

In 1947, India gained independence from Great Britain and then broke apart into Pakistan, India, and East Pakistan, later renamed Bangladesh. The conflict surrounding Kashmir became a problem when both India and Pakistan claimed it. This happened because the leader of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, didn't decide if he should join India or Pakistan, and chose to be nonpartisan.

There are a few problems that could explain the level of uncertainty between India and Pakistan, which in turn caused the conflicts that are still prevalent today. The Simla Accord was an agreement signed by India and Pakistan in which both countries vowed to respect the cease-fire line and would peacefully resolve the argument over Kashmir. There seems to be no evidence pointing to whether or not India and Pakistan have followed the agreement concerning the peaceful resolution, and whether or not they've sent delegates to represent themselves. This is a problem because neither country is sending a signal to wanting to solve the dispute, and that is causing uncertainty to if they will ever talk about it. Another thing to note is that this rivalry has been occurring since Pakistan and India separated in 1947, meaning that this is likely in history books all across that region. Current government officials from both sides grew up learning about Kashmir and have probably lived through a few wars regarding this issue. Their perception of the other side is extremely biased, and that fuels the misperceptions of the actions of the others. Because of this conflict existing for such a long period of time, the countries are reluctant to communicate because they are seen as a threat to each other as of now.

We believe that India and Pakistan are already taking steps to ensure a peaceful resolution to overcome this obstacle. As of May 30, 2018, the two countries have "declared a ceasefire along their disputed border in Kashmir" (Abi-Habib, Kumar). This is a memorable stride on India's part because they are acknowledging the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, and Pakistan's main demographic happens to be Muslim. India is trying to raise its credibility and signal that they are perhaps ready to negotiate with Pakistan. We, as a team, think that Kashmir should have the right to decide if they would like to be part of India, Pakistan, or become an entirely new country/state. The U.N. suggested conducting a plebiscite to "determine the final status of the territory" (Behind the Kashmir Conflict). Kashmir's militant organizations already had support to become independent, or to join Pakistan. In addition, the fact that they've had the first Ramadan truce in 18 years is already incredibly significant because it lets us know that this has happened in the past. Past cooperation shows how we have agreed in the past and could agree again.

The hostility and tension between India and Pakistan, regarding Kashmir, has been going on for 71 years and grows deeper every day. Both parties are constantly misinterpreting signals and perceive information using historical bias and fail to acknowledge them. However, these obstacles can be overcome if they can send their leaders or at least some representatives to come to a resolution and eventually end this conflict.