

# How a G20 meeting reignited territorial tensions | Aggies GO

Jonah Carlson

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A picture of the Pahalgam Valley in Kashmir, which is simultaneously popular with tourists and a contested territory of India and Pakistan.

Jonah Carlson - Earlier this month, delegates of the Group of 20 met in Kashmir to discuss the economics of tourism. The decision to hold the meeting in Kashmir, which was shunned by China and Pakistan, returns to the forefront serious questions about territory and boundaries. [Aijaz Hussain analyzes the geopolitics of the region](#) and provides insight on why the meeting is considered controversial by some parties.

One cannot discuss Kashmir without discussing [territory](#) and [boundaries](#). Territory includes all the space that is claimed by a sovereign power, such as a state. To indicate who claims what territory, boundaries are put in place to demarcate control, such as a border checkpoint. The conversation regarding territory and boundaries in the Kashmir region of Asia is one of the most complicated in the world. Three rivaling powers – China, India, and Pakistan – each contest for territory and more-favorable boundaries in the region. While the G20 meetings in Kashmir were largely economic in focus, with Hussain noting that the largest topics were directly related to tourism, its location has been perceived by both Pakistan and China as an affront to their territorial claims and an unwanted affirmation of Indian control. Hussain writes that both China and Pakistan “have argued that such meetings can’t be held in disputed territories,” noting soon after that such criticisms have been mostly dismissed by the government in New Delhi.

In addition to boundary disputes, the territorial debate in Kashmir demands international attention due to the

region’s [material power](#). The debate stretches back through much of the last century, including an insurgency in 1989 that significantly raised tensions. Today, each of the states contesting the region are nuclear-armed powers. While the region is unlikely to burst into high-intensity conflict in the immediate future, the risk of a major armed conflict between three of the world’s most populated, and nuclear, states is an unignorable security discussion.

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