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## The Kashmir Princess

The Kashmir Princess was an Air India plane chartered by the Chinese government in 1955. On April 11, it was carrying delegates and journalists from Hong Kong to Indonesia. China's president, Zhou Enlai, was due to be among them. He was delayed due to requiring emergency surgery, though his change in travel plans was a secret. When the plane reached 5,500 meters (18,000 ft) after takeoff, a bomb in the landing gear exploded. Three of the crew survived, but everyone else onboard was killed.

The obvious theory was that the bomb was an attempted assassination of the president. Investigators checked everyone that had been in contact with the plane and found one suspicious person: a Hong Kong janitor named Chow Tse-Ming. When they tried to find him, he'd gone missing. Authorities discovered that he'd been living using three different aliases and had spent his last few days in Hong Kong spending much more money than a janitor would typically have.

Chow Tse-Ming had fled Hong Kong on a flight to Taiwan on an airline that performed regular flights for the CIA. An American-made detonator was found among the wreckage. The Chinese were convinced that the US had been involved, and twice asked the Nixon administration about the events. Henry Kissinger is said to have commented that planting a bomb on a plane in Hong Kong was beyond the CIA's capabilities.

The most common speculation was that the CIA supplied equipment to Taiwanese agents, who had put together the plot to assassinate Zhou. Yet subsequent revelations have shown another conspiracy. Zhou Enlai never had surgery; he'd been tipped off about the assassination attempt in advance. Rather than stop it, he'd let it go ahead. An attempted assassination by the Taiwanese was a good public relations move for the People's Republic, and Zhou was able to use the publicity to his advantage when he arrived at the conference in Indonesia three days later.