

Jammu and Kashmir

State (pop., 2008 est.: 12,366,000), northern India.

Area 2,22,236 sq. km

Population 10,069,987 in 2001

Capital Srinagar (Summer), Jammu (Winter)

Principal Languages Urdu, Dogri, Kashmiri, Pahari, Punjabi, Ladakhi, Balti, Gojri and Dadri



Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Mr. N. N. Vohra



Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir Mr. Omar Abdullah

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Name	Portfolio(s)
Shri Tara Chand, Deputy Chief Minister :	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing & Urban Development 2. Municipalities 3. Elections 4. Printing & Stationery
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With an area of 39,146 sq mi (101,387 sq km), it occupies the southern portion of the Kashmir region of the northwestern Indian subcontinent and is bordered by Pakistan and China, by the portions of Kashmir administered by those two countries, and by the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. The land is predominantly mountainous and includes segments of the Karakoram and Himalaya ranges. Part of Kashmir's Ladakh region is included in the state. There are two major lowland areas: the plains of the Jammu region and the fertile and heavily populated Vale of Kashmir. The majority of the state's people are Muslims, although Hindus predominate in the southeastern Jammu area, and eastern Ladakh is

largely Buddhist. Formerly a princely state, Jammu and Kashmir became an Indian state in 1947, even as India and Pakistan were fighting for control of the entire Kashmir region.

state of India, located in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent in the vicinity of the Karakoram and western Himalayan mountain ranges. The state is part of the larger region of Kashmir, which has been the subject of dispute between India, Pakistan, and China since the partition of India in 1947. Formerly one of the largest princely states of India, it is bounded to the northeast by the Uygur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang and to the east by the Tibet Autonomous Region (both parts of China) and the Chinese-administered portions of Kashmir, to the south by the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, to the southwest by Pakistan, and to the northwest by the Pakistani-administered portion of Kashmir. The administrative capitals are Srinagar in summer and Jammu in winter. Area 39,146 square miles (101,387 square km). Pop. (2008 est.) 12,366,000.

Land

The vast majority of the state's territory is mountainous, and the physiography is divided into seven zones that are closely associated with the structural components of the western Himalayas. From southwest to northeast these zones consist of the plains, the foothills, the Pir Panjal Range, the Vale of Kashmir, the Great Himalayas zone, the upper Indus River valley, and the Karakoram Range. The climate varies from alpine in the northeast to subtropical in the southwest; in the alpine area, average annual precipitation is about 3 inches (75 mm), but, in the subtropical zone (around Jammu), rainfall amounts to about 45 inches (1,150 mm) per year. The entire region is prone to violent seismic activity, and light to moderate tremors are common. A strong earthquake centred in neighbouring Pakistani-administered Kashmir killed hundreds in Jammu and Kashmir state in 2005.

The plains

The narrow zone of plains country in the Jammu region is characterized by interlocking sandy alluvial fans that have been deposited by streams discharging from the foothills and by a much-dissected pediment (eroded bedrock surface) covered by loams and loess (wind-deposited silt) of Pleistocene age (about 11,700 to 2,600,000 years old). Precipitation is low, amounting to about 15 to 20 inches (380 to 500 mm) per year, and it occurs mainly in the form of heavy but infrequent rain showers during the summer monsoon (June to September). The countryside has been almost entirely denuded of trees, and thorn scrub and coarse grass are the dominant forms of vegetation.

The foothills

The foothills of the Himalayas, rising from about 2,000 to 7,000 feet (600 to 2,100 metres), form outer and inner zones. The outer zone consists of sandstones, clays, silts, and conglomerates, influenced by Himalayan folding movements and eroded to form long ridges and valleys called *duns*. The inner zone consists of more-massive sedimentary rock, including red sandstones of Miocene age (roughly 5.3 to 23 million years old), that has been folded, fractured, and eroded to form steep spurs and plateau remnants. River valleys are deeply incised and terraced, and faulting has produced a number of alluvium-filled basins, such as those surrounding Udhampur and Punch. As precipitation increases with elevation, the lower scrubland gives way to pine forests.

The Vale of Kashmir

The Vale of Kashmir is a deep, asymmetrical basin lying between the Pir Panjal Range and the western end of the Great Himalayas at an average elevation of 5,300 feet (1,620 metres). During the Pleistocene Epoch it was occupied at times by a body of water known as Lake Karewa; it is now filled by lacustrine (still water) sediments as well as alluvium deposited by the upper Jhelum River. Soil and water conditions vary across the valley. The climate is characterized by annual precipitation of about 30 inches (750 mm), derived partially from the summer monsoon and partially from storms associated with winter low-pressure systems. Snowfall often is accompanied by rain and sleet. Temperatures vary considerably by elevation; at Srinagar the average minimum temperature is in the upper 20s F (about -2°C) in January, and the average maximum is in the upper 80s F (about 31°C) in July. Up to about 7,000 feet (2,100 metres), woodlands of deodar cedar, blue pine, walnut, willow, elm, and poplar occur; from 7,000 to 10,500 feet (3,200 metres), coniferous forests with fir, pine, and spruce are found; from 10,500 to 12,000 feet (3,700 metres), birch is dominant; and above 12,000 feet are meadows with rhododendrons and dwarf willows as well as honeysuckle.

The Great Himalayas zone

Geologically complex and topographically immense, the Great Himalayas contain ranges with numerous peaks reaching elevations of 20,000 feet (6,100 metres) or more, between which lie deeply entrenched, remote valleys. The region was heavily glaciated in Pleistocene times, and remnant glaciers and snowfields are still present. The zone receives some rain from the southwest monsoon in the summer months—and the lower slopes are forested—but the mountains constitute a climatic divide, representing a transition from the monsoon climate of the Indian subcontinent to the dry, continental climate of Central Asia.

The upper Indus River valley

The valley of the upper Indus River is a well-defined feature that follows the geologic strike (structural trend) westward from the Tibetan border to the point in the Pakistani sector of Kashmir where the river rounds the great mountainous mass of Nanga Parbat to run southward in deep gorges that cut across the strike. In its upper reaches the river is flanked by gravel terraces; each tributary builds an alluvial fan out into the main valley. The town of Leh stands on such a fan, 11,500 feet (3,500 metres) above sea level, with a climate characterized by an almost total lack of precipitation, by intense insolation (exposure to sunlight), and by great diurnal and annual ranges of temperature. Life depends on meltwater from the surrounding mountains, and vegetation is alpine (i.e., consists of species above the tree line), growing on thin soils.

The Karakoram Range

The great granite-gneiss massifs of the Karakoram Range—which straddles the Indian and Pakistani sectors of Kashmir—contain some of the world's highest peaks, including K2 (also called Mount Godwin Austen), with an elevation of 28,251 feet (8,611 metres); at least 30 other peaks exceed 24,000 feet (7,300 metres). The range, which is still heavily glaciated, rises starkly from dry, desolate plateaus that are characterized by extremes of temperature and shattered rock debris. The Karakoram, along with other areas in and around the Himalayan region, is often called the "roof of the world."

Animal life

Among the wild mammals found in the state are the Siberian ibex, the Ladakh urial (a species of wild sheep with a reddish coat), the rare *hangul* (or Kashmir stag) found in Dachigam National Park, and black and brown bears. There are many species of game birds, including vast numbers of migratory ducks.

People

The cultural, ethnic, and linguistic composition of Jammu and Kashmir varies across the state by region. About two-thirds of the population adheres to Islam, a greater proportion than in any other Indian state; Hindus constitute most of the remaining third. There also are small minorities of Sikhs and Buddhists. Urdu is the state's official language.

The Jammu region

Jammu, winter capital of the maharajas (the former Hindu rulers of the region) and second largest city in the state, was historically the seat of the Dogra dynasty. More than two-thirds of the region's residents are classified as Hindu. Most of Jammu's Hindus live in the southeastern portion of the region and are closely related to the Punjabi-speaking peoples in Punjab state; many speak the Dogri language. The majority of the state's Sikhs also live in the Jammu region. To the northwest, however, the proportion of Muslims increases, with Muslims making up a dominant majority in the area around the western town of Punch.

Kashmiris of the vale and highlands

The Vale of Kashmir, surrounded by the highlands of the broader Kashmir region, always has had something of a unique character. The vast majority of the people are Muslims who speak Kashmiri or Urdu. Culturally and ethnically, their closest links are with peoples in the northwestern highlands of the Gilgit district of the Pakistani-administered sector of Kashmir. The Kashmiri language is influenced by Sanskrit and belongs to the Dardic branch of Indo-Aryan languages, which also are spoken by the various hill peoples of Gilgit; Kashmiri has rich folklore and literary traditions. The great majority of the population resides in the lower reaches of the vale. Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir's largest city, is located on the Jhelum River.

Ladakh

The Great Himalayas are an ethnic and cultural, as well as physical, divide. The portion of the Ladakh area (sometimes called "Little Tibet") located in northeastern Jammu and Kashmir is thinly populated. To the east, around Leh, the inhabitants are predominantly Buddhists of Tibetan ancestry who speak a Tibeto-Burman language (Ladakhi). In the region around Kargil to the west, however, the population is predominantly Muslim, most belonging to the Shi'ite branch of Islam.

Settlement patterns

The state's physiographic diversity is matched by a considerable variety of human occupation. In the plains and foothills of the southwestern region, colonization movements from the Punjab areas over a long period of time have produced numerous agricultural settlements. In the *dun* regions and lower

valleys of the foothills, where alluvial soils and the availability of water for irrigation make agriculture possible, the population is sustained by crops of wheat and barley, which are gathered in the spring (*rabi*) harvest, and of rice and corn (maize), gathered in the late summer (*kharif*) harvest; livestock also are raised. The upper sections of the valleys support a sparser population that depends on a mixed economy of corn, cattle, and forestry. Herders migrate to higher pastures each spring to give their flocks the necessary forage to produce milk and clarified butter, or ghee, for southern lowland markets. In winter the hill dwellers return to lower areas to work in government-owned forests and timber mills. Agricultural hamlets and nucleated villages predominate throughout the state; cities and towns such as Jammu and Udhampur function essentially as market centres and administrative headquarters for the rural populations and estates in the vicinity.

Economy

Agriculture

The majority of the people of Jammu and Kashmir are engaged in subsistence agriculture of diverse kinds on terraced slopes, each crop adapted to local conditions. Rice, the staple crop, is planted in May and harvested in late September. Corn, millet, pulses (legumes such as peas, beans, and lentils), cotton, and tobacco are—with rice—the main summer crops, while wheat and barley are the chief spring crops. Many temperate fruits and vegetables are grown in areas adjacent to urban markets or in well-watered areas with rich organic soils. Sericulture (silk cultivation) is also widespread. Large orchards in the Vale of Kashmir produce apples, pears, peaches, walnuts, almonds, and cherries, which are among the state's major exports. In addition, the vale is the sole producer of saffron in the Indian subcontinent. Lake margins are particularly favourable for cultivation, and vegetables and flowers are grown intensively in reclaimed marshland or on artificial floating gardens. The lakes and rivers also provide fish and water chestnuts.

Cultivation in Ladakh is restricted to such main valleys as those of the Indus, Shyok, and Suru rivers, where it consists of small irrigated plots of barley, buckwheat, turnips, and mustard. Plants introduced in the 1970s by Indian researchers have given rise to orchards and vegetable fields. Pastoralism—notably yak herding—long has been a vital feature of the Ladakh economy; breeding of sheep, goats, and cattle has been encouraged. The Kashmir goat, which is raised in the region, provides cashmere for the production of fine textiles. Some Gujjar and Gaddi communities practice transhumance (seasonal migration of livestock) in the mountains. In addition to supplying pasture for the livestock, the mountains also are a source of many kinds of timber, a portion of which is exported.

Resources and power

The state's limited mineral and fossil fuel resources are concentrated primarily in the Jammu region. Small reserves of natural gas are found near the city of Jammu, and bauxite and gypsum deposits occur in the vicinity of Udhampur. Other minerals include limestone, coal, zinc, and copper. The pressure of population on land is apparent everywhere, and all available resources are utilized.

All the principal cities and towns, including Leh, and a majority of the villages are electrified, and hydroelectric and thermal generating plants have been constructed to provide power for industrial development based on local raw materials. Major power stations are located at Chineni and Salal and on the upper Sind and lower Jhelum rivers.

Manufacturing

Metalware, precision instruments, sporting goods, furniture, matches, and resin and turpentine are the major manufactures of Jammu and Kashmir, with the bulk of the state's manufacturing activity located in Srinagar. Many industries have developed from rural crafts, including handloom weaving of local silk, cotton, and wool, carpet weaving, wood carving, and leatherwork. Such industries, together with the making of silverwork, copperwork, and jewelry, were stimulated first by the presence of the royal court and later by the growth of tourism; however, they also owe something to the important position achieved by Srinagar in west Himalayan trade. In the past the city acted as an entrepôt for the products of the Punjab region on the one hand and of the high plateau region east of the Karakoram, Pamir, and Ladakh ranges on the other hand. Routes still run northwestward into Gilgit via the Raj Diangan Pass and northeastward via the Zoji Pass to Leh and beyond. Handicraft manufacture also is important in Ladakh, particularly the production of cashmere shawls, carpets, and blankets.

Tourism

Although facilities for visitors to Jammu and Kashmir have improved considerably since the late 20th century, the state's potential in the tourist sector has remained generally untapped. Nevertheless, tourism has made a significant socioeconomic impact on Ladakh, which was largely isolated from outsiders until the 1970s. In addition to historical and religious sites, visitor destinations include the snow-sports centre at Gulmarg south of Baramula in the Pir Panjal Range, the hot mineral springs at Chumathang near Leh, and the state's many lakes and rivers. Mountain trekking is popular from July through September.

Transportation

Transport within Jammu and Kashmir remains a problem, although the Indian central government has made a substantial investment in developing the state's infrastructure. As a result of the India-Pakistan dispute over the Kashmir region, the route through the Jhelum valley from Srinagar to Rawalpindi, Pak., was closed in the late 1940s. This made it necessary to transform a longer and more difficult cart road through Banihal Pass into an all-weather highway in order to link Jammu with the Vale of Kashmir; included was the construction of the Jawahar Tunnel, which at the time of its completion in 1959 was one of the longest in Asia. This road, however, is often made impassable by severe weather, which causes shortages of essential commodities in the vale. A road also connects Srinagar with Kargil and Leh. Jammu is the terminus of the Northern Railway of India. In the early 21st century a rail link was completed between Jammu and Udhampur, with work well under way to extend the connection to Srinagar. Srinagar and Jammu are connected by air to New Delhi and other Indian cities, and there is air service between Srinagar, Leh, and Delhi.

Constitutional framework

The state of Jammu and Kashmir retains a special status within the union government of India. Unlike the rest of the states, which are bound by the Indian constitution, Jammu and Kashmir follows a modified version of that constitution—as delineated in the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954—which affirms the integrity of the state within the Republic of India. The union government has direct legislative powers in matters of defense, foreign policy, and communications

within the state and has indirect influence in matters of citizenship, Supreme Court jurisdiction, and emergency powers.

Under the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, the governor, who is head of state, is appointed by the president of India and is aided and advised by an elected chief minister and a council of ministers. The legislature consists of two houses: the Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha), comprising several dozen members elected from single-member constituencies; and the smaller Legislative Council (Vidhan Parishad), with most members elected by various groups of politicians, local administrators, and educators and a few appointed by the governor. The state directly sends six elected representatives to the Lok Sabha (lower house) and six members, elected by the combined Legislative Assembly and Council, to the Rajya Sabha (upper house) of the Indian Parliament. The High Court consists of a chief justice and 11 other judges, who are appointed by the president of India.

Health and welfare

Medical service is provided by hospitals and dispensaries scattered throughout the state, although accessibility to health care is somewhat lower in Ladakh than in other areas. Influenza, respiratory ailments such as asthma, and dysentery remain common health problems. Cardiovascular disease, cancer, and tuberculosis have increased in the Vale of Kashmir since the late 20th century.

Education

Education is free at all levels. Literacy rates are comparable to the national average. The two major institutes of higher education are the University of Kashmir at Srinagar and the University of Jammu, both founded in 1969. In addition, agricultural schools have been established in Srinagar (1982) and Jammu (1999). A specialized institute of medical sciences was founded in Srinagar in 1982.

Kashmir

A number of movements have variously sought a merger of Kashmir with Pakistan, independence for the region from both India and Pakistan, or the granting of Indian union territory status to Buddhist Ladakh. To contend with these movements, confront Pakistani forces along the cease-fire line, and support the administrative structure of Jammu and Kashmir state, the Indian union government has maintained a strong military presence there, especially since the end of the 1980s.

The Kargil area of western Ladakh has often been the site of border conflicts, including a serious incident in 1999. In May of that year Pakistan intensified artillery shelling of the Kargil sector. Meanwhile, the Indian army discovered that militants had infiltrated the Indian zone from the Pakistan side and had established positions within and west of the Kargil area. Intense fighting ensued between the infiltrators and the Indian army and lasted more than two months. The Indian army managed to reclaim most of the area on the India side of the line of control that had been occupied by the infiltrators. Hostilities finally ended when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan gave his assurance that the infiltrators would retreat.

However, shelling across the line of control continued intermittently into the early 21st century, until a cease-fire agreement was reached in 2004. Tensions in the region subsequently diminished, and India and Pakistan sought more cordial relations in general and greater regional cooperation. Limited

passenger bus service began in 2005 between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad on either side of the frontier, and, after the devastating earthquake in the region later that year, India and Pakistan allowed survivors and trucks carrying relief supplies to cross at several points along the line of control. In addition, in 2008 both countries opened cross-border trade links through the Kashmir region for the first time since the 1947 partition; trucks carrying locally produced goods and manufactures began operating between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad and between Rawalkot, Pak., and Punch, India.

Despite these advances, tensions have continued to erupt periodically in the region. One such incident involved facilities for Hindu pilgrims at the popular Amarnath cave shrine in Jammu and Kashmir state, high in the Himalayas east of Srinagar. In June 2008 a proposal by the state government to transfer a parcel of land to the shrine administrators to improve facilities for pilgrims was met with several weeks of riots and protests until the agreement was changed to a temporary occupation of the land during the annual pilgrimage.

Chinese interests

China had never accepted the British-negotiated boundary agreements in northeastern Kashmir. This remained the case following the communist takeover in China in 1949, although the new government did ask India—without success—to open negotiations regarding the border. After Chinese authority was established in Tibet and reasserted in Xinjiang, Chinese forces penetrated into the northeastern parts of Ladakh. This was done mainly because it allowed them to build a military road through the Aksai Chin plateau area (completed in 1956–57) to provide better communication between Xinjiang and western Tibet; it also gave the Chinese control of passes in the region between India and Tibet. India's belated discovery of this road led to border clashes between the two countries that culminated in the Sino-Indian war of October 1962. China has occupied the northeastern part of Ladakh since the conflict. India refused to negotiate with China on the alignment of the Ladakhi boundary in this area, and the incident contributed significantly to a diplomatic rift between the two countries that began to heal only in the late 1980s. In the following decades, China worked to improve its relations with India, but there has been no resolution to the disputed Ladakh frontier.
