

Kashmir Temperatures Are Mild, But Not Political Climate

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(Editor's note: Kashmir, an area encircled by more men under arms than probably any area of similar size in the world, has been the center of a raging dispute for 15 years. India, Pakistan and Communist China all claim parts of the region, and Russia recently cast its 100th veto in the United Nations to block a resolution calling for a negotiated settlement. In the following dispatch, UPI correspondents bring the mysterious and faroff land of Kashmir into focus.)

By United Press International
Srinagar, Kashmir (UPI)—Three times a day during spring and summer, an airliner arrives in this summer capital of Kashmir. Mostly, the passengers are tourists seeking an escape from the 115-degree heat of northern India.

By air and by road over the 9,200 foot high Banihal Pass, tourists are coming to the Kashmir Valley at the rate of 600 to 1,000 a day. They find the temperatures are mild, but the same cannot be said of the political climate.

This mountain surrounded area is always simmering. For a decade and a half, it has threatened to boil over.

India, Pakistan and Red China don't talk about the number of troops they have stationed around this much-disputed region, but it undoubtedly is one of the most militarized in the world.

Consist of Districts
Kashmir consists of four districts lying to the extreme north of the Indian sub-continent. It has an area of 85,861 square miles, or about the size of Minnesota. The population is something over four million, about 75 per cent of them Moslem.

There is no easy land access to any of the four areas. Since 1947 Kashmir has been one of the biggest trouble spots in Central Asia. India and Pakistan both claim the entire region, while Communist China says a big portion of Ladakh belongs to her. Each of the three nations hold portions of Kashmir.

India is in firm possession of the Kashmir Valley, Jammu and the western sections of Ladakh. Pakistan controls a rocky fringe of western Kashmir and the northern territories of Gilgit and Hunza, which includes the world's second highest mountain, K-2.

Red China infiltrated the Aksai China area of thumb-shaped eastern Ladakh beginning in 1950 or 1957, and holds approximately 14,000 square miles of barren Himalayan moorland. Of the areas, the valley and the northern territories are predominantly Moslem, Jammu is about equally split between Moslems and Hindus, and the residents of sparsely populated Ladakh are mostly Tibetan Buddhists.

Principal Kashmir Dispute
The principal Kashmir dispute, which was brought before the United Nations again this year, is a blurred affair. The two principals, Pakistan and India, do not agree on what actually happened.

In 1947, at the time of Indian and Pakistan independence, Kashmir was ruled by a Hindu maharaja. Under the terms of partition, rulers of the princely states were given the option of joining either India or Pakistan. They were, however, urged by the British to take into consideration the wishes of their people and the geographical implications.

Maharaja Hari Singh hesitated at the time of independence and asked Pakistan and India to accept a

"standstill agreement" until he made up his mind. There followed a period of uncertainty.

Pakistanis say communal uprisings occurred in Kashmir's Poonch area with the Maharaja's Hindu army firing on Moslems. As a result, the Pakistan government was unable to restrain Moslem tribesmen of Pakistan's northwest frontier agency from entering the valley.

Indians say the Pakistan army helped the tribesmen enter Kashmir and provided vehicles, gasoline and weapons. In any event, the Moslem tribesmen drove deep into the valley and almost captured the capital of Srinagar. The tribesmen got to the town of Baramulla near Srinagar and stopped to regroup. This appeared to be the turning point.

Instrument of Accession
The frightened maharaja hurriedly signed the instrument of accession to India and Indian troops were immediately airlifted to Srinagar. Had the Moslem tribesmen captured the Srinagar airport, it would have taken days for the Indian forces to enter the valley via the overland route.

The trained Indian army moved quickly and proved too much for the hit-and-run tribesmen who were eventually forced back to the western fringes of the state. A cease-fire was brought about by the United Nations in 1949.

Repeated suggestions in the UN security council that a plebiscite be held

have fundered on the question of troop withdrawal. No one knows what the result of a plebiscite would be. Two facts, however, stand out:

The Kashmiri Moslem seldom identifies himself with India. Visitors returning from the valley report that the Kashmiris usually refer to citizens of India as "those Indians" rather than as fellow countrymen. The high percentage of Moslems in Kashmir would appear to tip the balance in favor of Pakistan, rather than Hindu India.

However, one newsman who visited Kashmir in June said, "I still get the idea that if they voted and had three choices, they would choose independence first, and Pakistan second."

In the meantime, Kashmir exists in a type of political vacuum. Although commonly called an Indian state, it has not been officially designated as India's 16th state. Instead of a chief minister, as in other Indian states, Kashmir's leader is called a prime minister. Three elections have been held for the state legislature, but the members of parliament from Kashmir are still appointed.

A Kashmir government official describes the present prime minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, as a lovable man of the people. "He is very approachable," the official said. "Husbands and wives having

trouble don't take it to court. They take it to Pash Sahib."

Others are more critical of Bakshi and there are rumors in New Delhi that his days as political leader of Kashmir may be numbered. There are other reports that Kashmir's first prime minister, Sheikh Abdullah, "The lion of Kashmir," may be released from jail. The sheikh, perhaps the most popular figure in Kashmir, has been under arrest almost continuously since 1953 on charges of conspiracy.

There are growing fears that violence may soon erupt again. Chaudri Ghulam Abbas, supreme head of the Kashmir liberation movement, told United Press International "the Soviet veto of the Kashmir resolution in the United Nations Security Council was further proof that the only solution to the problem is direct action by Kashmiris themselves."

Last month Abbas called for 10,000 volunteers to be recruited by late August to resume the liberation fight which ended with acceptance of the 1949 UN cease-fire agreement. Abbas said the Kashmiris would "throw themselves into the abyss of war to achieve the liberation of their homelands."

Would Determine Policy
The Pakistan government immediately announced that no one group, such as the KLM, would determine Pakis-

tan's policy on Kashmir. The announcement said the cease-fire agreement is between Pakistan and India, and that Pakistan would do all in its power to prevent any violation of the agreement.

Abbas said his organization viewed the Pakistan government statement "with all the contempt it deserves."

India has no intention of losing its "northern crown." There is bound to be continued dissension and conflict.

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JIM GREY Takes Ford Firm Post
Jim Grey, for the past five years a member of the display advertising staff of the Mail Tribune, will leave Monday for Dearborn, Mich., to assume a position in the Ford Motor company's styling center.

Writing Project Winners Noted
White City — Awards have been announced for the 16th annual contest of the Hospitalized Veterans Writing project, developed to encourage hospitalized veterans to try creative writing for recreation and rehabilitation.



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Mrs. Grey and their two daughters, Kandi and Valerie, will accompany him and establish their home in Dearborn.

The Ford styling center deals with the designing and appointments of all new Fords, Mercurys and Lincolns.

Grey, before entering the newspaper business, graduated cum laude from Whitworth college in Spokane, Wash., majoring in art. He also has post graduate study in this field at the University of Hawaii and Southern Oregon college.

White City — Awards have been announced for the 16th annual contest of the Hospitalized Veterans Writing project, developed to encourage hospitalized veterans to try creative writing for recreation and rehabilitation. Winners at the White City Domiciliary include Victor M. Buck who won an award for his article, "Journey from Africa," and James Joseph Gillan, who won fourth prize in the section for "Outline of Book I'd Like to Write," and an honorary award for the first chapter of the book. He also won a prize for a character sketch entitled "He Made His Own Human Relations," and an honorary award for a book review.

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