on the Tibet issue. After the 1959 Tibet uprising, India had given asylum to the Dalai Lama and this obviously did not go down well with the Chinese. China perceived India as a threat to its rule over Tibet and this was also a major reason for the war. Mao Zedong even went on to state that the uprising in Lhasa, Tibet was caused by Indians. — In 1960, the Chinese premier Zhou Enlai suggested that if India gave up its claim over Aksai Chin, China would drop its claim in Arunachal Pradesh (then called the North Eastern Frontier Agency). But Nehru rejected this outright saying China had no legitimate claims over both the areas. — Throughout the summer of 1962, there were skirmishes along with the border areas between troops of both countries. — The Indian side was confident war would not be triggered and made preparations. India had only two divisions of troops in the region of conflict. In August 1962, Brigadier D. K. Palit claimed that a war with China in the near future could be ruled out. Even in September 1962, when Indian troops were ordered to "expel the Chinese" from Thag La, Maj. General J. S. Dhillon expressed the opinion that "experience in Ladakh had shown that a few rounds fired at the Chinese would cause them to run away." Because of this, the Indian army was completely unprepared when the attack at Yumtso La occurred. — Declassified CIA documents which were compiled at the time reveal that India's estimates of Chinese capabilities made them neglect their military in favour of economic growth. It is claimed that if a more military-minded man had been in place instead of Nehru, India would have been more likely to have been ready for the threat of a counter-attack from China. — On 6 October 1962, the Chinese leadership convened. Lin Biao reported that PLA intelligence units had determined that Indian units might assault Chinese positions at Thag La on 10 October (Operation Leghorn). The Chinese leadership and the Central Military Council decided upon war to launch a large-scale attack to punish perceived military aggression from India. In Beijing, a larger meeting of Chinese military was convened in order to plan for the coming conflict. — Mao and the Chinese leadership issued a directive laying out the objectives for the war. A main assault would be launched in the eastern sector, which would be coordinated with a smaller assault in the western sector. All Indian troops within China's claimed territories in the eastern sector would be expelled, and the war would be ended with a unilateral Chinese ceasefire and withdrawal, followed by a return to the negotiating table. India led the Non-Aligned Movement, Nehru enjoyed international prestige, and China, with a larger military, would be portrayed as an aggressor. He said that a well-fought war "will guarantee at least thirty years of peace" with India, and determined the benefits to offset the costs. — China also reportedly bought a significant amount of Indian rupee currency from Hong Kong, supposedly to distribute amongst its soldiers in preparation for the war. — On 8 October, additional veteran and elite divisions were ordered to prepare to move into Tibet from the Chengdu and Lanzhou military regions. — On 12 October, Nehru declared that he had ordered the Indian army to

"clear Indian territory in the NEFA of Chinese invaders" and personally met with Kaul, issuing instructions to him. → On 14 October, an editorial on People's Daily issued China's final warning to India: "So it seems that Mr. Nehru has made up his mind to attack the Chinese frontier guards on an even bigger scale. It is high time to shout to Mr. Nehru that the heroic Chinese troops, with the glorious tradition of resisting foreign aggression, can never be cleared by anyone from their own territory ... If there are still some maniacs who are reckless enough to ignore our well-intentioned advice and insist on having another try, well, let them do so. History will pronounce its inexorable verdict ... At this critical moment ... we still want to appeal once more to Mr. Nehru: better rein in at the edge of the precipice and do not use the lives of Indian troops as stakes in your gamble."

→ Marshal Liu Bocheng headed a group to determine the strategy for the war. He concluded that the opposing Indian troops were among India's best, and to achieve victory would require deploying crack troops and relying on force concentration to achieve decisive victory. On 16 October, this war plan was approved, and on the 18th, the final approval was given by the Politburo for a "self-defensive counter-attack", scheduled for 20 October. → India started following a 'Forward Policy' where it began to send troops and patrols to disputed border areas. Some of these troops even went beyond the Indian borders. This move deteriorated relations between both nations. → Also, the Indian leadership did not believe that China would attack. The army was also ill-prepared for any major war. Indian soldiers were heavily outnumbered by Chinese troops. Indian planning was shoddy before it sent troops to the disputed areas. → In the fighting that went on for a month in both the western and eastern fronts, nearly 3000 Indian soldiers were killed and about 1000 more injured. India had asked for help from the superpowers USA and USSR but did not get any help. → Both China and India did not use their navy or air force in the war. → China declared a ceasefire on 21 November since it reached its claim lines, and also stated that from December 1, 1962, the Chinese frontier guards would retreat 20 km behind the Line of Actual Control. → After the war, India increased its support for Tibetan refugees and revolutionaries. → The defeat in the war also led to the resignation of the then Defense Minister V K Krishna Menon, who was blamed for the lack of preparedness of the army. → Another consequence of the debacle was that India modernized its armed forces and became more prepared in later conflicts. It also perhaps taught the political leaders to be extra cautious and vigilant when it comes to matters of national security.

Indo–Pakistani war of 1965

Part of [Indo-Pakistani wars and conflicts](#) and [Cold War](#)



Top, bottom:

Indian soldiers with a destroyed Pakistani [M4A1 Sherman tank](#)
Pakistani soldiers maneuvering a captured Indian [AMX-13](#) tank

Date 5 August – 23 September 1965
(1 month, 2 weeks and 4 days)

Location

- [Kashmir](#)
- [Punjab](#)
- [Rajasthan](#)
- [Bengal](#)^[1]

Result Inconclusive

Territorial changes [Status quo ante bellum](#)

Belligerents

India	Pakistan
Commanders and leaders	
Lal Bahadur Shastri J. N. Chaudhuri Arjan Singh Joginder Dhillon Harbaksh Singh Har Kishan Sibal Z. C. Bakshi	Ayub Khan Musa Khan Nur Khan A. H. Malik Yahya Khan Abrar Hussain A.A.R. Khan
Strength	
700,000 infantry (whole army) ^[2] 700+ aircraft ^[3] 720 tanks ^[2] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 186 Centurions^[4] • 346 Shermans^[2] • 90 AMX-13^{[2][4]} • 90 PT-76^[2] 628 Artillery ^[4] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66x 3.7" How^[4] • 450x 25pdr^[4] • 96x 5.5"^[4] • 16x 7.2"^[4] Effective strength on the West Pakistan Border ^[5] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 infantry divisions (4 under-strength) • 3 armoured brigades 	260,000 infantry (whole army) ^[2] 280 aircraft ^[3] ~950 tanks ^[6] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 330–350 M47 Pattons delivered between 1955–60, • ~200 M48 Pattons delivered between 1961–64 ^{[6][7][8]} • 308 Shermans^[4] • 96 Chaffees^[4] 552 Artillery ^[4] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72x 105mm How^[4] • 234x 25pdr^[4] • 126x 155mm How^[4] • 48x 8" How^[4] • 72x 3.7" How^[4] • AK Lt Btys^[4] Effective strength on the West Pakistan Border ^[5] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 infantry divisions • 2 armoured divisions

Casualties and losses

Neutral claims^{[9][10]}

- 3,000–3,712 killed [\[11\]\[9\]](#)
- 150 [\[12\]](#)–200 tanks [\[13\]](#)
- 60–75 aircraft [\[14\]\[9\]](#)

Neutral claims^{[9][10]}

- 1,500–3,800 killed [\[11\]](#)[\[9\]](#)
- 200[\[13\]](#)–300 tanks[\[12\]](#)
- 19[\[9\]](#)–20[\[14\]](#) aircraft

show

Indo-Pakistani war of 1965

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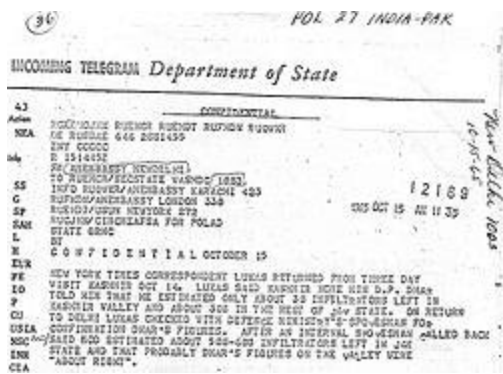
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The **Indo-Pakistani war of 1965**, also known as the **second Kashmir war**, was an armed conflict between [Pakistan](#) and [India](#) that took place from August 1965 to September 1965. The conflict began following Pakistan's unsuccessful [Operation Gibraltar](#),^[15] which was designed to infiltrate forces into [Jammu and Kashmir](#) to precipitate an insurgency against Indian rule.^[16] The seventeen day war caused thousands of casualties on both sides and witnessed the largest engagement of armoured vehicles and the largest tank battle since World War II.^{[17][18]} Hostilities between the two countries ended after a ceasefire was declared through [UNSC Resolution 211](#) following a diplomatic intervention by the [Soviet Union](#) and the [United States](#), and the subsequent issuance of the [Tashkent Declaration](#).^[19] Much of the war was fought by the countries' land forces in [Kashmir](#) and along the [border](#) between India and Pakistan. This war saw the largest amassing of troops in Kashmir since the [Partition of India](#) in 1947, a number that was overshadowed only during the [2001–2002 military standoff](#) between India and Pakistan. Most of the battles were fought by opposing [infantry](#) and [armoured](#) units, with substantial backing from air forces, and naval operations.

India had the upper hand over Pakistan on the ground when the ceasefire was declared,^{[20][21][22][23][24][25][26]} but the [PAF](#) managed to achieve [air superiority](#) over the combat zones despite being numerically inferior.^{[27][28][29][30]} Although the two countries fought to a standoff, the conflict is seen as a strategic and political defeat for Pakistan,^{[31][21][32][33][34][35][36]} as it had not succeeded in fomenting an insurrection in Kashmir and was instead forced to shift gears in the defence of [Lahore](#).^[37] India also failed to achieve its objective of military deterrence and did not capitalise on its advantageous military situation before the ceasefire was declared.^{[38][39]}

Background

Since the [partition of British India](#) in August 1947, Pakistan and India remained in contention over several issues. Although the [Kashmir conflict](#) was the predominant issue dividing the nations, other border disputes existed, most notably over the [Rann of Kutch](#), a barren region in the Indian state of [Gujarat](#). The issue first arose in 1956, which ended with India regaining control over the disputed area.^[40] In the 1960s Pakistan received 700 million dollars of [military aid](#) from the United States, by signing a defence agreement in 1954, which significantly modernised Pakistan's military equipment.^{[41][42][43]} After the defeat in 1962 [Sino-Indian War](#), the [Indian military](#) was undergoing major changes in personnel and equipment. During this period, despite being numerically smaller than the Indian military, Pakistan's armed forces had a qualitative edge in air power and armour over India, which Pakistan sought to use before India completed its defence build-up.^{[43][44]}



A declassified US State Department letter that confirms the existence of hundreds of "infiltrators" in the Indian-administered part of the [disputed Kashmir region](#). Dated during the events running up to the 1965 war.

Pakistani soldiers began patrolling in territory controlled by India in January 1965, which was followed by attacks by both countries on each other's posts on 8 April 1965.^{[40][45]} Initially involving border police from both nations, the disputed area soon witnessed intermittent skirmishes between the countries' armed forces. Pakistan launched [Operation Desert Hawk](#) and captured a few Indian posts near the Kanjarkot fort border area.^[46] In June 1965, [British Prime Minister Harold Wilson](#) successfully persuaded both countries to end hostilities. Both countries signed an agreement to settle the disputed border through international arbitration by the [International Court of Justice](#) on 30 June 1965.^{[47][48]} A tribunal was set to resolve the dispute, the verdict which came later in 1968, saw Pakistan awarded 780 square kilometres (301 square miles) of the Rann of Kutch, as against its original claim of 9,100 km² (3,500 sq mi).^{[49][50][51]} Pakistan's purpose for this operation was to assess the response of the Indian government and military^[52] and to draw Indian armour southward to Kutch, away from the [Punjab](#) and [Kashmir](#) region.^[52]

After its success in the Rann of Kutch, Pakistan, under the leadership of [Muhammad Ayub Khan](#), believed the [Indian Army](#) would be unable to defend itself against a quick military campaign in the disputed territory of [Kashmir](#) as the Indian military had suffered a loss to China in 1962^[citation needed] in the [Sino-Indian War](#). Pakistan believed that the population of Kashmir was generally discontented with Indian rule, and that a resistance movement could be ignited by a few infiltrating [saboteurs](#).

War

Operation Gibraltar

Main article: [Operation Gibraltar](#)

On 5 August 1965, Pakistani soldiers crossed the [Line of Control](#) dressed as Kashmiri locals headed for various areas within Kashmir. These infiltrators carried out intelligence collection with the help of locals in cities like [Gulmarg](#) and [Rajouri](#).^[53] Indian forces, tipped off by the local populace, captured several Pakistani soldiers who revealed that Pakistan was attempting to ignite the resistance movement employing a covert infiltration, code-named [Operation Gibraltar](#).^{[54][full citation needed]} The operation was eventually unsuccessful.^[55]

On 6 and 7 August, Indian forces engaged in skirmishes with several columns of Pakistani soldiers, who tried to cut communication lines and mix with the locals during celebrations.^[53]

Indian Army crossed the cease fire line on 15 August and captured several previously infiltrated peaks overlooking the [Srinagar – Leh Highway](#).^{[40][56]} Initially, the Indian Army met with considerable success, capturing three important mountain positions after a prolonged artillery barrage. By the end of August, Pakistan had made progress in areas such as [Tithwal](#), [Uri](#) and [Poonch](#).

Haji Pir pass

Main article: [Battle of Haji Pir Pass \(1965\)](#)

Wishing to stop the influx of Pakistani forces into the [Uri-Poonch](#) bulge, COAS [Jayanto Nath Chaudhuri](#) commanded the [XV Corps](#) under [Lt Gen K. S. Katoch](#) to advance and take over [Haji Pir pass](#). Under the watch of [Lt Gen Harbaksh Singh](#), led by [Brig. ZC Bakshi](#) of the 68 Infantry Brigade, Indian forces [captured the Haji Pir pass](#), 8 km into [Pakistan administered Kashmir](#) by 28 August.^[57]

Chhamb offensive

On 1 September 1965, Pakistan launched a counterattack, called [Operation Grand Slam](#), with the objective to capture the vital town of [Akhnoor](#) in [Jammu](#), which would sever communications and cut off supply routes to Indian troops. Ayub Khan calculated that "Hindu morale would not stand more than a couple of hard blows at the right time and place"^{[58][59][60]} although by this time [Operation Gibraltar](#) had failed and India had [captured the Haji Pir Pass](#).^[58]

Commander of the Western army, Lt Gen Harbaksh Singh had suggested after the capture of Haji Pir, that Pakistani forces would carry out a major offensive in the [Chumb](#) plain to advance and capture a strategically important location in [Akhnoor](#) to cut Indian supply lines but after a meeting with CAOS Chaudhari, the area was not reinforced. Instead, XV Corps under Lt Gen Katoch was tasked with securing Nowshera.^[61]

At 03:30 on 1 September 1965, the entire [Chumb](#) area came under massive artillery bombardment as Pakistan commenced [Operation Grand Slam](#). India's Army Headquarters was taken by surprise.^[62] Attacking with an overwhelming ratio of troops and technically superior tanks, Pakistan made gains against Indian forces under the command of [Maj Gen A. H. Malik](#), who were caught unprepared and suffered heavy losses. Maj Gen Mailk was then replaced by [Maj Gen Yahya Khan](#) by [C-in-C Gen Muhammad Musa](#) who authorised Maj Gen Khan to advance deeper into Indian Territory.^{[63][64]}

India responded by calling in its [air force](#) to blunt the Pakistani attack. The next day, Pakistan retaliated with its [air force](#) and attacked Indian forces and air bases in both [Kashmir](#) and [Punjab](#). India then decided to open up the theatre of attack into Pakistani Punjab and forced the Pakistani army to relocate troops engaged in the Chumb operation to defend Punjab. Operation Grand Slam therefore failed, as the Pakistan Army was unable to capture [Akhnoor](#); it became one of the turning points in the war, when India decided to relieve pressure on its troops in Kashmir by attacking Pakistan further south. In the valley, another area of strategic importance was [Kargil](#). Kargil town was in Indian hands, but Pakistan occupied high ground overlooking Kargil and Srinagar-Leh road. However, after the launch of a massive anti-infiltration operation by the Indian army, the Pakistani infiltrators were forced out of that area in the month of August.^[63]

Ichogil Canal

India crossed the [International Border](#) on the Western front on 6 September.^[65] President Ayub Khan, on the same day, declared a state of emergency through radio broadcast proclaiming that Pakistan was in a state of war with India.^[66] On 6 September, the [15th Infantry Division](#) of the Indian Army, under [World War II](#) veteran Major General Niranjana Prasad, battled a massive counterattack by Pakistan near the west bank of the [Ichhogil Canal](#) (BRB Canal), which was an *in fact* border of India and Pakistan. The General's entourage itself was ambushed, and he was forced to flee his vehicle.

Battle of Jassar

Main article: [Battle of Jassar](#)

The Battle of Jassar, fought on 6 September involved the defense of the Jassar Enclave, a Pakistani area on the Ravi River, against an Indian attack, with Pakistani forces, including the 3 Punjab and 13 FF, repelling the assault.^{[67][68]}

Battle of Burki

Main article: [Battle of Burki](#)

The [7th Infantry Division](#) under the command of Maj Gen Har Kishan Sibal attempted an offensive on the canal on 6 September. The forces advanced through Khalra-Barki- Lahore road and reached Barki by 7 September. The forces engaged heavily at the [Battle of Burki](#). The battle involved the air forces, armoured, infantry divisions and artillery brigades from both sides. The town fell by 11 September. A great amount of Pakistani ammunition was captured from Barki which helped Indian forces after the battle.^{[69][70]} The Indian artillery stood within the range of [Lahore International Airport](#). As a result, the United States requested a temporary ceasefire to allow it to evacuate its citizens in [Lahore](#).^[71]

Battle of Dograi

Main article: [Battle of Dograi](#)



Pakistani Sherman medium tanks and infantry push forward while under fire.

The thrust against Lahore consisted of the 1st Infantry Division supported by the three tank regiments of the 2nd Independent Armoured Brigade; they quickly advanced across the border, reaching the Ichhogil (BRB) Canal by 6 September. The Pakistani Army held the bridges over the canal or blew up those it could not hold, effectively stalling any further advance by the Indians on Lahore. [3rd Jat battalion](#) was the first Indian unit to cross the Ichhogil canal and capture it alongside Dograi.^[72] The same day, a counteroffensive consisting of an armoured division and infantry division supported by [Pakistan Air Force Sabres](#) forced the Indian 15th Division to withdraw to its starting point. Although 3 Jats suffered minimal casualties, the bulk of the damage being taken by ammunition and store vehicles, the higher commanders had no information of 3 Jats' capture of Dograi and misleading information led to the command to withdraw from Batapore and Dograi to Ghosal-Dial. This move brought extreme disappointment^[73] to Lt-Col [Desmond Hayde](#), CO of the 3 Jats. Dograi was eventually recaptured by the three Jats on 21 September, for the second time but after a much harder battle due to Pakistani reinforcements, in the [Battle of Dograi](#).^[74]

On 8 September 1965, a company of five Maratha Light Infantry was sent to reinforce a Rajasthan Armed Constabulary (RAC) post at Munabao – a strategic hamlet about 250 kilometers from Jodhpur. Their brief was simple: to hold the post and to keep Pakistan's infantry battalions from overrunning the post at bay. But at Maratha Hill (in Munabao) – as the post has now been christened – the Indian company could barely manage to thwart the intense attack for 24 hours. A company of three Guards with 954 heavy mortar battery ordered to reinforce the RAC post at Munabao could never reach. The Pakistani Air Force had strafed the entire area, and also hit a railway train coming from Barmer with reinforcements near Gadra road railway station. On 10 September, Munabao fell into Pakistani hands, and efforts to capture the strategic point did not succeed.^[75]

Sialkot offensive

Battle of Phillora

On the days following 9 September, India's [1st Armoured Division](#) under Major General [Rajinder Singh](#) advanced towards [Sialkot](#) with the intention to capture the sector and was met with Pakistan's [6th Armoured Division](#) under [Maj Gen Abrar Hussain](#). They first engaged in the town of Phillora. Failure on the Pakistani side to cause damage to the Indian advance forced the 6th Armoured Division to retreat to the town of Chawinda on 11 September and the [Battle of Phillora](#) was an Indian success.^{[76][77][78][79][80][81]} Pakistan lost 66 tanks in the battle while India only lost 6.^{[78][79][82]}

Battle of Chawinda

The Pakistani [I Corps](#) under the command of [Lt Gen Bakhtiar Rana](#) and the 6th Armoured under Maj Gen Hussain engaged with the Indian [I Corps](#) commanded by the newly appointed Lieutenant General [Patrick Dunn](#) and the 1st Armoured under Rajinder Singh from 14 to 19 September in the largest tank battle since the [Battle of Kursk](#) during the [World War II](#). It also involved the lowest ever air battle to be fought as the Pakistani [Sabre](#) engaged with the Indian [Gnats](#). The Indian offensive was repulsed and stopped successfully.^{[83][84]} Pakistan claimed that Indians lost 120 tanks at Chawinda.^[85] compared to 44 of its own.^[86] But later, Indian official sources confirmed India lost only 29 tanks at [Chawinda](#),^{[87][88]}

Towards the end of the Sialkot offensive, the Pakistani Armoured arsenal was left heavily damaged with more than 200 tanks destroyed and 36 captured which was very heavy compared to the Indian damages.^[89]

Battle of Asal Uttar

On 8 September, the Pakistani 1st Armoured Division and 11 Infantry Division under the command of Maj Gen Nasir Khan pushed an offensive towards [Khem Karan](#), with the intent to capture [Amritsar](#) (a major city in [Punjab, India](#)) and the bridge on [River Beas](#) to [Jalandhar](#).^[90] India then launched a counter-offensive. After India breached the Madhupur canal on 11 September, the Khem Karan counter-offensive was halted, affecting Pakistan's strategy substantially.^[58] The Pakistani forces engaged with an outnumbered Indian force comprising only the 2nd Independent Armoured Brigade commanded by [Brig Thomas K. Theogaraj](#), who formed a defensive horseshoe formation to counter the advancing Pakistani force.^{[91][92][93]}

The Pakistani tanks were more numerous and superior in quality, giving them a significant advantage. At the [Battle of Asal Uttar](#), however, the Pakistani force advanced into the well-positioned and well-camouflaged Indian formation, which led to approximately 97 Pakistani tanks being destroyed, against only 10 Indian tanks lost.^[94] The battle was a tremendous success for India and completely

halted the Pakistani advance on the Punjab front.^[95] The town where the battle was fought came to be known as Patton Nagar, named after the thoroughly destroyed US-made [M48 Patton tanks](#) in the battle.

During the battle, Pakistani rail bound reinforcements were attacked and destroyed by IAF Gnats.^[96]



Pakistani Army Position, [MG1A3](#) AA, 1965 War

Rajasthan Front

The hostilities in the Rajasthan Front commenced on 8 September. Initially, the Pakistan Desert Force and the Hur militia (followers of Pir Pagaro) were placed in a defensive role, a role for which they were well suited as it turned out. The Hurs were familiar with the terrain and the local area and possessed many essential desert survival skills which their opponents and their comrades in the Pakistan Army did not. Fighting as mainly light infantry, the Hur inflicted many casualties on the Indian forces as they entered Sindh. The Hurs were also employed as skirmishers, harassing the Indians in the Line of Control, a task they often undertook on camels. As the battle wore on, the Hurs and the Desert Force were increasingly used to attack and capture Indian villages inside [Rajasthan](#).^[97]

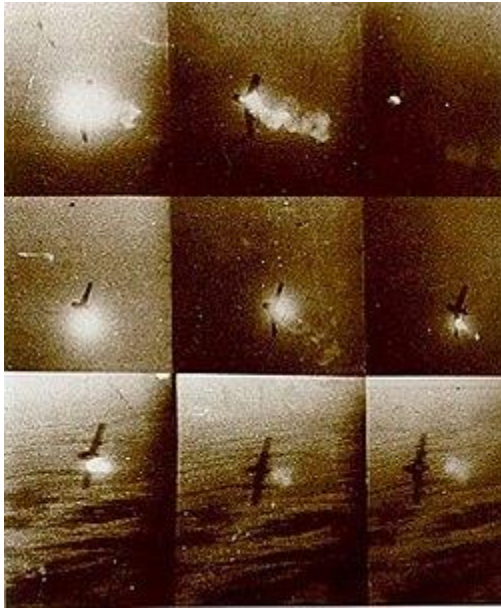
Stalemate

The war was heading for a stalemate, with both nations holding territory of the other. The Indian army suffered from 3,712 killed and 7,638 wounded, while Pakistan suffered from 1,500 killed and 4,300 wounded. Indian claims that they possession of 1,920 km² (740 sq mi) of Pakistani territory and the Pakistan army held 550 km² (210 sq mi) of Indian territory.^[98] The territory occupied by India was mainly in the fertile Sialkot, Lahore and Kashmir sectors,^{[99][100]} while Pakistani ground gains were primarily in [deserts](#) opposite [Sindh](#) and in the [Chumb](#) sector in [Kashmir](#).^[100] Pakistan claims that it held 4,190 km² (1,620 sq mi) of Indian territory, while losing 1,160 km² (446 sq mi) of its territory.^{[101][102][103][104]}

Aerial warfare

Main article: [Indo-Pakistani Air War of 1965](#)

Further information: [Indian Air Force § Second Kashmir War 1965](#), and [Pakistan Air Force § Indo-Pakistani War of 1965](#)



Pakistani Sabre being shot down in combat by an Indian Gnat in September 1965 as seen from the Indian aircraft.

The war saw the aircraft of [the Indian Air Force \(IAF\)](#) and the [Pakistan Air Force \(PAF\)](#) engaging in combat for the first time since independence. Although the two forces had previously faced off in the [First Kashmir War](#) during the late 1940s, that engagement was very limited in scale compared to the 1965 conflict. ^{[[citation needed](#)]}

The IAF was flying large numbers of [Hawker Hunters](#), Indian-manufactured [Folland Gnats](#), [de Havilland Vampires](#), [EE Canberra](#) bombers and a squadron of [MiG-21s](#). The PAF's [fighter](#) force comprised 102 [F-86F Sabres](#) and 12 [F-104 Starfighters](#), along with 24 [B-57 Canberra bombers](#). During the conflict, the PAF claimed it was out-numbered by around 5:1. ^{[[105](#)]}

The PAF's aircraft were largely of American origin, whereas the IAF flew an assortment of British and Soviet airplanes. However, the PAF's American aircraft were superior to those of the IAF's. ^{[[106](#)][[107](#)]}



Artist's depiction of Pakistani Fighter Jet

The F-86 Sabre was vulnerable to the diminutive [Folland Gnat](#), nicknamed "[Sabre Slayer](#)". ^{[[108](#)]} The Gnat is credited by many independent and Indian sources as having shot down seven [Pakistani Canadair Sabres](#)^{[[a](#)]} in the 1965 war, ^{[[109](#)][[110](#)]} while two Gnats were downed by PAF fighters. The PAF's [F-104 Starfighter](#) was the fastest fighter operating in the subcontinent at that time and was often referred to as "the pride of the PAF". However, according to [Air Commodore Sajad Haider](#), the F-104 did not deserve this reputation. Being "a high-level interceptor designed to neutralise Soviet strategic bombers at [altitudes](#) above 40,000 feet (12.19 km)," rather than engage in dogfights with agile fighters at low altitudes, it was "unsuited to the tactical environment of the region". ^{[[111](#)]} In combat the Starfighter was not as effective as the IAF's far more agile, albeit much

slower, [Folland Gnat](#) fighter.^{[112][113]} Yet it zoomed into an ongoing dogfight between Sabres and Gnats, at supersonic speed, successfully broke off the fight and caused the Gnats to egress.

An IAF Gnat, piloted by [Squadron Leader](#) Brij Pal Singh Sikand, landed at an abandoned Pakistani [airstrip](#) at [Pasrur](#), as he lacked the fuel to return to his base, and was captured by the Pakistan Army. According to the pilot, he got separated from his formation due to a malfunctioning compass and radio.^{[114][115]} This Gnat is displayed as a war trophy in the [Pakistan Air Force Museum, Karachi](#). [Sqn Ldr Saad Hatmi](#) who flew the captured aircraft to [Sargodha](#), and later tested and evaluated its flight performance, presumed that Gnat was no "Sabre Slayer" when it came to dog fighting.^[115] Three Indian [civilian aircraft](#) were shot down by PAF, one of which [shot down at Bhuj, Gujarat](#) was carrying [Balwantrai Mehta](#), [chief minister](#) of the Indian state of [Gujarat](#), total eight killed in the incident along with [Balwantrai Mehta](#) and his wife. The Pakistan Air Force had fought well in countering the much larger Indian Air Force and supported the ground forces.^[116]



Captured Indian [Folland Gnat](#) on display at the PAF Museum, [Karachi](#)

The two countries have made contradictory claims of combat losses during the war, and few neutral sources have verified the claims of either country. The PAF claimed it shot down 104 IAF planes and lost 19 of its own, while the IAF claimed it shot down 73 PAF planes and lost 59.^[117] According to [PAF](#), it flew 86 F-86 Sabres, 10 F-104 Star fighters and 20 B-57 Canberra's in a parade soon after the war was over. Thus disproving the IAF's claim of downing 73 PAF fighters, which at the time constituted nearly the entire Pakistani front-line fighter force.^[118] Indian sources have pointed out that, despite PAF claims of losing only a squadron of combat craft, Pakistan sought to acquire additional aircraft from [Indonesia](#), [Iraq](#), [Iran](#), [Turkey](#), and China within 10 days of the beginning of the war.^[119]

The two air forces were rather equal in the conflict because much of the Indian air force remained farther east to guard against the possibility of China entering the war.^[120] According to independent sources, the PAF lost 20 aircraft while the Indians lost 60–75.^{[14][121]} Pakistan ended the war having depleted 17 percent of its front-line strength, while India's losses amounted to less than 10 percent. The loss rate had begun to even out, and it has been estimated that another three weeks' fighting would have seen the Pakistani losses rising to 33 percent and India's losses totalling 15 percent. Air superiority was not achieved, and they were unable to prevent IAF fighter bombers and reconnaissance Canberras from flying daylight missions over Pakistan. Thus, 1965 was a stalemate in terms of the air war with neither side able to achieve complete air superiority.^{[120][122]} After the war, India's Chief of Air Staff [Marshal Arjan Singh](#) claimed that the IAF was able to achieve air superiority within three days of the Pakistani air strikes.^[123] However, according to Kenneth Werrell, the Pakistan Air Force "did well in the conflict and probably had the edge".^[124] When hostilities broke out, the Pakistan Air Force with around 100 F-86s faced an enemy with five times as many combat aircraft; the Indians were also equipped with comparatively modern aircraft inventory. Despite this, Werrell credits the PAF as having the advantage of a "decade's experience with the Sabre" and experienced

pilots. One Pakistani fighter pilot, [MM Alam](#), was credited with the record of downing five Indian aircraft in less than a minute, becoming the first known [flying ace](#) since the Korean War.^[124] His claims were never confirmed by the [PAF](#) and are disputed by Indian sources^{[125][126][127]} and some PAF officials.^{[128][129][130]}

Usage of tanks in battle

Main articles: [Battle of Phillora](#), [Battle of Asal Uttar](#), [Battle of Burki](#), and [Battle of Chawinda](#)



A Pakistani [M48A1 Patton tank](#) advances in Chamb sector of Kashmir during [Operation Grand Slam](#). in 1965.

The 1965 war witnessed some of the largest tank battles since [World War II](#). At the beginning of the war, the Pakistani Army had both a numerical advantage in tanks, and better equipment overall.^[131] Pakistani armour was largely American-made; it consisted mainly of [Patton M-47](#) and [M-48](#) tanks, but also included many [M4 Sherman](#) tanks, some [M24 Chaffee](#) light tanks and [M36 Jackson tank destroyers](#), equipped with 90 mm guns.^[132] The bulk of India's tank fleet was older [M4 Sherman](#) tanks; some were up-gunned with the French high-velocity CN 75 50 guns and could hold their own, whilst some older models were still equipped with the inferior [75 mm M3 L/40 gun](#). Besides the M4 tanks, India fielded the British-made [Centurion Tank](#) Mk 7, with the 20pdr (84 mm) gun [Royal Ordnance QF 20-pounder](#) gun, and the [AMX-13](#), [PT-76](#), and [M3 Stuart](#) light tanks. Pakistan fielded a more significant number and more modern artillery; its guns out-ranged those of the Indian artillery, according to Pakistan's Major General T.H. Malik.^[133]

At the outbreak of war in 1965, Pakistan had about 15 armoured cavalry regiments, each with about 50 tanks divided into three squadrons. In addition, there were 4 additional regiments termed "tank delivery units" (TDUs), i.e. 30, 31, 32 and 33 TDU (*presumably to deceive the Indian military planners as to their actual tank strength*), each consisting of two tank squadrons and one M-36B Jackson tank destroyer squadron.^[134] Besides the Patton, there were about 200 M4 Shermans re-armed with 76 mm guns, 150 M24 Chaffee light tank and a few independent squadrons of M36B1 tank destroyers. Most of these regiments served in Pakistan's two armoured divisions, the 1st and 6th Armoured divisions – the latter being in the process of formation.



Indian [Centurion tank](#) being examined by journalists near [Chawinda](#)

The Indian Army of the time possessed 15 cavalry regiments,^[134] and in the 1950s had begun modernising them by the acquisition of 164 [AMX-13](#) light tanks and 188 [Centurions](#). The remainder of the cavalry units were equipped with [M4 Shermans](#) and some [M3A3 Stuart](#) light tanks. India had only a single armoured division, the [1st 'Black Elephant' Armoured Division](#), which consisted of the [17th Horse](#) (The Poona Horse), also called 'Fakhr-i-Hind' ('Pride of India'), the [4th Horse](#) (Hodson's Horse), the [16th Cavalry](#), the [2nd Lancers](#), and the [62nd Cavalry](#),^{[135][136]} the two first named being equipped with Centurions. There was also the 2nd Independent Armoured Brigade, one of whose three regiments, the [3rd Cavalry](#), was also equipped with Centurions. Despite the qualitative and numerical superiority of Pakistani armour,^[137] Pakistan was outfought on the battlefield by India, which made progress into the Lahore-Sialkot sector, whilst halting Pakistan's counteroffensive on [Amritsar](#),^{[138][139]} they were sometimes employed faultily, such as charging prepared defences during the defeat of Pakistan's [1st Armoured Division](#) at [Asal Uttar](#).



Destroyed Pakistani [Sherman Tank](#)

Neither the Indian nor Pakistani Army showed any great facility in the use of armoured formations in offensive operations, whether the Pakistani 1st Armoured Division at Asal Uttar ([Battle of Asal Uttar](#)) or the Indian 1st Armoured Division at Chawinda. In contrast, both proved adept with smaller forces in a defensive role, such as India's 2nd Armoured Brigade at Asal Uttar and Pakistan's 25th Cavalry at Chawinda.

The Centurion battle tank, with its 20pdr gun and heavy armour, performed better than the overly complex^[*need quotation to verify*] Patton.^[139]

Naval hostilities

Main article: [Operation Dwarka](#)

Naval operations did not play a prominent role in the war of 1965. On 7 September, a [flotilla](#) of the Pakistan Navy commanded by Commodore S.M. Anwar, carried out a bombardment of the Indian Navy's radar station coastal town of [Dwarka](#), which was 320 kilometres (200 mi) south of the Pakistani port of Karachi. [Operation Dwarka](#), as it is known, is a significant naval operation of the

1965 war^{[140][141][142]} contested as a nuisance raid by some.^{[143][144]} The attack on Dwarka led to questions being asked in India's parliament^[145] and subsequent post-war modernisation and expansion of the Indian Navy, with an increase in budget from [Rs. 35 crores](#) to [Rs. 115 crores](#).^{[146][147]} Indian sources claim that it was not their intention to get into a naval conflict with Pakistan, and wished to restrict the war to a land-based conflict.^[148]

Covert operations

The [Pakistan Army](#) launched numerous covert operations to infiltrate and sabotage Indian [airbases](#).^[149] On 7 September 1965, the [Special Services Group](#) (SSG) [commandos](#) were [parachuted](#) into enemy territory. According to [Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army](#) General [Muhammad Musa](#), about 135 commandos were airdropped at three Indian airfields ([Halwara](#), [Pathankot](#) and [Adampur](#)). The daring attempt turned out to be an "unmitigated disaster".^[149] Only 22 commandos returned to Pakistan as planned, 93 were taken prisoner (including one of the Commanders of the operations, Major Khalid Butt), and 20 were killed in encounters with the army, police, or civilians.^[citation needed] The reason for the failure of the commando mission is attributed to the failure to provide maps, proper briefings and adequate planning or preparation.^[150]

Despite failing to sabotage the airfields, Pakistan sources claim that the commando mission affected some planned Indian operations. As the Indian [14th Infantry Division](#) was diverted to hunt for paratroopers, the Pakistan Air Force found the road filled with transport, and destroyed many vehicles.^[151]

India responded to the covert activity by announcing rewards for captured Pakistani [spies](#) or paratroopers.^[152] Meanwhile, in Pakistan, rumours spread that India had retaliated with its own covert operations, sending commandos deep into Pakistan territory,^[150] but these rumours were later determined to be unfounded.^[153]

Assessment of losses

India and Pakistan make widely divergent claims about the damage they inflicted on each other and the amount of damage suffered by them. The following summarises each nation's claims.

	Indian claims ^[154]	Pakistani claims ^[155]	Independent Sources ^{[9][10]}
Casualties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Army: 169 commissioned officers (1 brigadier, 9 lieutenant-colonels, 30 majors, 39 captains, 11 lieutenants, 79 second lieutenants), 80 junior commissioned officers (JCO), 1,820 other ranks^{[156][157][158][159][160][161][162][154]} Air force: 19 officers, 21 other 	1,039 Pakistani soldiers, 9,500 Indian soldiers	3,700 Indian soldiers, 1,500 Pakistani soldiers

	ranks ^[154]		
Combat flying effort	4,073+ combat sorties	2,279 combat sorties	
Aircraft lost	59 IAF (official), 43 PAF . ^[163] In addition, Indian sources claim that there were 13 IAF aircraft lost in accidents, and three Indian civilian aircraft shot down. ^[164]	19 PAF, 104 IAF	20 PAF, 60–75 IAF ^{[165][166]}
Aerial victories	17 + 3 (post-war)	30	—
Tanks destroyed	128 Indian tanks, 152 Pakistani tanks captured, 150 Pakistani tanks destroyed. Officially, 471 Pakistani tanks destroyed and 38 captured ^[167]	165 Pakistan tanks, 475 Indian tanks	
Land area won	1,900 km ² (720 sq mi) of Pakistani territory ^[168]	4,190 km ² (1,617 sq mi) of Indian territory ^[169]	India held 1,840 km ² (710 sq mi) of Pakistani territory and Pakistan held 540 km ² (210 sq mi) of Indian territory

Neutral assessments



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- In his book titled *Origins of Political Extremism: Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century and Beyond* Manus I. Midlarsky wrote,^[170]—

The most recent estimate has Pakistan occupying 1,600 square miles of Indian territory (1,300 of it desert). India conquered 350 square miles of Pakistan, but "of greater strategic value, as it was located near the West Pakistani capital, Lahore, and the industrial city of Sialkot as well as in Kashmir.

There have been several neutral assessments of the losses incurred by both India and Pakistan during the war. Most of these assessments agree that India had the upper hand over Pakistan when the ceasefire was declared. Some neutral assessments are mentioned below —

- According to the [Library of Congress Country Studies](#) conducted by the [Federal Research Division](#) of the [United States](#)^[22] —

The war was militarily inconclusive; each side held prisoners and some territory belonging to the other. Losses were relatively heavy—on the Pakistani side, twenty aircraft, 200 tanks, and 3,800

troops. Pakistan's army had been able to withstand Indian pressure, but a continuation of the fighting would only have led to further losses and ultimate defeat for Pakistan. Most Pakistanis, schooled in the belief of their own martial prowess, refused to accept the possibility of their country's military defeat by "Hindu India" and were, instead, quick to blame their failure to attain their military aims on what they considered to be the ineptitude of Ayub Khan and his government.

- Former *New York Times* reporter Arif Jamal wrote in his book *Shadow War*^[171] —

This time, India's victory was nearly total: India accepted a cease-fire only after it had occupied 740 square miles [1,900 km²], though Pakistan had made marginal gains of 210 square miles [540 km²] of territory. Despite the obvious strength of the Indian win, both countries claim to have been victorious.

- Devin T. Hagerty wrote in his book *South Asia in world politics*^[172] —

The invading Indian forces outfought their Pakistani counterparts and halted their attack on the outskirts of Lahore, Pakistan's second-largest city. By the time the United Nations intervened on September 22, Pakistan had suffered a clear defeat.

- In his book *National identity and geopolitical visions*,^[173] Gertjan Dijkink writes —

The superior Indian forces, however, won a decisive victory and the army could have even marched on into Pakistani territory had external pressure not forced both combatants to cease their war efforts.

- An excerpt from [Stanley Wolpert](#)'s *India*,^[174] summarising the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965,

In three weeks, the second Indo-Pak War ended in what appeared to be a draw when the embargo placed by Washington on U.S. ammunition and replacements for both armies forced the cessation of conflict before either side won a clear victory. India, however, was in a position to inflict grave damage to, if not capture, Pakistan's capital of the Punjab when the cease-fire was called, and controlled Kashmir's strategic Uri-Poonch bulge, much to Ayub's chagrin.

- In his book titled *The greater game: India's race with destiny and China*, David Van Praagh wrote^[175] —

India won the war. It held on to the Vale of Kashmir, the prize Pakistan vainly sought. It gained 1,840 km² [710 sq mi] of Pakistani territory: 640 km² [250 sq mi] in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan's portion of the state; 460 km² [180 sq mi] of the Saikot sector; 380 km² [150 sq mi] far to the south of Sindh; and most critical, 360 km² [140 sq mi] on the Lahore front. Pakistan took 540 km² [210 sq mi] of Indian territory: 490 km² [190 sq mi] in the Chhamb sector and 50 km² [19 sq mi] around Khem Karan.

- [Dennis Kux](#)'s *India and the United States estranged democracies* also provides a summary of the war,^[176]

Although both sides lost heavily in men and material, and neither gained a decisive military advantage, India had the best of the war. New Delhi achieved its basic goal of thwarting Pakistan's attempt to seize Kashmir by force. Pakistan gained nothing from a conflict which it had instigated.

- *A region in turmoil: South Asian conflicts since 1947* by Robert Johnson mentions^[177] —

India's strategic aims were modest – it aimed to deny the Pakistani Army victory, although it ended up in possession of 720 square miles [1,900 km²] of Pakistani territory for the loss of just 220 square miles [570 km²] of its own.

- An excerpt from William M. Carpenter and David G. Wiencek's *Asian security handbook: terrorism and the new security environment*^[178] –

A brief, but furious 1965 war with India began with a covert Pakistani thrust across the Kashmiri cease-fire line and ended up with the city of Lahore threatened with encirclement by the Indian Army. Another UN-sponsored cease-fire left borders unchanged, but Pakistan's vulnerability had again been exposed.

- English historian [John Keay](#)'s *India: A History* provides a summary of the 1965 war^[179] –

The 1965 Indo-Pak war lasted barely a month. Pakistan made gains in the Rajasthan desert, but its main push against India's Jammu-Srinagar road link was repulsed, and Indian tanks advanced to within a sight of Lahore. Both sides claimed victory, but India had most to celebrate.

- Uk Heo and Shale Asher Horowitz write in their book *Conflict in Asia: Korea, China–Taiwan, and India–Pakistan*^[180] –

Again, India appeared, logistically at least, to be in a superior position, but neither side was able to mobilize enough strength to gain a decisive victory.

- According to the [Office of the Historian](#) within the U.S. Department of State:^[181]

Conflict resumed again in early 1965, when Pakistani and Indian forces clashed over disputed territory along the border between the two nations. Hostilities intensified that August when the Pakistani army attempted to take Kashmir by force. The attempt to seize the state was unsuccessful, and the second India-Pakistan War reached a stalemate.

- Anthony Tucker-Jones write in his book *Tank Battles of the Cold War, 1948–1991*:^[182]

Both sides fought each other to a stalemate. Shortly after they agreed to a cease-fire, with each side having lost about 200 tanks.

Ceasefire

On 20 September, the [United Nations Security Council](#) unanimously passed a [resolution](#), which noted that its previous two resolutions went "unheeded" and now "demanded" an unconditional ceasefire from both nations within 48 hours.^{[183][184]} India immediately accepted,^{[185][b]} while Pakistan accepted it on 23 September, with some notable dramatics.^[187]

India and Pakistan accused each other of ceasefire violations; India charged Pakistan with 585 violations in 34 days, while Pakistan countered with accusations of 450 incidents by India.^[188] In addition to the expected exchange of [small arms](#) and artillery fire, India reported that Pakistan used the ceasefire to capture the Indian village of Chananwalla in the [Fazilka](#) sector. This village was recaptured by Indian troops on 25 December. On 10 October, a [B-57 Canberra](#) on loan to the PAF was damaged by three [SA-2](#) missiles fired from the IAF base at [Ambala](#).^[189] A Pakistani Army [Auster AOP](#) was shot down on 16 December, killing one Pakistani army captain; on 2 February 1967, an AOP was shot down by IAF [Hawker Hunters](#).

The ceasefire remained in effect until the start of the [Indo-Pakistani war of 1971](#).

Tashkent Declaration

The United States and the [Soviet Union](#) used significant diplomatic tools to prevent any further escalation in the conflict between the two South Asian nations. The Soviet Union, led by Premier [Alexei Kosygin](#), hosted peace negotiations in [Tashkent](#) (now in [Uzbekistan](#)), where Indian Prime Minister [Lal Bahadur Shastri](#) and Pakistani President [Muhammad Ayub Khan](#) signed the [Tashkent Declaration](#) on 10 January 1966,^[190] agreeing to withdraw to pre-August lines no later than 25 February 1966. In [India](#), the agreement was criticised because it did not contain a no-war pact or any renunciation of guerrilla warfare across [Kashmir](#).

India's Prime Minister, [Shastri](#), suffered a fatal heart attack soon after the [Tashkent Agreement](#) on 11 January 1966. As a consequence, the public outcry in India against the peace declaration transformed into a wave of sympathy for the ruling [Indian National Congress](#).^[191]

Public perceptions

The ceasefire was criticised by many Pakistanis who, relying on fabricated official reports and the controlled Pakistani press, believed that the leadership had surrendered military gains. The protests led to student riots.^[192] Pakistan State's reports had suggested that their military was performing admirably in the war – which they incorrectly blamed as being initiated by India – and thus the [Tashkent Declaration](#) was seen as having forfeited the gains.^[193] Some recent books written by Pakistani authors, including one by ex-[ISI](#) chief Lieutenant General [Mahmud Ahmed](#) Durrani initially titled *The Myth of 1965 Victory*,^[194] reportedly exposed Pakistani fabrications about the war, but all copies of the book were bought by the Pakistan Army to prevent circulation because the topic was "too sensitive".^{[195][196]} The book was published with the revised title *History of Indo Pak War 1965*, published by Services Book Club, a part of the Pakistan military and printed by Oxford University Press, Karachi. A few copies of the book have survived.^[197] A version was published in India as *Illusion of Victory: A Military History of the Indo-Pak War-1965* by Lexicon Publishers.^[198] Recently a new Pakistani impression has been published in 2017.

Intelligence failures

Strategic miscalculations by both India and Pakistan ensured that the war ended in a stalemate. In part, this inspired [Shekhar Gupta](#) to coin the [protologism](#), "war of mutual incompetence".^[199]

Indian miscalculations

Indian military intelligence gave no warning of the impending Pakistan invasion. The Indian Army failed to recognise the presence of heavy Pakistani artillery and armaments in [Chumb](#) and suffered significant losses as a result.

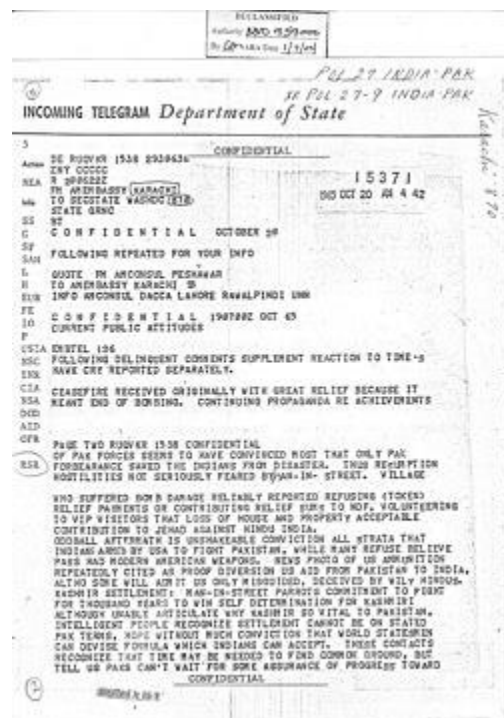
The "[Official War History – 1965](#)", drafted by the [Ministry of Defence of India](#) in 1992, was a long-suppressed document that revealed other miscalculations. According to the document, on 22 September when the [Security Council](#) was pressing for a ceasefire, the Indian Prime Minister asked commanding Gen. Chaudhuri if India could possibly win the war, were he to delay accepting the ceasefire. The general replied that most of India's frontline ammunition had been used up, and the Indian Army had suffered considerable tank losses. It was determined later that only 14% of India's frontline ammunition had been fired, and India held twice the number of tanks as Pakistan. By this time, the Pakistani Army had used close to 80% of its ammunition.

Air Chief Marshal (retd.) P.C. Lal, who was the Vice Chief of Air Staff during the conflict, points to the lack of coordination between the [IAF](#) and the Indian army. Neither side revealed its battle plans to

the other. The battle plans, drafted by the Ministry of Defence and General Chaudhari, did not specify a role for the Indian Air Force in the order of battle. This attitude of Gen. Chaudhari was referred to by ACM Lal as the "Supremo Syndrome", a patronising attitude sometimes held by the Indian army towards the other branches of the Indian Military.^[154]

Pakistani miscalculations

The Pakistani Army's failures began with the supposition that a generally discontented Kashmiri people would revolt against their Indian rulers, bringing about a swift and decisive victory. The Kashmiri people, on the other hand, remained calm and collected. The Indian Army was given enough information to understand [Operation Gibraltar](#) and that they were battling not insurgents, as they had initially thought, but Pakistani Army regulars.



Telegram from the Embassy of the United States in [Karachi](#):

“Continuing propaganda regarding achievements of PAK forces seems to have convinced most that only PAK forbearance saved the Indians from disaster.”

The Pakistani Army didn't know that Indian leaders wanted to attack the southern part of the country to start a new war. Pakistan had to send troops to the southern part of the country to protect Sialkot and Lahore instead of using them to help get to Kashmir.

Pakistan's attempt to capture Ahnora, a town north-east of Jammu and a key region for communications between Kashmir and the rest of India, was a failure. Many Pakistani commentators said that the Ayub Khan administration was indecisive during "[Operation Grand Slam](#)". The critics contend that the mission was unsuccessful due to Ayub Khan's awareness of the significance of Akhnoor to India, referring to it as India's '[jugular vein](#)', and his reluctance to invade it and initiate a conflict. Although progress was made in Akhnoor, General Ayub Khan relieved the commanding officer, [Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik](#), and replaced him with General [Yahya Khan](#). During the replacement, a 24-hour pause was observed, enabling the Indian army to regroup in Akhnoor and successfully repel a sluggish assault led by General Yahya Khan. The Indian Chief of Staff of the Western Command said, "The enemy came to our rescue." Then, Akhtar Hussain Malik criticised Ayub Khan for inventing Operation Gibraltar, which ultimately failed, and for denying him command

at a crucial point in the conflict. Malik said he would tell the truth about the war and how the army failed, but later decided not to because he was afraid of being banned.^[200]

Some authors have said that a [war game](#) – that was held in March 1965 at the [Institute for Defense Analyses](#) in the United States might have encouraged Pakistan. The exercise concluded that Pakistan would prevail in the event of a conflict with India.^{[201][202]} Other authors like [Stephen P. Cohen](#), have consistently commented that the Pakistan Army had "acquired an exaggerated view of the weakness of both India and the Indian military ... the 1965 war was a shock."^[203]

During the war, the Pakistani [Air Marshal](#) and [Commander-in-Chief](#) of PAF, [Nur Khan](#), later stated that it is the Pakistan Army that should be held accountable for initiating the conflict, rather than India.^{[204][205]} However, propaganda about the war continued in Pakistan,^{[206][207]} with most of the blame being placed on the leadership and little importance given to intelligence failures. This pattern persisted until the disastrous outcome of the Indo-Pakistani war in 1971.

Involvement of other nations

The United States and the United Kingdom have been the principal suppliers of military matériel to India and Pakistan since 1947. Both India and Pakistan were Commonwealth republics. While India had pursued a policy of nominal non-alignment, Pakistan was a member of both [CENTO](#) and [SEATO](#) and an ally of the West in its struggle against communism.^[208] Well before the conflict began, however, Britain and the United States had suspected Pakistan of joining both alliances out of opportunism to acquire advanced weapons for a war against India. They had therefore limited their military aid to Pakistan to maintain the existing balance of power in the subcontinent.^[209] In 1959, however, Pakistan and the United States had signed an Agreement of Cooperation under which the United States agreed to take "appropriate action, including the use of armed forces" to assist the Government of Pakistan at its request.^[210] By 1965, American and British analysts had recognised the two international groupings, CENTO and SEATO, and Pakistan's continued alliance with the West as being largely meaningless.^[211]

Following the start of the 1965 war, both the United States and Britain took the view that the conflict was largely Pakistan's fault, and suspended all arms shipments to both India and Pakistan.^{[citation needed][22]} While the United States maintained a neutral stance, the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, condemned India for aggression after its army advanced towards Lahore; his statement was met with a furious rebuttal from India.^[212]

Internationally, the level of support which Pakistan received was limited at best.^{[213][214][215]} Iran and Turkey issued a joint communiqué on 10 September which placed the blame on India, backed the United Nations' appeal for a cease-fire and offered to deploy troops for a UN peacekeeping mission in Kashmir.^[216] Pakistan received support from Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia in the form of six naval vessels, jet fuel, guns, and ammunition and financial support, respectively.^[217] Pakistan didn't gain meaningful support at an international level.^{[32][213][218][219]}

Since before the war, the People's Republic of China had been a major military associate of Pakistan and a military opponent of India, with whom it had [fought a brief war in 1962](#). China had also become a foreign patron for Pakistan and had given Pakistan \$60 million in development assistance in 1965.^[220] During the war, China openly supported the Pakistani position. It took advantage of the conflict to issue a strongly worded ultimatum to India condemning its "aggression" in Tibet and hinting at nuclear retaliation by China (China had exploded its first nuclear device the previous year).^[215] Despite strong fears of Chinese intervention on the side of Pakistan, the Chinese government ultimately exercised restraint.^[221] This was partly due to the logistical difficulties of a

direct Chinese military intervention against India and India's improved military strength after its defeat by China in 1962.^[214] China had also received strong warnings by the American and Soviet governments against expanding the scope of the conflict by intervening.^[215] In the face of this pressure, China backed down, extending the deadline for India to respond to its ultimatum and warning India against attacking [East Pakistan](#).^[219] Ultimately, Pakistan rejected Chinese offers of military aid, recognising that accepting it would only result in further alienating Pakistan internationally.^[215] International opinion considered China's actions to be dangerously reckless and aggressive, and it was soundly rebuked in the world press for its unnecessarily provocative stance during the conflict.^[215]

India's participation in the [Non-Aligned Movement](#) yielded little support from its members.^[222] Support given by Indonesia to Pakistan was seen as a major Indian diplomatic failure, as Indonesia had been among the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement along with India.^[223] Despite its close relations with India, the [Soviet Union](#) was more neutral than other nations during the war, inviting both nations to peace talks under its aegis in [Tashkent](#).^[224]

Aftermath

India

Despite the declaration of a ceasefire, India was perceived by many as the victor due to its success in halting the Pakistan-backed insurgency in Kashmir.^[33] In its October 1, 1965 issue, [Time](#) magazine quoted a Western official assessing the consequences of the war: "Now it's apparent to everybody that India is going to emerge as an Asian power in its own right."^[225]

In light of the failures of the [Sino-Indian War](#), the outcome of the 1965 war was viewed as a "politico-strategic" victory for India. The Indian prime minister, [Lal Bahadur Shastri](#), was hailed as a national hero in India.^[226]

While the overall performance of the Indian military was praised, military leaders were criticised for their failure to effectively deploy India's superior armed forces to achieve a decisive victory over Pakistan.^[227] In his book *War in the modern world since 1815*, noted war historian [Jeremy Black](#) said that though Pakistan "lost heavily" during the 1965 war, India's hasty decision to call for negotiations prevented further considerable damage to the Pakistan Armed Forces. He elaborates:

India's chief of army staff urged negotiations on the ground that they were running out of ammunition and their number of tanks had become seriously depleted. In fact, the army had used less than 15% of its ammunition compared to Pakistan, which had consumed closer to 80 percent and India had double the number of serviceable tanks.^[228]

In 2015, [Marshal of the Indian Air Force](#) Arjan Singh, the last surviving armed force commander of the conflict, gave his assessment that the war ended in a stalemate, but only due to international pressure for a ceasefire, and that India would have achieved a decisive victory had hostilities continued for a few days more:

For political reasons, Pakistan claims victory in the 1965 war. In my opinion, the war ended in a kind of stalemate. We were in a position of strength. Had the war continued for a few more days, we would have gained a decisive victory. I advised then prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri not to agree to a ceasefire. But I think he was pressured by the United Nations and some countries.^[229]

As a consequence, India focussed on enhancing communication and coordination within and among the tri-services of the Indian Armed Forces. Partly as a result of the inefficient information gathering

preceding the war, India established the [Research and Analysis Wing](#) for external [espionage](#) and [intelligence](#). Major improvements were also made in [command and control](#) to address various shortcomings and the positive impact of these changes was clearly visible during the [Indo-Pakistani war of 1971](#) when India achieved a decisive victory over Pakistan within two weeks.

China's repeated threats to intervene in the conflict supporting Pakistan increased pressure on the government to take an immediate decision to develop [nuclear weapons](#).^[230] Despite repeated assurances, the United States did little to prevent extensive use of American arms by Pakistani forces during the conflict, thus irking India.^[231] At the same time, the United States and United Kingdom refused to supply India with sophisticated weaponry which further strained the relations between the West and India.^[232] These developments led to a significant change in India's foreign policy – India, which had previously championed the cause of [non-alignment](#), distanced itself further from Western powers and developed close relations with the [Soviet Union](#). By the end of the 1960s, the Soviet Union emerged as the biggest supplier of military hardware to India.^[233] From 1967 to 1977, 81% of India's arms imports were from the Soviet Union.^[234] After the 1965 war, the arms race between India and Pakistan became even more asymmetric and India was outdistancing Pakistan by far.^[235] India's defence budget too would increase gradually after the war. In 1966–1967, it would rise to 17% and by 1970–1971 it would rise to 25% of its revenue.^[236] According to [World Bank](#) data, India's defence expenditure by GDP decreased from 3.871% in 1965 to 3.141% in 1969, then slightly increased to 3.652% in 1971.^[237]

Pakistan

After the war, a significant number of Pakistanis regarded their military performance to be positive. In Pakistan, 6 September is celebrated as [Defence Day](#) to remember how [Lahore](#) was able to defend itself against the Indian army. The performance of the Pakistani Air Force was particularly praised.

The Pakistani government was accused of spreading misinformation about the consequences of the war among its citizens.^[238] In his book *Mainsprings of Indian and Pakistani foreign policies*, S.M. Burke writes^[172] —

After the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965, the balance of military power had decisively shifted in favor of India. Pakistan had found it difficult to replace the heavy equipment lost during that conflict while her adversary, despite her economic and political problems, had been determinedly building up her strength.

Air Marshal (retired) [Nur Khan](#), who headed the Pakistan Air Force in 1965, said in an interview with Dawn newspaper^[239] —

The army “misled the nation with a big lie” – that India rather than Pakistan provoked the war – and that Pakistan won a “great victory”.

And since the “lie” was never rectified, the Pakistani “army came to believe its fiction, (and) has continued to fight unwanted wars,”

Pakistani commentator Haidar Imtiaz remarked:^[240]

The myth of ‘victory’ was created after the war had ended, to counter Indian claims of victory on the one hand and to shield the Ayub regime and the army from criticism on the other.

A book titled *Indo-Pakistan War of 1965: A Flashback*,^[241] produced by the [Inter-Services Public Relations](#) of Pakistan, is used as the official history of the war, which omits any mention of the

operations [Gibraltar](#) and [Grand Slam](#), and begins with the Indian counter-offensive on the Lahore front. The Pakistan Army is claimed to have put up a "valiant defense of the motherland" and forced the attack in its tracks.^[240]

Most people agree that the idea of a mobile, hard-hitting Pakistan Army was badly hurt during the war because important breakthroughs were not made.^[242] The military's ill-founded belief that their "[martial race](#)" of soldiers could defeat "Hindu India" in the conflict was criticised by several Pakistani writers.^{[243][244]} Rasul Bux Rais, a Pakistani political analyst wrote^[245] –

The 1965 war with India proved that Pakistan could neither break the formidable Indian defenses in an intense violent military campaign fashion nor could she sustain an all-out conflict for long.

Historian Akbar S Zaidi notes that Pakistan "lost terribly in the 1965 war".^[246]

The Pakistani air force, on the other hand, racked up considerable acclaim and esteem among the military and international warfare critics for its defence of Lahore and other crucial parts of the country and its hefty retaliation against India the day afterward. The air force's vigilance was also influenced by the fact that some pilots were frantically re-enlisted six times in a single hour when they detected Indian air raids. In Pakistan, the air force and army are honored on [Defence Day](#) and [Air Force Day](#). These days are on 6 and 7 September, respectively.^{[247][248]}

Furthermore, Pakistan had lost more ground than it had gained during the conflict, and, perhaps even more crucial, it had failed to secure Kashmir. Many people consider this outcome to be a setback for Pakistan.^{[34][35][36]}

The faulty planning of [Operation Gibraltar](#) was criticised by senior Pakistani officials and military experts, which ultimately led to the conflict. The Tashkent declaration was also criticised in Pakistan, even though few people were aware of the seriousness of the situation at the end of the conflict. Political leaders were also subjected to criticism. Ayub Khan had espoused high expectations among the Pakistani populace regarding the superiority, if not invincibility, of its armed forces,^[249] in accordance with the guidance of [Zulfikar Ali Bhutto](#), the foreign minister of Pakistan. Nonetheless, the failure of Pakistan to attain its military objectives during the conflict resulted in a political liability for Ayub.^[250] After the defeat of its Kashmiri ambitions, an increasingly vocal opposition challenged the army's invincibility.^[251]

The economic contraction in Pakistan was one of the most significant outcomes of the conflict.^{[252][253]} Pakistan had experienced impressive economic growth since the early 1960s, but the war ended that. Between 1964 and 1966, Pakistan's defence spending rose from 4.82% to 9.86% of GDP, putting a tremendous strain on its economy. In 1970–71, the expenditure on defence accounted for 32%^[236] or 55.66% of the total government expenditure.^[254] According to veterans of the war, the war greatly cost Pakistan economically, politically, and militarily.^[255] Nuclear theorist Feroze Khan maintained that the 1965 war was a last [conventional attempt](#) to snatch Kashmir by military force, and Pakistan's own position in the international community, especially with the [United States](#), began to deteriorate from the point the war started, while on the other hand, the alliance with China saw improvements.^[255] [Chairman joint chiefs](#) General [Tariq Majid](#) claims in his memoirs that [Zhou Enlai](#) had long advised the government in the classic style of [Sun Tzu](#): "to go slow, not to push India hard, and avoid a fight over Kashmir, 'for at least, 20–30 years, until you have developed your economy and consolidated your national power'".^[255] General Majid maintained in *Eating Grass* that the "sane, philosophical and political critical thinking" was missing in Pakistan, and that the country had lost extensive human resources by fighting the war.^[255]

Pakistan was surprised by the lack of support from the United States, an ally with whom the country had signed an Agreement of Cooperation. The US turned neutral in the war when it cut off military supplies to Pakistan (and India);^[citation needed] an action that the Pakistanis took as a sign of betrayal.^[256] After the war, Pakistan would increasingly look towards China as a major source of military hardware and political support.

Another negative consequence of the war was growing resentment against the Pakistani government in [East Pakistan](#) (present day [Bangladesh](#)),^[203] particularly for West Pakistan's obsession with Kashmir.^[257] [Bengali](#) leaders accused the central government of not providing adequate security for East Pakistan during the conflict, even though large sums of money were taken from the east to finance the war for Kashmir.^[258] In fact, despite some Pakistan Air Force attacks being launched from bases in East Pakistan during the war, India did not retaliate in that sector,^[259] although East Pakistan was defended only by an understrengthed infantry division (14th Division), sixteen planes and no tanks.^[260] [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman](#) was critical of the disparity in military resources deployed in East and West Pakistan, calling for greater autonomy for East Pakistan, an action that ultimately led to the [Bangladesh Liberation War](#) and [another war](#) between India and Pakistan in 1971.

Pakistan celebrates [Defence Day](#) every year to commemorate 6 September 1965 to pay tribute to the soldiers killed in the war.^[261] However, Pakistani journalists, including [Taha Siddiqui](#)^[262] and Haseeb Asif^[263] have criticised the celebration of Defence Day.

Awards

National awards

- [Santu Jouharmal Shahaney](#), an [IOFS](#) officer, served as the first Indian Director General [Ordnance Factories](#) (DGOF). He was awarded [Padma Bhushan](#), by the Government of India, in the Civil Service category.^[264]
- K. C. Banerjee, an [IOFS](#) officer. Received [Padma Shri](#) in 1967, for his contributions during the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965, as the General Manager of [Rifle Factory Ishapore](#),^[265] that developed and manufactured the [7.62 Self-Loading Automatic Rifle](#), that played decisive role in India's victory in the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965.^{[266][267][268][269]}
- [Joginder Singh Dhillon](#), Lt. Gen, awarded the [Padma Bhushan](#) in 1966 by the Government of India for his role in the 1965 war,^[270] becoming the first Indian Army officer to receive the award.^[271]

Gallantry awards

For bravery, the following soldiers were awarded the highest gallantry award of their respective countries, the Indian award [Param Vir Chakra](#) and the Pakistani award [Nishan-e-Haider](#):

India

- Company Quarter Master [Havildar Abdul Hamid](#)^[272] (Posthumous)
- [Lieutenant-Colonel Ardeshir Burzorji Tarapore](#)^[272] (Posthumous)

Pakistan

- [Major Raja Aziz Bhatti Shaheed](#)^[273] (Posthumous)

Battle honours

After the war, a total of 16 [battle honours](#) and three [theatre honours](#) were awarded to units of the Indian Army, the notable among which are:^[274]



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other politicians visit Shauryanjali war, 17 September 2015

- Jammu and Kashmir, 1965 (theatre honour)
- Punjab 1965 (theatre honour)
- Rajasthan 1965 (theatre honour)
- Assam
- Burki
- Dograi
- Hajipi
- Hussainiwala
- Kalidhar
- OP Hill
- Phillora

Capture of Three Pimples



IAF [MiG-21s](#) were used extensively in the Kargil War.

As the operation was fully underway, about 250 artillery guns were brought in to clear the infiltrators in the posts that were in the [line-of-sight](#). The [Bofors FH-77B field howitzer](#) played a vital role, with Indian gunners making maximum use of the terrain. However, its success was limited elsewhere due to the lack of space and depth to deploy it.

Area three pimples consisted of the Knoll, Lone Hill and Three Pimples. 2 Rajputana Rifles of Lt. Col. Ravindranath was tasked to recapture it on 28 June. Gen Malik personally talked with Ravindranath before the battle. The battle began 2 hours later and lasted 2 days. Area three pimples was captured on 29 June.^[101]

Five Years of Balakot:
A New Nuclear South Asia

Yogesh Joshi

16 February 2024

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Summary

How has South Asia's nuclear dynamics shifted after five years of India's air strikes against terrorist safe havens in Pakistan's Balakot? This paper argues that India's punitive military action not only imposed direct costs on the Pakistani Army but also called into question Pakistan's nuclear redlines. Balakot has allowed India to overcome from the stranglehold of self-deterrence obtained in the aftermath of the 1998 tests and nuclear tests by the two South Asian rivals.

It has been almost five years since India conducted air strikes inside Pakistani territory in Balakot in response to the attack on Indian security forces in Pulwama in Kashmir. The deadly terrorist strike on 15 February 2019, which claimed the lives of 44 security personnel, triggered a major military crisis between South Asia's two nuclear-armed adversaries. The crisis and its culmination have changed Indo-Pakistan's nuclear and conventional dynamics significantly.

Two weeks after the Pulwama terrorist attacks, the Indian government launched [air strikes](#) against alleged terrorist training camps deep inside Pakistani territory in Balakot. The action was [unprecedented](#). Successive Indian governments have shown [immense restraint](#) in the face of continuous provocation and cross-border terrorism by Pakistan-based groups. India's current Prime Minister Narendra Modi has tried to alter that tradition of military restraint by ordering [limited kinetic action](#) against terrorist hideouts across the border in Kashmir. However, the use of air power in mainland Pakistan was highly unexpected. The last time the Indian Air Force targeted Pakistani territory was during the 1971 war over Bangladesh. Even at the height of the Kargil war in 1999, the air force was strictly instructed [not to cross](#) the 'Line of Control' separating the Indian and Pakistani-administered regions of Kashmir.

Modi's use of force during the Balakot attacks was the most emphatic response in its fight against Pakistan-based terror groups so far.

India's retaliation invited an immediate Pakistani response. First, the Pakistani government convened a meeting of its nuclear command body – the [National Command Authority](#) – suggesting that any further escalation would invite a Pakistani nuclear reaction. Islamabad's linking of the crisis with nuclear escalation was a desperate ploy. Since the 'surgical strikes' against terrorist hideouts across the Line of Control in [September 2016](#), India's tactic of conventional escalation was called into questioning Pakistan's nuclear bluff.

However, Islamabad's response was purely conventional. Just a day later, on 27 February 2019, Pakistani Air Force planes breached Indian airspace and attempted a bombing raid on an Indian military base close to the line of control in Kashmir. In the ensuing air battle, India lost a fighter jet. The Pakistan Army captured the pilot and paraded him on Pakistani media. The Indian Air Force also claimed to have [shot down](#) a United States (US)-supplied F-16 fighter jet of the Pakistani Air Force. The stage was set for the crisis to escalate further. In fact, as Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan [Ajai Bisaria](#) has argued, New Delhi was ready to up the ante by launching missiles at Pakistani targets if the captured fighter pilot was not released immediately. The international community, led by the US, [forced Pakistan](#) to release him, paving the way for the eventual de-escalation of the crisis.

The crisis and its culmination introduced two new variables in South Asia's strategic scenario.

First, India's military action and its use of air power have [redefined the cost calculus](#) of the Pakistani state's support for anti-India terrorist groups. India's earlier restraint allowed Islamabad to continue its support for such groups without costs. The Indian air strikes at Balakot signalled that New Delhi will henceforth hold the Pakistan Army directly responsible for terrorism in Kashmir and will engage in punitive military action. The Pakistan Army could not continue to support terrorism on the cheap. Of course, India's military action invited a Pakistani response, as was the case on 27 February 2019. However, directly engaging the Pakistani military was a much better strategy than allowing its generals to sleep peacefully while letting the terrorists do their bidding. In fact, months after the Pulwama crisis, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence provided Indian counterparts [information on a possible terrorist attack in Kashmir](#) to avoid another military response from New Delhi.

Second, India's response to the Pulwama attack and Pakistan's counter to Indian air action also shattered the idea that any limited military engagement would lead to a nuclear war. Since the 1998 nuclear weapons tests in South Asia, India's military restraint resulted partially from the fear of a conventional military crisis escalating into a nuclear one. Pakistan also used its nuclear weapons as a shield under which it could continue to support terror without inviting a conventional riposte from India.

After the December 2001 attack on the Indian parliament, the government [mobilised the military](#) but desisted from initiating any action against Pakistan. Even after the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, New Delhi opted for a [diplomatic rather than a military offensive](#) against Islamabad. Taking its cue,

Pakistan, has over the years, continued to lower the threshold for nuclear use in the subcontinent, and its introduction of [tactical nuclear weapons](#) has been a part of that strategy. The crisis proved that Pakistan's threshold for nuclear use is much higher. Pakistan opted for a conventional response to India's initial escalatory air strikes. Even when New Delhi threatened to use conventional missiles – the second rung of the escalation ladder – Pakistan prepared only for a [conventional response](#). The crisis has opened a new space for limited military action in the subcontinent.

The conventional military and the nuclear dynamics in the subcontinent underwent significant revision after the Balakot incident. New Delhi finally discovered a political will to punish Pakistan militarily. Henceforth, every time a Pakistan-based terrorist group aims to target India, the Pakistan Army will have to gear up for some kinetic action. Islamabad has also been forced to revise its nuclear 'red lines', at least in practice if not in theory. This does not mean that the two nuclear adversaries will always be able to calibrate military escalation short of a nuclear war. However, it has shown that the use of nuclear weapons is not inevitable in a crisis between the two countries.

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Operation SINDOOR: Forging One Force

The Synergy of India's Armed Forces

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Introduction

In an age of multi-domain warfare, where threats evolve faster than borders shift, **India's national security architecture has demonstrated the strength of jointness and strategic foresight. Operation SINDOOR**, initiated on **May 7, 2025**, in the aftermath of the **Pahalgam terror attack**, which claimed the lives of 26 innocent civilians showcased a calibrated, **tri-services response** that embodied precision, professionalism, and purpose. Operation SINDOOR was conceived as a punitive and targeted campaign to **dismantle the terror infrastructure** across the **Line of Control** and deeper inside Pakistan.



Multi-agency intelligence provided confirmation of **nine** major camps that were eventually targeted in the operation. India's retaliatory action was based on **meticulous planning** and an **intelligence-led approach**, which ensured that the operations were conducted with **minimal collateral damage**. Operational ethics were central to the mission, and restraint was exercised to avoid civilian harm.

In the aftermath of Operation SINDOOR, Pakistan initiated a series of **retaliatory drone and UCAV attacks** targeting key **Indian airbases** and **logistics infrastructure**. These attempts, however, were effectively neutralised by India's **comprehensive and multilayered air defence architecture**. Central to this success was the **Integrated Command and Control Strategy (ICCS)**, which facilitated **real-time threat identification, assessment, and interception** across multiple domains. In every single domain of Operation Sindoor there was operational **synergy** between the forces and fully supported by the Government, agencies and departments.

The operation unfolded across land, air, and sea—a **seamless demonstration of synergy** between the **Indian Army, Air Force, and Navy**. The Indian Air Force (IAF) played a crucial role in delivering precision strikes against terror infrastructure across Pakistan. It conducted **high-impact air operations** on targets such as the **Nur Khan Air Base** and the **Rahimyar Khan Air Base**, with visual evidence of damage presented during official briefings. The Air Force's robust air defence environment proved pivotal in protecting Indian airspace during retaliatory drone and UAV attacks from across the border. The indigenously developed **Akash surface-to-air missile system** and legacy platforms like the **Pechora** and **OSA-AK** were deployed effectively in a layered defence grid. The IAF's Integrated Air Command and Control System enabled **real-time coordination** of air assets, allowing Indian forces to neutralize aerial threats efficiently and maintain net-centric operations throughout the conflict.

Simultaneously, the Indian Army demonstrated its preparedness and effectiveness in both defensive and offensive roles. The Army's air defence units worked in tandem with the Air Force, deploying a wide array of systems ranging from **shoulder-fired MANPADS** and **LLAD guns** to **long-range SAMs**. These units were instrumental in countering waves of drones and loitering munitions launched by Pakistan. Despite Pakistan's unrelenting efforts to inflict damage, Indian forces succeeded in ensuring the security of both military and civilian infrastructure.

The Indian Navy played a critical role in asserting maritime dominance during Operation SINDOOR. Operating as a composite networked force, the Navy deployed its **Carrier Battle Group (CBG)** equipped with **MiG-29K fighter jets** and **airborne early warning helicopters**. This ensured persistent surveillance and real-time identification of threats across the maritime domain. The CBG maintained a **powerful air defence shield** that prevented hostile aerial incursions, especially from the **Makran coast**. The Navy's presence created a strong deterrent and effectively bottled-up Pakistani air elements along their western seaboard, denying them any operational space. Naval

pilots conducted round-the-clock sorties, further demonstrating India's readiness and strategic reach in the region. The Navy's ability to establish uncontested control over the seas also validated its anti-missile and anti-aircraft defence capabilities in a complex threat environment.

During Operation Sindoor, the **Border Security Force (BSF)** also played a critical role in thwarting a **major infiltration attempt** along the International Border in the **Samba** district of Jammu and Kashmir. BSF troops noticed suspicious movement in the early hours and swiftly responded, leading to a heavy exchange of fire. In the ensuing encounter, the BSF **successfully neutralized** at least **two infiltrators and recovered arms, ammunition, and other war-like stores**. The operation underscored the BSF's vigilance, operational preparedness, and its crucial role in maintaining border security during heightened tensions.

Operation SINDOOR was thus not just a tactical success but a **strategic statement**. It demonstrated India's capacity for **high-precision, coordinated military action across land, air, and sea**. The operation was made possible by years of investment in defence preparedness and the unwavering policy and budgetary support from the Government of India. The message was clear: when appeals to reason and diplomacy are met with continued aggression, a decisive response is both justified and necessary. In sum, Operation SINDOOR will be remembered as a **defining moment in India's defence history—a symbol of military precision, inter-service cooperation, and national resolve**. It successfully eliminated terror threats, reaffirmed India's regional dominance, and sent a strong message that cross-border terrorism would be met with a calibrated yet firm response.

Major Government-Led Coordination Efforts Among the Armed Forces

1. Creation of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)

On **24 December 2019**, the Union Cabinet approved the creation of the **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)**, a four-star General who heads the **Department of Military Affairs (DMA)** and acts as the principal military adviser to the Defence Minister on tri-Service matters.

Key roles of the CDS include:

- Overseeing the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Territorial Army.
- Promoting jointness in procurement, training, staffing, and command restructuring.
- Leading tri-service organizations, including cyber and space commands.
- Advising the Nuclear Command Authority and participating in defence planning bodies.
- Driving reforms to optimize resources, enhance combat capabilities, and reduce waste.
- Implementing multi-year defence acquisition plans and prioritizing inter-Service needs.

The CDS strengthens unified leadership and fosters integration for a more coordinated and modern Indian military.

2. Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs)

To modernize the Armed Forces, efforts are underway to restructure forces through the establishment of **Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs)** and **Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs)**. These reforms aim to optimize operational preparedness by unifying the Army, Navy, and Air Force capabilities based on geography and function. Studies at the Service Headquarters level are actively exploring Theatre Commands for **Land Borders, Maritime, and Joint/Integrated Air Defence** to

enhance synergy and combat effectiveness. The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan has emphasized that **jointness and integration** are essential prerequisites for ITCs, which will clearly separate operational roles from administrative Raise-Train-Sustain (RTS) functions, allowing commanders to focus on security and operations. ITCs represent the start of wider reforms toward **multi-domain operations**, integrating space and cyberspace with traditional domains, and advancing digitization and data-centric warfare.

3. Creation of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA)

Department of Military Affairs (DMA) with CDS as **Secretary** was created in **2020** to facilitate optimal utilization of resources and **promote jointness** among the three Services. The subjects allocated to DMA include:

- The **Armed Forces** of the Union, namely, Army, Navy and Air Force.
- **Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence** comprising of Army Headquarters, Naval Headquarters, Air Headquarters and Defence Staff Headquarters.
- **Works relating to Army, Navy and Air Force.**
- **Promoting jointness in procurement**, training and staffing for the Services through joint planning and integration of their requirements.
- **Facilitation of restructuring of Military Commands** for optimal utilisation of resources by bringing about jointness in operations, including through establishment of joint / theatre commands.

4. Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control & Discipline) Act, 2023

The Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control & Discipline) Act, 2023 promotes **jointness** in the Indian Armed Forces by **empowering commanders of tri-service formations with authority over personnel from all three Services**. This unifies the disciplinary chain, speeds up decision-making, and fosters operational and cultural integration. By streamlining command without affecting individual Service identities, the Act lays the legal foundation for future integrated theatre commands. Key implications of this Act are:

- **Unified command:** ISO commanders can discipline all personnel under one authority.
- **Faster processes:** Reduces delays from inter-Service coordination.
- **Joint culture:** Encourages cross-Service cohesion and shared responsibility.
- **Legal base for theatre commands:** Supports future integrated operations.
- **Service identity retained:** Each Service's unique norms remain intact.

5. Joint Logistics Nodes (JLNs)

Three Joint Logistic Nodes (JLNs) have been established and are operational since **2021** at **Mumbai, Guwahati and Port Blair** for **Logistics Integration** between the **three services**. These JLNs will provide **integrated logistics cover** to the Armed Forces for their small arms ammunition, rations, fuel, general stores, civil hired transport, aviation clothing, spares and also

engineering support in an effort to synergize their operational efforts. This initiative would accrue advantages in terms of **saving of manpower, economize utilisation of resources, besides financial savings.**

6. Joint Training Courses, Seminars & Exercises

- **Tri-services Future Warfare Course:** A pioneering initiative by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, this is a **rank agnostic course** for **Major Generals to Majors** and their **equivalent level officers from other services**. The course intends to acquaint the officers with the **operational** and **technological** aspects of **modern warfare**. The need for a Future Warfare Course for Tri Services officers arose from the rapidly evolving nature of modern warfare, driven by technological advancements, changing global dynamics, and emerging threats. The course has been curated by Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff with the help of veteran and serving subject matter experts. The **first edition** was conducted in New Delhi from **23 - 27 September 2024** and the **second edition** was held at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi from **April 21 to May 09, 2025**. The second edition featured an enhanced curriculum covering specialised subjects and domain-specific warfare developments in military operations.
- **Defence Services Technical Staff Course:** The Defence Services Technical Staff Course (DSTSC) was held on **10 June 2024** at **MILIT, Pune**, with **166 officers** from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and friendly foreign nations. For the first time, the course was conducted by **Tri-Services Joint Training Teams**, marking a significant step towards jointness and multi-domain operational readiness. Officers were trained in emerging technologies, defence strategy, and geopolitical awareness, along with exposure to live drills, defence R&D, and industrial corridors—a bold push toward techno-leadership and Atmanirbharta in military capability.
- **Parivartan Chintan Conference:** The **Tri-service Conference**, ‘Parivartan Chintan’, was held in New Delhi on **08 April 2024**. The ‘Chintan’ was curated as a brainstorming and idea incubation discussion to generate new and fresh ideas, initiatives and reforms to further propel **Jointness and Integration in the Armed Forces**. Jointness and Integration are the cornerstones of the transformation to Joint Structures which the Indian Armed forces are progressing towards with the intention of being “Future Ready”.
- **Seminar on ‘Synergising Air and Naval Forces: Enhancing Combat Power in the Indian Ocean Region’:** [\[16\]](#) Headquarters Southern Air Command, in collaboration with the **Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS)**, hosted a seminar on “Synergising Air and Naval Forces: Enhancing Combat Power in the Indian Ocean Region” on **25 February 2025**. The Seminar featured two sessions that brought together senior officers, both serving and retired, from **Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff, Headquarters Southern Air Command, Indian Army, Indian Navy** and **CAPS**. Participants deliberated on synergising maritime air operations and enhancing combat power, offering valuable insights and perspectives on strengthening joint operational capabilities.
- **Joint Exercises:**
 - **Exercise Prachand Prahar 2025:** The Indian Armed Forces conducted a **tri-service integrated multi-domain exercise, Prachand Prahar**, in the high-altitude terrain of the Himalayas along the Northern Borders in **Arunachal Pradesh**. The **three-day** exercise, held from **March 25 to 27, 2025**, focused on **coordinated**

operations involving the Army, Air Force, and Navy. Prachand Prahar **follows Exercise Poorvi Prahar**, conducted in **November 2024**, which focused on the integrated application of aviation assets. The exercise validated integrated planning, command and control, and seamless execution of surveillance and firepower platforms across the three services, covering the full spectrum of conflict.

- **Exercise Desert Hunt 2025:** An integrated **Tri-Service Special Forces** exercise named Exercise Desert Hunt 2025 was conducted by the **Indian Air Force** at Air Force Station Jodhpur from 24 to 28 February 2025. The exercise involved elite **Para (Special Forces)** from the Indian Army, the **Marine Commandos** from the Indian Navy along with the **Garud (Special Forces)** from the Indian Air Force, participating together in a simulated combat environment. This high-intensity drill was aimed at enhancing **interoperability, coordination** and **synergy** among the three Special Forces units to ensure **swift** and **effective response** towards emerging security challenges.

7. Technology Integration & Network-Centric Warfare

- **Defence Communication Network (DCN):** The DCN is a **strategic, exclusive, secure** and **state-of-the-art communication network**. Implementation of DCN is a proof of strength of the Indian industry and has reaffirmed the emphasis of the Government on **Make in India** program. The DCN is a major step towards ensuring **Network Centricity across the three Services**, Integrated Defence Staff and Strategic Forces Command. The network provides converged voice, data and video services to the three Services based on secured system with adequate redundancy.
- **Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS):** The Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS) of the Indian Air Force provides the backbone for real-time coordination, enabling synchronized responses across multiple units of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. This system proved its mettle recently during the tensions between India and Pakistan post Operation SINDOOR.

8. 'Year of Defence Reforms' – 2025

Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh, with all the **Secretaries of the Ministry of Defence** unanimously decided to observe 2025 as the '**Year of Reforms**' in the MoD. This would aim at **transforming the Armed Forces into a technologically-advanced combat-ready force capable of multi-domain integrated operations**. The broad areas identified for focussed intervention in 2025 include:

- Reforms should aim to further **bolster Jointness & Integration initiatives** and facilitate establishment of the **Integrated Theatre Commands**.
- Develop a shared understanding of operational requirements and joint operational capabilities through **inter-service cooperation & training**.