

government resorted to a blockade of his territory, forcing the ruler to flee to Pakistan. Hereafter, the Indian armed forces took control of the state, and held a referendum in February 1948, in which the people of Junagadh almost unanimously opted for union with India. A year later, Junagadh was merged with the province of Saurashtra and allotted seven members in the Saurashtra legislative assembly. This rounded off the process of its integration into the India Union, which Pakistan continued to contest.<sup>41</sup>

((The Kashmir situation on the other hand was more complex and directly related to the history of Partition. As Sumit Ganguly has argued, the crux of the problem lay in the "competing visions of state construction in South Asia".<sup>42</sup> In 1947, the Muslim-majority princely state of Kashmir remained geographically contiguous with Pakistan with strong trade links with her. So Pakistan legitimately believed that it had a natural claim on the state. For Jinnah and the Muslim League, Pakistan without Kashmir would be "incomplete", while for Nehru and the Congress, integration of Kashmir would buttress India's secular credentials.<sup>43</sup> Since 1846, Kashmir had been ruled by a Hindu Dogra chief, Maharaja Gulab Singh, as a "Hindu state", to the total exclusion of the Muslim majority from any share of political power. His descendent Maharaja Hari Singh also ruled Kashmir with the help of a small Brahman-Dogra elite, who controlled political power as well as most of the fertile agricultural land. But he faced a democratic political agitation launched by the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference under the leadership of Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, demanding rights for the Muslims and asserting a Kashmiri regional nationalism or *Kashmiriyat*.<sup>44</sup>

At the time of transfer of power, while Pakistan's claim to Kashmir was supported by the Muslim Conference—a breakaway group of the National Conference—the National Conference itself, enjoying the support of 75 per cent of the local Muslims, took a different course of action. In May 1946, fearing the prospect of an independent Dogra autocratic rule, it launched a "Quit Kashmir" movement based on a broad communal coalition with the local Hindu Pandits, and got closer to the Indian National Congress. Abdullah, who had developed a personal friendship with Nehru since 1938,<sup>45</sup> was put in jail for his opposition to Dogra rule, while the maharaja, faced with such challenges, refused to sign any IoA. Meanwhile, communal trouble from Punjab spread to Kashmir and the existing feeble administration failed to control it. So allegedly to avenge the atrocities on their co-religionists, the Pathan tribesmen from the North-West Frontier Province, with covert assistance from the Pakistani administration,

entered western Kashmir in October 1947. The maharaja's tiny army and civil administration collapsed after a brief resistance, and he appealed to the Indian government for help. The latter agreed to help only if the maharaja signed an IoA to join India, which he did. And immediately after this the Indian army landed at Srinagar airport and brought the situation under control. But this also ushered in a protracted conflict with Pakistan, which saw Kashmir as its legitimate part and intervened militarily. Full-scale war between the Indian and Pakistani armies started from November 1947. While the Indian army established control over much of the Kashmir Valley, Ladakh and Jammu, the Pakistani army occupied about one-third of the territory of the state, which it called "Azad Kashmir". Thus by December 1947 Kashmir was virtually bifurcated, and India decided, on the advice of Lord Mountbatten, to take the case to the United Nations (UN) for a multilateral solution.<sup>46</sup>

When Prime Minister Nehru decided to take the Kashmir issue to the UN, he believed that India had a strong legal case based on Kashmir's accession to India being signed by the maharaja, and supported by the National Conference, representing the majority of the Muslim population in the valley. He complained of an illegal Pakistani aggression, first indirect and then direct. Pakistan on the other hand contested the legality of the accession, which it believed was extracted through pressure.<sup>47</sup> But more importantly, at this global forum the issue was caught in Cold War politics and became subservient to Britain's strategic interests in the region.<sup>48</sup> As a result, the UN failed to take a firm decision or deliver any tangible solution that would be acceptable to both the parties. In April 1948, it set up a five-nation commission to find a solution to the Kashmir issue. By 1949, it came to a patchy agreement by which both India and Pakistan agreed to a ceasefire. The resolution asked Pakistan to "vacate its aggression" and India to reduce its troops to a level sufficient only for maintaining law and order; and after that a plebiscite was to take place to decide the fate of Kashmir. But that plebiscite never took place as India demanded that all the tribesmen and Pakistani troops withdraw first before such a plebiscite could take place, while Pakistan agreed to withdraw its troops only after the plebiscite had taken place and conditional on its outcome. By the 1960s, as Ganguly argues, the UN and the world lost interest in the Kashmir issue,<sup>49</sup> which remained as a festering wound in the India-Pakistan relations causing two subsequent wars—the Indo-Pak War of 1965 and the Kargil War of 1999. ))

The situation in Hyderabad was just the reverse, as it was a Hindu-majority state under a Muslim ruler—the nizam—supported