



# Population Growth Among China's Minorities

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THE PATTERN of population growth among China's 55 minority nationalities is changing more rapidly than at any time in China's history, and faster than that of the Han, China's majority nationality. It has moved from a low rate of growth to a high one in a little over a decade, creating a need for further examination of minority population trends. Minorities now make up 6.7 percent of China's population.

Before liberation in 1949 population reproduction among China's minorities, as among the Han, was of the primitive type (Type I) — high birthrate, high mortality, and a low or negative rate of growth. This had existed among some nationalities for a long time, as shown in the following table.

Some perhaps moved far away, some fused with present-day nationalities, while others died out.

There were an estimated 1.18 million Mongolian people within the area now embraced by Inner Mongolia during the reign of Qing dynasty Emperor Jiaqing (1796-1820), but by 1947 only 832,000 were left, a drop of 29.5 percent. There were five to six million Tibetans in the 7th to 9th centuries, but the number had fallen to 2.776 million by 1953, China's first post-liberation census showed. In something over a thousand years the Tibetan population decreased by 45 to 55 percent. In the early years of this century there were about 2,500 to 3,000 Hezhe people who live in Heilongjiang province,

fluence of old religious and superstitious customs.

The liberation put an end to the basic conditions breeding oppression, affirmed the equality of all nationalities, organized local autonomy in places where minorities lived in compact communities, and laid the foundations for economic and educational equality and common advance. However, the starting points for the various nationalities were very different. In the early years after liberation, China had 11 national minorities which still retained vestiges of primitive communal societies. They had an aggregate population of 600,000 which made up 1.7 percent of the total for minority nationalities. The population of three of the largest nationalities in the stage of serfdom or slavery — Tibetan, Dai, Hani — added up to four million, or 11.6 percent of the total for minorities. Others were in a feudal stage with landlord ownership.

Most minority nationalities then engaged in farming, a few still with the primitive slash-and-burn style. About 2.2 million were nomads who dwelt temporarily at various sites with water. Others lived by hunting and fishing. Cold and hunger, disease including plagues, and natural calamities made the life span short and mortality rates high.

Discrimination and military campaigns against them by the reactionary ruling class speeded up the decline. In 1723, putting down a "rebellion" of a leader who did not want to submit to Qing dynasty authority, government troops killed several hundred thousand people of Mongolian, Tibetan and Tu nationalities in Qinghai province. Similarly, suppressing an uprising

Population Reproduction in Certain Nationalities (per thousand)

Nationality	Date	Birthrate	Mortality	Natural Growth Rate
Miao (Xuyong, Southern Sichuan)	1943	33.6	50.5	-16.7
Settled Mongolian (Northeast China)	1939-40	37.3	44.2	-6.9
Nomadic Mongolian (Northeast China)	1941	21.7	28.3	-6.6
Mongolian (Inner Mongolia)	1939-40	30.4	44.2	-13.9

About 150 different national groups are mentioned at one time or another in Chinese historical records. Many of them cannot now be traced, but the reasons have not been ascertained in all cases.

but only 300 on the eve of liberation. Their nationality was on the verge of extinction.

The main reasons for these rapid falls were low productivity, backward economies, lack of medical care, oppression and exploitation in the relations among nationalities and within their ranks, fighting among nationalities, and the in-

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of minority peasants in two campaigns in 1723-1736 and 1855-1868, the Qing government massacred several hundred thousand Miaos in southeastern Guizhou. In 1943 the Kuomintang authorities launched a large-scale massacre of innocent Mongolians in the Ih Ju league (prefecture); between 1942 and 1945, working hand-in-glove with the troops of the Dai minority hereditary headmen, they killed 6,000 Jinuo people in Yunnan province. Only 4,000 Jinuos were left.

Frequent fighting between nationalities themselves — between the ruling groups of different clans and tribes over seizure of livestock, slaves, pastures and farmland — were another disaster for the minorities. Sometimes one such feud could wipe out an entire clan or tribe, or brought an end to both sides.

Religious influence was also a factor preventing the increase of population in some minorities. Lamas, who were not allowed to marry, accounted for 49.4 percent of the population in Tibet, 33.3 percent in Xikang (a former province now divided between Tibet and Sichuan province), and 33.3 percent in Inner Mongolia, according to 1937 statistics. In the Wa and Dai minority regions in Yunnan province, severed human heads were used by priests in sacrifices to the ancestors. To get them, passers-by and people from other villages would be seized. This led to endless killings in revenge. Sometimes over 100 people died at one time, and only one or a few in a village might escape.

#### Begin to Increase

After liberation, because of positive factors such as the availability of health services (in some cases

even before fundamental social reform), relief and improved productivity, hence a better diet, the reproduction pattern of minorities shifted quickly to Type II — high birthrate, low mortality and high rate of growth. In the Liangshan Yi area of Sichuan province, even though slavery continued to exist in the early years after liberation,

rise from 8 per thousand in 1952 to 26 per thousand in 1964.

In the country as a whole, growth of minority population has speeded up year by year since liberation. In 1982 while total national population showed an 85.3 percent growth over 1949, that for the minorities registered a 104.4 percent growth. (See graph.)

The first type of pattern — high birthrate, high mortality and low rate of growth — which had existed for several thousand years in regions inhabited by the Han people, began in some minority areas only in the early years after liberation. However, between 1964 and 1978 it very rapidly changed to the second type — high birthrate, low mortality and high rate of growth.

The elimination of national oppression and discrimination, the institution of regional autonomy, the implementation of policies for equality, unity and mutual benefit among the nationalities, and vigorous support for developing the economy and culture in the minority areas are the things that made the change possible. All of these have promoted prosperity in these areas and contributed to the change in the economic structure in those

#### Patterns of Population Reproduction

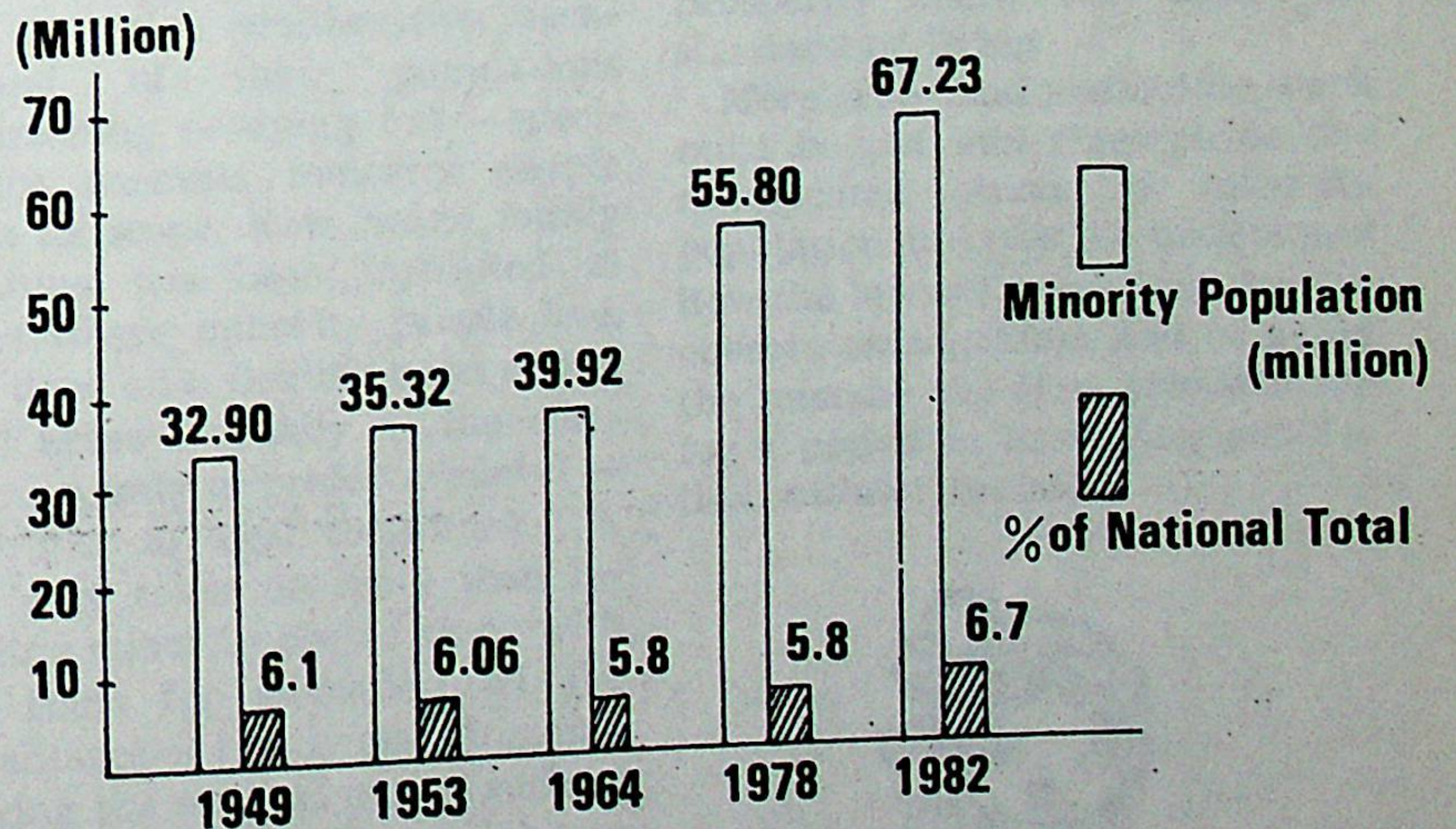
Type I: High birthrate, high mortality, low rate of growth.

Type II: High birthrate, low mortality, high rate of growth.

Type III: Low birthrate, low mortality, low rate of growth.

the natural growth rate rose from 10 per thousand in 1949 to 20 per thousand in the late 1960s, while that in the Chen Barag banner (county) of Inner Mongolia, inhabited by purely nomadic Mongolians, jumped from a negative number in the 1940s to 36 per thousand in the early 60s. The rate of increase in an agricultural area is shown by figures for the Maonan people in Guangxi in the south: a

### Minorities as Percent of National Total



CHINA RECONSTRUCTS



with low productivity. Meanwhile, rapid cultural, health and medical development has brought epidemic diseases under control. Medical care and a better standard of living have ended the long-standing problem of sterility among women of some minorities and increased the number of births. Education has done away with certain superstitious practices such as killing twins as sacrifices.

Minority populations as a whole went through two spurts. The first was between 1949 and 1953 when, from an extremely low or even negative number in some cases, the rate of growth reached 20.5 per thousand in 1953. The second was between 1978 and 1982, in which year it reached 54.6 per thousand. A special phenomenon in these two periods is the fact that many minority people who had concealed their origin for fear of oppression and discrimination before liberation, now registered as members of their nationality. People of minority nationalities also enjoy a certain preference in candidacy and election to office, in being chosen for jobs, and for attending college, and are exempt from the national family planning policy. As a matter of fact, these factors have promoted the intermarriage of Han and minority people and encouraged their children to claim the minority as their nationality.

Recently there were 31 minority nationalities whose rate of growth was over 50 per thousand, and 11 with over 100 per thousand. The rate of growth of the Tujia, who live in Hunan and Hubei provinces, reached 450.9 per thousand and of the small Russian minority (mainly in Xinjiang), 573.9.

### Shift to Third Type

The flexible policy on minority population has resulted in an astonishing rise in the birthrate and natural rate of growth in a few nationalities. At this point, the descending trend of minority population having been completely reversed, a new question has arisen — is it time to consider family planning for them? Population researchers think so. Meanwhile, some minorities, recognizing the

advantages of family planning among the Han people have urged it among themselves on a voluntary basis. Thus the pattern in minority areas where this has been done has begun to shift to the third type — low birthrate, low mortality and low rate of growth.

An example is the Zhangjia-chuan Hui autonomous county in Gansu province. In the eight years between 1972 and 1980 the birthrate dropped from 38 to 15 per thousand, the rate of natural growth from 32 to 9 per thousand, and mortality from 6 to 5 per thousand.

Another is Gansu province's Gannan Tibetan autonomous prefecture, an area of animal husbandry and farming. Births there decreased from 45.5 per thousand (1964) to 14 (1980), the rate of growth from 31 to 10.5 per thousand, and mortality from 15.5 to 6 per thousand.

Such a shift in pattern from Type II to Type III, before family planning became widely accepted, took a century and a half in countries of Europe and North America, and 25 years in Japan. But in the above examples it took place in only a dozen years — faster than among the Hans in China.

### A Look at Policy

The present national policy on family planning — drawn up at a time when minorities had not achieved such marked growth and against a preliberation background of their populations diminishing or dying out — specifically exempts minority people from its scope. Now, when family planning has been instituted in areas where minority people live, it is done on a flexible basis and in local areas — usually at the commune, county or prefecture level — according to local conditions.

It may cover no more than including minority people along with the Hans for education on the advantages of family planning, and making the medical means such as contraceptives or IUDs available to those minority couples who request them. A further step may be having the minority population includ-

ed in the plan for the growth of population for the locality as a whole, in which case the births by minority couples are scheduled in the annual plan for births. Any such measures must be agreed upon by the local people's congress, which includes delegates from the minorities in this area (in national autonomous area these may be the majority), and be done in consultation with spokesmen for the nationalities.

Even in such localities, in the mountainous parts where conditions are poorer and the birthrate has not risen so markedly, minority people may not be included in any family planning activity unless couples request to be.

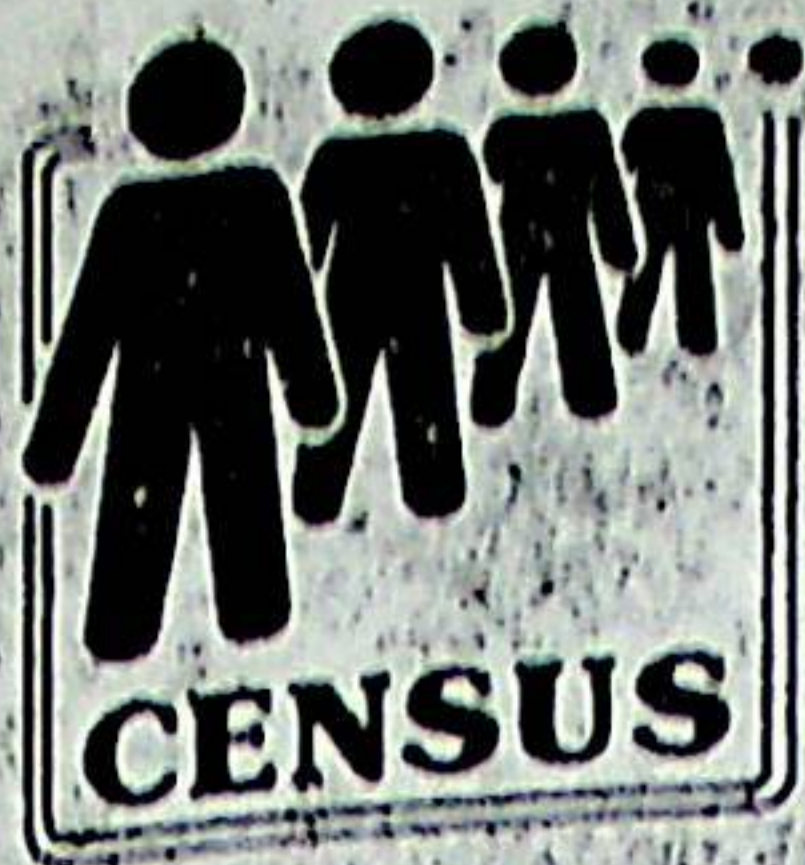
It is easier to promote family planning among the minority people than among the Hans. Ideas traditional among the Han people such as having more sons means greater fortune, "bringing up sons to rely on in old age," and the woman going to the man's family after marriage, if they exist at all among the minorities, are not so strong.

When a locality considers the question of whether or not to include its minority nationalities in family planning, consideration is given to the relation of population to its land, natural resources, grain, energy resources and ecology. Family planning for the minorities is then taken as part of an overall plan for population and economic development to promote prosperity there and raise the standard of living.

More effort and meticulous work must be put into research on the complicated issues of minority population in order to understand how the laws of population growth operate among them and to avoid the mistake the Han people made for a period in increasing population without control. □







# China's Population Now 1,031,882,511

CHINA'S recent census, recorded on July 1, 1982, came up with a total of 1,031,882,511 people.

This figure includes the population of Taiwan province, Jinmen, Mazu and a few other islands off Fujian province, calculated according to figures released by Taiwan. It also includes the Chinese population of Hongkong and Macao, calculated according to figures released by the Hongkong and Macao authorities.

Mainland population was given as 1,008,175,288. Preliminary studies of the data collected yield the following figures:

**Sex Composition:** Males number 519,433,369, or 51.5 percent. Females are 488,741,919, or 48.5 percent.

**Population of the Nationalities:** The Hans number 936,703,824, or 93.3 percent of the total. Minority nationalities are 67,233,254, or 6.7 percent. Since the 1964 census the Hans have increased by 285,407,456, or 43.8 percent, and the minority nationalities by 27,309,518, or 68.4 percent. Of the 55 minority nationalities, those with a population of more than one million have increased from 10 in 1964 to 15 at present.

**Educational Levels:** 4,414,495 are university graduates and 1,602,474 are university undergraduates (including both those who attended previously and those now attending). People with a senior middle school education number 66,478,028, junior middle school 178,277,140 and primary school 355,160,310. These figures include graduates, undergraduates and those who did

not finish. There are 235,820,002 illiterates (people 12 years of age and above who cannot read or can read only a few words).

Compared with 1964, some of the changes (per 100,000 people) are as follows:

Those with a university education have increased from 416 to 599.

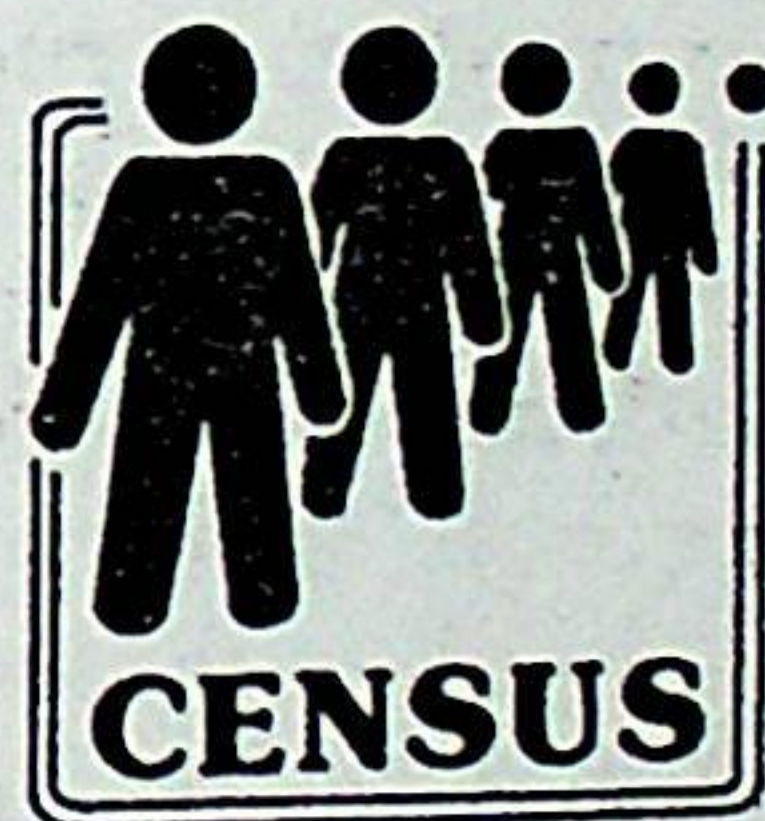
Those with senior middle school education have increased from

1,319 to 6,622; junior middle school 4,680 to 17,758; primary school 28,330 to 35,377.

**Birth and Mortality Rates:** Births in 1981 were 20,689,704, a rate of 20.91 per thousand. Deaths in 1981 were 6,290,103, a rate of 6.36 per thousand. Population increase in 1981 was 14,399,601, or 14.55 per thousand.

**Urban Population:** Urban population (excluding rural population of counties under city administration) is 206,588,582, of which 144,679,340 dwell in 236 cities and 61,909,242 live in 2,664 towns. It has increased by 79,485,541 or 62.5 percent and its proportion in the total increased from 18.4 percent in 1964 to 20.6 percent today.

Compared with the 1964 census, total population has increased by 313,593,529, or 45.1 percent, in 18 years, an average annual increase of 17,421,863, a rate of 2.1 percent. □



## On the New Census

WHEN initial results of China's recent census were published, Beijing's English-language newspaper *China Daily* carried a commentary entitled "What the Census Tells Us." Portions of the article are quoted below.

"This census, the third since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, is a meticulous piece of work, and has an error rate much lower than the world standard, according to officials of the State Statistical Bureau.

"Millions of census employees and volunteer workers made repeated house calls to collect data, correct errors, and make final checks. Specialists are still study-

ing the questionnaires and processing the data on the computer.

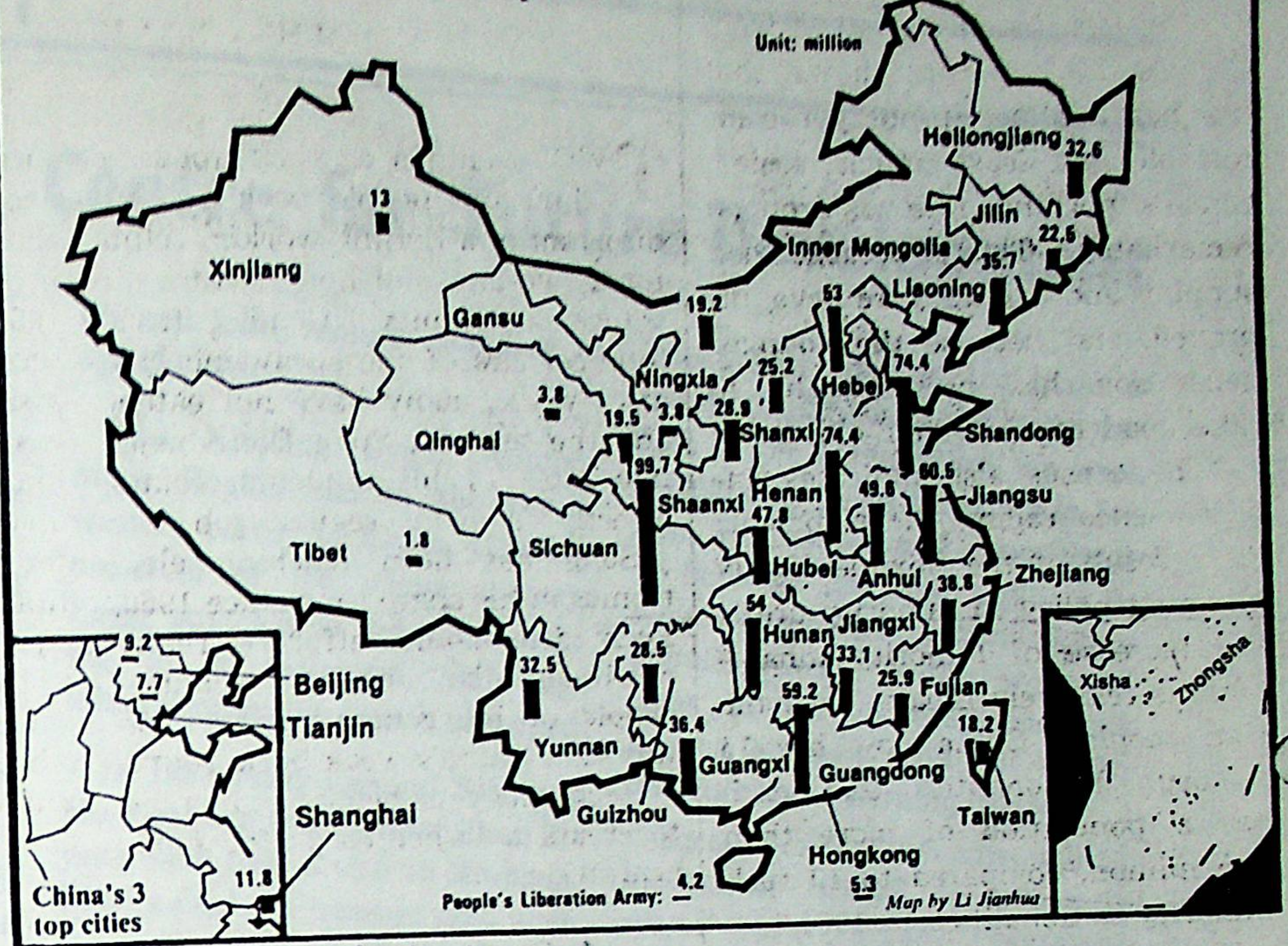
"This census is also a result of fruitful co-operation between China and the UN and other countries."

Talking about China's economic planning benefits from the census, the commentator says, "The economy in a socialist system always takes into account the long-range interests of the people and aims to meet the people's needs in the best possible way. It determines exploitation of natural resources and development of production. It also serves as a reliable basis for better organization, employment, and education of our people. Detailed statistics for each age bracket will

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### Sketch Map of China's Population Breakdown

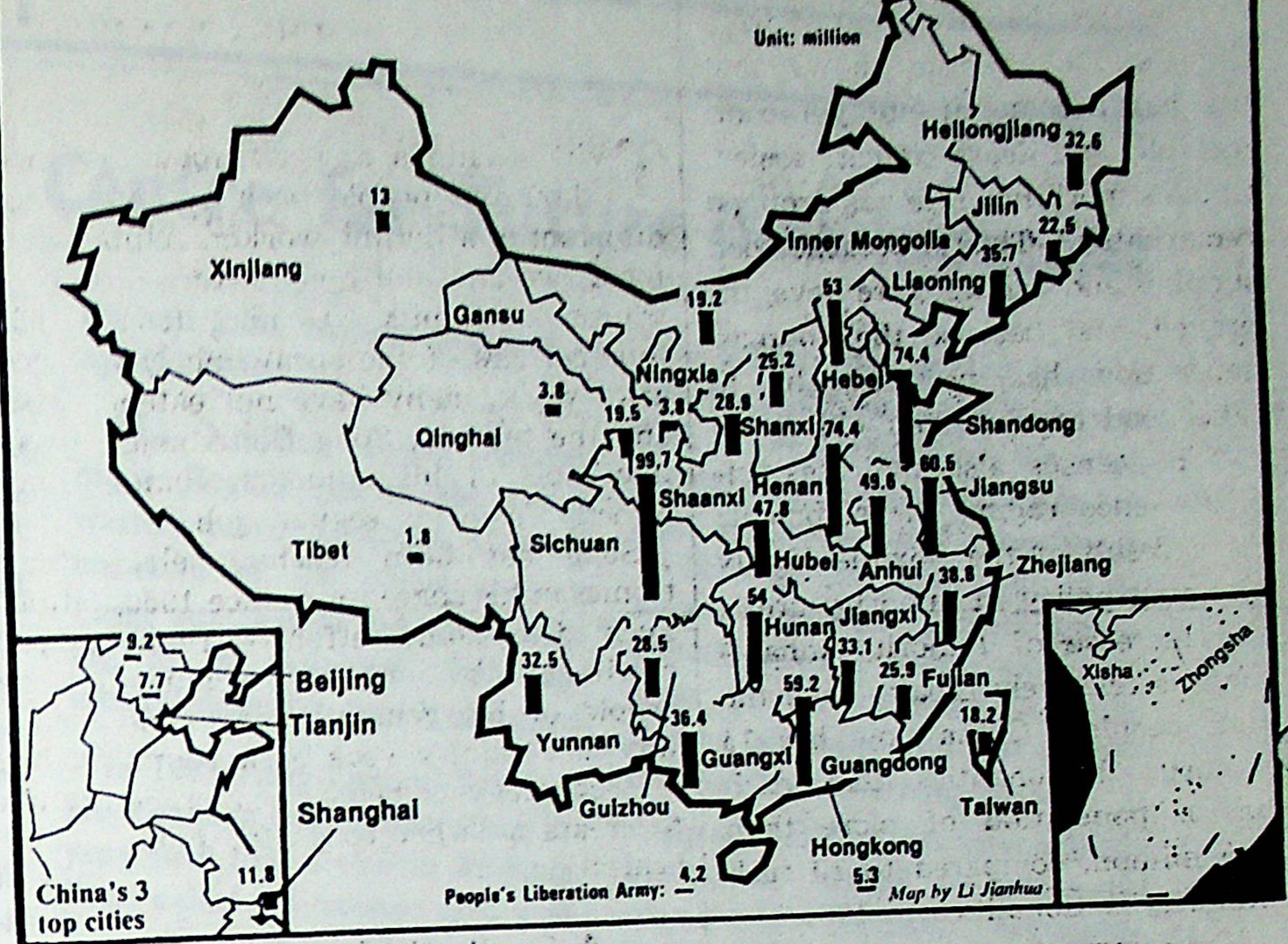


The population distribution in the provinces, municipalities, autonomous regions, including members of the armed forces

Beijing	9,230,687		
	(including the nine counties under the direct administration of Beijing, 3,632,715)		
Tianjin	7,764,141		
	(including the five counties under the direct administration of Tianjin, 2,621,576)		
Hebei province	53,005,875	Jiangxi province	33,184,827
Shanxi province	25,291,389	Shandong province	74,419,054
Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region	19,274,279	Henan province	74,422,739
Liaoning province	35,721,693	Hubei province	47,804,150
Jilin province	22,560,053	Hunan province	54,008,851
Heilongjiang province	32,665,546	Guangdong province	59,299,220
Shanghai	11,859,748		(the figures for the population of Dongsha and Nansha Islands are not at present included)
	(including the ten counties under the direct administration of Shanghai, 5,538,876)	Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region	36,420,960
Jiangsu province	60,521,114	Sichuan province	99,713,310
Zhejiang province	38,884,603	Guizhou province	28,552,997
Anhui province	49,665,724	Yunnan province	32,553,817
Fujian province	25,931,106	Tibet Autonomous Region	1,892,393
	(including the population of Jinmen and Mazu and a few other islands, 57,847)	Shaanxi province	28,904,423
		Gansu province	19,569,261
		Qinghai province	3,895,706
		Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region	3,895,578
		Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region	13,081,681
		Taiwan province	18,270,749
		Hongkong and Macao Regions	5,378,627
		Members of the Armed Forces	4,238,210



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**SPECIAL REPORT**

**Xinjiang — A Centre for Future Development**

by **LU YUN**  
Our Correspondent

**T**HE faint scents of melons and fruit trees are carried by the wind past the ruins of 2,000-year-old sites, where once the Silk Road linked Asia and Europe long ago.

Vast expanses of sandy and pebbly waste are twisted by the same wind into fantastic landscapes, dotted with lush green oases.

Streams ripple at the foot of snow-capped mountains. Herds of cattle and sheep graze peacefully, tended by plain, forthright people with their own unique customs and culture.

And amidst these scenes, timeless as the hills and sands, visitors may also find new cities in the des-

ert and joint ventures standing in age-old cities.

The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region sits in the north-western corner of China, covering one-sixth of the whole country. Large stretches of it are still waiting to be reclaimed, and huge mineral resources remain untapped.

In 1983 Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang and Premier Zhao Ziyang each paid a visit to Xinjiang. Zhao called it a treasure land waiting to be opened in the modernization drive. Hu said the Party Central Committee had decided to include the development of Xinjiang on its agenda and to turn Xinjiang and the whole northwest into an important economic development base in the next century.

The lowest point of the basin is the Aydingkol Lake; its water surface is 154 metres below sea level, second only to the Dead Sea in Jordan. The temperature varies greatly between day and night. As winter approaches, according to a popular rhyme; people wear fur coats in the morning and silk dresses at noon and eat watermelons around burning stoves.

Because of the high surrounding mountains, rainfall is extremely sparse in Turpan, averaging 16.6 mm a year. In very dry years it can be only 4 mm. The local people also call it *fengku*, which means wind warehouse, because gales and hurricanes blow more than 30 days a year on the average. Although hurricanes are extremely rare on land, the convection of the hot air from the basin itself and the cold air blowing from the north form these violent storms.

**Turpan — Land of Extremes**

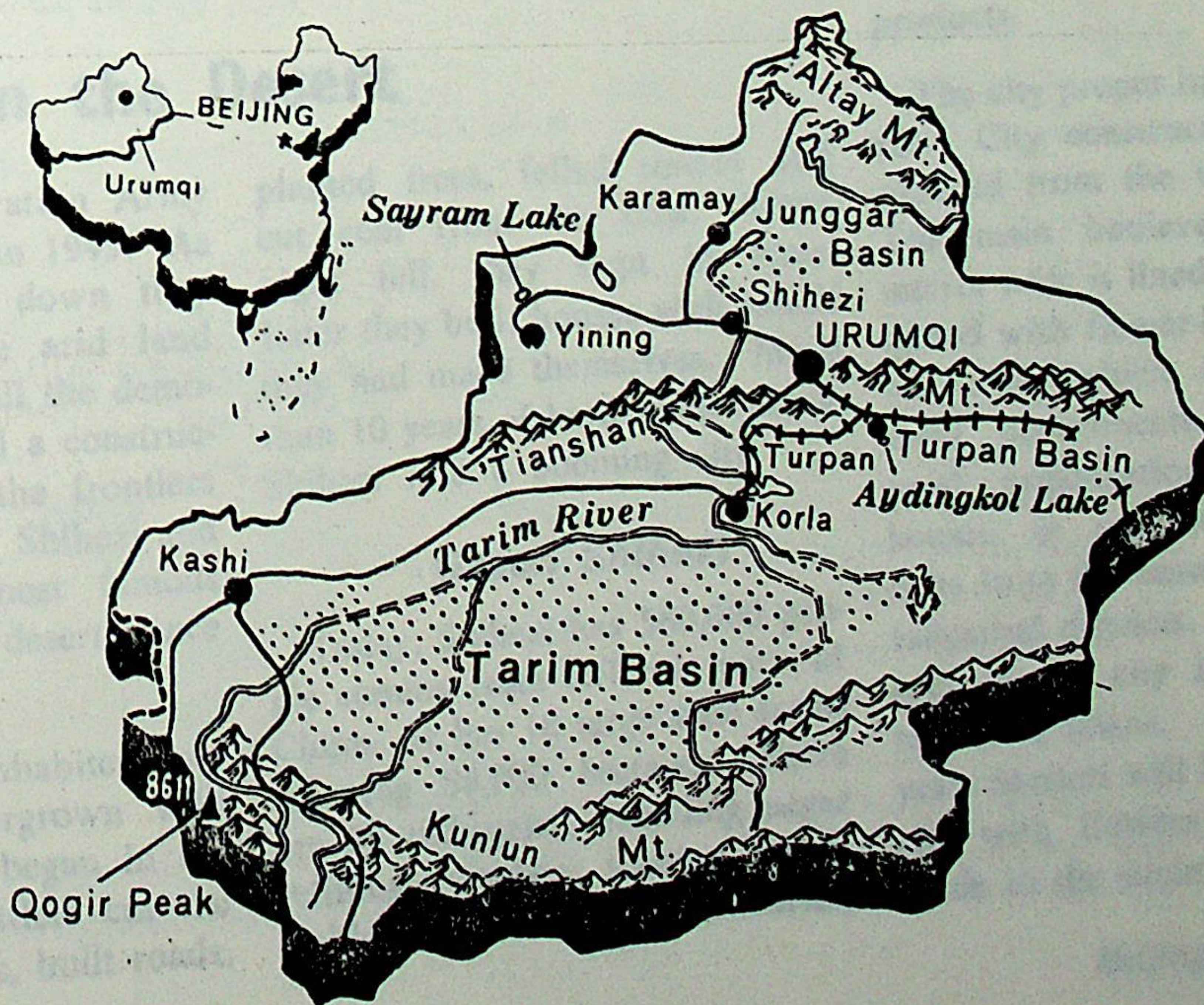
**T**HE Turpan Basin is about 150 kilometres southeast of Urumqi, the regional capital. It is known as "the oven" — the hottest place in China.

Set deep in high mountains, Turpan is the lowest land in China.

**Ancient Ruins**

The hot, dry weather has pre-

Near the centre of the basin is the Flaming Mountain, which was described in the ancient Chinese mythological novel *Journey to the West*. There, the blazing sun makes the red rocks glow as if they were on fire. In the novel, the flame stretches 400 kilometres and not a blade of grass grows in the surrounding areas. Even if you had bronze head and an iron body you would melt if you managed to get to the mountain. Although this is only a fable, Turpan is indeed unbearably hot. Temperatures reach as high as 44-46 degrees C and even 48-49 degrees C in summer.





many friends in the valley. Now her son and daughter are grown up and work in Turpan.

A prefecture leader said since the household contract responsibility system was introduced in 1979, the advantages of the area have been better exploited. The area planted to grapes has nearly doubled, from over 3,300 to almost 6,600 hectares. Where once 10,600 hectares were planted with cotton, now 14,600 hectares are snowy white at harvest time. Meanwhile, grain cultivation has been cut from 30,000 hectares to 23,300 hectares. Grape and raisin supplies still fall far below demand. Turpan's grapes, sweet and clean, top those grown in any other places. It may be possible to ship more grain in from other areas and further expand the acreage sown to grapes and cotton.

The people of Turpan are working hard to learn advanced cultivation techniques from other parts of China and abroad. A joint project with Tianjin will help improve the quality of the local wine and co-operation with their counterparts in Guangdong, Hebei and Liaoning will improve techniques for preserving fresh melons and fruits. Equipment for processing raisins will also be imported from



Hanging grapes to dry.

abroad, to raise the quality and output of this tasty treasure.

which mainly process local farm and sideline products. These industries turn out more than 1,000 products.

## New Cities in the Desert

**T**HE People's Liberation Army entered Xinjiang in 1949. As soon as they settled down they began to develop the arid land around them. Later all the demobilized soldiers formed a construction corps to guard the frontiers and reclaim the land. Shihezi and Karamay are two most famous cities built in the desert since liberation.

Shihezi was once inhabited only by animals and overgrown with reeds. Reclamation began in the winter of 1949. Settlers cut the reed, burnt the weeds, built roads,

planted trees, felled timber and cut coal from the hills. When night fell, they slept in tents. Later they built houses with bricks they had made themselves. More than 10 years of hard work turned Shihezi into a booming city.

### Green Shihezi

Today, Shihezi has 560,000 people coming from different parts of China. It has 18 large state farms covering 58,000 hectares. There are 35 industries, including sugar refining, woollen textiles, paper making and foodstuff factories,

The city proper has 130,000 people. City construction was well-planned from the very beginning. The main boulevard 40 to 80 metres wide is lined with trees and dotted with flower-beds. The central area, which houses government departments, schools, cultural organizations, shops and houses, is separated by shelter belts from the eastern and western industrial districts. About 29 per cent of the city is covered with trees and lawns. In another few years Shihezi will be a picturesque city with flowers in the spring, shade in the summer, fruits in the

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autumn and evergreens in the winter.

The city has its own newspaper and TV and radio station. It has 170 middle schools, so junior middle school education is universal. Most technicians in the construction corps are graduates of the Shihezi College of Agronomy.

With the implementation of the responsibility system in production both in farming and livestock breeding, production has gone up, bringing about a speedy improvement in the people's livelihood.

The open policy adopted by the city has already had a good beginning. Woollen fabrics produced by the Bayi (August 1) Woollen Mill are sold in 16 countries and regions; at home supply always falls short of demand. A woollen knitwear workshop using Italian machines to produce 600 tons of knitting goods a year has already been put into operation. The Bayi Woollen Mill plans to set up a joint factory with the coastal city of Dalian. A farm which imported machines and pesticide from Hongkong and Australia has had good results in increasing its cotton output with the help of ex-

perts. The Bayi Sugar Refinery also imported machines and equipment from Japan, paid for in compensatory trade.

### Oil City Karamay

Karamay means "black oil" in the Uygur language. It is the first big oilfield surveyed and exploited in the 1950s.

On the Black Oil Hill, so named because of the continuous flow of petroleum, oil springs gurggle amid lumps of black asphalt, softened by the heat of the sun. Every now and then shiny black oil will bubble out. The liquid flows down the hill into an oil pond, which is smooth and calm as a mirror. Because its solidifying point is 50-70 degrees below zero, the crude oil is suitable for refined oil used in extreme cold, such as lubricants for airplanes and precision instruments and black paint for luxury limousines.

The presence of petroleum in Xinjiang was recorded in classical literature in 600 BC. But exploitation began only in 1897 in Dushanzi, near the Black Oil Hill. By 1949, when the People's Republic was founded, there were only two

shallow wells, with a daily output of only 14-21 barrels.

In October 1955 crude oil for industry gushed from the No. 1 well for the first time. The gates to the oil treasure-house were opened. Three years later the first phase of the oilfield's development had been completed. Today the Karamay oilfield combines drilling, pumping, refining and transportation. The city is a new industrial centre with 160,000 people.

While trying to increase the output of the existing oilfields, Xinjiang oil authorities are working in collaboration with other countries to prospect for new reserves. The results have been encouraging. Another oilfield has been located in an area near Karamay. Its reserves are estimated to far exceed those of Karamay. In the Tarim Basin in southern Xinjiang, the largest inland basin in China, rich oil and gas resources have been detected. It is estimated the oil well in the northern part of the basin drilled in September 1984 will yield 2,380 barrels of crude oil and 200 cubic metres of natural gas daily.

### Advantages and Disadvantages

First-time visitors to Xinjiang agree that you can't really understand how vast China is until you visit the region. A trip to the next town can be 200-300 kilometres, or even 500 kilometres. The bus speeds along a straight, seemingly endless highway through the desert. There is no grass, no water, no human beings, not even a bird; only lamp posts and the distant mountains. Occasionally a small village comes into view, but it is quickly passed.

Xinjiang has three big mountain ranges (the Tianshan, Altay and Kunlun mountains), three big basins (the Tarim, Junggar and Turpan basins) and a dozen big

A workshop at the Tianshan Knitting Mill.



January 7, 1985



rivers. The Tarim River, 2,179 km long, is the world's longest inland river. Creeping towards the vast desert are glaciers.

Because the area is not very high above sea level, it has long hours of sunshine, strong radiation and high accumulated temperature, Xinjiang is full of vitality. Provided it is adequately exploited, the autonomous region will create enormous wealth.

Before liberation, however, the local people suffered from class oppression. The economy was backward. Every three peasant households shared one animal for ploughing and nine families shared a wheel-barrow. Consumer goods were scarce and expensive — one metre of white cloth was worth 15 kg of wheat, and a flashlight could be exchanged for a sheep.

After liberation, exploitation was put to an end. The people of different nationalities have rapidly developed farming and animal husbandry, with the help of people all over China. Today the autonomous region has 4,000 factories producing iron, steel, petroleum, coal, power, machines, chemicals, textiles, refined sugar, paper, tanned leather, tobacco and

other goods. These factories, which turn out 2,000 types of products, have laid a good foundation for the future large-scale development.

### Rich Resources

There are 3.2 million hectares of arable land in Xinjiang, 2.5 times as high as the national per-capita average. About 6.4 million hectares of wasteland can be reclaimed. The autonomous region has 50 million hectares of grassland, one-fourth of the nation's total. It has 110 billion cubic metres of water (including ground water), 3.5 times as much as the national per-capita average.

The autonomous region has 30.24 million head of cattle, one-tenth of the nation's total. Wild animals and plants abound. So far 586 animal species and 3,569 kinds of plants have been discovered. To protect this wildlife, 15 nature reserves embracing 7.25 million hectares of land were set up and 13 more will be established in the near future. Among the animals living in Xinjiang are sable, wild deer, muskrat, marmot, snow leopard, lynx, wild ass and wild camel. The region has

2.84 million hectares of forest and 260,000 hectares of water surface suitable for breeding fish and other aquatic products.

Minerals are also abundant in Xinjiang. Of the 150 known minerals, Xinjiang has 118, or 80 per cent of the minerals so far discovered in China. At the Xinjiang Geology and Minerals Exhibition Centre, visitors will find lucid petroleum which does not need to be refined, aquamarine which can be ground into stones shaped like cat's eyes, a 100-gramme gold nugget, a 350-kilogramme coarse rock crystal, a 2,500-square-centimetre mica sheet, and huge lumps of copper, chromite, beryl and grease white jade. The reserves of beryllium, soda-niter, muscovite, feldspar, porcelain clay and serpentine rank first in China. Thirty-seven types and 78 kinds of jades and other precious stones have been found. At present, petroleum, coal, cement mortar and mirabilite and salt are being mined in large quantities. Twenty minerals or mineral products, such as beryl and columbium, tantalum concentrate, are exported.

Tourism in Xinjiang is unique and enchanting. The snow-capped mountains such as Bogeda Peak, which can be seen from Urumqi, and Qiaogeli Peak, the second highest peak in the world, are big attractions for mountaineers. The placid Tianchi Lake, Bayinbuluke Swan Lake, Sailimu Lake are breathtakingly beautiful. Ancient glaciers, hot springs and the "devil's city"\* are natural wonders.

Xinjiang has attracted many Chinese and foreign historians, archaeologists, writers, filmmakers, journalists and tourists. Since liberation, more and more professionals have come to develop the

\* A 60-square-kilometre eroded area with a spectacular view. At night the violent winds howl like ghosts.

The Basics of Xinjiang

	1949	1978	1983
Total industrial output value (million yuan)	90.97	3,327.52	5,349.37
Total agricultural output value (million yuan)	628.32	2,648.52	4,049.72
Number of minority cadres	3,000	117,476	181,860
	1981	1982	1983
Annual average income of peasants and herdsmen (yuan per capita)	236	277	307
Annual average wage of workers and staff in state enterprises (yuan)	606	736	998
	1949	1978	1983
College Students	379	10,002	16,438
Hospital and Clinic Beds	696	57,647	63,113



area. Now, 240,000 skilled specialists work in the region. Of every 10,000 people, 2.3 are college graduates. Especially since the Party Central Committee called for Xinjiang's development in 1983, many experienced professionals have moved west.

Of course, developing Xinjiang is not that easy. The region also has its limitations.

Ismail Amat (a Uygur), chairman of the autonomous region, pointed out that the growth of Xinjiang's economy is limited by many factors. First of all, water and usable land are unevenly distributed. Water is scarce, especially in spring. It evaporates quickly due to the long hours of sunshine. This has plagued water conservation projects.

Second, much of Xinjiang is isolated from the rest of China. Because it is so big, communication and transportation are backward and inconvenient. This, in turn, hinders economic development.

Third, the somewhat superficial geological surveys conducted so far fail to meet the needs of large-scale development. The authorities are still not sure exactly where the region's mineral resources lie.

And finally, there are not enough scientists and technicians to implement the development plans.

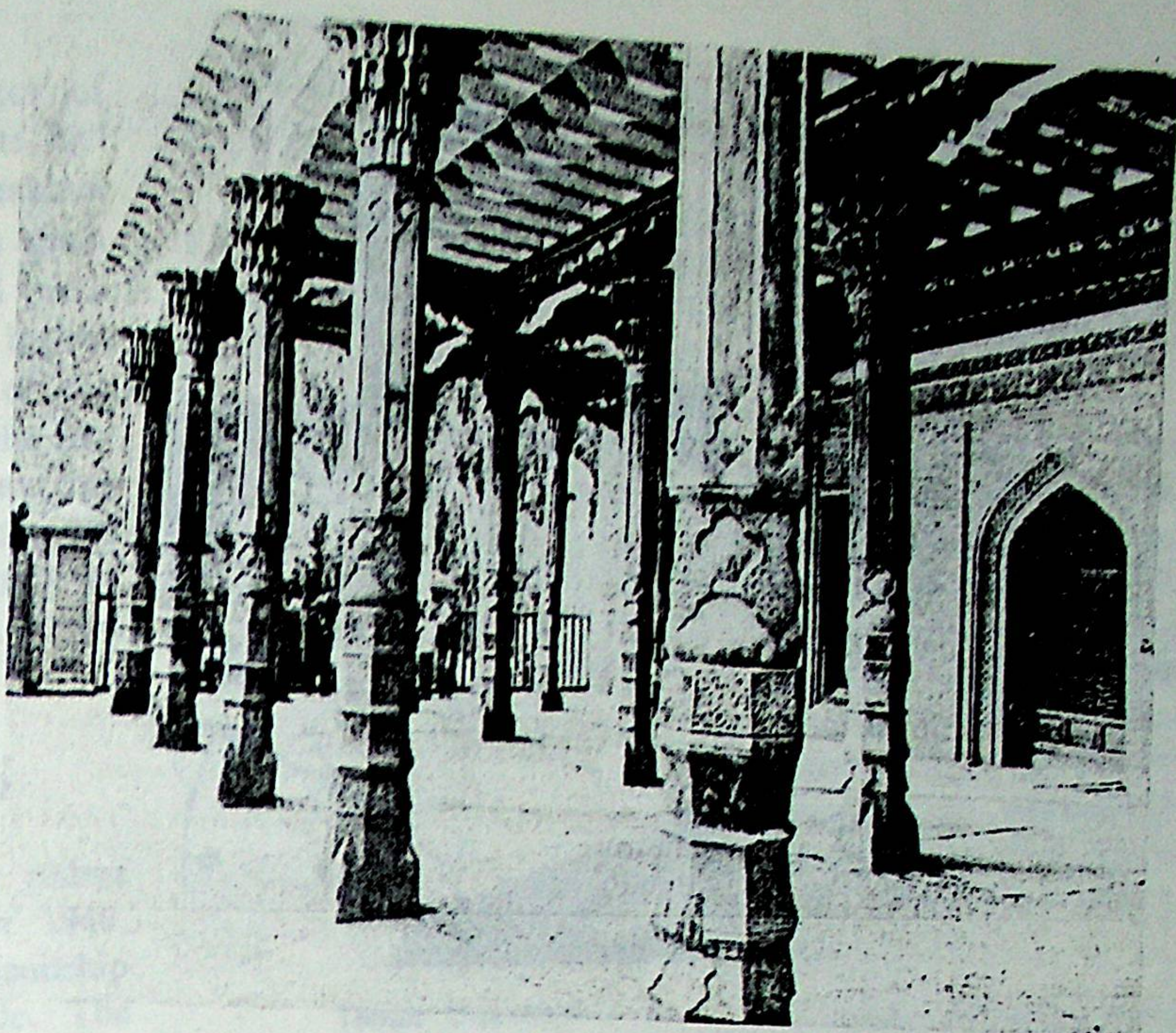
Amat went on to say that these disadvantages must be acknowledged and dealt with. Only then

## Ethnic Groups in Harmony

THE Uygur minority dominates Xinjiang, but there are also 46 other ethnic groups. Of the region's 13.3 million people, about 6.1 million are Uygur and about 5.4 million are Han. Most of the remaining people are Kazak, Hui, Mongolian, Khalkhas, Sibo, Tajik,

Uzbek, Manchu, Tahir and Tartar or Eluosi (Russian).

At the western tip of China, Kashi is a centre of Uygur culture. Young people and old, men and women, stroll the streets wearing traditional Uygur clothes. Young



Delicate carvings in a mosque.

can practical plans for exploitation be worked out.

He particularly stressed the importance of using foreign capital, advanced techniques and equipment in the large-scale development of Xinjiang. There are already eight joint ventures. Other forms of co-operation include prospecting.

Amat said more flexible policies will be adopted. Clients at home and abroad are warmly welcome to develop the area in many forms. They will receive preferential treatment and good facilities in the use of land for construction and in the supply of labour, raw and other materials, in the sale of products as well as in pricing and taxation.

women prefer dresses with intricate, colourful embroidery. Young men wear square hats. Older women usually cover their faces with large brown veils and old men wear their leather hats even in the hot summer. Tourists to the city enjoy riding through the colourful streets in donkey carts fixed with bright sunshades.

### We Are Satisfied

Aitgar Mosque is more than 540 years old. It can accommodate 7,000 worshippers. In Kashi more than 1,000 years of Islamic history and tradition have found their way into every aspect of life. About 6,000 mosques have been renovated and built. Moslems can attend religious services any time and listen to the Koran. The local government has seen to it that religious leaders can live comfortably and play their part in the political life of the municipality.

The leading imam of the Aitgar Mosque, Kacemu Kareage, said the Party's current policies and the situation of Moslems in Xinjiang satisfy them very much. Kareage has made a pilgrimage to Mecca.



The Uygur deputy director of Kashi's largest industrial arts factory, a woman named Reabiam said they have produced a great variety of hats, embroidered products, tapestry and musical instruments, to meet the needs of the Uygur people. Director of the factory was getting ready to leave for Urumqi to bring back gold. He will collect about six times as much as he did last year, to be used for women's jewelry.

### Deep Friendship

From listening to Uygur cadres who have grown up after 1949, one can see the deep friendship they feel for the Han people. The feeling is mutual.

In the Kashi Cotton Mill, 41.6 percent of the 4,300 employees are members of minorities. One of them is Hawayeye, the Party branch secretary, a Uygur. During breaks she can often be found in a mill courtyard entertaining workers of all ethnic groups with her funny stories.

Hawayeye lived in the countryside near Kashi before she became one of the first generation of industrial workers in Xinjiang. She and some other workers were later sent to the Zhengzhou Cotton Mill in Henan Province to learn techniques. Hawayeye's first Han teacher was Ge Haitang, a yarn spinner there.

The two women became as close as sisters and although they have never seen each other since, they still keep in touch by letters.

In the 1960s Hawayeye was sent to learn more advanced techniques in a mill in Shaanxi Province. In the 1970s, she went to study management in Qingdao, a coastal city in Shandong.

On a later trip to Shanghai Hawayeye met Hao Jianxiu, a former



Tomur Dawamat.

textile worker, who was then Minister of Textile Industry. In August 1983 when Hao visited Xinjiang as an alternate member of the Party Central Committee Secretariat, she came to see Hawayeye. They warmly embraced and Hao was invited to eat roast mutton in Hawayeye's home.

Turcun, the 35-year-old secretary to head the region's nationalities affairs commission, learnt standard Chinese from a Han engineer when he was a technician in a factory. After two years of hard study, he could read novels in Chinese. Later he received a higher education in the Central Institute for Nationalities and worked in Beijing for several months. He has been to several big cities in south and northwest China.

Turcun says he has always felt the warmth of the big multinational family. Once he went with some friends to a small county town in Jiangsu Province. To their surprise, a big Uygur festival came up. The local Han people cooked them a special meal in Uygur style. They were all moved to tears.

Turcun now can speak Chinese fluently and write reports about

the work of his office. To express his love for all the people of his country, he throws all his energy to his work and study. In 1985 he will take a course in ancient Chinese offered by a local university.

Tomur Dawamat, director of the standing committee of the Xinjiang people's congress and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, said that Xinjiang now has 180,000 minority cadres (43 percent of the total number of cadres in Xinjiang). Their advancement cannot be separated from the help of the Han cadres. He is one example of this.

Before Xinjiang was liberated, Dawamat was a poor peasant living in a small village in Turpan Prefecture. During the rent reduction and land reform movements two Han cadres gave him much help. He began to understand the meaning of exploitation, and how to serve the people. In the 1950s, he was elected village leader and then county leader. Later he went to Beijing to study in the Central Institute for Nationalities. Elected vice-chairman of the autonomous region in 1964, he received warm support and help from Wang En-mao, a Han who is first secretary of the region's Party committee.

"In the past few years the people of all minorities in Xinjiang have been very satisfied with the Party's policies," he said. "Happiness is linked to initiative. We are now all in high spirits. Our confidence and hopes form a boundless potential which is very important to the development of Xinjiang in the near future. □





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# REVIEW

**MALAYSIA:**

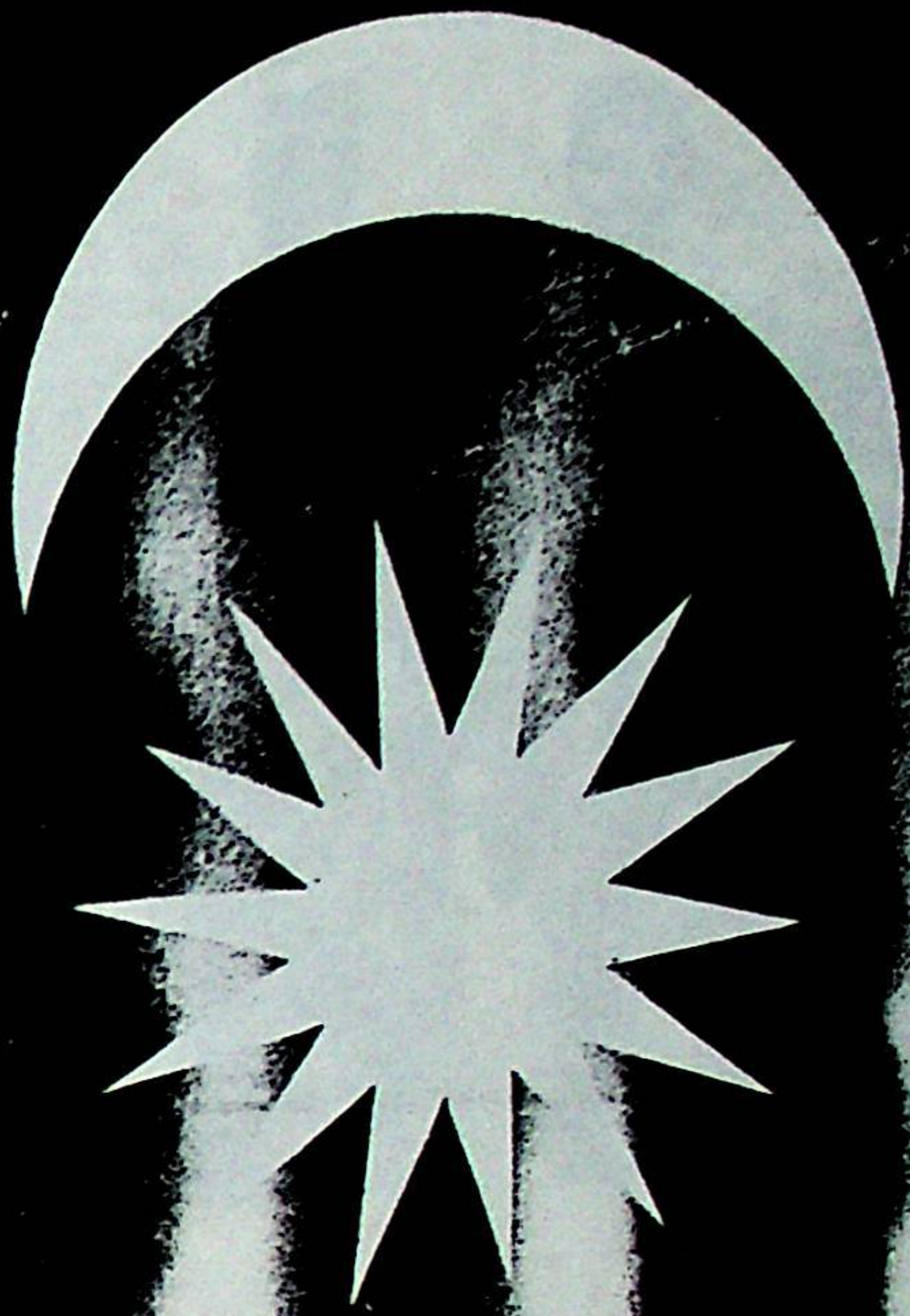
*MCA Shotgun Wedding*

**FOCUS ON SHIPPING:**

*High and Dry*

**ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK:**

*Funding Crisis*



## MALAYSIA'S INDUSTRY HEAVY BETTING



HON SANG

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Japan ¥600 — Korea Won 1200 — Laos US\$1.75 — Malaysia M\$4.50 — Nepal Rs 20 — New Zealand NZ\$2.20 — Pakistan Rs 20 — PNG Kina 1.50 — Philippines P 16 — Saudi Arabia SR 10  
Singapore S\$4 — Spain P 270 — Sri Lanka Rs 30 — Sweden SKr 23 — Taiwan NT\$70 — Thailand Baht 40 — U.K. £1.70 — U.S.A. US\$2.50



# Deadly winter games

The Soviets enter the sixth year of their Kabul adventure without breaking the ability of the rebels to hit back

By Husain Haqqani in Peshawar

Large-scale movements of Soviet and Afghan Government troops indicate a fresh winter sloop in the Shumali plains bordering the strategic Panjsher Valley. Large armoured convoys carrying thousands of troops are reported to have left Kabul for the southern flank of the valley — a move initially interpreted by Western diplomats as the beginning of a new offensive there. Mujahideen guerilla sources, while not ruling out another offensive before the end of winter, say the present troop movements are designed to forestall guerilla attacks and secure Soviet-supported government positions.

Fresh troop deployments also have been reported from Herat, bordering Iran, and there has been a build-up in two provinces — Paktia and Ningarhar — bordering Pakistan. The Soviets apparently plan to continue their war of attrition against Afghan civilians while trying once again to cut off mujahideen supply routes before the winter is over.

Since the Soviets occupied the country five years ago they have failed to deny the mujahideen civilian support and supplies, while securing their own munitions flow. However, 1984 was a relatively better year for the Soviets. Repeated offensives in the Panjsher are aimed at preventing guerilla attacks on the Salang highway connecting Kabul to the Soviet border, which will almost definitely resume after the winter. Increased military activity in provinces bordering Iran and Pakistan is meant to flush out guerillas from areas where they have access to cross-border support.

The Soviet operation in eastern Afghanistan has been a major one, but the Muslim guerillas have fought it fiercely since it began in mid-December. Elements of at least three Soviet divisions and thousands of Kabul government troops are involved in the offensive in Paktia and Ningarhar, which control the shortest guerilla supply trails from Pakistan's tribal area. Fighting has focused on the garrisons of Jaji and Chamkani, which the mujahideen have had under intermittent siege since last summer.

In one recent incident, resistance fighters from various groups combined to attack a large convoy of more than 500 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and other vehicles, destroying four tanks and killing 20 soldiers. The convoy was stalled 25 km short of both Jaji and Chamkani and

an unusually large number of resistance fighters — said by some mujahideen to be as high as 1,500 — participated in the ambush.

The Soviets have brought an addi-

tional 4,000 troops into their base at Samarkhel, 60 km from the Pakistan border, which serves as headquarters for operations in three eastern provinces. Samarkhel, which now contains an estimated 10,000 Soviet and Kabul troops, itself came under attack on 23 January, resulting in the destruction of several tanks and setting an ammunition depot on fire. The Afghan Government garrison at Barikot, 10 km from the Pakistan border, also has been under mujahideen siege and Afghan officials have admitted it is difficult to get essential goods into Barikot though they blame "repeated



Afghan guerillas: fighting fiercely.

## The Chinese connection

Kabul accuses Peking of supplying the resistance with arms and supporting what it calls terrorist activities

Afghanistan's Soviet-installed government has stepped up its propaganda campaign against China's support for the Afghan resistance. On 30 January, Kabul published the text of a letter from the central committee of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDPA) to its counterpart in the Chinese Communist Party. The letter urged an end to "interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan" and called for expansion of "mutually fruitful relations."

The next day, a protest note was sent to the Chinese Government by the Afghan Foreign Ministry, listing various types of weapons with Chinese markings captured from the mujahideen guerillas and accusing China of supporting terrorist activities. Observers of the Afghan situation say the protests reflect growing fears among Afghanistan's communist rulers of active Chinese involvement on behalf of the mujahideen, which is hurting the Soviet war effort.

Chinese weapons, particularly rockets and anti-aircraft guns, are avail-

able to the resistance in large quantities and they seem to be more effective in guerilla war than heavier, more expensive equipment from the West. Chinese arms supplement the Soviet weapons captured by resistance fighters and the fact that in most cases the parts and ammunition for both types is similar works to the advantage of the mujahideen.

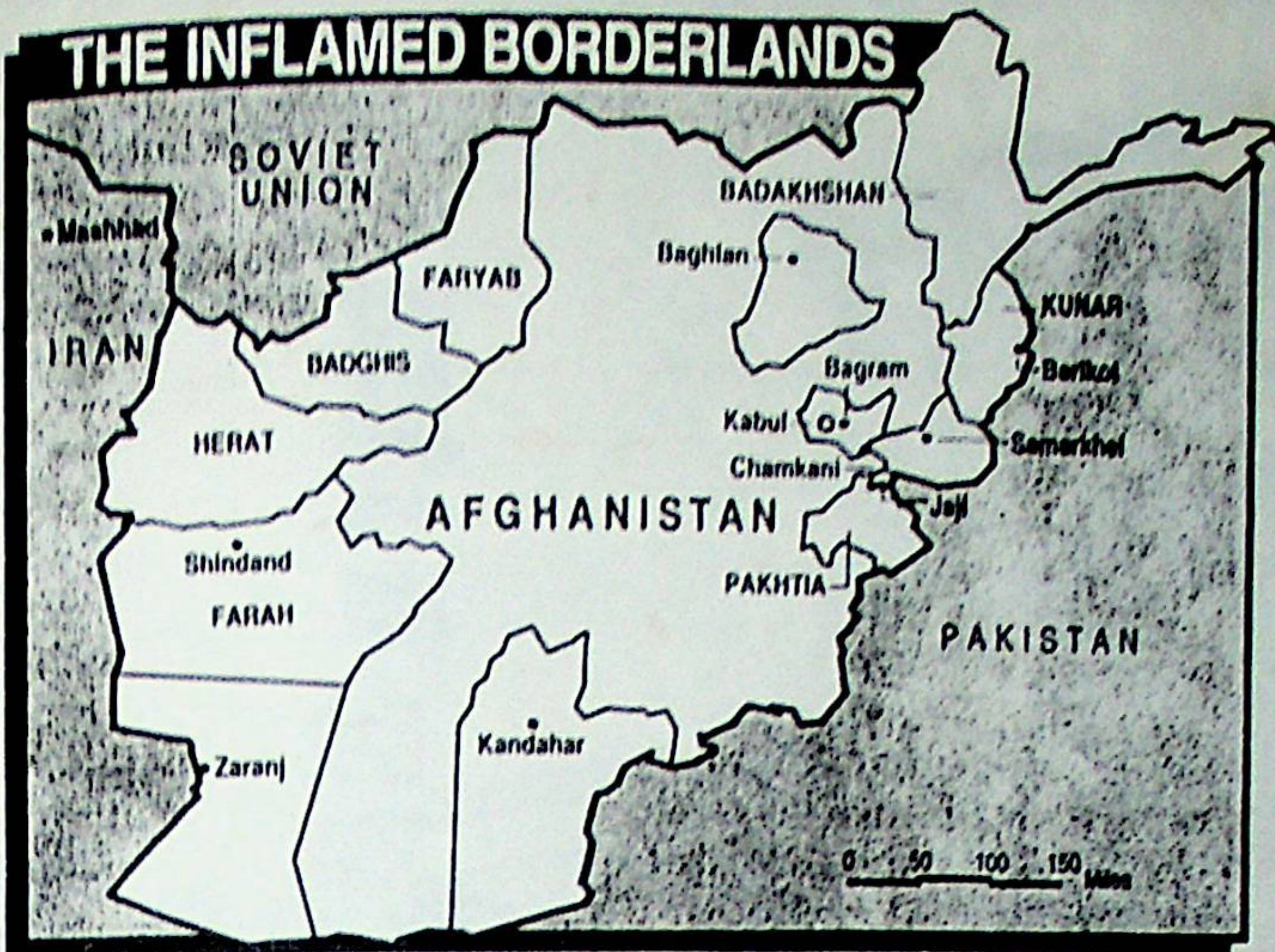
The PDPA letter, as reported by the official Afghan media, repeats charges of training camps in Xinjiang province for "counter-revolutionary bands" — a reference to the mujahideen. It says, "several hundred Chinese instructors are engaged in training Afghan bandits in the training centres inside Pakistani territory." It also alleges that the Chinese have supplied "approximately 2,000 heavy machine guns, 1,000 anti-tank rockets and nearly half a million rounds of ammunition to the anti-Afghan revolution agents through the Pakistani army," without giving any indication of the source of these figures.

The most interesting aspect of the



Pakistani shell-  
 Both Soviet and  
 regular Afghan  
 forces have suffer-  
 ed major losses in  
 recent battles and  
 two reliable muja-  
 hideen sources  
 claimed an Afghan  
 general from the  
 14th Division was  
 wounded in action  
 in Paktia in the  
 last week of Jan-  
 uary.

Besides defending  
 embattled garri-  
 sons, Soviet pres-  
 sure on mujahideen in the eastern pro-  
 vinces is linked to the security of  
 Kabul, where the resistance continues  
 to mount regular attacks. On the fifth  
 anniversary of the Soviet invasion last  
 December, Kabul was hit with rockets  
 for five consecutive days, some of  
 them falling near the Darulaman pre-  
 sidential palace. The attacks came  
 despite tight security, and Soviet  
 units were unable to do anything ex-  
 cept drop flares over the city from heli-  
 copters.  
 More recently, Western diplomats  
 reported a rocket-and-mortar attack  
 on the well-defended Bagram airbase



had the right of hot pursuit against  
 guerillas into Pakistan, followed by a  
 series of attacks on border villages and  
 refugee camps in Pakistan. In recent  
 months, the Karmal government has  
 accused Pakistan or Iran of cross-bor-  
 der raids whenever fighting has in-  
 creased inside Afghanistan.

Kabul's protest notes to Islamabad,  
 making these accusations, now invari-  
 ably contain threats of retaliatory ac-  
 tion. Diplomats and Pakistani officials  
 say the allegations of direct Pakistani  
 and Iranian attacks can be used as jus-  
 tification for more Afghan incursions  
 into the two countries — particularly  
 Pakistan. "Sealing the borders is a  
 tough task," observed a Western dip-  
 lomat. "Besides fire power against the  
 mujahideen in Paktia and Ningarhar,  
 the Soviets also want to apply  
 psychological pressure against Af-  
 ghanistan's neighbours. They think the  
 prospect of more Soviets along the bor-  
 der coupled with threats of hot pursuit  
 will frighten Pakistan into cutting  
 supplies through its territory." Pakis-  
 tani Foreign Ministry officials confirm  
 that the tone of Afghan protests over  
 alleged Pakistani border violations has  
 become "more threatening." But as  
 Pakistan does not officially acknowl-  
 edge supporting the mujahideen, there  
 is no way it will admit taking measures  
 to stop them even if it did.

Fighting has escalated in the region

near Kabul. The mujahideen destroyed  
 as many as 12 Soviet helicopters, tak-  
 ing advantage of a daytime snowstorm  
 which grounded aircraft.

The Soviets generally retaliate  
 against attacks on their bases and per-  
 sonnel by resistance forces with aerial  
 bombardment of civilian targets. But  
 the tactic has had only limited success  
 in reducing support for the muja-  
 hideen.

Over the past four months or so, the  
 thrust has been towards border pro-  
 vinces and the border itself. Soviet-in-  
 stalled Afghan President Babrak Kar-  
 mal warned last year that Afghanistan

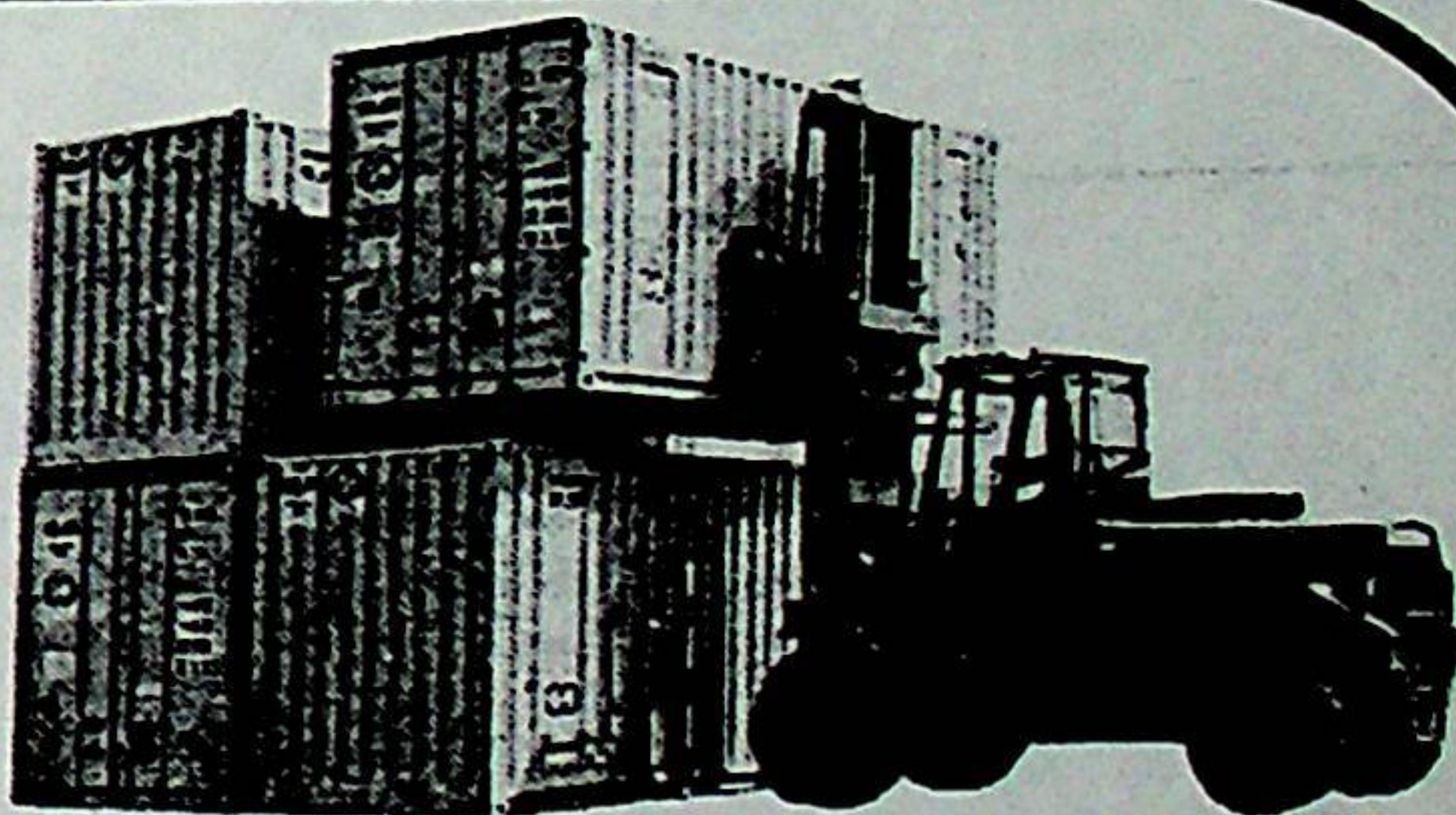
letter is the lengthy description of  
 Sino-Soviet cooperation in the early  
 stages of the Chinese revolution,  
 followed by the argument that  
 China should not object to "the  
 Afghan revolution" getting similar as-  
 sistance.

"The military assistance of the  
 Soviet Union to revolutionary China  
 was welcomed," the letter says, "but  
 the right of our revolution to obtain  
 such assistance is rejected [by China]."  
 It continues: "China, having such past  
 experience, should have stood up in  
 support of the April revolution, and  
 the Afghan patriots who have been and  
 are fighting for the same objectives for  
 which thousands of Chinese revolu-  
 tionaries sacrificed themselves in the  
 years of the revolutionary war."

No reference was made to the fact  
 that the Chinese party does not recog-  
 nise the PDPA as a revolutionary  
 party, nor to previous criticism by Af-  
 ghanistan of Chinese revisionism and  
 alliance with imperialism. The PDPA  
 made an indirect appeal for Chinese  
 economic assistance, saying "it would  
 have been understandable if Chinese  
 agricultural technology, tractors,  
 foodstuffs and Chinese machinery  
 were imported into the new Afghanis-  
 tan" and Chinese specialists helped in  
 the country's reconstruction.

But it expressed shock that China  
 chose to unite with "reaction and  
 counter-revolution." — HUSAIN HAQQANI

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# Islam, After Persecutions, Rebounds in



The New York Times / Christopher S. Wren

Id Kah Mosque, Kashgar, China. Islam is most active religion in China, which has about 13 million ethnic Moslems.

## Islam, After Persecutions, Rebounds in China

By **CHRISTOPHER S. WREN**

Special to The New York Times

**KASHGAR, China** — From a slender minaret of the Id Kah Mosque, a loudspeaker summoned the faithful to evening prayer.

A street vendor removed his cloth shoes, knelt on a piece of cardboard under a poplar tree and pressed his forehead to the ground in the southwestward direction of Mecca. Inside the rambling mosque in this heavily Moslem city in western China, a row of other worshippers facing the white-washed wall took up the affirmation of God's greatness — "Allah akhbar!"

Daily prayer, one of the five pillars of the Moslem faith, goes on today in the world's most populous atheistic country. After harsh but ultimately unsuccessful persecution by Maoist radicals, the authorities have allowed Islam to flourish and become China's most active religion.

Statistics from last year's nationwide census indicated that China has about 13 million ethnic Moslems, more than the combined populations of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Unofficial estimates put the number closer to 20 million.

Mehut Amin, an official of the Religious Affairs Bureau in Xinjiang-

Uighur Autonomous Region, estimated that there were seven million Moslem believers in the northwestern region alone. He said that Xinjiang also had 12,000 working mosques and 15,000 Moslem clergy and other functionaries.

"Where there are Moslems, there are mosques," Mr. Amin said during an interview in Xinjiang's capital of Urumqi. "Where there are mosques, there are religious personnel."

Peking has allowed a qualified return to overall freedom of religion in the last few years. It seems most tolerant of Islam, for reasons that go beyond a de-

Continued on Page A12, Column 1



# On Fabled Silk Road, Free Trade Thrives in China

By CHRISTOPHER S. WREN  
Special to The New York Times

KASHGAR, China — The other Sunday, Turgan Tokhti went down to the bazaar and found a new donkey to pull the wooden cart that provides the family transportation. It was a good sturdy donkey, only 2 years old, and he bought it for \$90.

The 48-year-old farmer knew how to drive a bargain at the bazaar, which he has frequented since he was a boy. "I go to sell rice and fruit that I don't need and I buy meat and cooking oil," he explained. "I go every week."

In the cool of the early morning, buyers and sellers converge every Sunday on this oasis town from the surrounding desert and mountains. Their carts, laden with produce and drawn by horse, donkey and even camel, clog the poplar-fringed roads. While Kashgar's mammoth white statue of Chairman Mao Zedong looks the other way, the crowds swell to more than 20,000 people in pursuit of a little private enterprise.

The weekly bazaar is probably the largest of 44,000 free markets that now flourish in China as a consequence of the agricultural changes introduced over four years ago by Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader.

## Bazaar an Old Tradition

Such markets operate ostensibly as an outlet for surplus crops and sideline goods that China's 800 million peasants are encouraged to produce under a responsibility system that lets them earn more for growing more. But the markets have by now become a regular source of food and consumer goods that state-run stores cannot provide.

The bazaar is an old tradition in Kashgar, which was an ancient city on the fabled Silk Road. Caravans paused here between the mountain passes of the snow-shrouded Pamirs and the forbidding Taklamakan Desert. When Marco Polo stopped in Kashgar seven centuries ago, he found the town prosperous but its inhabitants stingy. Perhaps he did not understand that the local Uighurs, a Turkish minority in Central Asia, have survived by their wits.

There is still no lack of entrepreneurial ingenuity at the Kashgar bazaar, which sells more in a single Sunday than most other Chinese markets can unload in a week. There are vendors of cart wheels, knitwear, tie-dyed silk, horse bridles and camel bells, window frames for traditional mud-brick houses and colorful rugs for yurts, the felt tents used by nomadic herdsmen.

## A Donkey Sells for \$35

The other Sunday, men wearing embroidered Uighur skullcaps hawked handmade black leather boots for \$12.50 a pair. A small girl would not part with her father's woolly sheep for less than \$60. An old man asked only \$35 for his tired donkey, which he was selling to trade up to a newer model.

Stalls with inviting aromas served up Uighur delicacies, from barbecued



Peasants debating the merits of a horse offered for sale at the Sunday bazaar in the oasis city of Kashgar, China. The weekly bazaar, which draws more than 20,000 people, is probably the largest free market in the country.

mutton shish kebab to a hard roll that looked suspiciously like a bagel. Scampering children and mangy dogs ran underfoot. Sheep, goats, donkeys, camels and chickens contributed to a cacophony that nearly drowned out the lively bargaining.

Some negotiations were conducted through middlemen who tugged at the sleeves of the haggling participants, trying to join them in a firm handshake that would seal the deal. But there were no fights, for all the shouting, and no uniformed policemen were in sight.

Kashgar, which is the westernmost city in China, also has the usual state-owned department store downtown, but it does not seem to do much business. On one visit, it was filled with people who sprawled on the concrete floor to escape the noonday heat outside. No one seemed to be shopping, only dozing.

## Private Commerce Revives

The Sunday bazaar on Kashgar's outskirts, and a smaller daily one in town, testify to the revival of private commerce in China. Both were closed during the Cultural Revolution, when Maoist radicals accused even minor peddlers of taking the capitalist road.

"Everything had to be bought through the state stores and many goods were not obtainable," Elsa

Shakir said. "But the exchange of goods still went on in the countryside outside Kashgar."

Mr. Shakir, a deputy commissioner of the Kashgar prefecture, estimated that his area now had more than 10,000 traders, of whom 2,000 to 3,000 worked full time. Some retain agents in Shanghai and Peking who can dispatch popular merchandise 2,500 miles or more to Kashgar in about 10 days. "If you went through the Government bureaucratic system, it would take a year," Mr. Shakir said.

The shrewdest merchants have become wealthy enough to buy their own trucks, which is rare in China. "Peasants have to wait one year to earn their income," Mr. Shakir said. "Traders can get their income in one day."

## Peasants Catch the Fever

But local peasants have also caught the fever. "Almost everyone goes to the bazaar," said Abdoushikur Yakub, the chairman of the Pahatekli commune outside Kashgar. "I go myself and it's wonderful."

Hussein Mohammed, a prosperous farmer, explained how he benefited

from the bazaar. He said that he was obligated to sell the state a ton of his rice last year for 21 cents a pound. He sold his remaining four tons of grain on the fluctuating free market for about 50 cents a pound.

His wife, Pasha Abdullah, said she went to the Sunday market to buy clothes for their seven children. "And the rest of the things my husband buys for me," she added dutifully.

The Kashgar authorities try to assess a 5 percent tax on each transaction at the bazaar. Merchants are also subject to a 3 percent income tax on their business. Mr. Shakir said there were no other restrictions as long as the traders did not sell contraband or engage in speculation.

The local inhabitants seem proud of their bazaar. "Last year I went to Yugoslavia and Rumania and I saw some of the markets, but they were drab and the quality of goods was poor," Mr. Shakir said. He attributed the Kashgar bazaar's success to the tolerant new policies from Peking. Then he confided, "If you go out to the countryside, business is even brisker."



# Islam, After Persecutions, Rebounds in West China

Continued From Page A1

also to avoid provoking the kind of fanaticism that has wracked Iran. The majority of China's Moslems belong to ethnic minorities that inhabit the sensitive frontier regions, Xinjiang, the borders Mongolia, the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, has 6 million Uighurs and 1 million Kazakhs, as well as lesser numbers of Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Tajiks and 500,000 Huis or Chinese-speaking Moslems. China's defense strategy hinges upon placating such minorities. A display of religious tolerance also enhances China's image among the nations of Asia, the Middle East and Africa. China has diplomatic links with nearly two dozen Moslem countries.

## Wary of Foreign Influence

Last month, Xi Zhongxun, a senior party official, urged Chinese Moslems to cultivate religious and cultural contacts with Moslems abroad. The ideological journal Red Flag explained last summer that such religious contacts would "play an important role in raising our country's political influence."

Mr. Xi also warned that Chinese Moslems "not allow any foreign religious organizations or persons to interfere" in their activities. But officials shrug off the risk that the fundamentalism of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini will catch on.

Abdullah Riyim, the head of Xinjiang's foreign affairs office, said that China's Moslems were nearly all orthodox Sunnis, with only the Tajiks following the Shiite sect common to Iran. And he added: "Khomeini is conservative. We are progressive." Mehut Amin said that because Chinese Moslems didn't speak Farsi, "Most of the masses could not understand what they broadcast."

Yet there is concern that the Ayatollah Khomeini not be given a pretext to meddle. A Moslem religious leader in Xinjiang said, "I am not worried because his influence will not reach this area."

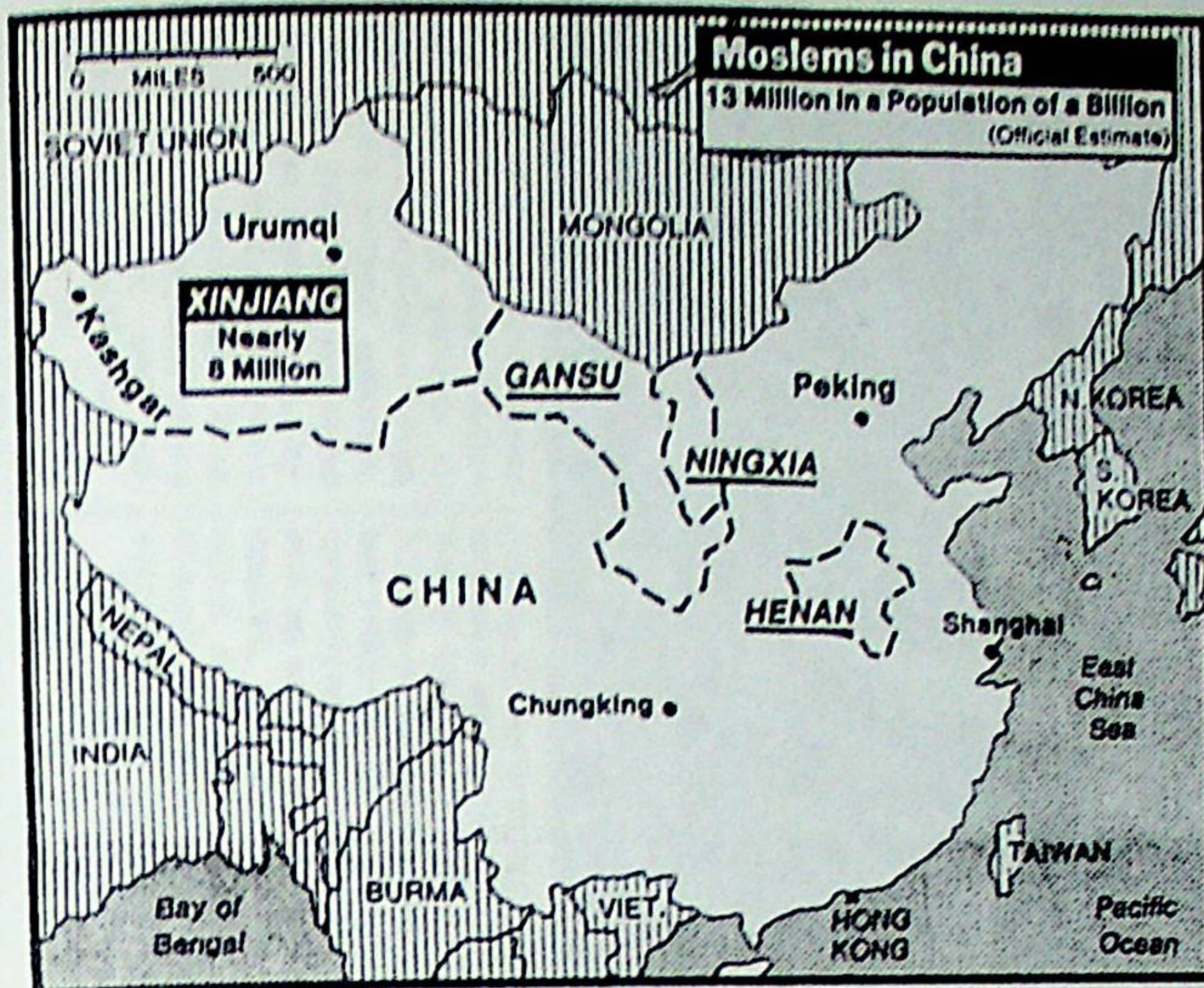
## Protection Under the Constitution

He went on to complain that "the Ayatollah wants to make Iran the center of Islam and move Islam into Iran, because the Ayatollah is Shiite." Chinese officials who arranged the interview asked later that the clergyman not be identified because his views might upset Teheran, with whom Peking has diplomatic ties.

China's treatment of its Moslems has clearly improved since the Cultural Revolution, when some clergymen were reportedly paraded through the streets with pig's heads tied around their necks.

Today, Xinjiang authorities tell Han Chinese to coop up their pigs rather than risk offending Moslems by letting them forage at large. And early this year, a Shanghai youth newspaper apologized for calling the Moslem prohibition against pork a "fetish."

Islam, like Christianity and Buddhism, is protected in theory by a new state Constitution adopted last December. "People have the right to believe or not to believe in religion," said Bahar Rahim, an Uzbek official in Xinjiang. But the watchdog Religious Affairs



The largest concentration of Chinese Moslems, according to 1982 census, is in Xinjiang. Other major areas include Ningxia, Gansu and Henan.

Bureau still monitors religious activities. Ismail Amat, the chairman of Xinjiang's regional government, said last year, "We must deal blows at all violations of law, crimes and counterrevolutionary sabotage carried out under the cloak of religion." He gave no examples.

## Clergymen Keep Followers in Line

Moslem clergymen are expected to keep their followers in line. In early November 1981 riots broke out in Kashgar after a Chinese killed a Uighur in a dispute. Kassem Karaji, the Imam of Kashgar's Id Kah Mosque, visited several mosques to reduce the tension. "I told the worshipers that they must have confidence in the government and that these people would be dealt with by law and nobody should interfere," he recalled.

Since 1980, Peking has allowed a score of Moslems each year to make the hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca that all devout Moslems must theoretically take in their lifetime. The visas are arranged through Pakistan because China does not have diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia.

In return, the pilgrims help promote China's ties with Moslem countries. When Saleh Mullah, a Kashgar clergyman, made his hajj in 1981, he and four other pilgrims stopped in Pakistan and Bangladesh on their way home as guests of the local Moslems.

The authorities have printed 70,000 copies of the Koran in Arabic to replace those lost in the Cultural Revolution, though Mr. Amin conceded that "it is still not enough." There are plans to print another 30,000 copies in Uighur next year. About 120,000 copies of the Hadith, a collection of the Prophet's sayings, has been printed in Uighur, Mr. Amin said.

Islam is strongest in ethnic areas like southern Xinjiang and perhaps no more so than in China's westernmost city of Kashgar. As early as the 9th century, the faith followed the caravans along the old Silk Road to Kashgar, where it supplanted Buddhism and Nestorian Christianity, before eventually dominating the rest of Xinjiang in the 14th century.

Because Islam took root before the Chinese subdued the local tribes and asserted control over the frontier, the Communist regime views it as indigenous. By contrast, it treats Christianity as a religion imported by foreign missionaries.

Imam Karaji, sitting on a carpeted floor of his home, said, "We have no exact statistics" about practicing Moslems in Kashgar. But he estimated that 4,000 to 5,000 worshipers attended daily prayers at his mosque, while 10,000 to 15,000 came for the Friday service. Moslems do not get Friday off, as in

officials have encountered public pressure to worship. "People say, 'Why don't you attend mosque?'" Mr. Amin said. But Bahar Rahim conceded that some Communist officials were also practicing Moslems.

The Pahatekli Commune outside Kashgar has 2,320 Uighur families organized into 43 production teams. It also has 43 mosques. "Each team has its own mosque," the commune's party secretary, Abdullah Ahmed, proudly said. "It is 100 percent Moslem here." He also reported that his commune had 240 Communist Party members, who are supposed to be atheists.

The authorities have rationalized the appearance of party officials at religious functions by claiming that they are respecting ethnic tradition. "It is according to their custom and does not mean that they believe in religion," insisted Mr. Amin.

The Red Flag article last summer assured party members that religion would wither away once China made sufficient scientific advances that its citizens "no longer need to look for spiritual sustenance in the illusory world of gods." But young Uighurs or Kazakhs are also looking to Islam as the best outlet for their ethnic identity in a nation run by the Han Chinese.

Imam Karaji insisted that he did not expect a return to suppression of religion. "I am confident that under the Communist Party of China, Islam will continue to be practiced," he said.

But the coexistence of Islam and Marxism in Xinjiang glosses over their inherent contradictions, and the Imam implied that there was no room for spiritual compromise.

"The Prophet only gives one heart to every individual," the 80-year-old Imam said. "He only gives one belief. Either you believe in Islam or you believe in Communism."

said they took advantage of the long lunch break.

The Government forbids religious education for those under 18, but Moslem beliefs get passed on at home. The China Youth Newspaper complained last year that parents in Xinjiang were "forcing" religion upon their children.

Imam Karaji agreed that "more and more young people are coming to the mosque." And in the square outside Kashgar's Id Kah Mosque, a young schoolteacher born after the Communists took power declared that "everyone believes in Islam here."

In parts of southern Xinjiang, some