

Panel 21

The Prospects for Normalization in Kashmir

The dispute over Kashmir continues to prevent Pakistan and India from realizing the true benefits of integration between geographically contiguous states. The commendable move from Pakistani and Indian leaders to pursue a normalization course on Kashmir has undermined vested interests to some extent and has already provided a real opening for peace in Jammu and Kashmir. However, the initial momentum is subsiding as residents on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) have not experienced the kind of beneficial interaction they had initially expected. Economic and human interaction across the LoC remains minimal. Moreover, renewed tensions between Pakistan and India, political troubles in Indian Kashmir, and a change in government in Pakistan in the past two years have further eroded expectations.

It is widely accepted that allowing the attention on Kashmir to waver would be suicidal for India-Pakistan relations. Yet, this remains entirely possible if the current mood prevails. This future oriented panel seeks to bring together key policy influencers and academics from both sides of Kashmir to discuss the likely future of inter-Kashmir relations across the LoC, the potential opportunities that present the most hope, the major stumbling blocks, and the probability of the move towards normalization of the state and the lives of its citizens.

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