

India has faced many conflicts with its neighbours since independence. India had four conflicts against Pakistan, one against the Chinese and one to liberate Goa that was under the rule of Portuguese since the 15th century. All these conflicts had a stressful effect on India's polity and economy. However, the country emerged stronger after the conflicts. As students of defence studies it is important for you to understand the perspective of all these conflicts. The conflicts that India was engaged in were:

- (i) India - Pakistan Conflict - 1947-48
- (ii) Liberation of Junagadh - October 1947
- (iii) Liberation of Hyderabad - September 1948
- (iv) Liberation of Goa, Daman and Diu- December 1961
- (v) Sino-India Conflict -1962
- (vi) Indo-Pak Conflict – 1965
- (vii) Indo-Pak Conflict – 1971
- (viii) Kargil Conflict with Pakistan - 1999

On 22nd Oct 1947 Pakistan sent raiders (mainly Afghan Tribals from the Pashtun areas astride Durand Line), supported by Pakistani army, inside Kashmir via Abbottabad and Muzaffarabad areas, initially in Poonch, Rajauri sectors of Jammu and Kashmir (J & K) and later in Northern areas through Gilgit and Hunza. Within a couple of days, the Pakistan army also launched offensive all along the Jammu and Kashmir border. The Dogra forces of Maharaja Hari Singh resisted the raiders and Pakistani regular troops gallantly, but were outnumbered and overrun.

The raiders had reached closer to Srinagar on 24th October 1947 when the Maharaja decided to seek India's help. India considered the request of Military Assistance, but turned it down as J & K was an independent state and India did not want to interfere in the affairs of J & K unless it acceded to the Union of India. Finally, J & K acceded to Indian Union (Instrument of Accession) on 27th October 1947.



India- Pakistan War 1947-48

Upon signing the Instrument of Accession, J & K became part of India and India flew its first battalion to Srinagar by Dakota aircrafts, followed by more troops by air and land, to resist the intruders. Slowly, through gallant actions, the intruders were pushed back beyond the Pir Panjal Ranges and beyond Zoji La (La means a Pass) in North Kashmir. Simultaneously, India approached the United Nations to intervene. The conflict continued through 1948 with Indian troops gaining slow but steady success in pushing back the intruders.

On 1st January 1949, a UN monitored ceasefire was declared. An agreement

was signed at Karachi and the line that demarcated the actual ground positions of both the forces was identified and declared as the Cease Fire Line (CFL). The ceasefire ended India's first conflict post independence. However, the ceasefire resulted in almost 53% of the original area of the state of J & K remaining in control of Pakistan and 47% of the area remaining under the control (and part of India).

Find out and Discuss :

What is the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)? What role does it play in Kashmir?

Liberation of Junagadh- Oct 1947

Junagadh was a princely state in Saurashtra region of present-day state of Gujarat. The state had a Muslim ruler Nawab Muhammad Mahabat Khan III with a predominant Hindu population. Its coastline hugged the Arabian Sea and on the other three sides it had newly formed Indian territory. The Nawab of Junagadh was inclined to include Junagadh in the state of Pakistan and he declared his intentions.

Troops of Junagadh indulged in violence and intrusions in the neighbouring

states of Mangrol and Babariawad. The majority Hindu population had also started showing signs of revolt against the Nawab. On receiving such reports, the Government of India quickly decided to muster up military force and invade Junagadh. An army Brigade was assembled at Rajkot, a naval amphibious task force was ordered to land at Jafrabad (Kathiawar region) and a squadron of aircraft was readied at Jamnagar for quick reaction. This was the first joint operation of the three forces in independent India.

Seeing the large force mustered against him, the Nawab of Junagadh fled to Pakistan. Indian army entered Junagadh while the air force carried out over-flights and the naval force landed at Jafrabad, in late October 1947. Later, a referendum was conducted and 91% of the population indicated their desire to merge with the Union of India.



Junagadh

Liberation of Hyderabad – Sep 1948



Hyderabad (Nizam)

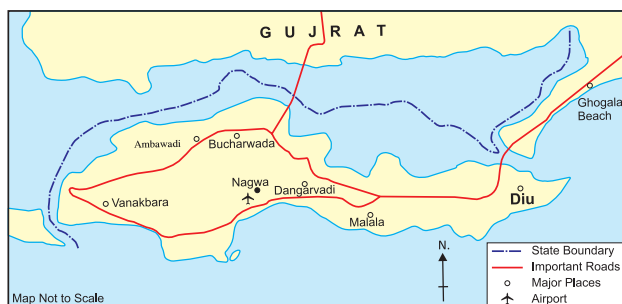
Liberation of Hyderabad -September 1948

When India became independent, the Nizam of Hyderabad opted to remain independent and not join the Indian Union. But, an independent state of Hyderabad surrounded by Indian Union could have created a geopolitical problem in future. By July 1948, border skirmishes between Indian forces and Razakars (Nizam's militia) increased. Pakistan supplied the Hyderabad forces with guns, by landing aircraft at Warangal and Bidar air bases.

The Indian military operation

codenamed 'Polo' was launched on 12 September 1948. A five-pronged attack started their thrust simultaneously. The major thrust was astride Solapur – Hyderabad axis that was the shortest route. The Air Force attacked Bidar and Warangal air bases and also provided close air support to the ground forces. The Indian forces smashed through the opposition of Razakars and regular forces of Hyderabad and closed onto Hyderabad. The Nizam surrendered on 17 September 1948. The Hyderabad liberation action is also known as a Police Action.

Liberation of Goa, Diu and Daman –Dec 1961



Diu



Daman



Goa

Goa, Daman and Diu were Portuguese territories in India. When India became independent the Portuguese continued to rule these territories. The demand for liberation of Portuguese territories was an important feature of India's anti-colonial policy.

India decided to launch a Division-sized force with some armour and artillery support and fighters and bombers, against Portuguese in Goa. The Indian Navy was asked to carry out blockade of Goa by preventing ships from entering the three Goa harbours. Two battalions for land operations, air support from Jamnagar and naval forces were to capture the

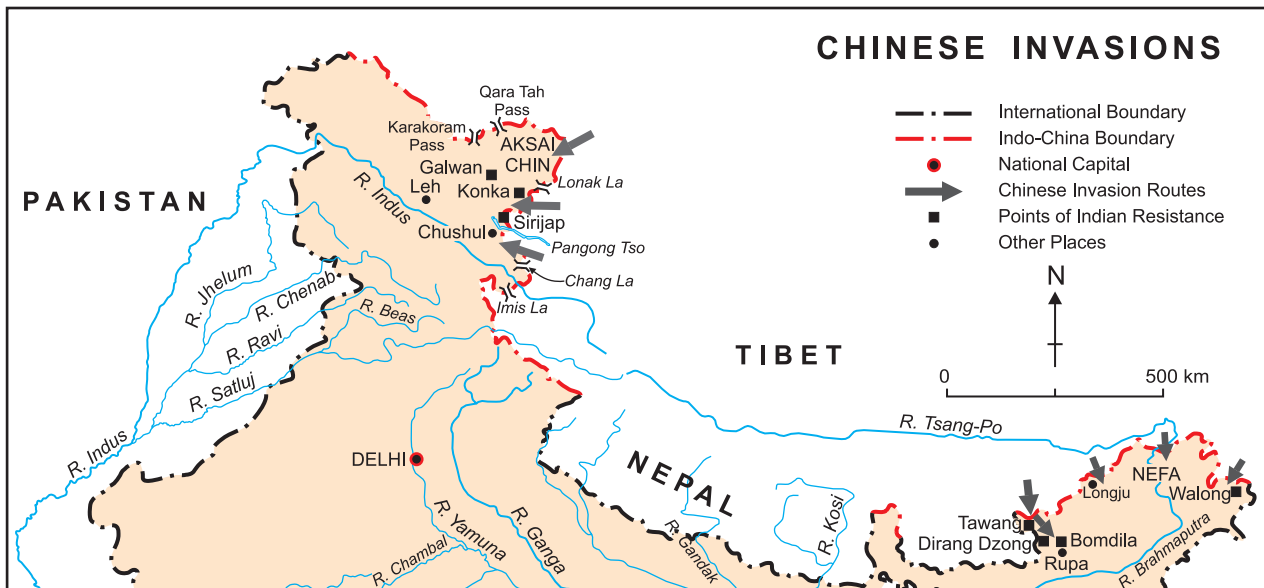
coastal fort and land forces, to capture Diu. Some air support from Bombay (Mumbai) was also given. The operation began on 18th December 1961. It was a joint operation conducted by the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

The war ended when the Portuguese surrendered, on 19th December 1961. About 3000 Portuguese soldiers were taken as prisoners.

Find out and Discuss :

Why was Goa important to the Portuguese?

India-China Conflict, 1962



Ladakh Region

India was one of the first countries to recognize the communist government of China in 1949. China was also a participant at the Bandung Conference of 1955. Despite this, the relations

between the two countries deteriorated. There were clashes in 1958 in the region of Aksai Chin and then the two countries went to war in 1962.

The main causes for the tensions

between the two countries can be identified as follows:

- The forcible annexation of Tibet in 1950, by the People's Liberation Army of China (PLA).
- China proclaimed that the entire Himalayan region was part of its sovereign territory and refused to acknowledge the sanctity of the McMahon Line separating India from China in the east in NEFA (Now known as Arunachal Pradesh). Besides this China also laid claims on large parts of Eastern Ladakh which included Aksai Chin.
- The unilateral encroachment and annexation of Aksai Chin region of Ladakh by China in 1956.
- Flight of a large number of Tibetan refugees and the 14th Dalai Lama to India in 1959. The Dalai lama was granted asylum by the Indian Government.
- China was feeling concerned about India's growing stature amongst the Afro-Asian nations through its diplomatic policies of Non-alignment.

On 20 October 1962, the People's Liberation Army of China invaded Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh (then

known as the North East Frontier Agency) in a synchronized move. The war lasted until 21 November 1962. The war ended with a defeat for India when China unilaterally withdrew only from Indian territories in Arunachal Pradesh. The Chinese forces withdrew before the snow could block safe passage to its forces. The Chinese PLA however clung on to most of its territorial gains in Ladakh.

Some of the causes of the defeat of India in the war were:

- (i) Miscalculation of China's intentions by the Indian political leadership. This was in spite of the warning given by military advisers well in advance to be prepared for war.
- (ii) China was fully prepared to wage a limited war against India. It enabled them to concentrate superior numbers and well-armed forces.
- (iii) The Indian army was inducted in the war without adequate roads, logistic support, weapons suitable for fighting in mountains and acclimatization in the high-altitude regions.
- (iv) The Indian Air Force was not used in an aggressive manner, in spite of it enjoying air superiority.



India China War, 1962

Indo-Pak Conflict 1965



Rann of Kutch



India Pakistan Border (Jammu and Kashmir)

The cause for the 1965 Indo Pak war can be attributed to Pakistan's views about the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J & K). Pakistan had not accepted the decision of the Maharaja of J & K to join the Indian Union in 1947. It had led to the first Indo-Pakistan war in 1947-48. What were the causes of the 1965 war?

Pakistan had miscalculated the

strength and morale of the Indian armed forces after their setback in the Sino-Indian war of 1962, as also the will of the people of Jammu & Kashmir. In April 1965 Pakistan launched a minor offensive in the Rann of Kutch to test the resolve and strength of the Indian forces and leadership. Though this skirmish was inconclusive, it emboldened

Pakistan to launch “Operation Gibraltar” along the pattern of the 1947 invasion of the Kingdom of J&K. On 5 August 1965 about 3000 Pakistani soldiers crossed the Line of Control dressed as Kashmiri locals and headed for various areas within Kashmir. The infiltration was revealed to the Indian Army by the civilian population of J&K. Tipped off by the local populace; these infiltrators were intercepted and defeated by the Indian Army.

On 1 September 1965 Pakistan launched a major offensive codenamed ‘Operation Grand Slam’ in the Chaamb–Jaurian sector to cut off the Jammu–Srinagar Road. The Indian Air force blunted the Pakistani offensive and the front was stabilized by the Indian Army. India now launched a counter offensive in Sialkot and Lahore sectors. Threatened by this counter offensive, Pakistan was forced to remove its armour from Chhamb sector to reinforce Sialkot and Lahore. Indian forces leaned onto Ichhogil canal, east of Lahore and fought intense battles in Sialkot.

In the meantime, between 9 and 11 September 1965 Pakistan had concentrated her Armoured Division South of Lahore and launched a counter-

offensive in Khemkaran Sector. There, with shrewd Indian tactics of water-logging the area, Pakistani tanks were bogged down and were an easy target near the small hamlet of Asal Uttar. Indian gallantry resulted in blunting the Pakistani offensive and took a heavy toll on the Pakistani Patton tanks. Thereafter, on all fronts, there were battles of attrition which were fought till the Cease- fire was declared on 23 September 1965. This was followed by a peace conference at Tashkent in 1966 where both sides agreed to withdraw from areas captured by them.

The war helped Indian forces to regain their confidence after the disastrous 1962 war. The Indian army had fought the war with vintage weapons, such as Sherman Tanks and Vampire and Hunter aircraft; compared to the modern Patton Tanks and F 86 Sabre jets and F 104 supersonic Star Fighters gifted to Pakistan by the United States. Despite this, Indian forces decimated the Pakistani Tanks and aircraft. This war resulted in speeding up the modernization of the Armed Forces, which proved in good stead for India during the 1971 war.



India Pakistan War, 1965

Indo-Pakistan Conflict – 1971



Indian Offensive in East Pakistan

General Elections took place in Pakistan in 1970 for its Parliament. Awami League from East Pakistan, under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a clear overall majority. However, Pakistan President Yahya Khan refused to invite him to form the government. This led to mass protests in East Pakistan. President Yahya Khan ordered a crackdown on East Pakistani protesters (known as Operation Searchlight). Mujibur Rahman, the leader of Awami Party, demanded independence. Pakistani forces unleashed a mass massacre and millions of refugees crossed over to India. Requests by India to the United Nations to intervene and stop the bloodshed did not meet with success. Border skirmishes between Indian troops and Pakistani

forces started to take place.

India supported the Awami League and their struggle led by the Mukti Bahini. Pakistan took the first step of attacking eight Indian Air fields in the Western Sector on 3 December 1971. The air attacks were mostly ineffective. But it led to official declaration of war by India.

The war took place on two fronts, in West and in East Pakistan. Indian forces launched multipronged and multi-directional offensive into East Pakistan, supported by Mukti Bahini. Coordination between the Indian Air Force, Navy and the Army was successfully implemented in the 1971 conflict. The Indian Navy blocked the important Pakistani ports of Chittagong, Khulna and Cox Bazar harbours. The Indian Air Force

established air superiority in the Eastern Sector. The army advanced rapidly towards Dacca (Dhaka).

On the Western front, Pakistani offensives were successfully blocked while the Indians captured territories in Shakargarh Bulge. Many Pakistani tanks were destroyed and Pakistani Air Force also suffered heavy casualties. Pakistani forces surrendered at Dhaka on 16 December 1971, thus ending the war. East Pakistan was liberated and a

new Nation called Bangladesh was born.

The Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1971 helped India during the war. On the other hand, the United States supported Pakistan by sending its aircraft carrier USS Enterprise into the Bay of Bengal to put pressure on India.

Find out and Discuss :

Role played by the Indian Navy in the context of the Karachi Harbour during the 1971 war.



16 December 1971: Pakistan's surrender at Dhaka.

Indo-Pak Conflict in Kargil, 1999



Kargil Region

The situation in Jammu and Kashmir had been relatively stable in the late 1990s. Prime Minister Vajpayee and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met at Lahore in 1998 to promote peace between the two nations. It is during this period that Pakistan took the decision to destabilize the situation in Kashmir.

Accordingly, the Pakistani Army set in motion a plan to cut the highway linking Srinagar to Leh via Zoji La Pass, Drass, Kargil and Batalik by occupying Indian posts along the Line of Control overlooking this highway. This would have threatened India's route of communication to Leh and also threaten India's defences in Siachen. The occupation of these posts was carried out in the winter, between November 1998 to April 1999. These posts were usually vacated during the winter by both the countries due to heavy snowfall and extreme winter conditions.

Pakistan employed soldiers from the Northern Light Infantry (Pakistan claimed these were Mujahideen fighters) as they were from areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, which also has similar terrain

and extreme winter weather. Having successfully occupied the vacated Indian posts in the winter, they managed to surprise Indian forces when they came to know about this intrusion in early May 1999. Tragically, the first patrol sent by Indian Army in May 1999, to check some of the posts was captured. They were tortured and killed by the Pakistani army persons already occupying these posts.

Additional forces were inducted by India, to first contain and then evict the Pakistani intruders. India generated considerable diplomatic pressure on Pakistan to vacate the occupied areas, however it was finally the valour of the Indian Army, helped by the Indian Air Force which recaptured the posts inch by inch through the relentless and accurate artillery gun fire, followed by the fearless infantry assaulting up the steep cliffs and slopes. The battle was finally won on 26 July 1999.

Find out and Discuss :

What is the geopolitical importance of the Kargil sector in the context of the Srinagar-Leh Highway?



Kargil 1999



The Kargil war Memorial : was constructed at “Ground Zero” location at Dras in year 2004 as a recognition to the supreme sacrifice made by soldiers during ‘Operation Vijay’.

For details of the various wars fought by the Indian Army look at the following website:

History - The Official Home Page of the Indian Army

<https://indianarmy.nic.in/Site/FormTemplete/frmTempSimple.aspx?MnId=+50>.

EXERCISE

Q1 (A) Choose the correct alternative and complete the following statements:

- (i) The term Razakars is associated with
 - a. Nizam of Hyderabad
 - b. Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir
 - c. Mujib ur Rahman of Bangladesh
 - d. Portuguese of Goa
- (ii) Junagadh was a princely state in the state of
 - a. Gujrat
 - b. Goa, Daman and Diu
 - c. Maharashtra
 - d. West Bengal

(B) Complete the following sentence by using an appropriate reason:

- (i) India sent troops in the Kargil region because...

(C) State the appropriate concept for the given statement:

- (i) The agreement by which Jammu and Kashmir became part of India is called:

(D) Find the odd word from the given set:

- (i) Chhamb, Shakargarh, Akhnur, Anjadiv

Q.2. State whether the following statements are true or false with reasons:

- (i) United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan was created after the 1947-49 India Pakistan war.

Q.3. Express your opinion on the following:

- (i) What can India do to ensure that a Kargil like situation does not arise again?

Q.4. Answer the following:

- (i) Explain how India took over Goa in 1961?

Activity

Study the map of East Pakistan. Read how the Indian army conducted the 1971 India Pakistan war in East Pakistan. Discuss it in the classroom.

