

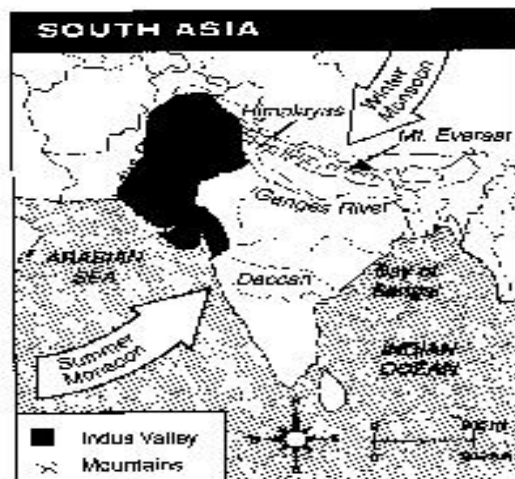
# The Geography of South Asia

In ancient times the region of South Asia was known simply as India. Today the region is divided into the countries of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

South Asia has mountains, plains, and plateaus. At the southern edge of this region is the Arabian Sea. To the north lay the tallest mountains in the world, the Himalayas (hīh•muh•LAY•uhs).

Two important rivers begin in the Himalayas. These are the Ganges (GAN•jeez) and Indus rivers. Both rivers run through the northern part of South Asia. People in ancient India first settled in the fertile plains of the Indus Valley along the Indus River. The land along the Ganges River was settled next. The southern part of India took longer to settle because it is hilly and rocky. This area is known today as the Deccan (DEH•kuhn).

All of South Asia is affected by the summer monsoon, the season when



moist winds blow from the Indian Ocean. Most of the region's rain falls during the summer. In the winter, the monsoon winds reverse direction and little rain falls.

## Review

### CHECK UNDERSTANDING

1. What are some of the landforms in South Asia?
2. What two important rivers in South Asia begin in the Himalayas?

### THINK CRITICALLY

3. How do you think monsoons affected trade and agriculture in ancient India?

### SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

**Research Activity** Use library resources to find out more about a river in South Asia. Write a paragraph describing the river's length, source, and how it has affected people.