



# **International Boundary Study**

**No. 86 – December 2, 1968**

## **India – Pakistan Boundary**

**(Country Codes: IN-PK)**

**The Geographer  
Office of the Geographer  
Bureau of Intelligence and Research**

# INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY

No. 86 - December 2, 1998

## INDIA – PAKISTAN BOUNDARY (The Rann of Kutch Sector)

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Background.....	2
II. Boundary Alignment.....	2
III. Acts of Delimitation.....	5
A. The Indo–Pakistan Western Boundary Cast Tribunal Award, 19 February 1968 .....	5
IV. Summary .....	8

# **INDIA – PAKISTAN BOUNDARY (The Rann of Kutch Sector)**

## **I. BACKGROUND**

Prior to the independence of India and Pakistan the land areas of the British Indian Province of Sind, and of the UK suzerainties of Kutch, Santalpur, Tharad, Suigam, Wav, and Judphur, abutted upon the Rann of Kutch. The Indian Independence Act of July 18, 1947, allotted Sind to Pakistan, and when the suzerainties over the other abutting states expired, they acceded to and merged with India. A partial demarcation of the boundary in the Rann of Kutch occurred in 1923–24, growing out of a dispute over the southern limits of Sind in 1913 that was resolved in 1914. After independence, Pakistan, in July 1948, raised the issue of the Sind–Kutch frontier delimitation east of the demarcated boundary. The problem arose periodically thereafter but the dispute usually remained at a rather low key. However, local hostilities occurred along the frontier in 1965. Through the good offices of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, military actions were terminated and the two states agreed to submit the boundary dispute to the Indo–Pakistan Western Boundary Case Tribunal. This Tribunal presented its Award determining the boundary in February 1968.

The Rann of Kutch is a desolate area encompassing approximately 8,000 square miles of salt wastes, brakish ponds, marsh and isolated, rocky, elevated bets. From approximately June to November, the Rann is a shallow body of water with a maximum depth varying between 2 and 5 feet; the bets, at this time, are islands. As the wet monsoon season ends, the water level drops rapidly and the swamp and salt flat conditions again prevail.

In early historic times, the Rann was a permanent embayment of the sea and the site of the mouth of part of the Indus system. However, continued deposition of material in the delta combined with an earthquake, which uplifted the territory to the north of the Rann, led to the diversion of the Indus westward and the abandonment of the Kutch distributaries. As a result, the Rann, over the centuries, has assumed its present condition.

## **II. Boundary Alignment**

According to the award of the Indo–Pakistan Western Boundary Case Tribunal, the 252-mile long Rann of Kutch boundary has been delimited as follows:

"...Reference is made here to the Award Map (Map C). Because of the imprecise topographical features in the region and the impossibility of exactly delimiting many acts of State authority, the boundary must sometimes be represented by approximate straight lines.

"The portion of the boundary between the Western Terminus (marked as "WT") and the Western Trijunction (marked as Point "A") shall lie along the vertical line as

demarcated on the ground.<sup>1</sup> In the sector between the Western Trijunction and Point "B" on Map C, the boundary will be that which was laid down in the most recent survey of that region, being Erskine's Survey; in that sector the maps of Erskine form part of the composite Map C.

From Point "B", which is the easternmost point of the eastern loop as appearing on Indian Map B-11, the boundary shall go in a straight line to Point "C", which is indicated as "Sadariaja Got" on Map C, and from there straight east–northeast until at Point "D", in the vicinity of the reported Karali outpost, it shall reach the boundary symbols appearing on a recent map of that sector, Indian Map B-26, which also forms part of Map C. From Point "D" it shall follow the boundary symbols until Point "E", which is defined in the next paragraph.

"The boundary around Dhara Banni and Chhad Bet will be straight lines drawn from or through certain basic points. These shall be the southernmost (G) and easternmost (H) points of Chhad Bet, as appearing on Indian Map B-33, and two traverse stations marked on Indian Map B-48 as small circles, one lying at a distance of approximately 5.8 miles south of Baliari next to the mark "5 r", and the other lying at a distance of approximately 1.7 miles south of the letters "D" and "H" in "Dhara Bani". The boundary shall go in a straight line through the middle of the first-mentioned circle and touch the second circle as depicted on Map C. Point "E" lies where that line reaches the boundary symbols on the northern edge of the Rann. From Point "G", the boundary shall go straight west until at Point "F" it reaches the straight line originating at Point "E". From Point "G" it shall proceed to Point "H", touching the outer points of the two tongues of land as depicted on Map C. From Point "H", the boundary shall go in a straight line north–northeast until it reaches the boundary symbols appearing on the most recent survey map of that sector, Indian Map B-33. That point is called Point "K".

"As from Point "K", and until the Eastern Terminus, the boundary shall follow the boundary symbols appearing on the other maps and the plane-table section which form part of Map C, being Indian Maps B-33, B-34, B-35, Pakistan Map 103 and Indian Map TB-28, with the following deviations (Indian Map TB-28 of 1938 being chosen in preference to Pakistan Map 137 of 1881, which choice in my opinion finds support in the "Minutes of the Meeting held at Lahore and Amritsar from 25th to 28th March 1959, in connection with the Demarcation of Rajasthan (India)—West Pakistan Boundary"):

(a) The two deep inlets on either side of Nagar Parkar will constitute the territory of Pakistan. Already in 1885, the Deputy Commissioner of Thar Parker pointed out that if these inlets were to be considered Kutch territory,

"A glance at the map will show that Parkar would be a peninsula almost entirely surrounded by Kutch territory. The Kutch State could erect fortifications and establish

---

<sup>1</sup> Work completed in 1923–4. See below. The Western terminus is the intersection of the due east line, delimited in 1913, and the "vertical" line demarcated in 1923–4. See map for other points.

Custom houses at places situated many miles within the district for instance close to Veerawah, or on some of the roads which, crossing inlets of the Rann, lead from one part of this district to another."

(Pak. Doc. B. 9).

"In my opinion it would be inequitable to recognise these inlets as foreign territory. It would be conducive to friction and conflict. The paramount consideration of promoting peace and stability in this region compels the recognition and confirmation that this territory, which is wholly surrounded by Pakistan territory, also be regarded as such. The points where the boundary will thus cut off the two inlets are these:

"At the western inlet, the boundary will leave the boundary symbols indicated on Indian Map B-34 at the point marked thereon as "26", more precisely where the cart track is indicated as departing from the edge of the Rann in a southeasterly direction. This point is indicated as Point "L" on Map C. On the other side of the inlet, the point will be that where the camel track is indicated on Indian Map-34 to reach the edge of the Rann; that point is indicated as Point "M" on Map C. Between Points "L" and "M", the boundary shall be a straight line.

"The boundary will cross the eastern inlet at its narrowest point in a straight line between Points "N" and "O" marked on Map C.

(b) The boundary marked by symbols along the outer edges of the peninsula of Nagar Parkar and up to the Eastern Terminus is a jagged one. As such it is unsuitable and impracticable as an international boundary. The boundary shall accordingly lie in conformity with the depiction on Map C between the outer points on jutting-out tongues of land from Point "M" and until the Eastern Terminus, marked as "ET" on Map C.<sup>2</sup>

"At no point between the two Termini shall the alignment of the boundary as above described be such as to include in India territory not claimed by India, as defined by the depiction of India's claim line on Map A."

The points mentioned in the treaty delimitation have been located as precisely as possible on the summary map attached to this study. Scale, however, of the original Map C is approximately 1:253,440.

### **III. Acts Of Delimitation**

The formal bases for the delimitation of the Kutch-Sind boundary are few in number. On November 11, 1913, the Foreign Department of the Government of India informed the Government of Bombay that "The Government of India observe with satisfaction that the dispute between the Sind authorities and the Cutch (sic) Dabar has been settled by a

---

<sup>2</sup> Point ET is situated 825.8 meters below pillar 920 on the Jodphur boundary.

compromise agreeable to both parties, and are pleased to accord their sanction to rectification of the boundary line proposed in paragraphs 9 and 10 of your letter."

The cited paragraph stated:

"9: On a full review of the evidence, therefore, the Government arrived at the conclusion that the boundary between Cutch and Sind should be the green line in the accompanying map from the mouth of Sir creek to the accompanying map from the mouth of Sir creek to the top of Sir creek at a point where it joins the blue dotted line;<sup>3</sup> from there it should follow the blue dotted line due east until it joins the Sind boundary as marked in purple on the map, and His Highness Rao has now expressed his willingness to agree to this compromise.

"10: On this proposed settlement being referred to the Commissioner in Sind that officer agreed to the adoption as the frontier line of the blue dotted line running due east from [the] Sir creek. He observed, however, that the Sir creek changes its course from time to time, and the western boundary of the area which it proposes to surrender to Rao should, therefore, be described as the 'centre of the navigable channel of Sir creek.'...

"I am to explain that the term 'navigable' is really inappropriate in a larger sense. The creek, of course, is tidal and it is only at certain conditions of the tide that the channel is navigable, and then only to country craft as far as the point from which the proposed boundary turns due east from the creek."

With the continuation of the boundary eastward, India and Pakistan agreed to the creation of a Tribunal composed of Ales Bebler, Judge of the Constitutional Court of Yugoslavia; Nasrollah Entezam, Ambassador of Iran and former President of the UN General Assembly; and Gunnar Lagergren, President of the Court of Appeals of Western Sweden as Chairman. The Indo–Pakistan Western Boundary Case Tribunal met in Geneva (Switzerland) beginning on February 15, 1966. Oral hearings started on September 15th and they continued until July 14, 1967. The Award of the Tribunal is dated February 19, 1968.

- A. The Indo–Pakistan Western Boundary Case Tribunal Award, 19 February 1968, published 1968 in New Delhi by the Manager of Publications (of the Government of India), with three maps.

The Award contains the bases for the claims of both states but not the great bulk of the evidence which covered 10,000 pages and included about 350 maps. In summary, the uninhabited, disputed territory involved approximately 3,500 square miles in the Rann of Kutch. Both states agreed that Sind and Kutch (and the other Indian states) were conterminous and that the boundary between them was traditional, well-established, and well-recognized.

---

<sup>3</sup> Both lines are shown on Map "A" published with the Award.

Pakistan submitted evidence to establish:

- a) Sind extended south of the Rann both before and during the British period of Indian administration and at all relevant times Sind exercised effective and exclusive control over the northern half of the Great Rann;
- b) The Rann of Kutch is a marine feature and a separate entity lying between the Indian and Pakistani states. As such, a boundary would be governed by the principles of the "median line" and equitable distribution. Note: The line is actually a lateral line. The bets in the Rann would be allocated on the basis of contiguity or "nearness to the shore."
- c) The Rann was actually a boundary "with width", without being a condominium, and this "width" needed to be reduced to a "widthless" line.

As a result, Pakistan claimed an equidistant, lateral line roughly equal to the latitude of 24° north.

India, on the other hand, contended that the boundary ran generally along the north shore. According to India, the 1923–4 demarcation placed 134 demarcation pillars on the ground including not only the "vertical" line north of the WT point but also eastward along the two loops of the taluka of Badin.

Both states furnished documentation of occupation and administration of certain territories and maps confirming their claims.

The court, in a majority, but not unanimous, opinion established a compromise line close to the north shore of the Rann. The delimitation has been quoted in full in the description above. A map (1" equals 4 miles) was also appended to the award. To implement the Award of the Tribunal, the two states negotiated an "Agreement on the rule of procedure for the demarcation of the boundary to be determined by the Tribunal":

The Agent of India and the Agent of Pakistan have agreed to the following procedure for demarcation of the boundary between India and Pakistan in the Gujarat–West Pakistan sector in accordance with the Award of the Indo–Pakistan Western Boundary Case Tribunal (Constituted Pursuant to the Agreement of 30 June 1965).

1. The basis of demarcation shall be the alignment of the boundary as delineated by the Tribunal on maps to be annexed to the Award. Each Government should be supplied with two sets of these maps duly authenticated by the Tribunal.

2. Each Government shall nominate its Representative to be in overall charge of the demarcation work and intimate to the other Government and the Tribunal the name and address of such Representative
3. The demarcation will be done jointly by a composite team consisting of an Officer-in-Charge, nominated by each Government, and other equal number of Indian and Pakistani personnel.
4. The Representatives of the two Governments shall meet at Delhi not later than two weeks after the Award is rendered to discuss and decide upon the following matters:
  - (i) The strength of the team.  
(It is not possible to give the exact number of personnel composing the team at this stage as the strength of the team will depend upon the alignment of the boundary and the quantum of work involved which can be ascertained only after the Award is rendered).
  - (ii) The design and specifications of the boundary pillars and traverse pillars, the number and spacing of pillars.  
(The design and specifications of the boundary pillars will depend upon the alignment of the boundary and the nature of the terrain. The pillars may be of cement concrete, stone or masonry according to the requirements of the terrain).
  - (iii) Detailed operational instructions for the guidance of the field staff. (Such operational instructions have to be necessarily finalised only after the nature of the alignment is known).
  - (iv) Any other matters which require consideration for effective demarcation work.

If the Representatives of the two Governments do not agree upon any of the above matters, either Government shall immediately report to the Tribunal the matters in difference for the decision of the Tribunal.

5. The personnel of the demarcation team shall be made available for demarcation work by each Government not later than one week of the decision regarding its strength.
6. The first task of the demarcation team shall be to ascertain if any control points exist and are available. These control points should be supplemented, wherever necessary, in order to determine the pillar positions on the ground in accordance with the alignment of the boundary. If control points do not exist or are not available, a fresh series of triangulation or traverse will be carried out



and control points determined and the pillar positions located with the help of these points.

7. Simultaneously with the location of the pillar positions, pillars shall be emplaced at each position. (It shall not be necessary to emplace pillars in any portion of alignment if boundary pillars already exist therein). Each Government shall supply equal number of pillars according to designs and specifications as determined and members of the team representing each Government (hereinafter referred to as 'party') shall place equal number of pillars.
8. After the boundary pillars are emplaced in proper positions, final Theodolite Traverse of secondary accuracy shall be run to provide coordinates of all the boundary pillars. With the help of these coordinates, a plane-table survey shall be carried out quarter mile astride the boundary alignment on 4" = 1 mile scale. The plane-table shall contain particulars similar to those appearing in the plane-tables of the Sind–Rajasthan Boundary Survey.
9. (a) With the help of the plane-table sections, fair-drawn originals shall be prepared, the work being shared by the two Parties equally. The fair drawn originals prepared by a Party shall be retained by it.  
  
(b) Duplicates shall be prepared of the plane-table sections. Each Party shall be given half of the originals of the plane-table sections and the duplicates of the remaining half of the plane-table sections.  
  
(c) Each Party shall print the fair drawn originals retained by it and on the reverse of each printed copy shall be entered in print all details pertaining to the boundary pillars, their numbers, coordinates, mutual bearings, and distance. The final printing shall be undertaken after exchanging proof corrections. Each Party shall supply to the other Party one hundred printed copies of each of these strip maps.
10. Every field record shall be authenticated by both the Officers-in-Charge and other officers of each Party responsible for the record.
11. Fifteen copies of the strip maps shall be authenticated by the Plenipotentiaries of both the Governments, five of them being retained by each Government and the remaining five submitted to the Tribunal for record.
12. The two Officers-in-Charge shall jointly prepare a report of the progress of demarcation every month in quadruplicate and forward two copies to each of the Representatives of India and Pakistan, who shall retain one copy each and submit the other copy to their respective Governments for transmission to the Tribunal with their remarks, if any, for the Tribunal's information. If, in the

course of the demarcation work, any difficulty arises, the same shall be referred by either Government to the Tribunal who shall give such directions as they deem fit, if necessary after hearing both the Governments.

13. Joint calibration of tapes and Hunter Short Bases shall be carried out at the Geodetic and Research Branch, Dehra Dun (India). Two officers of Pakistan designated by the Government of Pakistan shall be allowed by the Government of India to visit Dehra Dun for about a week to carry out such joint calibration.
14. Each Government shall grant visas to the Representative and the members of the demarcation team belonging to the other Government for entry into its territory for the entire period of field operations or for the entire period of demarcation work, as required, and shall also allow transport used by them to enter into and depart from its territory without any restrictions.
15. Wireless communications between the two Officers-in-Charge and other members of the demarcation team employed in field jobs shall be provided by their respective Governments to facilitate communications inter se.
16. Each Government shall provide suitable escorts to members of the Party of the other Government for safety and security arrangements on its territory.
17. On the assumption that the Award will be rendered on 1 November 1967, the two Governments shall endeavor to have the field work completed by 31 March 1968 and to have the strip maps submitted for authentication by the Plenipotentiaries of the two Governments by 31 May 1968.

The two governments have established mixed demarcations teams to survey and to demarcate the boundary and in subsequent meetings have agreed to erect reinforced concrete pillars which will be intervisible. A pillar will be situated at every change in direction of the boundary and there will be not less than three pillars every mile of boundary. By May 31, 1969, strip maps will be prepared and authenticated to serve as part of the demarcation document. This action presumably will complete the process of boundary settlement.

#### **IV. SUMMARY**

Maps published by U.S. Government agencies should show the new Rann of Kutch boundary as an established international boundary. The Award map should be used as the basic compilation document for medium-scale maps or charts while the attached map may serve for small scale productions. In all probability minor changes in the alignment will occur with demarcation as they normally do. However, it is doubted if more than a few square miles would "change hands" as the surveyors attempt to transfer the line from the

old, medium-scale maps to the ground. Should the boundary line change appreciably, this study will be revised as soon as the proper data are available.

This International Boundary Study is one of a series of specific boundary papers prepared by the Geographer, Office of Strategic and Functional Research, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, in accordance with provisions of Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-16.

Government agencies may obtain additional information and copies of the study by calling the Geographer, Room 8744, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520 (Telephone: Code 182, Extension 4508).