



NATIONAL SEMINAR
THE KASHMIR DISPUTE
From Genesis to Resolution
Thursday, 5th February 2026



INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Conversations



@Foothills



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Disclaimer: The discussion and report have followed Chatham House rule. The statements, facts and opinions by speakers do not constitute the official policy of ISSRA/NDU.

NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY



CONCEPT NOTE

Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) remains one of the longest-standing unresolved disputes on the United Nations agenda, anchored in UN Security Council Resolution 47 (1948) and subsequent resolutions affirming the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination. India's continued occupation, in defiance of these resolutions, has made IIOJK a central source of instability in South Asia. The occupation is accompanied by sustained militarization and serious violations of international law and human rights, as documented by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018, 2019).

India has sought to divert global attention from these abuses by emphasizing border tensions with Pakistan, obscuring the humanitarian and political crisis confronting Kashmiris. Following the May 2025 India–Pakistan escalation and proactive diplomacy have enhanced its international credibility. This evolving context presents a strategic opportunity to reassert the Kashmir dispute within its lawful UN framework and galvanize international action toward a just settlement and full implementation of UN resolutions.

In this context, the seminar “The Kashmir Dispute: From Genesis to Resolution” aims to foreground Kashmiri testimonies alongside verified international reports, fostering a rights-based dialogue, to reinforce international attention on the dispute and promote policies aligned with UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Key Takeaways

- The Kashmir dispute is fundamentally about the denial of the inalienable right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. This right is enshrined in the UN Charter and affirmed through multiple UN Security Council resolutions.
- Pakistan's position is morally strong, grounded in international law and UN resolutions, supported by deep historical, cultural and religious affinities with the Kashmiri people.
- The Kashmiri freedom movement is indigenous and self-sustaining. It is not a proxy war. Kashmiris have sacrificed and will continue to sacrifice for their rights regardless of external support.
- Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) serves as the base camp of the Kashmir cause with its own representative assembly, executive, and supreme court. In sharp contrast, Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) faces heavy militarisation, excessive use of force, pellet guns, collective punishment and demographic engineering.
- Maintaining AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) in constitutional limbo for decades is indefensible legally, morally and politically. This uncertainty fuels local grievances and weakens Pakistan's overall position on the dispute.
- Post-May 2025 developments, along with the renewed global focus on occupation and self-determination after Gaza, have improved Pakistan's diplomatic standing and brought the Kashmir issue back into international focus.
- Pakistan must develop a clear strategy with defined end-states and red lines while exploring flexible diplomatic options, including mediation and third-party involvement, without diluting the principled stance on self-determination.
- GB should be granted provisional province status with parliamentary representation to resolve constitutional ambiguity, improve governance and strengthen Pakistan's legal position.
- A comprehensive educational campaign is needed to equip Pakistani youth with the detailed history, so they can effectively articulate and propagate the cause.
- The human rights crisis in IIOJK should be internationalised through UN forums. Strong advocacy is required for the release of Kashmiri political prisoners, including Yasin Malik, to preserve the space for peaceful resistance.
- While new mediation forums offer opportunities, they must be approached with caution. Bypassing established UN frameworks risks destabilising the international legal order.
- Pakistan must maintain military preparedness to address defensive and offensive contingencies and safeguard national security.

Summary Of Proceedings

- Kashmir dispute remains one of the oldest unresolved agenda items of the United Nations Security Council, fundamentally concerning the denial of self-determination rather than territorial rivalry.
- Just like Palestine, the overwhelming power and favourable international environments cannot extinguish an indigenous people's inalienable right to self-determination.
- The Kashmir dispute can be better understood through a trilateral analytical framework: conceptual (grounded in international law), moral (supported by historical and cultural affinities), and physical (shaped by power equations and diplomatic effort).
- The history of the state of Jammu and Kashmir goes back to the Treaty of Amritsar (1846). In 1947, sovereignty legally reverted to the people of Kashmir. The Instrument of Accession by Maharaja Hari Singh remains contested as significant territories (GB and AJK) revolted and declared independence.
- UNSC resolutions affirming the right to self-determination remain legally valid. The core value of UN resolutions and UN Charter Article 103 is that bilateral engagement cannot override the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination, and sovereignty has not passed to India or Pakistan.
- Pakistan's position on the Kashmir dispute is grounded in international law, yet sustained intellectual, diplomatic, and narrative efforts are required to shape a favourable international environment for resolution.
- Exclusive reliance on plebiscite is strategically difficult without complementary diplomatic engagement, structural dialogue, and flexible options aligned with evolving ground realities.
- The Kashmiri struggle is ideological and indigenous, rooted in Islamic fundamentals and solidarity with the global Ummah, rather than driven by economic deprivation.
- Educated Kashmiri youth, including professionals, scholars, and doctors, are at the forefront of the freedom struggle, challenging narratives that attribute resistance to unemployment.
- Human rights violations documented in IIOJK include sexual violence, media suppression, enforced disappearances, and the use of sedition laws to silence dissent. Specific restrictions include the lockdown of Jamia Masjid and amendments to the Waqf Board allowing non-Muslim interference in Muslim religious lands.
- India's development and investment narrative has not resolved deeper political grievances in IIOJK. Its development initiatives are often perceived as countering pro-Pakistan aspirations rather than addressing core demands for self-determination.

- Leaders such as Yasin Malik, Asiya Andrabi, and Qasim Faktoo remain imprisoned, demonstrating the lack of impartial legal frameworks in IIOJK. Repression has amplified, rather than diminished, the demand for self-determination.
- The psychological trauma faced by families of political prisoners ("Half Widows") and the precarious health of incarcerated leaders underscore the profound human cost of the unresolved dispute.
- The peaceful resistance of Kashmiris currently prevents wider regional war, but the execution of political leadership or continued human rights violations risk triggering armed escalation. In a nutshell, Kashmir remains the world's most dangerous nuclear flashpoint.
- On the other hand, AJK functions as the political "base camp" of the Kashmir cause, with its own institutions, while sharing defence and foreign affairs with Pakistan under the Karachi Agreement.
- AJK's Legislative Assembly includes 12 seats representing refugees from IIOJK (6 for the Valley, 6 for Jammu), ensuring political representation for the entire erstwhile state despite the geographical divide. Governance in AJK serves as a bridge to self-determination, not a substitute.
- GB, though historically distinct, is also part of the disputed territory per UN resolutions. India considers GB disputed to block international investment, reinforcing its inclusion in the plebiscite framework.
- GB requires a constitutional amendment for parliamentary representation to resolve administrative grievances through improved governance without conflating them with the core international dispute.
- The administrative and developmental issues in AJK and GB should not be conflated with the international conflict. Resolving local grievances strengthens Pakistan's moral and legal position without prejudicing the final settlement.
- Pakistan's traditional narrative on Kashmir faces fatigue globally and domestically. There is a need for a deeper public understanding of legal concepts such as "occupation", "self-determination", and the law of armed resistance.
- India has strategically shifted its position from seeking international intervention in 1948, to framing the issue as bilateral under Simla, to now claiming it as an internal matter, and recently asserting that only AJK is disputed.

- Post-May 2025 developments have improved Pakistan's diplomatic and strategic standing. The rights to self-determination and to resistance are back in global focus. It is time to replace the terrorism narrative with a rights-based framework centred on self-determination and recognition of legitimate resistance.
- China is also a party to the dispute, especially post-2019. The 1963 Border Agreement stipulates that China will renegotiate the boundary if Kashmir is settled, reinforcing its stake in the final resolution.
- Water security issues, particularly India's actions regarding IWT have also trilateralised the dispute by bringing China more directly into the equation due to border tensions in Ladakh and Aksai Chin.
- The Line of Control (LoC) is not an international border. It is a de facto boundary, not a de jure border.
- In this fragmented global order, which is being constantly undermined by major powers and their designated security providers (like India), Pakistan also must prepare militarily, including all kinds of defensive or offensive possibilities, to safeguard its national security interests.
- Pakistan's diplomatic engagement must adapt to global shifts while preserving core principles of international law. While new mediation forums offer opportunities, parallel mechanisms must be approached with caution to avoid undermining established UN and Bretton Woods frameworks that underpin the international legal order.

Conclusion

The Kashmir dispute is a fundamental manifestation of the struggle for the right to self-determination, not merely a territorial rivalry. Overall, the seminar highlighted that India's attempts to downplay the issue have backfired. Sustained youth engagement, rights-based narratives, and adherence to international legal frameworks remain critical. Kashmir remains a nuclear flashpoint, where peaceful resistance mitigates escalation and a meaningful resolution requires reshaping the political environment while upholding legal and moral principles.

Programme

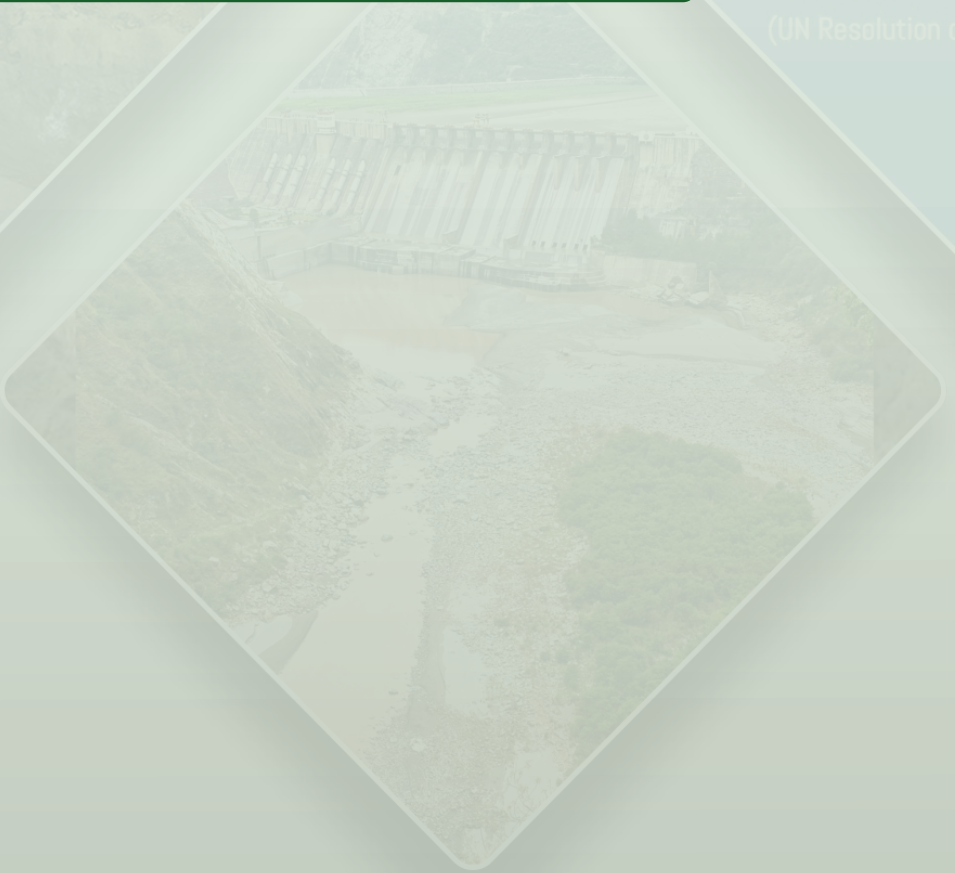
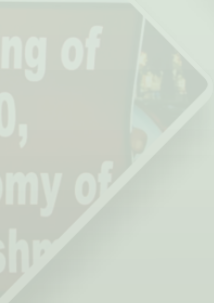
Time	Event	Speaker / RV
1030 - 1100	Arrival of Guests/ Registration	ISSRA Hall
1100 -1105	Group Photograph	Collaboration Wall ISSRA
1105 -1110	Tilawat & National Anthem	-
1110 - 1120	Welcome Note	President NDU / DG ISSRA
Academic Session		
1120 - 1125	Introduction by Moderator	Ms Faeza Dawood
1125 - 1135	Genesis of Dispute	Justice Syed Manzoor Hussain Gillani (Retd)
1135 - 1145	IIOJK Perspective	Dr Mujahid Gillani
1145 - 1155	AJK Perspective	Ms Farzana Yaqoob Khan
1155 - 1205	Legal and Future Resolution	Mr Jamal Aziz
1205 - 1305	Interactive Session	-
1305 - 1310	Wrap up by the Moderator	Ms Faeza Dawood
1310-1320	Remarks by Special Guest	Ms Mushaal Hussein Mullick
1320 - 1330	Chief Guest Remarks	Amb Sardar Masood Khan
1330 - 1335	Souvenir Distribution	-
1335 Onwards	Lunch & Dispersal	Banquet Hall /Informal Dining Hall



The final disposition of the State of
be made in accordance with the will
through the democratic method
plebiscite conducted under the
United Nations

(UN Resolution on Kashmir J

Picture Gallery











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