

# **Silk Road to Sinkiang**

**IQBAL M. SHAFI**

**1988**



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## DEDICATION

Dedicated to my wife Shahnaz and our children Adil, Mehnaz and Aali who accompanied me to China and encouraged me to write this book.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Any errors of omission or commission, however, remain my personal responsibility and corrections or guidance received from any quarter will be appreciated.

IQBAL SHAFI



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# THE BOOK

Apart from the *Foreword by Sahabzada Yaqub Khan*, a Prologue and an Epilogue, the book consists of *five main chapters and as many as fifteen appendices* containing a wealth of information about travel and tourism in China.

*Chapter I* carries the reader from Islamabad to Khunjrab Pass along the Karakoram Highway. There is interesting description of places of historic significance on the way like Taxila, Mansehra, Thakot and the Buddhist rock carvings along the Indus.

*Chapter II* describes the history and the geography of Xinjiang (Sinkiang)—the Uigur Autonomous Region contiguous to Pakistan. It also narrates the colourful history of the ancient Silk Road and the fascinating cultural as well as intellectual inter action of ancient civilizations, religions and peoples.

*Chapter III* takes such historic cities as *Tashkurghan, Kashgar, Urumqi and Turfan* on the Northern arm of the Silk Road and describes their past history, their characteristics and present situation.

*Chapter IV* provides information on cities like *Yarkand, Karghalique and Khotan* which are not only legendry but also provide a window on their ancient glory while successfully engaged in the present day drive for modernisation.

*Chapter V* has been specially written as a *guide for the intending traveller between Pakistan and China* and provides such vital information as *how to obtain a visa, prepare for the journey, where to go, what to see etc.* The *fifteen appendices* also provide important information such as *various addresses with phone numbers, custom regulations of both China and Pakistan, Road distances and Travel Time Charts, Conversion Tables, Chronology of Chinese Dynasties, Useful Chinese phrases for everyday use etc.*

Most of all, as remarked by Sahabzada Yaqub Khan in the Foreword, the book "will help to promote greater understanding and friendship between Pakistan, China and those travellers of diverse nationalities who feel encouraged to undertake the exciting and unforgettable journey across the Khunjrab Pass." The book also contains a number of maps and excellent colour photographs of people and places.



### THE AUTHOR

Educated at the Aligarh Muslim University, Brigadier Iqbal Shafi served in the Army with distinction for over 30 years and was awarded Sitara-e-Imtiaz. At the time of his induction in the Foreign Service of Pakistan in 1978, he was serving as Pakistan's Defence Attache in China. Currently a Director of the Aga Khan Foundation, he visits China frequently.

Brigadier Shafi is a qualified interpreter in the Chinese language, lectures on China frequently, is an Associate Scholar of Pakistan Institute of Strategic Studies and has contributed research papers such as "The Long March of the Chinese Army" and "A Short History of Muslims in China." He is also Vice President of the All Pakistan-China Friendship Association.

The present publication "Silk Road to Sinkiang" is a labour of love and he is presently working on a book on Central Asia with special reference to Sinkiang.