

## Kashmir, empty tranquility



**CHRISTIAN MCPHATE**  
Op-Ed Editor

Why is it that the governments of the world never seem to get anything done?

On July 27, 2007, the two-day International Kashmir Peace Conference concluded in Washington D.C. with little accomplishment, but a list of promises that will soon be broken.

It was the seventh conference held for the war-torn country.

The round table discussion took place on Capitol Hill with numerous speakers presenting creative ways to reach the long-sought goal of the Kashmir people—peace.

The Kashmir conflict is a territorial dispute between China, India and Pakistan. The countries are arguing over the northwestern region of the Indian subcontinent with India laying claims to the Dogra Kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has contested this claim, for the dictatorial-ruled country controls a third of Kashmir.

There have been three wars between Pakistan and India over the rich, natural resources and trade routes of the Led Zeppelin country.

Several resolutions were presented at the conference with each politician making promises to bring peace to the war-torn country.

For instance, Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan offered to provide jobs to professionals on both sides of the cease-fire line while Deputy Ambassador Muhammad Aslam Khan declared that Pakistan would never betray the trust of Jammu and Kashmir.

And the list goes on with various constructive but shallow promises

thrown out for the people of Kashmir, ranging from the use of water resources as a bargaining chip to the nuclear-free zone and a committee of civil society actors who want to develop a vision of future Kashmir.

The resolution draft included nine points:

1. The process of reconciliation and peace building between India and Pakistan be expedited and the people of Jammu and Kashmir be acknowledged as integral partners of the process and acknowledged as its primary stake holders. The parties should determine the parameters of the process and define a time frame for its implementation.

2. Free movement across Jammu and Kashmir be reinstated, all traditional routes across the cease-fire line may be reopened and made operational.

3. The fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Jammu and Kashmir be ensured and the various draconian laws be withdrawn. The expeditious release of all detainees and prisoners be ensured and cases against them and those already released be withdrawn. Information may be made available about the conditions and fate of approximately 10,000 disappeared persons.

4. The return, rehabilitation and resettlement of all internally and externally displaced persons, including Kashmiri Pandits and those from the border areas and cease-fire line, be facilitated with dignity and honor.

5. For comprehensive and lasting peace in South Asia, and a politically secure and democratic future, the inalienable right to self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir be recognized and respected.

6. All cycles of violence in Jammu and Kashmir should end and a space be created for the conclusive settlement of the dispute in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of all the people.

7. Demilitarization is a necessary step for ensuring peace in the region.

8. India and Pakistan should negotiate a treaty to create a nuclear weapons-free zone in all of Jammu and Kashmir.

9. Trade and tourism across the cease-fire line be prompted and inflow of tourists from India and Pakistan to both sides of Jammu and Kashmir be allowed and encouraged.

And what was our government's input on the issue of Kashmir, a country where the citizens must wake each day to the horrors of humanitarian violations, including torture, rape and murder?

Congressman Dan Burton, Danny Davis, Clarke, Rahall, Moran, Pascrell, Tom Davis, Rohrabacher, Honda and McDermott emphasized that a solution was needed for establishing peace and all parties needed to navigate a settlement to end the agony of the Kashmiri people.

And President Bush's office released a statement that "he [Bush] sincerely appreciates your thoughtfulness in writing and sends his best wishes."

How is the country of Kashmir going to find a resolution without an overseer mediating the process of peace?

India and Pakistan are too ingrained with their own agendas to truly bring about a democratic peace settlement with the Kashmiri people: The country of Pakistan is disintegrating underneath the media's watchful eyes while dictator Musharraf weaves his tales of lies in an attempt to solidify his powers over people who do not respect or want his rule—despite the rigged election turnouts.

Of course, with President Bush's constant abuse of his powers, his partnership with dictators like Musharraf and his lack of foresight with the blood feud between the Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds in Iraq, what does the world expect?

His agendas lie outside the realms of humanitarian.

## Christian's Horrorscopes

**Today's birthday (10-10-07):** God sent me a message for you: Your friends are becoming annoying—ignore them. Try going out with the ones you hate this weekend. You will be surprised at the outcome. Loved ones will try and give you positive advice on Friday—ignore them as well. They never give good advice.

**Aries (March 21-April 19):** You find yourself lost in the throes of drama—enjoy the ride.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20):** You are loved, and you really do not feel like being an ass this week (unusual for you). Try to take it all in stride. Take your new fling to a horror movie or a haunted house. You will be surprised at what can happen in the dark with ghosts moaning all around you.

**Gemini (May 21-June 21):** You are hated... enjoy!

**Cancer (June 22-July 22):** Avoid being an ass this week. In fact, try being nice to your exs for once in your life. Agree to everything that they ask you. Wash their car for them. Make a romantic dinner for their new flames. If you do this, then you just might stay the hand of the Blair Bitch.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22):** Sorry, but your week sucks again. Try to avoid haunted houses this weekend.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** This week avoid all tests like the plague, including babie tests, school tests, STD tests, Cosmo's tests, driving tests and anything else with a test before it or after it... just avoid hearing the word all together. I would vanish for the week. Go on vacation to Witch's Gate with a Libra. It will be a positive experience.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Try to avoid drama this week. Enjoy your weekend with the ones you love. Go to the local churches with a turban on your head and scare some Christians.

**Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Over the next couple of days, classmates are going to become more annoying with their constant texting and bickering. Grab a hammer and a shovel... be prepared.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Try to make important money decisions this week. After Thursday, expect to receive some news that will change the course of your life for the next couple of weeks in a negative light. Try and enjoy this new found darkness.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** It is time to change your alliances this week. Become a bad guy... impersonate George W. Bush. You will be hated, alone, and the rest of the country might think you are crazy, but least you will make some powerful friends and you will never run out of tacos.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)** You are easily irritated by your loved ones, friends and just about anyone else you run into over the next seven days. You can pretend that you are not angry, but you would be better off locking yourself in a padded cell.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20):** Darkness looms on your horizon. It is time to reevaluate those old contracts with the university. Try reading the fine print for once and you just might save yourself from Satan (not really.... you are doomed).

## ~ Letters to the editor ~

Concerning the cover story associated with sexual assault occurring off-campus, I am a sophomore on the cycling team at MSU and have seen the jest of parties, from Greek to geek, and I have observed and participated in them all.

I think the cover story of Oct. 3, 2007, concerning sexual assault gives a twisted image of parties in general, specifically Greek parties.

Given that I am not a member of any Greek organization and never wish to be, I still hold somewhat of a respect for these organizations for promoting community on and off campus.

The article stated that, "The victim had gone to several locations before arriving at an unregistered Sigma Nu party, where there was hard liquor, drinking

games and minors present."

While this may be true, the sentence brings focus onto a specific Greek organization rather than the sexual assault case as a whole.

Likewise, the article stated that the victim had been to "several locations before arriving," but the Greek party was the only one mentioned.

I think Greeks are the easy-way out when finding something to put a blame on and that is unfortunate when college students need community most, for better or worse.

— Brian Vestal

Your MSU enrollment statis-

tics ("Enrollment Rate Remains Relatively Stable," Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2007) were interesting but misleading.

In your breakdown by ethnicity, you indicate that MSU has 12.6 percent African-Americans.

In fact, there are far more black students at MSU than this 12.6 percent figure suggests because the number fails to include black students who aren't Americans, e.g., black African and black Caribbean students.

If those students are considered, the percentage of black students at MSU is actually closer to 20 percent.

In other words, American black students are counted as black; international black students are counted as "nonresident aliens."

— Race being such a touchy issue these days, I must decline to sign this letter.

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## Tickets for Rockin the Falls are on sale now!

Tickets are \$8 at pre-sale price and for MSU students; \$10 at the door.

Eleven bands will play at the Sikes Lake Center at MSU on Saturday, Oct. 13 starting at 12 p.m.

Drawings for door prizes will be done between set times.

Benefits for the event will go to Wichita Falls families who were affected by the summer floods.

**RECYCLE**



**PLEASE**