

The 1965 War between India and Pakistan

Background and Causes

The **1965 war** was the second major military confrontation between India and Pakistan after independence. The main cause was the **unresolved Kashmir dispute** that continued to fuel political and military tensions. Pakistan believed that growing dissatisfaction in Indian-administered Kashmir could be used to its advantage. Under **Operation Gibraltar**, Pakistan sent armed infiltrators into Kashmir to encourage rebellion. India viewed this as aggression and launched a **military counteroffensive**, leading to full-scale war. Deep-rooted mistrust, competing national identities, and the unfinished legacy of partition made conflict inevitable.

Major Events and Military Operations

The war saw intense fighting across multiple fronts. Pakistan began with **Operation Gibraltar** to incite insurgency and followed with **Operation Grand Slam** to capture the Akhnur sector in Jammu. India retaliated by crossing the **international border** near Lahore and Sialkot. Some of the largest **tank battles** since World War II occurred in Sialkot. Both **air forces** fought fiercely, demonstrating improved military capacity. Despite the intensity, neither side achieved a clear victory. After seventeen days of combat, a **UN-brokered ceasefire** halted the war.

Role of International Powers and United Nations

The **United Nations** played a crucial role in ending the conflict. The **UN Security Council** demanded an immediate ceasefire, supported by pressure from global powers. The **United States** and **Soviet Union** both discouraged escalation and temporarily suspended arms supplies to both sides. Later, the **Soviet Union hosted peace negotiations** in Tashkent, where India's Prime Minister **Lal Bahadur Shastri** and Pakistan's President **Ayub Khan** signed the **Tashkent Agreement** in 1966. Though peace was restored, the mistrust between the two nations persisted.

Consequences and Outcomes

The war caused **heavy human and economic losses** on both sides. Thousands of soldiers and civilians were killed, and both economies were severely strained. Militarily, the war ended in a **stalemate**, as neither side gained significant territory. Politically, Pakistan failed to achieve its goal of inciting revolt in Kashmir. India, on the other hand, consolidated its **defensive and political strength**. The **Tashkent Agreement** restored pre-war boundaries and normalized relations, but it did not resolve the Kashmir dispute.

Historical Significance and Long-term Impact

The **1965 war** reinforced Kashmir's centrality in Indo-Pak relations and influenced both countries' **foreign policies**. Pakistan sought closer ties with **China** for strategic support, while India began to **modernize its defense** forces. The conflict also exposed weaknesses in leadership and military coordination. In the long term, the war deepened mutual suspicion and laid the

foundation for future conflicts, including the **1971 war**. The legacy of 1965 continues to affect **regional security, diplomacy, and national identities** in South Asia today.

Conclusion

The 1965 war was a **turning point** in South Asian history. It demonstrated the **fragility of peace**, the **depth of mistrust**, and the enduring **impact of the Kashmir issue**. Although the conflict ended in a ceasefire, its political and emotional consequences continue to shape India-Pakistan relations. Real peace, even today, depends on **dialogue, mutual respect**, and addressing the **core issues** that sparked the war six decades ago.