

Issue Date: November 28, 1980

Afghanistan: Soviets Annexing Vital Border Area; Other Developments

Soviet forces had moved into the largely uninhabited Wakhan salient in northeastern Afghanistan and were gradually annexing it, a Pakistani news agency reported Nov. 4.

The strategic narrow strip of territory bordered Pakistan and China as well as the Soviet Union. The Soviet troops had been "quietly busy, for the last six months" in taking over the Wakhan salient, where there was "insignificant insurgency," the Pakistani news agency said.

According to the report, the Soviet takeover "would thus make Pakistan feel more vulnerable and deprive China from having any direct access to Afghanistan."

In other military developments, six Afghan helicopter gunships, believed to be piloted by Soviet personnel, Oct. 24 strafed two Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan, killing three refugees and wounding seven. The attack was the third reported in four weeks against Pakistani territory. [See 1980 Afghanistan: [Pakistan Border Post Raided](#)]

Insurgent forces Oct. 26 attacked the Jalalabad airport and destroyed two helicopter gunships and three tanks guarding the field, rebel sources in Peshawar, Pakistan claimed. The airport, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) from the Khyber Pass, served as the principal base for Soviet military aircraft operating in the region.