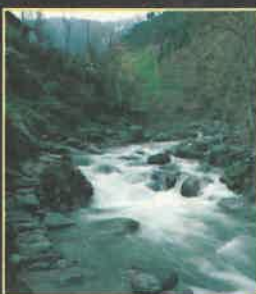




Portrait of North West Frontier Province



Ihsan H. Nadiem



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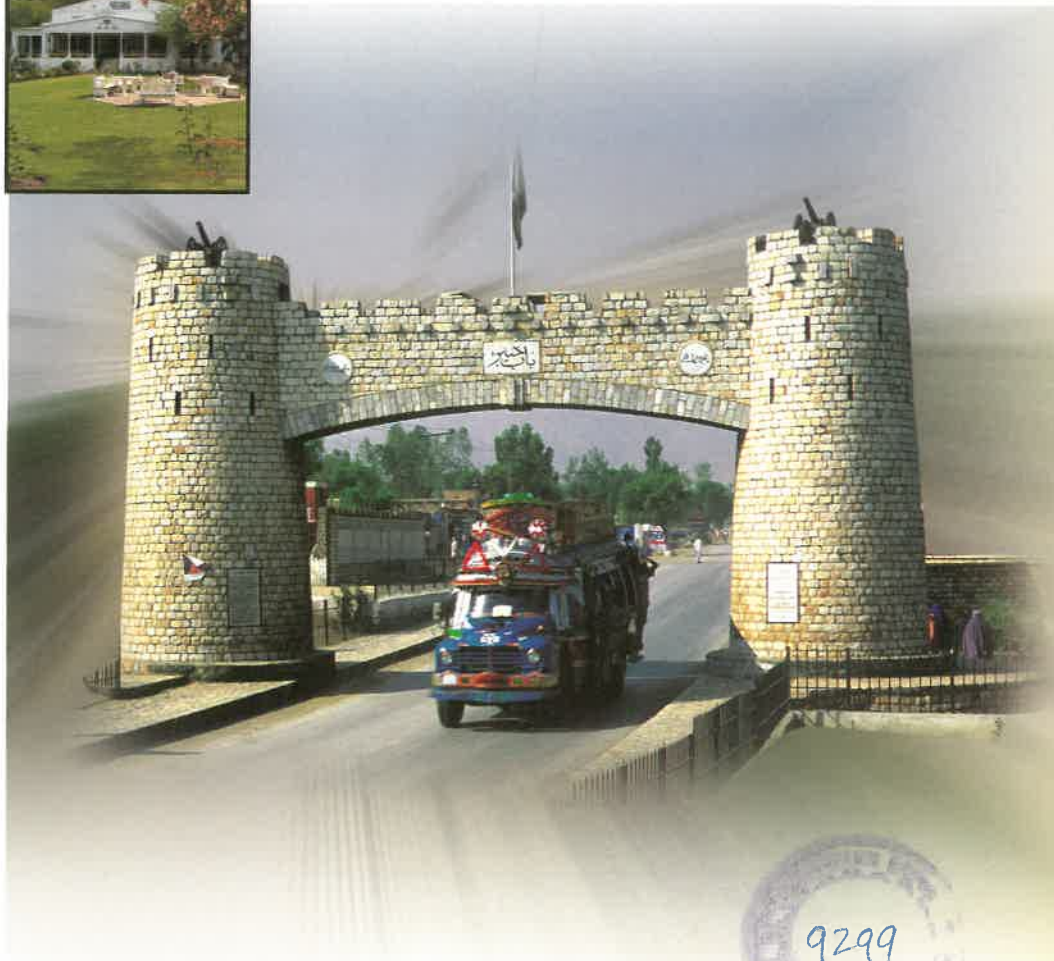
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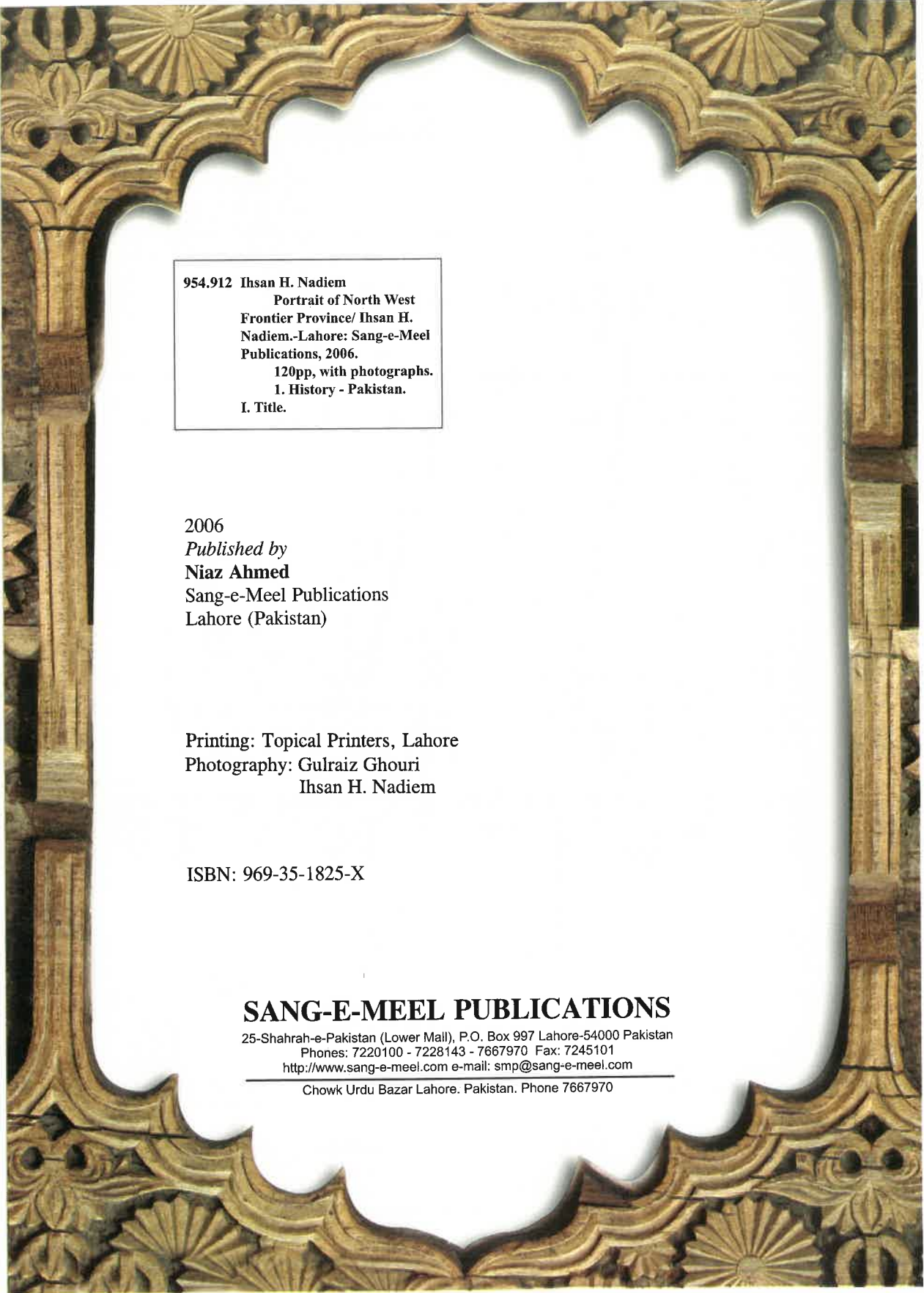
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To
The amicable people of
NWFP,
who, with their
charismatic character,
make such a magnificent
cultural mosaic.



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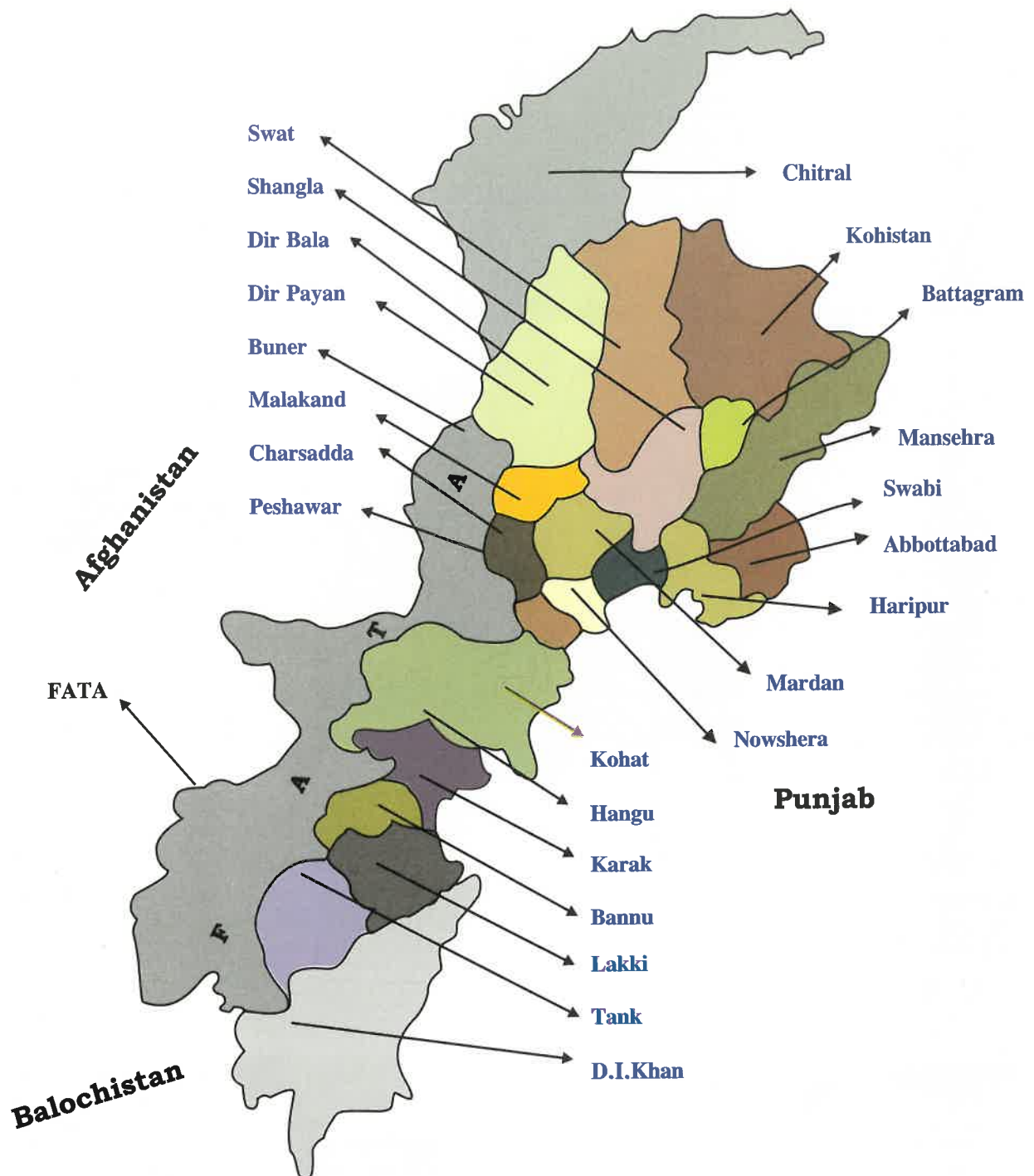
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Portrait of
**NORTH WEST
FRONTIER PROVINCE**



Ihsan H. Nadiem

Map of
North West Frontier Province
(Showing districts)





Preface

It was a few years back that a series of books under the cover 'Portrait' was planned to deal with all the four provinces of Pakistan. The aim was to put together the facts of each of the federating units by way of its general physiography, climate, terrain, history, regions, cultural traits etc. This was planned to be done in such a way that the whole portrait of the province would come up with sharp focus on it but in as few words as possible. As the details in any case could not be entertained within its limitations it was thought to be a good compendium that could be widely owned and benefited to introduce in its entirety the particular region about which it dealt. The visual aspect of each of it, however, was to be taken care of very particularly. In this way all of these were to be profusely illustrated, giving the exotic flavour of their natural beauty and heritage attraction even while thumbing through each of them. The first in the chain, **Portrait of Sindh**, was published in 2002. The next in the same series '**Portrait of NWFP**' is in your hands now. After this publication, it is planned to go to **Portrait of Balochistan**, finally to move on to **Portrait of Punjab**. After all these monographs come out, it will easily become the four-volume **Portrait of Pakistan**.

It was quite an ambitious plan and could not possibly be materialised unless with special input by certain quarters. Chaudhry Niaz Ahmad, like always, was the force behind such a programme in his quest for spreading knowledge especially about Pakistan. While I was made responsible for their text and illustrations, he resolved to devote himself to the aim of bringing out a well-designed and attractively printed monograph of each Portrait. The efforts put in the first of the series encouraged us to continue with the remaining treatises as per programme.

While I am thankful to Chaudhry Niaz Ahmad for taking special care of the series of the Portraits of the Pakistani Provinces, I am equally indebted to Chaudhry Afzaal Ahmad, who, having his finger on the pulse of reading public, has always stood with me by giving me new ideas on their improvement. He has a very discerning eye for getting such jobs done at the best levels at their different stages of printing.

My first exposure to the region of North West Frontier was back in 1962 when I joined the Italian Archaeological Mission at Swat as an Archaeological Scholar and independently excavated at Panr. In the following two years I dug the Stupa site of Saidu I and a small, presumably prehistoric, site of Saidu II. In the later years (1974-1978) I was headquartered at Peshawar for more than four years as Officer-in-Charge of the Archaeological Sub-Regional Office, where I was responsible for administering and maintaining the antiquity and co-ordinating research in the field of archaeological heritage in the areas of the whole of NWFP and the districts of Attock and Rawalpindi of the Punjab Province. This afforded me with a great opportunity of visiting even the remotest parts of the Province and meeting not only the learned people of particular areas

but also interacting with common men, many of whom with immense knowledge of the region and the tract. My own Pukhto, learnt during the days of stay at Swat but polished due to my close contacts with my in-laws (of the Yousafzai tribe) came always handy and enabled me take first-hand notes of personal communications.

My senior colleagues and very good friends in the Peshawar University's Department of Archaeology and the Peshawar Museum, namely Farzand Ali Durrani, Farid Khan and Fidaullah Sehrai were all like encyclopaedias of different periods of archaeology of NWFP in their own right. During my stay at Peshawar, though also on my visits before and after it, they were not only always ready to discuss the subject with unflinching enthusiasm but also gave their time to accompany me to so many sites in my pursuit of furthering knowledge or solving a pedantic enigma or riddle. Also Muhammad Sa'id from the Geography Department of the same University was very helpful in letting my bookish knowledge translated into practical experience about the geographical and geological facts of the province. About quarter of a century later, Fida's archaeologist son, Nidaullah Sehrai, was most helpful in updating my information on certain sites where the research work still continued, or was taken up most recently.

Apart from these brethren-in-arms there were some other friends like Dr. Shamsur Rehman and Dr. Muhammad Mushtaq – both from Hazara and well-versed with its terrain and history that too while in medical profession – who, with their very intelligent and penetrating questions gave me additional ideas to probe into the past. (The former was then an Associate Professor of medicine in the Khyber Medical College, Peshawar, while the latter Civil Surgeon, Central Government Hospital at Rawalpindi).

I will never forget the hospitality of the friends named in the preceding two paragraphs, and of numerous others whom I cannot mention individually for want of space. One instance may be of interest to mention here. One of the (real, big) Khans that I met in NWFP was in the Dir-Bajaur area. He had helped us with his men in many ways – from guiding to playing guard in remote and Agency areas. He was kind enough to invite us over the dinner. However, as we returned to his *Hujra* it was already getting late. I showed a bit of reluctance to wait further as the way to our next stop in Saidu Sharif, Swat was not considered safe because of the hilly, narrow tracks of those days for our long-chassis Toyota Land Cruiser with equally undependable new Karachiite driver not accustomed to those roads and sharp turns. I couldn't imagine our Khan to be more furious as he took it an attack on his honour. I instantly understood that he meant business, when he said 'either feast or death'. I knew he had already slaughtered a '*dumba*' (a kind of a sheep with thick fatty tail) – a sign of honouring the guest. A refusal to this in the Pathan society is taken as insult and an unforgivable commission because they could kill or get killed for honour. Well, we stayed preferring the lesser of the risks – driving at night instead of unceremonious death. I am thankful to all of them and hope to give some details in my book, *Inside Pakistan Archaeology: A narrative in first person*".





I may also mention here that in this treatise the words and terms Pushtoon, Pukhtoon or Pathan and Afghan have been used in one and the same sense without going into the finer touch of academic differences raised by some writers. It would have been too far from the general scope of the book, and too long to deal with in few pages if entered into such a debate of the sorts.

It may also be mentioned here that this treatise deals with the study of NWFP as a political entity. This is precisely why Northern Areas, which are under the control of Federal Government and even technically not part of this province, have been left out. However, the FATA on its western fringes having the cultural and social affinity with the settled areas of Pukhtoon, and sharing common beliefs and traits with them, have been included for study along with their adjoining areas with the same bearings.

In dealing with the present day North West Frontier Province, standing too close to one of the most burning spots of the world, was no easy a task. As this treatise does not make any claim to be trespassing into the realm of political sphere even remotely, here it was an unavoidable task to make certain references, though mostly generalised and in the passing.

In planning the photographic side of the present Portrait, in addition to using some of my own pictures, I took the help of the professional photographer, Gulraiz Ghouri of the Foto Bank (gulraizghouri@hotmail.com), who is the recipient of many awards in this field. With his input, I am sure the resultant visual impact of the whole book would not only be enhanced but will also stand more representative of the beauty of the places that are portrayed. I would be only too miser if I do not acknowledge with thanks his indefatigable nature of working on the selection of the photographs.

Like always, M. Rafique Dogar, journalist, columnist and author has been very kind to spare his time to discuss matters pertaining to the part of Islamic as well as contemporary history. I am thankful to him too.

It may be recorded here that in the mention of the time scale, Gregorian calendar has been used in this monograph, adding the letters BC for Before Christ and CE for the Christian Era. For the Hijra year, which though seldom occurs, the letters AH precede the figure. When there is no mention of any of these letters it should be taken as CE without any ambiguity. Similarly the measures of length and volume have been given in the metric system, while temperatures in Centigrade sometimes also give their equivalent in Fahrenheit in parentheses, as is also the case with kilometres and miles.

Lahore.

Dated: October 24, 2005.

Ihsan H. Nadiem

Former Director of Archaeology, Pakistan
& University Professor of Architecture.
Email: inadiem@yahoo.com





Kalam in Winter. Swat



General view of the River Kunhar.

Preamble

Pakistan though a young nation, inherited a long history and a wide spectrum of unique cultures and civilisations. The whole country is replete with sites and signs of ancient glory that its different regions saw over a period of some 500,000 years. If the Pothohar area or the Rohri hills present a milieu of Old Stone Age, the famous Harappan Civilisation, going back to more than five thousand years, flourished over the whole of Indus Valley, and beyond. The exquisite art and culture of Gandhara, some two thousand years ago, prospered in the Vale of Peshawar and adjoining areas while the Salt Range is witnessed overflowing with monuments of the Hindu Shahiya period that followed this great culture. The extraordinary signs of the Muslim period, with its earliest period in the early decades of the 8th century CE, are found scattered all over the country, most outstanding among them being at Banbhore, Lahore, Multan, Thatta, Rohtas, Peshawar etc.

The country consists of four major administrative entities known as provinces. While three of these provinces – Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan – owe their nomenclature to some specific regional quality or a sound ethnical basis the fourth one, North West Frontier Province, derives its name from its location, as it lies toward this direction of the country.

The Name

The province had been known by different names like Charene and Gandhara in its long and chequered history. It became part of Punjab since the Sikhs started gradually annexing it to their domain in 1818. When the Punjab was annexed by the British to their Indian dominion in 1849, the North West Frontier Province, being part of it, came under British suzerainty. Subsequently, it became a separate administration unit under a Commissioner in 1901, and a Governor's province in 1932. Since then it is this identity that has stuck to it to this day.

The NWFP is also quite often called as *Sarhad* – meaning Frontier – in its shorter form emanating from the vernacular or Urdu term “*Shumal Maghribi Sarhadi Suba*”. Some of its prominent litterateurs and artists, and even political or social bigwigs, had pride in using the word *Sarhadi* (belonging to *Sarhad* or Frontier) as a part of their names by themselves, or by their disciples and followers.



A herdsman with his herd of goats in Swat.

There also had been movements in the recent past, though mostly political in nature, in favour of changing its name to represent its character and cultural entity as a Province. However, being an amalgamation of varied ethnic groups and a mixture of races poles apart from each other but well-knit into a beautiful cultural mosaic, as also having their own regions or pockets within the Province where they have their particular type of culture and cultural traits, the task seemed to be stupendous. In 2005 the government has constituted a committee not only to deliberate on this issue but also with a specific task to come out with a definite suggestion or recommendation to change the name.

The job becomes all the more monumental against the fact that nearly one-third of the population of NWFP is non-Pukhtoon. In the tribal areas, they are called *Hamsaya* or *Kadwal*. In the border areas of Hazara and Derajat, their social norms resemble more closely to those in Punjab and Kashmir rather than the main Pushto-speaking centres of the Province. Clan groups remain important, but mainly as social networks, particularly for marriages. Chitral has a separate language and culture of its own, which becomes visible as soon as one crosses over from Dir. The carrying of arms, of which a Pukhtoon is so proud of in showing or even using, is not only uncommon but possibly absent in this distant land of Chitral. The most distinct amongst the inhabitants of this area are the indigenous Kalash, people now confined to just a few small valleys. Their way of life is rooted in the worship of ancestral spirits and trees. However, due to the conversions of the Kalash to Islam, their age-old traditions are fast disappearing. In addition, there are also other ethnic clusters, even if small in numbers, grouped at different places in the Province.

As to its present name, North West Frontier Province, bearing in it only a directional criterion, there could have been another dimension as well. It might have been earned because of its notable role as a transitional, or a buffer, zone between the South Asia Subcontinent, practically under subjugation of the British, and the areas lying beyond it towards north and west, mainly outside the authority of the Islanders from the Atlantic. Its physical location between the highland massif of Central Asia and the plains of the Indus, and the rest of the Subcontinent beyond, added to its vital importance. The above conclusion remains true even today, and as part of Pakistan, when so many upheavals have been experienced in the history of the region beyond it over the last about half a century.

Boundaries and Terrain

The Province is most strategically located and touches many regions, diagonal to each other and with distinct difference in physical features and cultural background. On its eastern side runs the province of Punjab while on the northeastern side it kisses the territory of Jammu and Kashmir, more specifically the Azad or Free part of Jammu and Kashmir. To the north, a mountainous but barren sliver of Northern Areas, administratively under the control of the Federal Government of Pakistan and politically claimed to be part of Kashmir, contiguous with the Province, shakes hands with the equally barren strip of China. Still on the north, towards western side, its boundary almost touches Tajikistan, which lies across the Wakhan Corridor.

The physical features that separate the NWFP and Central/Western Asia from each other, such as the Hindu Kush range, as well as those 'openings', which provide access between the areas, such as the Khyber, Tochi etc. Passes, are also located in the Frontier.

On its western side are situated the Federally Administered Areas (FATA), with Afghanistan beyond. The 2,640 kilometres (1,610 miles) long Durand line, drawn as a result of a treaty in 1893 between the British raj and Afghanistan, determines its western border.

The Indus River, as it descends to the plains in the Haripur district of Hazara region, forms part of the province's eastern border with Punjab. In its south it shares its boundary with the Province of Balochistan, except just a tip that meets the Dera Ghazi Khan district of Punjab.

The terrain of the North West Frontier Province generally consists of mountain ranges, undulating submontane areas and plains surrounded by hills mostly in the shape of bowl or trough. The mountain ranges in its northern part largely run north-south, while south of the Kabul River, which almost bisects the province from north to south, the highland ranges are found in an east-westerly direction. On the north the Province is shut off from the Pamirs by the mountains of the Hindu Kush (Slayer of Hindus). The Kunar River cuts the Hindu Kush region into two distinct ranges – the northern Hindu Kush and the Hindu Raj. The mountain ranges here are mostly covered with snow and lofty glaciers. The highest peak, Tirich Mir, found in this region rises to a height of 7,690 metres. To the south of the Hindu Raj lie the rocky regions of the Panjkora, Swat, and Kandia river basins. The Lesser Himalayan and the sub-Himalayan regions are located in the eastern part of the





Crossing the River Swat by mules, near Matta.

Province and form definite ranges broken by hilly terrains and expanses of small plains. The fertile Peshawar Valley, covered with alluvial sediments that have been subjected to erosion, extends northward along the Kabul River.

South of the Kabul River lies the east-westerly Sufaid Koh Range, or Selseleh-e Safaid Koh, in Urdu, or Selseleh-e Spin Ghar, as it is known in the vernacular. It is a mountain range that forms a natural frontier between Pakistan and Afghanistan, extending westward for 160 kilometres from the Vale of Peshawar (Pakistan) to the Lowrah Valley (Afghanistan). The boundary between the two countries runs along the summit of the range, which reaches a height of 4,760 metres in the west at the point where the boundary turns southward. The range forms an almost unbroken 4,300-metre (14,000-foot) wall that towers above the surrounding hills. It separates the basin of the Kabul River (north, chiefly in Afghanistan) from the Kurram and Afridi Tirah regions (south, largely in Pakistan). Except for a narrow trough cut by the Kabul River, which breaks through the mountains to flow eastward into the Indus River, the range connects directly with the Shandur offshoot of the Hindu Kush mountain system. The strategic and historic Khyber Pass lies in the eastern part of the mountains. The northern spurs of the range are extremely barren, but the intervening valleys support agriculture and gardens abounding in mulberries, pomegranates, and other fruits. The main range and the upper portions of the spurs are wooded with pine and deodar.

The Khyber Pass is the largest and by far the most renowned of the Passes in the range on this side of the Province. It is over 56 kilometres long and connects the valley of Peshawar – the city itself

standing as sentinel at its opening – on its east, with Jalalabad in Afghanistan, on the west, and Torkham as the border checkpoint. The Kurram, Tochi, and Gomal Rivers not only provide the famous mountain passes, each known after the name of the respective river, but also act as the lifeline of the province's southern region by providing the much needed water. The Tochi Pass connects Ghazni in Afghanistan with Bannu in Pakistan and the Gomal Pass provides a route from Afghanistan to Dera Ismail Khan in NWFP while it also overlooks the Punjab Plain.



Khattak Dance

FATA

The tribesmen of the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) in themselves present a unique testimony to the influence of physical environment on human cultural behaviour. Because of the rugged wilderness of their region these Pukhtoon have been living a somewhat secluded life. They could, however, exact tolls from the powers that wanted safe passage through their territory. As such in these tribal areas on the province's western fringe the people have not been influenced much from outside world in their customs and way of life. They have mostly remained free to govern themselves according to their own customs. As in the British days, even today Political and military agents who are responsible to the federal government have the power to award or withhold subsidies and to control entry into and departure from the tribal areas.

Most of the FATA being barren, there is hardly any agricultural activity in the area and practically no industry, barring a handful of privately run enterprises producing small weapons. The widespread unemployment forces many people to become involved in crime, or to refuse to pay their dues (even to the service-oriented WAPDA for consuming electricity). Large-scale illiteracy

and absence of exposure to the outside world strengthened retrogressive tendencies and promoted attachment to primitive customs and taboos. However, with the great changes in the strategic and tactical approach due to the invention of sophisticated and state-of-the-art war material this region has lost much of its earlier importance. The Pathan tribes of this territory are now learning to join the mainstream of cultural environment in this twenty-first century as the other inventions in the field of communication have also seeped in even in the remotest of the areas within the last few years.



Herdsman with his goats in the wilderness of the D.I.Khan district.

Climatic Attributes

The North West Frontier's climate is highly dependent on the terrain. It generally varies with elevation. The mountain ranges experience cold winters and cool summers. However, the southern part of the Province undergoes markedly high temperatures that may rise into the 50s C. Precipitation over the province is variable but averages roughly 400 mm annually, with much of this occurring during the period from January to April. The flora found on the mountain slopes in the north of the province consists of evergreen oak and pine while such broadleaf trees as the plane and poplar grow on the warmer and sunnier slopes. There are also extensive mountain grasslands. The hills to the south of the Province present a marked difference from those on the north. Here they are sparsely covered with bushes, acacia, and grasses.

Pukhtoon/Pushtoon and some Tribes

The North West Frontier Province, as mentioned earlier, is mainly inhabited by the Pukhtoon – designating as such a person who speaks Pukhto. This proud race makes up one of the world's largest tribal societies, where each clan guards its own territory and honour. The term Pathan, probably taken from Urdu/Hindi, was mainly adopted for them by the British during the raj. However, there are scholars who hypothesize on the basis of some legends that 'True Afghans' are often differentiated from 'True Pathans' as genetically distinct entities. The former claim direct descent from Qais Abdur Rashid of Bani-Israel lineage, while the latter from one Karan whose antecedents are unknown. Most of the scholars of the field, however, do not differentiate between the two terms applied to the Pushto (or Pushtu) speaking population. According to them "Pathan or Afghan genealogies, whatever be their merit, all commence from Qais Abdur Rashid, who is believed to be thirty-seventh in descent from Malik Talut (King Saul). His home was in Khorasan or Kakar Khorasan, the tract immediately to the west of Koh-i-Sulaiman in Zhob district, now in Balochistan".

Herodotus, the Greek historian, in circa 450 BC mentioned the tribe of 'Paktues' (sounds much nearer Pakhtu) distinguished by their bravery and called their country 'Paktica'. The term 'Afghan', however, comes much later as it could be traced having been used for the first time in 7th century CE. There are also, of course, other theories – including the one about a possible link with Jewish-Israelites' lost tribe – put forward in the past about the genesis of Pukhtoon.

However, most scholars tend to agree on the point that the racial composition of the Pukhtoon is less than clear. Some assume that the tribes, who inhabited the area in the days of the Greek historians were part of the great Aryan hordes, which had moved down from Central Asia a millennium or so earlier. Over the course of centuries, the Greek, Persian (Iranian), Turk, and Mongol invaders who passed through the Frontier also left their marks on these local dwellers, which apart from the language are apparent from their general appearance and facial features.

What is known of Pukhtoon history, as indicated elsewhere, shows that the structure of Pukhtoon society has been tribal throughout the known period of history. Most of the Pukhtoon land comprises dry mountainous regions close to Hindu Kush and even the plains in the region, except for the fertile Peshawar valley, are mostly dry. Thus, the agricultural land has not been able to sustain the populace, and therefore their survival had always been precariously dependent on warfare and adventures. The Mughal king, Babur,



A man from Lukky district.

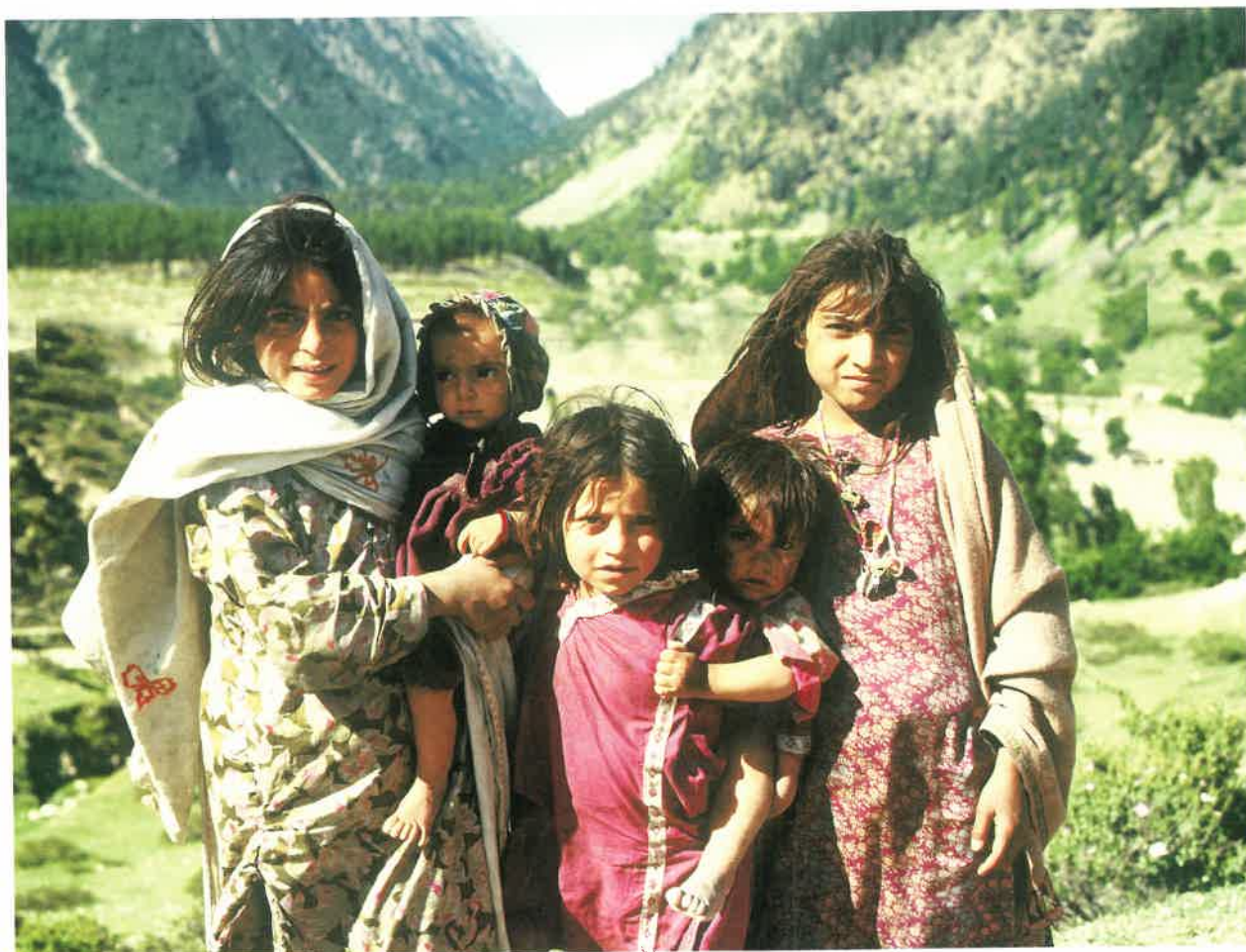


Decorative woodwork, practised at Peshawar and D.I.Khan.



Old jewellery and a piece of Gandhara stone - Swat.

described the Pukhtoon as a people given to plundering, and it is believed that their political influence grew with a sudden increase in their numbers as well as their role as mercenaries in the Persian and Mughal armies. Although the strategic importance of the NWFP as a gateway to the expansive Subcontinent of South Asia attracted invaders from the north, due to the inhospitability of the land, they would only pass by without establishing their rule. Cut from the outside world, Pukhtoon society remained dependent on non-productive economic means of war and plundering, forcing them to be conscious of their survival and security on a daily basis, whereas social and cultural isolation made them inward looking.



Swati kids.

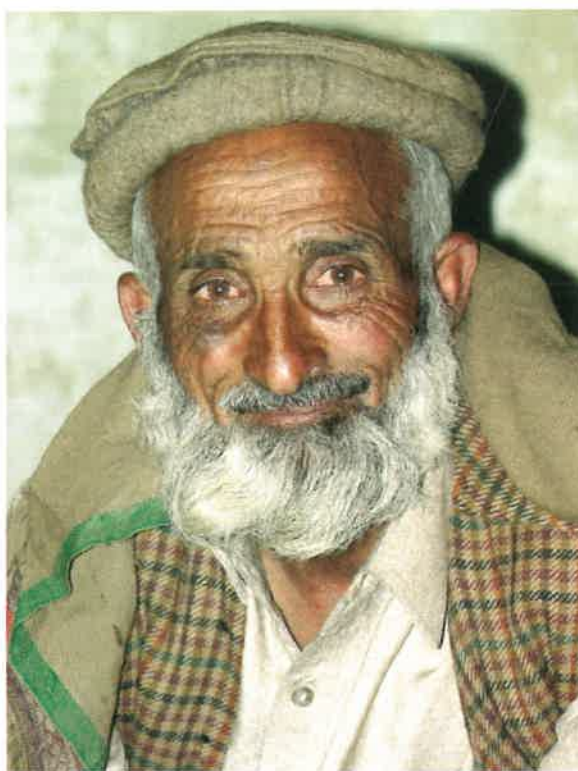
The famous Pukhtoon tribes, to mention a few, are Yousafzais of Bajaur, Malakand Agencies and Valley of Peshawar, Afridis of Khyber Agency, Kohat and Peshawar, Mohmands of Mohmand Agency, Orakzais of Orakzai Agency, Turis and Bangash of Kurram Agency, Waziris of North Waziristan Agency, Mahsuds and Urmars of South Waziristan Agency, and Bhattanis and Sheranis attached to Tank and D.I. Khan Districts. The Khattak tribe of the well-known warrior-poet Khushal Khan Khattak is also one of the prominent tribes of Peshawar and Kohat border. There are other smaller tribes such as Shinwaris, Mohammad Zai, Mullagoris, Shilmanis, Safis, Zaimukht, Muqbil, Mangal, Zadran, Para Chamkani, Kharoti, Jadoon, Daur etc.

The tribes are sub-divided into Khels, which may be reckoned equal to clans. Within the Khels, the basic division is the expanded family group. The leader of each family group is called a Malik, and the most important of a group of Maliks is designated as the leading Malik of the Khel.

The word Khan is used so very frequently in NWFP as part of the name or, say as surname. History tells that the word was in use for the ruler or monarch of a Mongol tribe though Genghis Khan (early 13th century) used Khakan – Khan of Khans – for himself. However, a distinction was made between the title of Khan and that of Khakan, which he had assumed as Great Khan, or a supreme ruler of the Mongols. Under the influence of the Mongols, the term Khan was subsequently adopted by many Muslim societies. Among the Seljuqs and the Khwarezm-Shahs of central and western Asia, Khan was the highest title of the nobility while in the Safavid Iran it was a sort of equivalent of a provincial governor. As the time passed, the high connotation of the word lost its significance. Its use with the names of the lower strata also crept up. It then started denoting any person of the Muslim society, who owned property, especially in the areas of South Asia Subcontinent and Afghanistan where its use as a surname is now very common. In the Pukhtoon areas Khan is still a form of address to show regard and respect to a person. The chief of a family, a clan, or a tribe is invariably called Khan if otherwise not a Sayed, in which case he would command the words of address as Mian or Bacha (Badshah) Saheb with veneration.

There is no apparent class stratification within the community, the Pukhtoon tribe, and therefore only those who are outside the community – the small minority of occupational groups, like artisans, blacksmith, goldsmith, mullah (the Muslim priest) and barber – make a separate class on the basis of their professions that are looked down upon. This classification is, therefore, based on caste rather than class.

The society of Pukhtoon of the settled areas is likewise made up of numerous tribes and clans, each taking great pride in its genealogy. Their love for independent way of life is not different from their brethren of the FATA. The Yousafzai, Muhammadzai and Khalil tribes have also mostly spread to the settled districts. Most of these Pukhtoon tribes of the settled districts have extensive blood relationships with the tribal Pukhtoon. The social structure in the settled districts has, however, changed a great deal from the tribal order. The Khans have lost much of their original leadership role in the settled districts and can now retain their old position through personal charisma, valour, administrative capabilities and level of contacts in the official hierarchy, in addition to enjoying greater means of subsistence.



A man smiles at camera in Malakand district.

Languages

The major language spoken in the NWFP is Pukhto as most of its residents are Pakhtoon, especially in the lowlands, western highlands and some of the southern areas of the Province. The mountainous northern regions of the province are mostly non-Pukhtoon, being home to diverse ethnic groups and languages, such as Khowar, Kohistani, Shina, Torwali, and Kalami. In some areas Seraiki or Hindko, also predominates. The areas of these two languages – or presumably dialects belonging to the main stock of Punjabi language – are mostly confined to the Peshawar city and some southern and eastern districts.

In addition to Khowar, which is the mother tongue of 90% of the population of around 210,000 to 250,000 persons there are some 9 languages, which are used in the Chitral valley. However, most

of the remaining 10% also speak Khowar but as their second language. The other languages spoken locally in this region are: Phalura, Gujari, Dameli, Gawar-Bati, Nuristani, Kalasha, Yidgha, Wakhi and Kirghiz. In addition, a variety of Persian is spoken in the isolated village of Madaglasht. Pukhto has also made its way into Chitral, though quite recently. The new addition to the languages of Chitral is that of Munji. It is spoken in the Munjan Valley in Badakhshan, Afghanistan. During the War in Afghanistan, as the villages in Munjan were badly hit, the Munji people fled to Pakistan and settled in refugee camps, primarily in Chitral, where the language made its base, though on a very limited scale.

It may be interesting to note that the language pattern in the city and the Vale of Peshawar has also changed drastically with the arrival of the Afghan *Muhajireen* (refugees) as an aftermath of the turmoil in Afghanistan starting with the incursion of the erstwhile Soviet forces in 1979. Although supposedly confined to the camps or *khaima basties* (tent villages) of their own, set up by Government of Pakistan and the International Agencies, many of them not only put up in the settled population but also thrived in – now almost legal form of the trade – smuggled goods and other small time jobs in addition to running a lucrative transport business. Many of them also spread to the Federal Capital Area of Islamabad in addition to Punjab and Karachi where they purchased property and looked as if settled forever. Their influx to the areas outside their *khaima basties* around Peshawar has resulted in the Pukhto-speaking population overwhelmingly dominating the Hindko or Peshawari speaking populace at least to the extent of this area.

As to the major language of NWFP, Pukhto, it is thought to be one of the Indo-Iranian Languages – the group of related languages spoken by more than 450 million people in a region extending from eastern Turkey to Bangladesh, obviously including most of the South Asia Subcontinent. It is also thought that these languages form a subfamily of the Indo-European languages amongst which can be counted some of the medieval languages like archaic Persian and modern Persian, Pukhto, Kurdish and Baluchi.

Pukhto, also called Pushto depending on the area where you communicate in this medium, is spoken in slightly different dialects in different areas. It, however, falls into two main styles of spoken medium: the southern dialect, which preserves the ancient *sh* (as in "Pushto" or in Pai-shawar or Paishaur for Peshawar) and *zh* sounds and the northern one, which has *kh* (as in "Pukhto" and like that in Pai-khawar for Peshawar) and *gh* sounds instead. The spoken difference is hardly observable from its written form, which has the same letters in use universally.

The language is written in a modified Arabic alphabet not infrequently bearing strong influence of the languages of the South Asia Subcontinent. It is also not uncommon to find 'loanwords' from other languages like Arabic and Persian (Farsi) – with also some archaic words of the latter – and of course not forgetting the English words creeping in due mainly with its influence for over two centuries of British raj in the South Asia Subcontinent.

Leaving aside the millions of the Afghan refugees, around 68 per cent of the households in NWFP are Pukhto speaking, eighteen per cent speak Hindko – akin to Punjabi with variant dialect, used mostly in Peshawar city, Kohat valley and Hazara – while Seraiki, or Derajati dialect of Punjabi as in Dera Ismail Khan and other parts of southern NWFP, is the mother tongue of four per cent. Around eight per cent of households speak local languages, such as Khowar in Chitral district, while Urdu and Punjabi speaking migrants are not more than two per cent of the households. The national language, Urdu, acts as lingua franca, though not everywhere in NWFP. Its use is mostly confined to the cities, especially the larger ones, where English is also widely understood.

To some the modern beginning of Pukhto goes back to the 16th century but it became prominent after the creation of the Afghan state, in the 18th century; when it was made an official language along with Dardi Persian. The Pukhtoon themselves mostly regard the 'best' Pukhto spoken in the Yousafzai Valley, as the Peshawar Valley is usually referred to, or that of the Khattaks'. In this area

the harsh-styled tongue that is Pushto does not fall hard on the ears of those who are not tuned to its sounds, the case though may not be the same towards the south – say Bannu or around, where it is often also referred to as Bannuchi.

Pukhto Literature and Literati

Pukhto literature can be traced with much certainty having existed from the 17th century. However, there are scholars, who believe its early appearance in the 11th century. The most prominent amongst their heroes, Khushhal Khan Khattak, who was also the chief of the Khattak tribe and an ardent enemy of the Mughals especially Aurangzeb Alamgir (1618-1761), wrote spontaneous and forceful poetry of great charm. The Encyclopaedia Britannica extols his literary merit in the following words: “From the borderlands of the Persian-speaking zone, culturally under the Mughal rule, one man deserves special attention. The chief of the Pashtun tribe of Khattak, Khushhal Khan (died 1689), rightly deserves to be called the “father” of Pashto poetry, for he virtually created a literature of his own in his mother tongue. His skill in translating the sophisticated traditions of Persian literature into the not too highly developed idiom of the Pashtuns is astonishing. His lively lyric poems are his finest works, reflecting that passionate love of freedom for which he fought against the Mughals. The poems he wrote from prison in “hell-like hot India” are as dramatic as they are touching in their directness. Many members of his family took to poetry; and during the 18th century original works, both religious and secular, were composed in Pashto, and the classics of Persian literature were translated into that language.”



Khushhal Khan Khattak.

The land has also produced mystical poets like Rehman Baba in the late 17th or early 18th century. Born as Abdul Rehman in the high hills of the Mohmand area he was a gifted poet who wrote sufic and religious poetry, especially towards his later age, possibly to be regarded as one of the greatest of the poets of the area. His renderings were admired in that age of lesser communication facilities throughout the Pukhto speaking areas, and from Afghanistan to Central Asia to the South Asia Subcontinent. Singers took pride in singing his poetry and even the general public admired his *kalam* while the religious scholars found the true meanings and new directions for their practice of the Faith. Due to his high stature as mystic poet he was given title of Baba (father or grandfather of the nation) and is known as Rehman Baba in the popular term as reverence and respect to him.



Rehman Baba.

Influence of Islam

Almost the whole population of the Province consists of Muslims, though a very negligible number of Sikhs and Hindus do share with them mainly in the districts of Buner and Peshawar. Islam, to



Modern Mosque along Chitral river.

most scholars, had come to the land of the Pukhtoon much earlier than the incursions of Mahmud of Ghazna, who is credited with its spread in the heart of Indian Subcontinent – of course excepting Sindh and Southern Punjab – in 11th century CE. In 642 Arab General Qutaiba conquered Persia and Amir (Caliph) Muawaya, ruled Baghdad from 673 to 739. He is recorded to be in control of the western frontier of India. Scholars, on the basis of this fact and the tribal oral traditions corroborated by circumstantial historic evidence that an Arab Missionary, Khalid bin Abdullah had settled down in tribal areas and was responsible for converting the tribes to Islam, opine the spread of this Divine Faith and its having taken roots within ninety years of its advent in Arabia in 610 CE.

Probably it is due to their early exposure to the religion of Islam, and closeness of the segments of society within their respective areas of tribal influence, that the Pukhtoon are taken as orthodox Muslims, who follow its codes and rituals as the normal routine of life. The majority among them are Sunnis and adhere to saying their *munz* (*salat* or obligatory prayers), and (*saum*) fasting in the month of Ramadan with much punctuality. Their visits to *mazars* or shrines of the late Muslim saints and pious personages are also common.

The level of their attachment to Islam could be gauged from the fact that in spite of the secular forces of the All India Congress having all its influence here, with their Government in NWFP and the *Khudai Khidmatgar* (Servants of God) Movement, the Muslim Leaguers, won a landslide victory in the referendum of 1947 on the question of accession to Bharat (India) or Pakistan.



An outlying grain market in D.I.Khan.

Economy

The economy is essentially agricultural especially in the basins or valleys' plain land but in no way confined to them only. Even though the mountainous terrain is not favourable to extensive cultivation, vast stretches have been made cultivable in these areas. Irrigation is carried out on about one-third of the cultivated land, which mostly consists of level-fields in the plains or the terraced ones in the favourable hilly areas. In the rural areas, the women-folk also help their men in the fields, though mostly they prefer to run the household as an exclusive occupation. Women are not encouraged to work in any field of mixed-gender profession as such those who go to serve as paid employees are mostly in teaching (the girls) job, which field is seldom encouraged in the Tribal areas. As the job-opportunities in N.W.F.P. are very limited, mainly because of scarcity of larger industrial units, men-folk mostly go out to other provinces – or even countries – in pursuit of livelihood. Excepting a limited number of technically qualified persons among them, they are mostly in odd employments of watch-and-ward or transport-related fields.

Wheat, corn (maize), sugarcane, sugar-beet and tobacco are the major crops while there is also cultivated variety of different fruits like apples, peaches, amlok (mostly known as *Japanee Phall* or the Japanese fruit in other parts of the country), ground-nuts, cherry etc. The bee farming is also done generally in the Peshawar basin and valleys of some rivers like Swat.

Poppy cultivation in the western part of the Province, especially the Tribal areas, had been a lucrative agricultural activity for a long time. This triggered impetus to the manufacturing of opium and other refined narcotics, especially in FATA, where normal laws of the country did not operate and the difficult terrain helped some elements to establish small factories. However, with the efforts



of the Pakistan Government – aided by international community and UN agencies – through giving alternate incentives, the country was declared as opium poppy free in 2002. However, re-emergence of opium poppy cultivation in 2003-2004 was of great concern for the government and the International Agencies. In response to the renewed efforts about 78 percent of the total 6,700 hectares of illicit opium poppy cultivation had been eradicated by the end of 2004, according to a UN report. In 2005 the Government has reported to have succeeded in eliminating the cultivation menace in Mohmand Agency, Bajaur Agency, Kurram Agency, and North Waziristan Agency, which cover almost the whole area with notoriety for the drugs' raw material.

The province's principal industries are the manufacture and refining of cane- and beat-sugar, the canning and preservation of fruits and vegetables and tobacco processing. Other products are cotton textiles, cement, ghee (purified butter), furniture, and milled grains. The NWFP is especially famed for the manufacture of small arms and accessories, particularly in the area of Darra (Pass) Adam Khel or some other places in the FATA.

Nanga Parbat and numerous other glacier-draped mountains of the Himalayas, Karakorum and Hindu Kush provide a continuous source of water for the Indus and its tributaries. These mountain ranges also provide important timber, animal products, and minerals – even if not in abundance or exploited to their fullest – gold, silver, tin and semiprecious stones that have been traded throughout the Indus Valley even in the days of the yore. However, the Province is generally not very rich in natural resources though there are running projects and abundant prospects of generating hydro-electricity in addition to emerald mining especially in Swat. The Province is quite rich in fresh-water fish resources. There are two exotic and 26 indigenous cold water fish species in Pakistan and they are mainly restricted to the north of the country's North West Frontier Province and Northern Areas.

Contemporary Warriors/Heroes

NWFP, because of its terrain and social conditions, nurtures many a martial race, which has proved its mettle throughout the long and chequered history. One of its sons, Sepoy Ali Haider, was awarded the Victoria Cross, which is the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces.

The citation says:

“He was 31 years old, and a sepoy in the 13th Frontier Force Rifles, Indian Army during the Second World War, when the following deed took place for which he was awarded the VC.

“On 9th April, 1945 near Fusignano, Italy, during the crossing of the Senio River, only Sepoy Ali Haider and the two other men of his section managed to get across under heavy machine-gun fire. Then, while the other two covered him, the sepoy attacked the nearest strong point and, in spite of being wounded, put it out of action. In attacking a second strong-point he was again severely wounded but managed to crawl closer, throw a grenade and charge the post; two of the enemy were wounded, the remaining two surrendered. The rest of the company were then able to cross the river and establish a bridgehead.”

He was born in Kohat of NWFP, then in British India and now in Pakistan, on August 21, 1913 and died at the same place on July 15, 1999. He later achieved the rank of Havildar. One of the obituaries in commemoration says: “ALI HAIDAR was the only Pathan to receive the Victoria Cross in the Second World War. His death reduces the number of living Second World War VCs to 25. The action which brought him his award typifies the sense of duty to comrades of the men of the North-West Frontier region now in Pakistan, where warfare between tribes or against an invader is a way of life. He was serving as a sepoy (private soldier) in what would be regarded as his local regiment – the 13th Frontier Force Rifles.”

Another of the Pukhtoon from Nowakili village in Swabi district, Captain Karnal Sher Khan, was awarded Nishan-i-Haider, the highest Military Award of Pakistan, awarded to *Shaheed* soldiers, who have

shown bravery and courage in times of war and border battles (1948, 1956, 1965, 1971, 1999). He thus became one of those eight legendary heroes who received this highest military award for laying down their lives in defense of their motherland.

“Captain Karnal Sher Khan emerged as the symbol of mettle and courage during the Kargil conflict on the Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan in the disputed State of Jammu and Kashmir. He set personal examples of bravery and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. He defended the five strategic posts, which he established with his *jawans* at the height of some 5,182 metres (17,000 feet) at Gultary, and repulsed many Indian attacks. After many abortive attempts, the enemy on July 5 ringed the post of Capt. Sher Khan with the help of two battalions and unleashed heavy mortar firing and managed to capture some part of the post. Despite facing all odds, he led a counter-attack and re-captured the lost parts. But during the course he was hit by the machine-gun fire and embraced *Shahadat* (martyrdom) at the same post.” He is the first officer from the NWFP province to be awarded with the prestigious Nishan-i-Haider.”



Ali Haider,
Victoria Cross



Captain Karnal Sher Khan,
Nishan-e-Haider
(Photo Courtesy ISPR)



Khan of Squash, Jahangir Khan.

Khans of Squash:

Not only that the Pukhtoon areas produce the brave and the gallant men in the field of warfare, and might be taken as rough being tough, they have also excelled in sports, especially Squash. This may be the only individual sport in which Pakistan has made her presence felt at the international level



Two of the Great Khans of Squash, Roshan Khan and Hashim Khan.



One of the Great Khans of Squash, Azam Khan.



Khan of Squash, Jansher Khan.

ever since her debut in 1950. The man who put Pakistan on the squash map of the world was a stockily-built balding Pathan Hashim Khan, in his forties and till then little known even in his own country. Since then Pakistan has remained among the top squash playing countries of the world, thanks to the personal efforts and charisma of the Great Khans of Squash; Hashim, Mohibullah, Azam, Roshan, and later Jahangir and Jansher, almost all of them coming from a small village of Nowakili and related to each other except in the case of Jansher.

Mohibullah Khan was the first squash player ever to hold both the Hardball and Softball world titles simultaneously. One generation of Khans later, world record holder, Jahangir Khan would do the same. Azam Khan had won four British Open titles. Another Khan, Sharif won the total of 12 North American Open titles and became the permanent World Record holder in the Hardball for all times.

When Jahangir Khan's elder brother, Torsam Khan, died tragically on court of heart condition, he got determined to honour his brother with his play. Jahangir thus became ten times British Open Champion, and the World Record holder. He was also the World Open champion for seven times from the late 1970s to late 1980s. It was then the turn of Jansher Khan, who won the British Open for six times (1992-1997) and for eight times the World Open (1987, 1989-90, 1992-1996).

Artists and Literary Genius

The Peshawar valley of NWFP is very fertile even in the human crop of performing arts. Some of the topmost names in the world-famous Indian film and music fields originally came from here. It introduced the likes of actor Prithvi Raj, and his talented sons, Raj Kapoor and Shashi Kapoor, and later the versatile Shahrukh Khan of the modern day. The legendary screen actor Yousaf Khan (Dilip Kumar) was born and raised in a narrow alley off the Story-tellers' (Qissa Khwani) Bazaar. Shamsbad Begum, Miss Dulari, Edan Bai, and Amir Bai Karnatki, famous singers of the subcontinent took their start from this area during the British raj. From here also rose the literary genius, Ahmad Shah Bukhari (Pitrus Bukhari).



The legendary Indian Film Star,
Dilip Kumar -
Yousaf Khan from Peshawar.



Raj Kapoor, Shashi Kapoor and others. Their family hailing from Peshawar



Indian contemporary film-star,
Shah Rukh Khan having his roots in NWFP.

Social and Political Stalwarts



Bacha Khan, Sarhadi Gandhi Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

It has also produced one of the towering social reformers and politicians, Ghaffar Khan (1890-1988), who, following the Gandhian tradition of preaching non-violence and tolerance, was given the popular title of 'Sarhadi Gandhi', also nicknamed *Bacha (Badshah)* Khan with reverence by his disciples. He had set his goal for a united, independent, secular India. To achieve that end, he founded the *Khudai Khidmatgar* (Servants of God) during the 1920s. Also known as the "Red Shirts", the organisation recruited over 100,000 members. Through strikes, political organisation and non-violent opposition, the *Khudai Khidmatgar* was able to achieve some temporary success and came to dominate the politics of the NWFP from 1930 until 1947. However, their role seemed to have diminished after the boycott of the famous Referendum of July 1947. Ghaffar Khan died in 1988 in Peshawar but was buried in Jalalabad (Afghanistan), in accordance with his wish.

The stalwarts like Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan and Pir Saheb of Manki Sharif, among others, from this area were in the forefront of the struggle for independent homeland for Muslims of the South Asia Subcontinent under the banner of All India Muslim League, known as Pakistan Muslim League after 1947.

Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, a political stalwart and a leader of great mettle in the forefront of the Pakistan Movement, was born in 1899 in Peshawar City. After passing his Persian Honours and later in 1923 receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Punjab University he went to Aligarh, in the then Muslim tradition, to get higher education. During his stay in Aligarh he developed close friendship with Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar, who later led the *Khilafat* (Caliphate) Movement. His friendship with Johar would prove to be a turning point in his life. While back at Peshawar, he became an active worker of *Khilafat* Movement, led by Johar. He was elected to the Municipal Committee in 1929, a seat he held for a number of years.



Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar.



Dr Khan Saheb.

While Congress party had a solid support in the Frontier, in the likes of

Dr Khan Saheb and his brother Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Muslim League was fragmented and devoid of any substantial public support. Supporters of the *Khilafat* Movement were equally divided between the Congress and the Muslim League. It was around 1926 that Nishtar joined the Muslim League and along with other like-minded politicians started the formidable task of organising the party in NWFP. It was at that time that he became a confidante of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He also

played an important role as a Muslim Leaguer in the famous Referendum of July 1947. After the independence and creation of Pakistan on 14 August 1947, Nishtar served as Federal Minister and then Governor of Punjab Province. Later on, due to a clouded political scene in Pakistan, he detached himself from the mainstream.

The Sardar was a very good poet and equally excelled in oratory. Even when in the corridors of power he always kept his legendary contacts with the masses and common people on whom he had great influence. He died on February 14, 1958 and was buried within the premises of the Quaid-e-Azam's Mausoleum at Karachi.

Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, another political leader of great reckoning, was born in Chitral on July 16, 1901. He got his education at Peshawar and Aligarh before receiving the Bar-at-Law from England in 1926. He joined the All India Congress and remained member of the assembly from 1937 to 1946. From 1942 to 1946 he was also the Deputy Leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party. He joined Muslim League in 1946, worked hard on the famous Referendum in which people of NWFP decided to join Pakistan on independence. He was appointed the first chief minister of the province by the Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in which capacity he served from 1947 to 1953. Later he also remained Federal minister in different governments in addition to holding important positions in the Pakistan Muslim League. He died on October 22, 1981.



Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan.

The Pir of Manki Sharif, a religious leader of the famous gaddi (saintly seat) in Nowshera was another great leader, who motivated people and helped the Muslim League in achieving a homeland for Muslims of the South Asia Subcontinent. He had, however, founded an organisation of his own, the *Anjuman-us-asfia*. On the instance of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he declared *jihad* to achieve Pakistan and ordered the members of his *anjuman* to support the League in the 1946 elections.



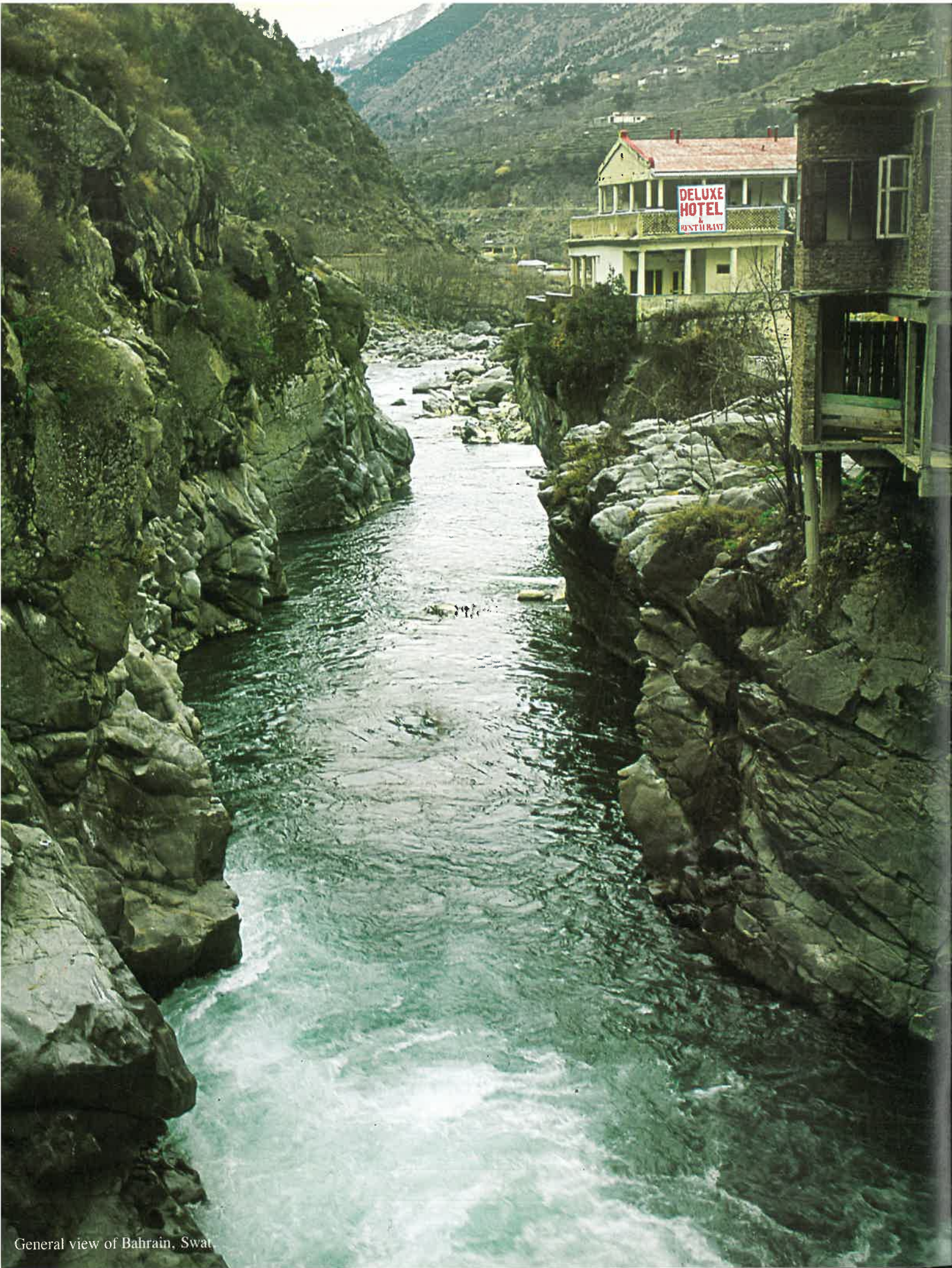
The Islamia College, Peshawar, the first landmark of scholarship and enlightenment in the North West Frontier Province was conceived and founded by another great leader from NWFP. A far-sighted son of the soil, Sahibzada Sir Abdul Qayum Khan, was able to establish this college, the only institution of higher learning in the whole of NWFP, in 1913. His was a laudable act to lay the base of higher education in the region, in spite of fierce opposition from religious diehards.

Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Khan.

The very first Martial Law Administrator on all-Pakistan basis, General (later Field Marshal) Ayub Khan also came from this province. He hailed from Haripur, then in Hazara district. After introducing a new Constitution in 1962, he gave the system of Basic Democracies to govern the country and remained its president till 1969. He shifted the Federal Capital from Karachi to the newly developed city of Islamabad.



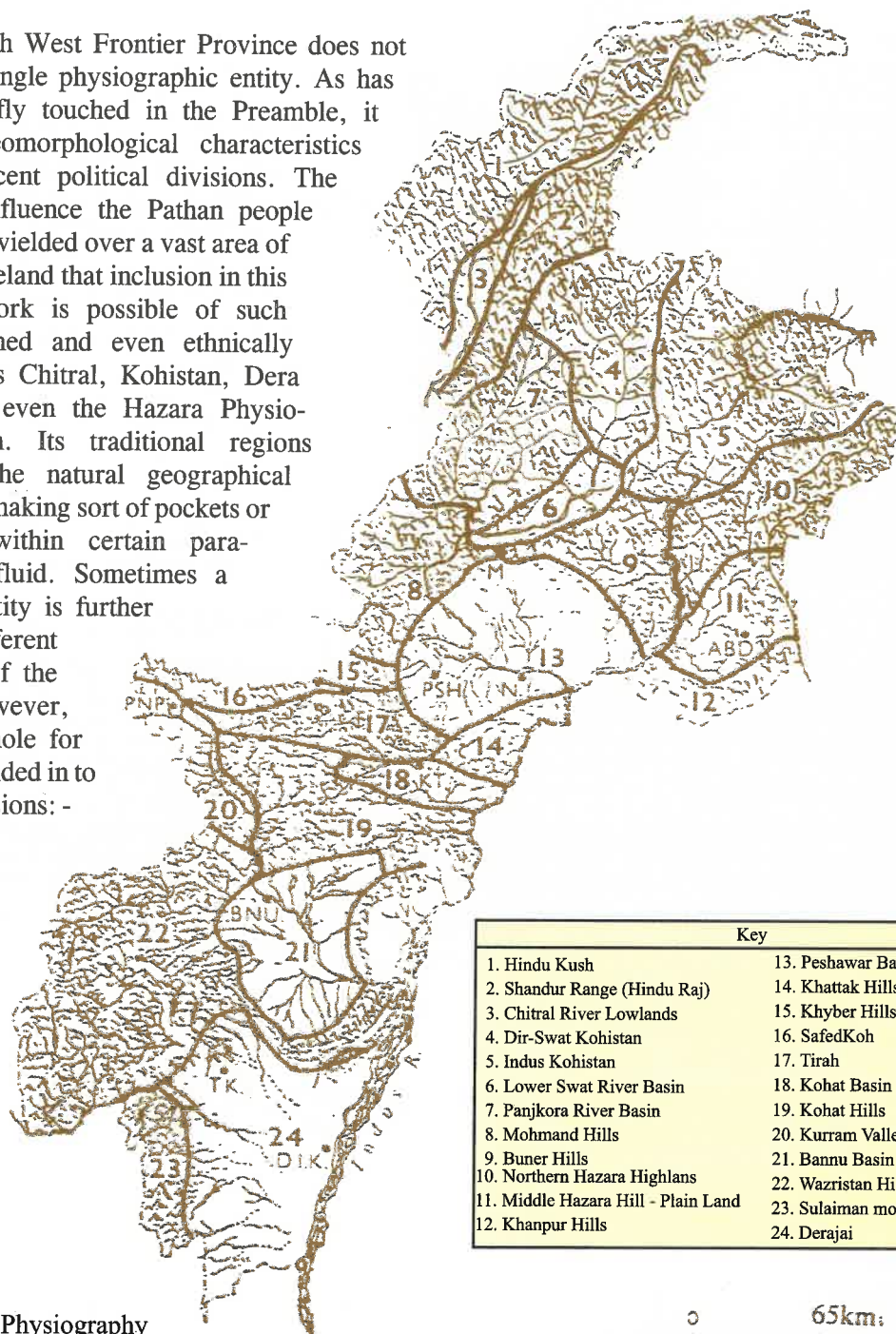
Field-Martial Ayub Khan.



General view of Bahrain, Swat

Physiography and Traditional Regions

The North West Frontier Province does not enjoy a single physiographic entity. As has been briefly touched in the Preamble, it shares geomorphological characteristics with many adjacent political divisions. The overwhelming influence the Pathan people themselves have wielded over a vast area of their rugged homeland that inclusion in this regional framework is possible of such physically detached and even ethnically different areas as Chitral, Kohistan, Dera Ismail Khan or even the Hazara Physiographic Division. Its traditional regions mostly follow the natural geographical features, in fact, making sort of pockets or specific areas within certain parameters, though fluid. Sometimes a physiographic entity is further divided into different cultural groups of the inhabitants. However, taking it as a whole for study it can be divided in to the following divisions: -



NWFP: Regional Physiography
(After Dichter)

0 65km:



1. The Northern Himalayan Zone:

It includes the Hindu Kush Region with districts of Chitral, Swat, Dir Bala, Dir Payan, Malakand and Hazara Region, which include the districts of Abbottabad, Mansehra, Batta-gram, Kohistan and Haripur.

2. The Peshawar Basin:

It should include the whole of the Peshawar Valley consisting of the districts of Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Charsadda and some Tribal areas adjoining the settled districts at the edge of the bowl.

3. The Kohat Basin and Adjoining Hill Zone:

It comprises of the Kohat Basin and the adjoining Kohat Hills, Hangu and Karak districts.

4. The Central Highland and Hill Zone:

It includes the Sufed Koh, Tirah and Khyber Hills, Kurram Valley and the Kurram Agency and Khyber Agency.

5. The Bannu Basin,

It consists of the districts of Bannu and Lakki.

6. The Southern Highland and Hill Zone:

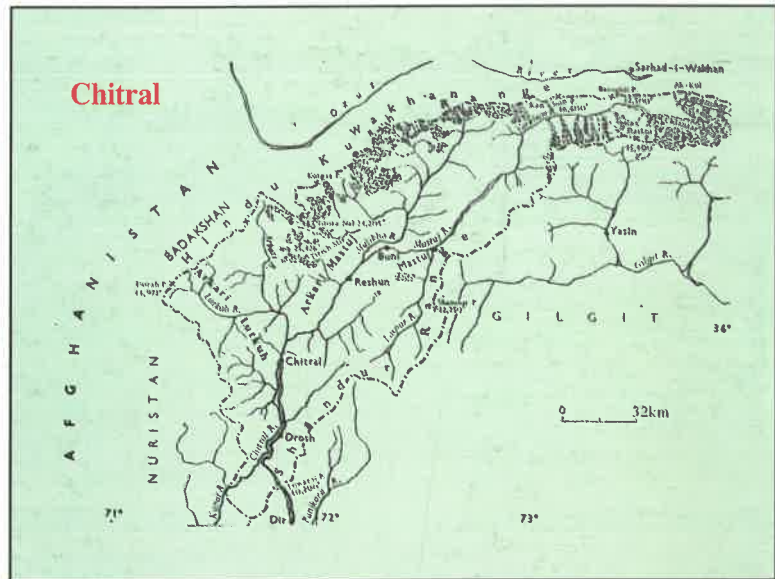
It mostly consists of what is under the Federally Administered Areas of Waziristan and Waziristan Hills, Marwat Range and Sulaiman Mountains.

7. The Dera Ismail Khan (commonly known as Derajat) Basin, which consists mainly of the expansive district of Dera Ismail Khan, and the adjoining district of Tank.

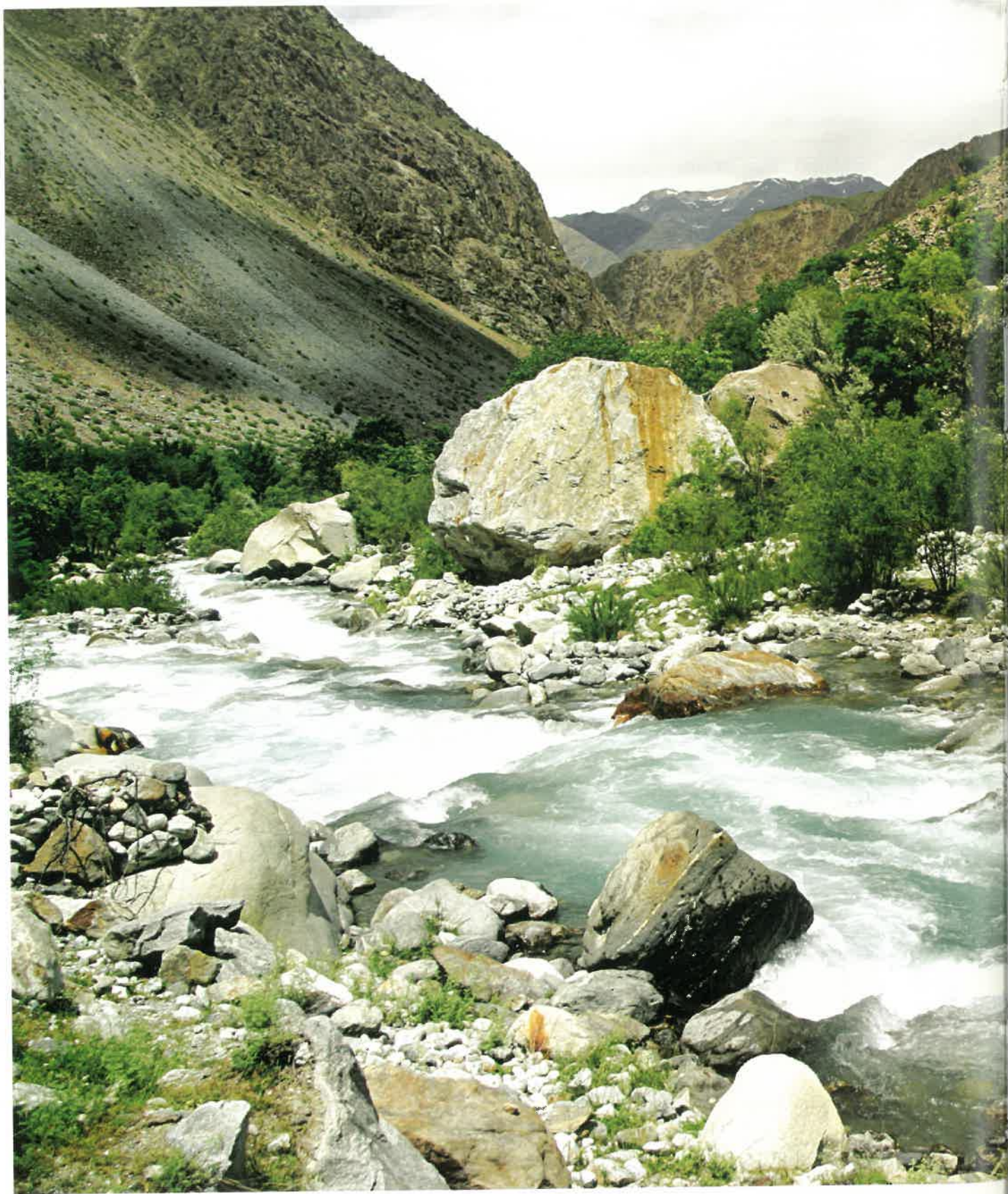
1. The Northern Himalayan Zone

By far this is the single largest of all the physiographic divisions in the political boundaries of the North West Frontier Province. It consists of all the highland areas practically north of the Peshawar trough, delimiting it at the Khyber Pass-Kabul River areas. This area contains in it a wide variety of cultural milieu as in addition to the natural physiographic Region of the Hindu Kush it contains the districts of Chitral, Swat, Dir Bala, Dir Payan, Malakand and Haripur. The districts of Abbottabad, Mansehra, Battagram and Kohistan also make its part, being in this highland region. From Chitral to Hazara Region it has at least three different cultural entities, when division is made on the broader lines.

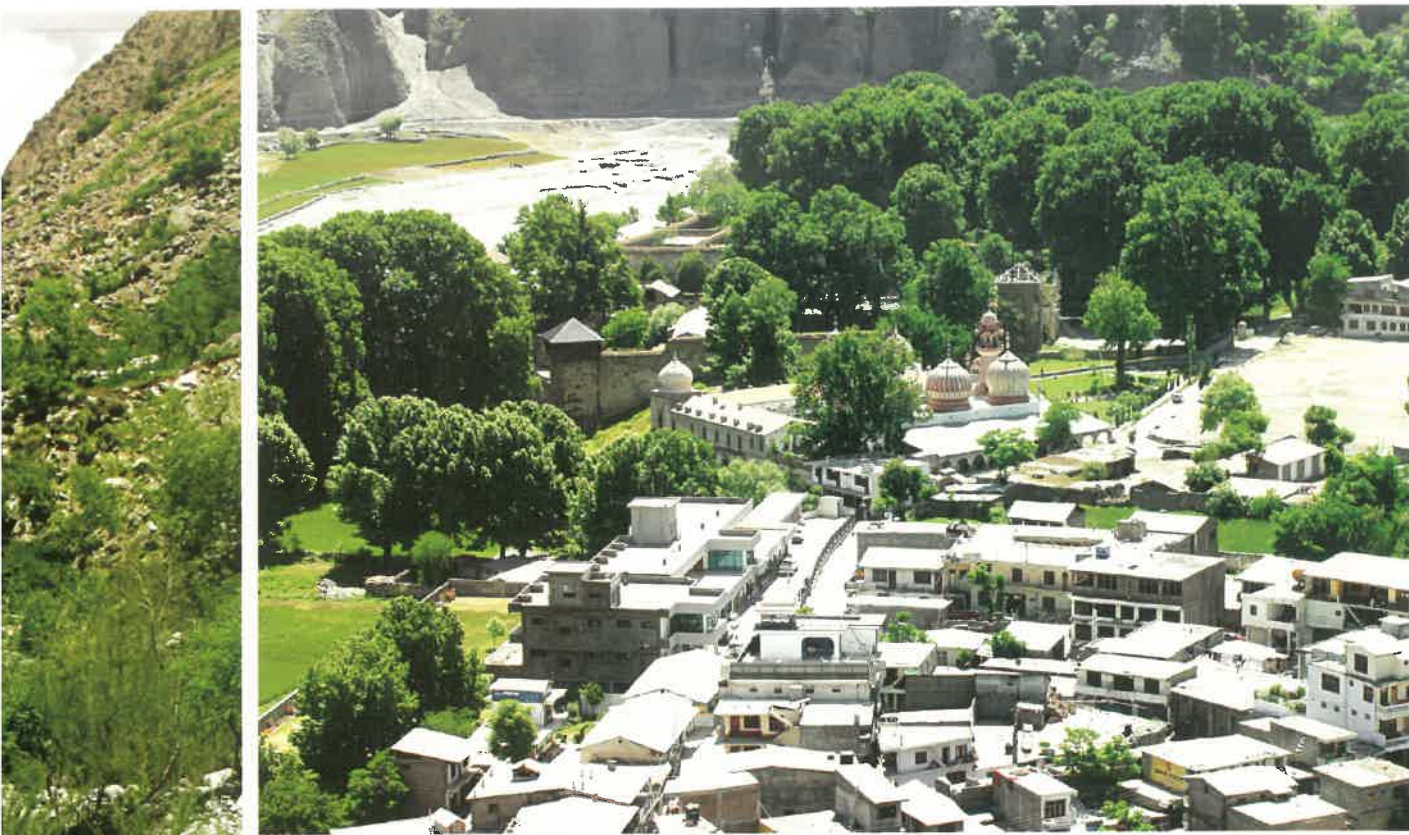
Chitral, also known as Chitrar and Qashqar lies in the heart of Marco Polo land, nestling between the rugged mountains of the Hindu Kush. The region is a hidden Paradise in this range. Khowari is the main language for communication as also expression of sentiments, as the literature bears witness to it. Being the northernmost district of the Province it is also the largest one in terms of area. It covers a land measuring 14,850 square kilometres and, with a density of just 25 persons per square kilometre, it has a total population of 371,250 persons.



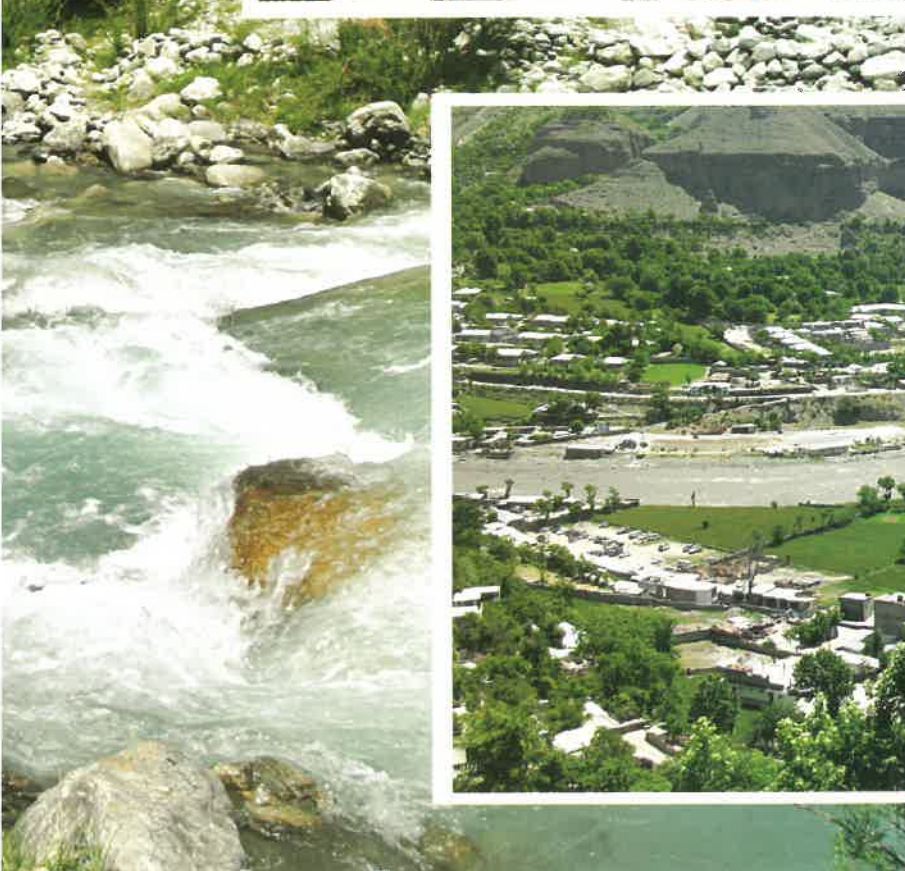
Arkary Valley, Chitral.



A view of Gulain, Chitral.



Chitral seen from above. Shahi Mosque is also visible.



A panoramic view of Chitral.



Shahi Mosque, Chitral.

Earlier enjoying the status of a State, it became a district only in 1970. Its boundaries on the west and north meet Afghanistan and Tajikistan from the Wakhan strip. Due to geographical barrier it is joined with the rest of the country through Lowari Pass over the Lowari Top, which has a height of 3,200 metres (10,500 feet) from the mean sea level. As it remains closed for almost five months due to heavy snowfall and bad weather there is a proposal to construct a rail-tunnel (8 kilometres long) to keep the communications open in all weathers. The other means of reaching Chitral, the air, also remains dependent on the weather for most of the time.

The district has some of the charming snow-peaked mountain ranges, ageless glaciers and deep green valleys through which flow the icy cold and crystal clear hill torrents from mountain springs



Polo, at the roof of the world, Shandur, Chitral.



A Chitrali woman weaving woolen 'patti'.

and melting of ice. It is here in Chitral that the world's famous and highest Polo ground stands right on the very summit of over 3,734 metres (12,250 feet) Shandur Pass. The district varies in elevation from about 1,070 metres (about 3,500 feet) in the extreme south at Arandu to 7,690 metres (25,230 feet) at the summit of Tirich Mir, the fifth highest peak in the world, in the Hindu Kush Range. Mythologically, it has been the familiar abode of giants and fairies since times immemorial. Its high hills still preserve the huge caves wherein are supposed to have inhabited the ancient giants called KASH and GABAR. Chitral is the home of the mysterious Khow tribes who fought the armies of Alexander. Here also lives the ancient Kalash tribe in some of its remote valleys, practicing a culture and beliefs, and a way of life that probably date back to the prehistoric period. It is the home of courageous and brave people, who were the first among the princely states to opt for the new Islamic country, Pakistan, and who shed their blood for the liberation of Northern Areas from Dogra tyranny during the Kashmir *Jehad* of 1948.



A closer view of the headgear, part of dress and hair style in Chitral.



Chitrali girl.



Weaving for the masses in Dir.

Across the mountains on east of Chitral are situated the districts of **Dir Bala** (Upper Dir) and **Dir Payan** (Lower Dir), which are altogether different in their cultural ethos from Chitral. Dir was also a princely State. It merged in to Pakistan in 1969 and attained its position as a district in 1970. However, it was further divided into two administrative units of districts, called Dir Bala and Dir Payan.

The total area covered by **Dir Bala** is 3,699 square kilometres with a population of 685,400 persons inhabiting it. The whole district has a beautiful natural setting with rivers, springs, hills and mountains, which could easily be exploited to enhance tourist trade. Some minerals, though not in large quantity, are also present here but the mainstay of the population is either agriculture or providing labour in other provinces or countries.

The district of **Dir Payan** has a rich history of its own. It was an independent State since 13th century, covering the present areas of Dir, Swat, Buner and Amb. In 1914 the Badshah Saheb, Abdul Wadood – the father of the last Wali of Swat – revolted against the Nawab of Dir, Aurangzeb Khan, and left the latter only in control of Dir. As a State it acceded to Pakistan, in 1947, at the time of independence from the British rule. In 1960, when an army operation was underway in Dir-Bajaur area, it was given under the control of the Malakand Agency. However, in 1970 it attained the status of a full-fledged district as Dir Payan, spread over an area of 1,582 square kilometres.

Although historically important for many outings of the makers of history of the like of Alexander and Babur, its archaeological wealth is also immense. A museum was set up at Chakdara way back in 1979 to portray this treasure brought in from the excavations in the over-all Dir. It displayed

material belonging to the Gandhara Grave Culture from Timargarha (16th to 4th Century BC). Its other material included sculptures and other miscellaneous material from Buddhist stupas, monasteries and sites excavated at Andandheri, Chatpat, Damkot, Jabagai, Machowa, Ramora, Bambolai etc. – all located around Chakdara and belonging to the period from 1st to 7th centuries CE. Chakdara, which opens the way to the Dirs and Chitral districts has a fort to the west of which, on the great height, stands the Curchill Picket known as such for having been used by Sir Winston Churchill as a young Captain while participating in the Malakan Campaign.

Next in the same Zone comes **Malakand**, which since the British days was an Agency area under the control of the Centre. During the days of Pakistan it enjoyed the same status under the custody of the Federal Government. It was turned into a settled area district in 1970.

Its headquarter lies at the top of the Malakand Pass, on the other or southern side of which lies the Dargai Fort and the town of the same name up to which runs the train service branching off from Nowshera on the Pakistan Railways tracks. The area of Malakand district also represents, now though loosely, the tribal bearings of the Pukhtoon.

It is smaller in dimensions, as compared to other districts of NWFP, spread over an area of 952 square kilometres, with a population of 567,392 heads. Agriculture is the main occupation of the population.

Next comes the district of **Swat**, where, after the successful coup against the Nawab of Dir, Miangul Abdul Wadood (known as Badshah Saheb) had established an independent state. It was granted the status of a district in 1970, after the dismemberment of the One Unit of West Pakistan, making Saidu Sharif its headquarters. It is known as Sharif (Holy) for being the place where is



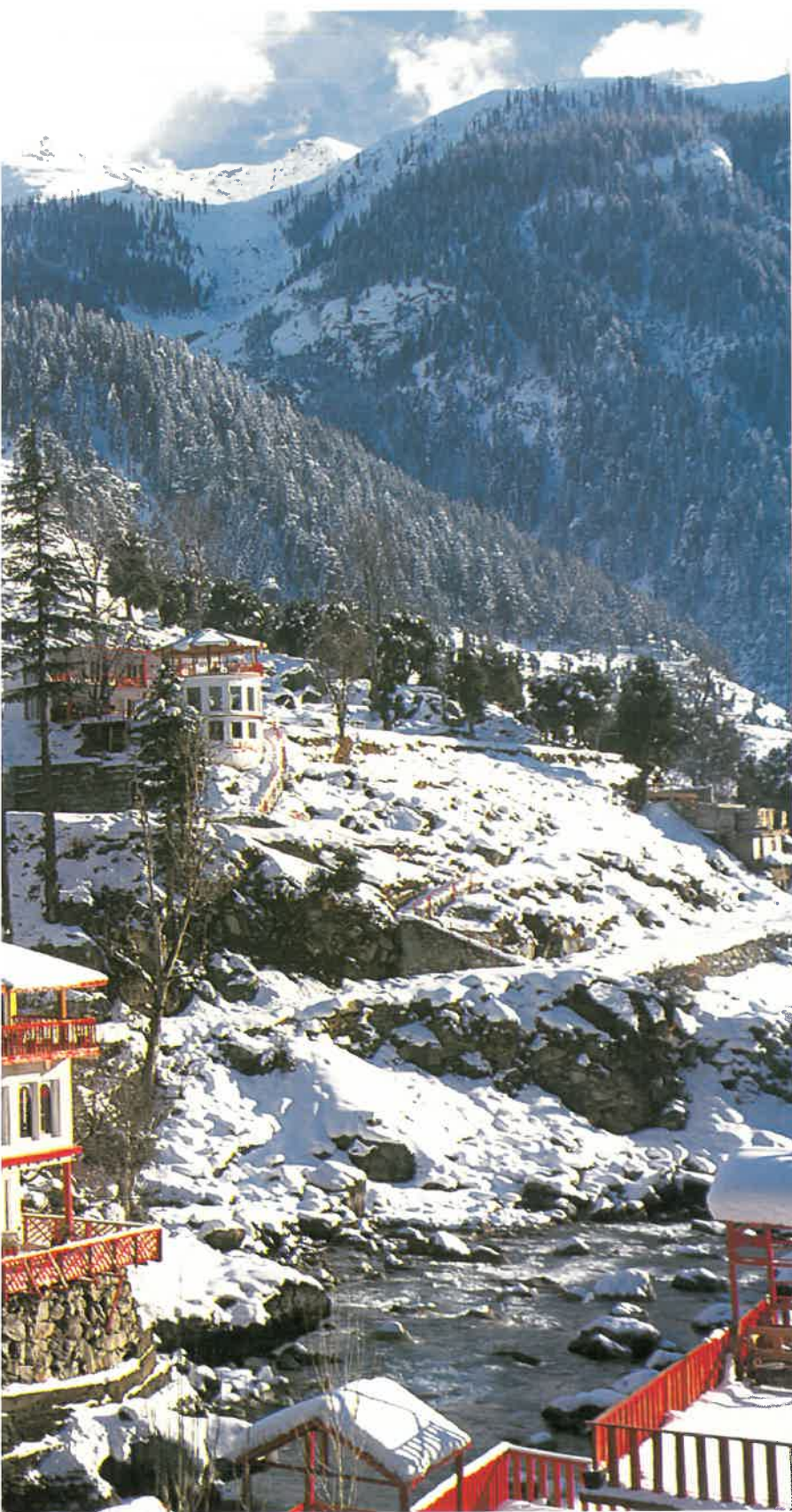
Sufaid Mahal (White Palace) in Marghar, Swat.



General view of Bahrain, Swat



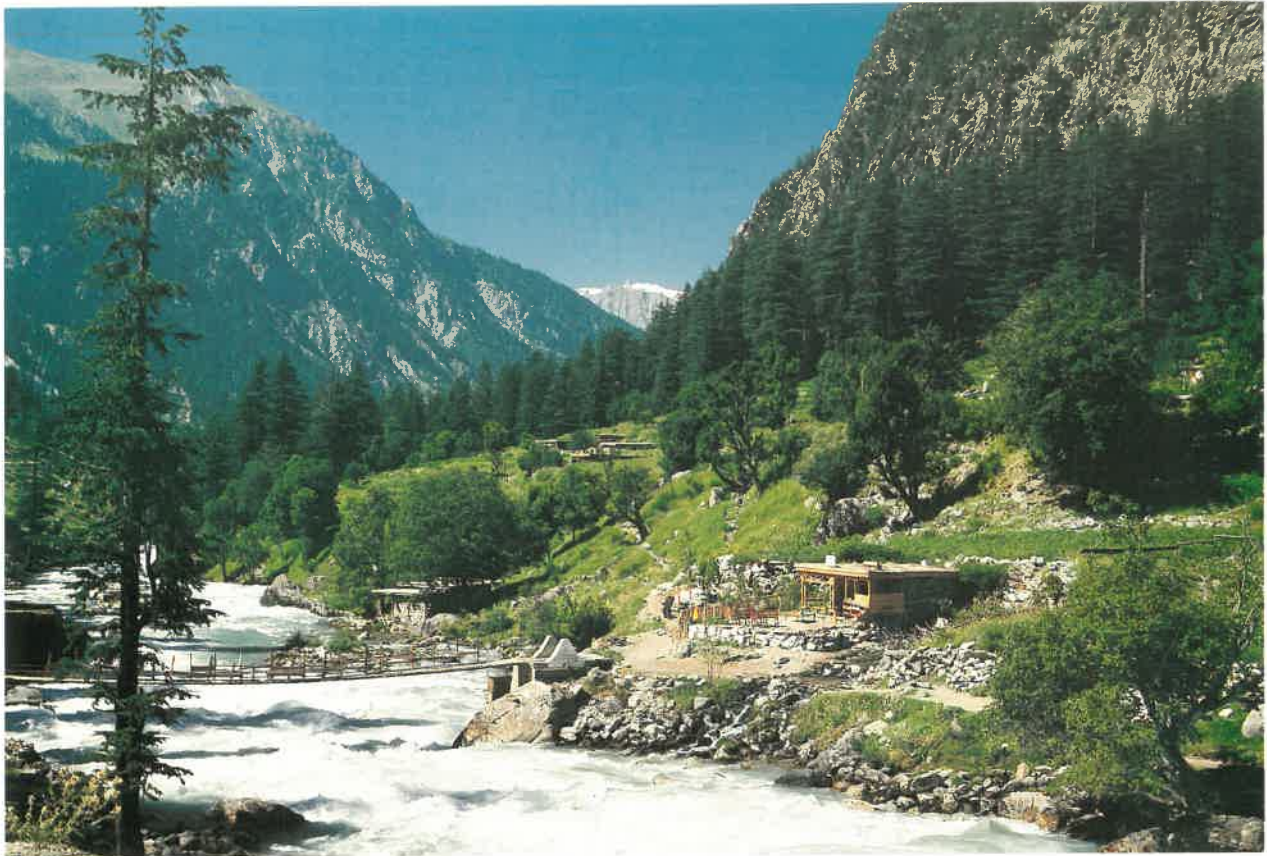
Ushu Valley, Swat.



situated the shrine of Saidu Baba, a saintly personage of a large following after whose name the place is called. It has a total area of 5,337 square kilometres with a population of 1,574,415 souls. In addition to the enchanting towns of tourist interest, along the river Swat, it has the only Ski resort at Malamjabba. The district is approachable by road from Dir, Malakand, Karakar Pass – with Buner on the other side – and Kohistan, towards which side one can get the Karakoram Highway after crossing the Shangla Pass. It is also connected by air with Peshawar and Islamabad. It has excellent accommodation facilities (hotels of all categories) in all its towns especially the twin-cities of Mingora and Saidu Sharif, the former of which is a thriving trading centre of the whole region.

No account of Gandhara region in Pakistan would be complete without the mention of Swat. The ancient Udiyana, derived from Sanskrit *Urighyan* meaning garden, is truly the land of clear and cool flowing waters, lush green valleys and colourful flowers. Situated in the north-western part of the Province it is bound on the northeast and west sides within the mountain ranges of the Himalayas, the Karakoram, the Hindu Kush, and the Pamir. On its south lie the plains of the districts of Buner, Mardan, Swabi and Charsadda.

Although this valley remained the cradle of many a culture since pre-historic times, its true significance could not be gauged till scientific explorations and excavations were conducted here. It remained the object of preliminary exploration in 1926 and then 1933 by Sir A. Stein, the great archaeologist and explorer. E. Barger and Ph. Wright carried out its archaeological survey, though on somewhat smaller scale in 1938. It was in fact the Italian Archaeological Mission, under the leadership of indefatigable Professor Gisepe Tucci, the then President of Istituto Italiano Per Il



Upper Swat (Mateltan)



General view of Madyan, Swat.



Matiltan Valley, Swat.



Malam Jabba Ski Resort, Swat.



Miniature stupa, Swat Museum.



Swat Museum. A view of Ethnological Gallery.

Medio Ed Estremo Oriente (IsMEO) that its accurate survey was carried out in 1955 and 1956. The results of these explorations led to excavations, which were commenced in 1956, and spread over the next three decades or so. These digs have brought to light numerous sites ranging from pre-historic, proto-historic, Grave Culture, Gandhara to Hindu Shahiya and Islamic eras. The excavations at Ghaligai (c.3000-1400 BC), Loebanr III (c.1700-1400 BC), Birkot Ghundai (c.1700-1400

BC), Proto-historic Graveyards (c.1400-300 BC), Aligrama (c.18th century BC-4th century CE), Udigram (4th century BC-14th century CE), Gogdara III (4th century BC-1st century CE), Butkara I (3rd century BC-10th century CE), Barama (3rd cent. BC - 8th cent. CE), Panr I (1st -5th cent. CE), Saidu Sharif (1st -5th cent. CE) etc. amply prove the point.

The Udegram Fort, thought to be going back to the early Christian Era, and possibly was in place when Alexander of Macedonia came, is an interesting discovery on the hill not much away from Mingora.

Amongst the numerous Gandhara sites in Swat some important may be recalled as; Butkara I and Butkara III, Panr, Saidu I stupa and monastery – Loebanr stupa and monastery, Shna Shah Stupa, Malamjaba Stupa, Gumbatuna



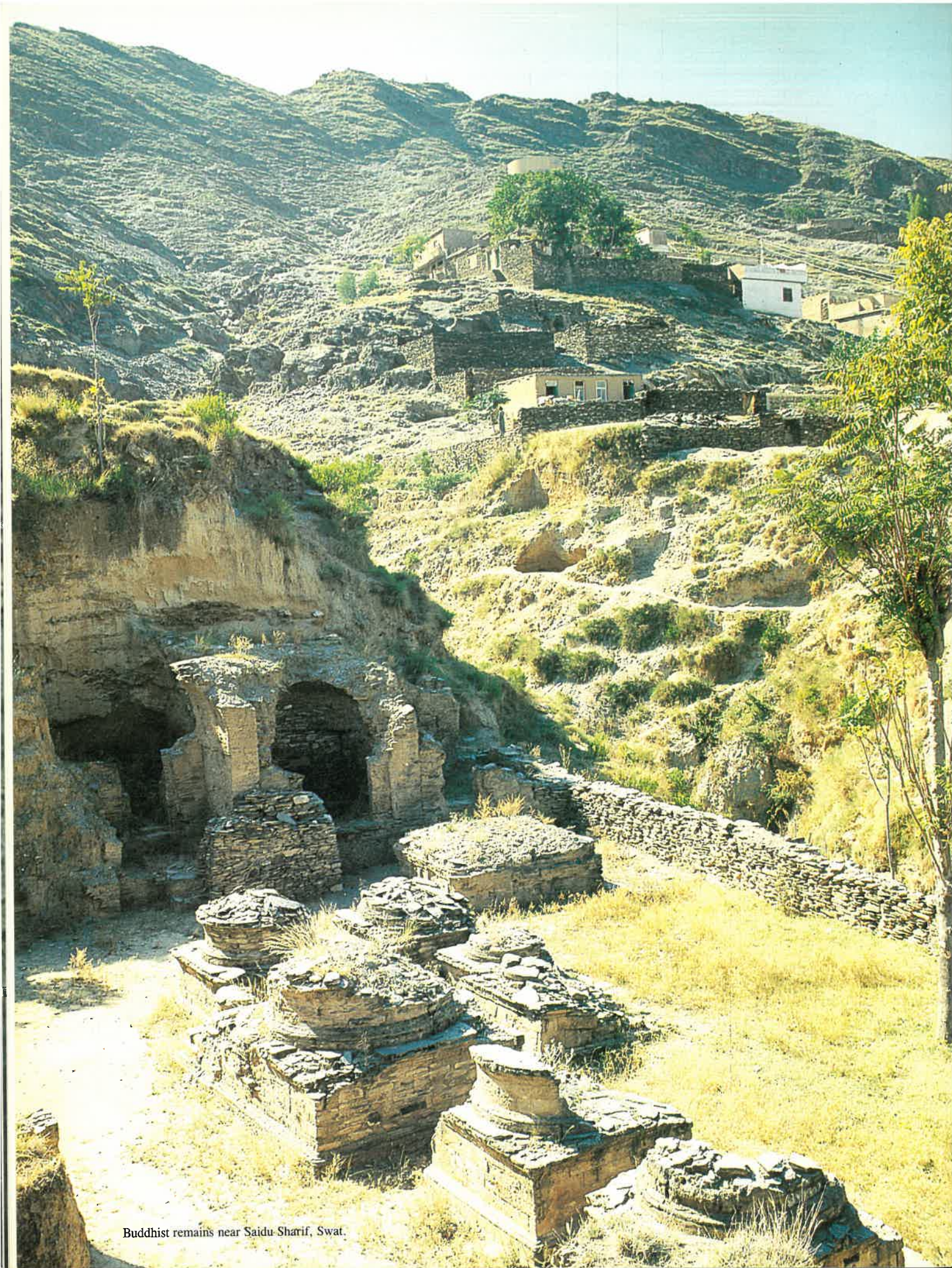
Butkara, Saidu Sharif.



Tomb of Saidu Baba in Swat.



Miandam Valley, Swat.



Buddhist remains near Saidu Sharif, Swat.

Stupas Site, Nimogram stupa and monastery, Shingardar Stupa, the colossal statue of Buddha near village of Ghaligay, Barikot Stupa, Najigram stupa and monastery, Topdara stupa, Foot-prints of Buddha – now in the Swat Museum. A large sized Buddha carved on a big boulder by the side of the hill attracts the eye while going to Jahanabad.

In this predominantly a Gandharan, or next the prehistoric, period the discovery of an 11th century mosque is of startling nature for the scholars. Although no mosque structure of the period has been found surviving above ground yet the unearthing by archaeologist's spade the remains of the mosque by the side of Mount Raja Gira was a great breakthrough in this direction. The hypostyle mosque was built of schist slabs and stone blocks in the supposedly Gandhara style. The building of the mosque appeared to have been repaired or reconstructed twice during its lifetime. A deep arched niche in the western wall by all counts should be the *mehrab*.

It is, however, to be noted that the Gandhara period by far dominates the scene and has yielded a rich harvest of stone sculptures and other small finds. A local museum displays not only the archaeological material, retrieved from the excavations or otherwise collected, but also presents the ethnological wealth of the region, which is unique in itself. And when coming to uniqueness of the arts in Swat, the woodwork, especially the carving on the old wooden mosques can simply not be omitted.

Along the road by the scenic Swat River towards north are situated equally scenic and beautiful, though small, towns of Madyan and Bahrain. Kalam is the last resort on the road from the Swat Valley. It is here that the clear-water streams of Ushu and Utrot join together to make the Swat River. These streams are famed for the cold water fish like trout. For fishing, the Lake Mahodand, further 20 kilometres from Kalam, in the upper Ushu Valley, is also a great attraction for the anglers.

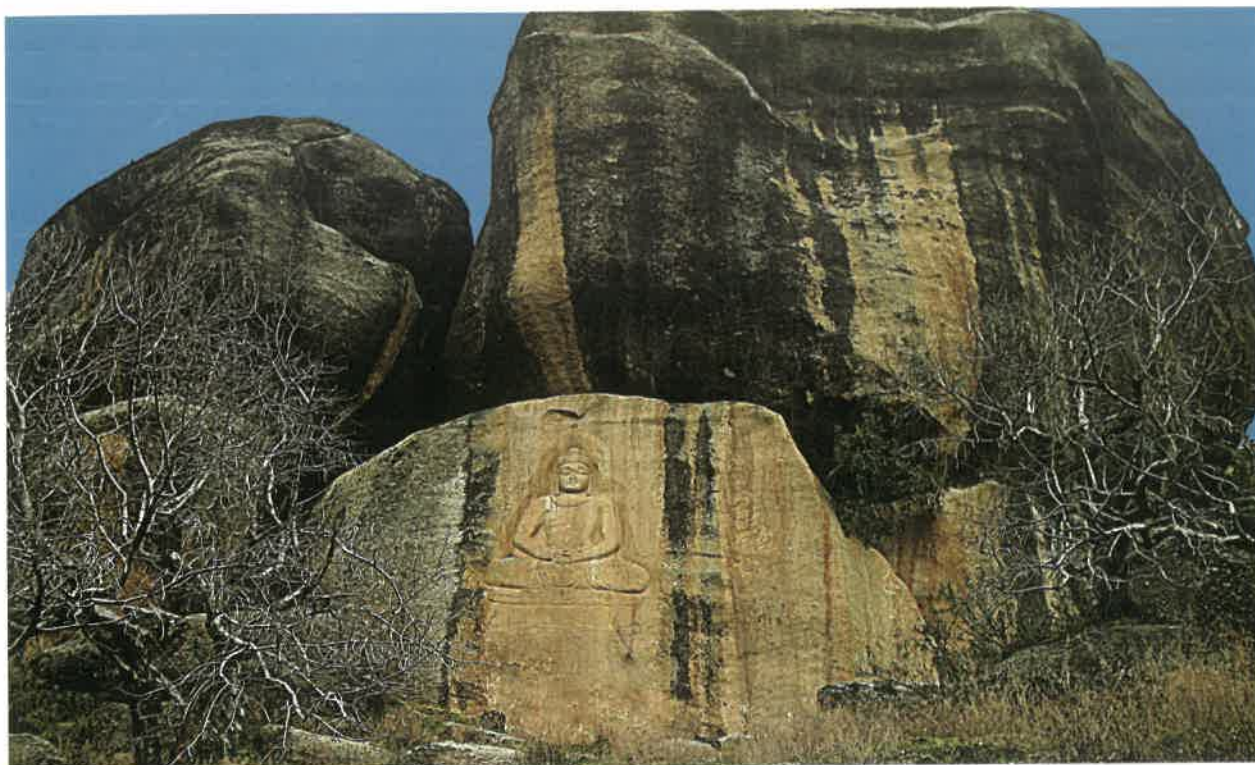
Shangla was a tehsil of the Swat district till it was separated and made a district in July 1995. It is predominantly inhabited by the Pukhto speaking Swati caste, while Gujjar, who move to the lower places and plains during winter, also share the place with them. The society follows the tribal traditions not very different from other Pukhto-speaking areas of the region.



Standing Buddha in stone - Gandhara sculpture



Shingardar Stupa, Swat.



A Buddha in stone carving at Jahanabad, Swat.



A closer look of the stone carved Buddha at Jahanabad, Swat.

The boundaries of Shangla meet the districts of Swat, Battagram, Kohistan and Buner. Thick forests that cover most part of the district are the mainstay for livelihood of the people of this district though next popular profession is agriculture. The population density comes to 341 persons per square kilometre while the area covered by the district is 1,568 square kilometres.

Perhaps the most sparsely populated amongst the districts of NWFP is **Kohistan**, which adjoins Shangla district, Hazara Region and a part of Swat. It is known for its hilly tracts, which hardly have any vegetation on them.

It came in to being as a district in 1976 and has as many as three subdivisions, namely Dasu, Chilas and Pattan. Although a backward district from modern development standards, it has attained manifold importance after the construction of the Karakoram Highway (KKH) or the famous Silk Road, which passes through it.

A German Anthropological Team has discovered many human records of the ancient times, mostly in the form of rock-paintings, in their search though mostly not going much away from the Highway.

With a population density as low as 63 persons per square Kilometre the district covers the land measuring 7,492 square kilometres. Here too agriculture is the main profession of the population.

A very important archaeological discovery in the Pattan area of the district startled the world a few years back. A chance discovery had brought a horde of gold ornaments, which though consisted of two ornaments: one in broken parts of hollow bangle – almost lost now – and two; a girdle of extraordinary weight of 16 kilograms, broken in to 57 pieces, some of them depicting interesting things or even scenes.



Pieces of unique gold ornaments found from Pattan.

Battagram, or sometimes written as Batgram, was elevated to the status of district in 1993 from that of being a tehsil of the Mansehra district in the Hazara Region. It rubs its borders with districts of Kohistan and Shangla and the tribal area of Kala Dhaka. It consists of two sub-divisions; Battagram and Alayee. With its olden tribal flavour the district surpasses in natural beauty having vegetation-covered hills, clear blue springs and streams and an overall fertile land well-suited to agriculture, which is the main profession of the population here. Industrial units, though introduced recently, have come to the area as a boon resultant of the presence of the Karakoram Highway, which passes through it.

The total area covered by the district is 1,301 square kilometres, which sustains a population of 360,377 heads. The discovery of a deep cave just a few kilometres from the district headquarters, almost along the Karakoram Highway, may take its history back to stone-age when studied properly.



Karakar Pass, to Buner.

Buner attained the status of a district in 1991, when its position was raised from that of a tehsil of the Swat district. With its headquarters at Dagar – as Buner is the name of the territory and not a specific place – it now has seven sub-divisions as Dagar, Gadizayee, Chugharzai, Gagra, Chamla and Towtalayee. The district covers a total area of 1,865 square kilometres with a population of 656,480 souls.

In addition to being the home of one of the greatest saints of NWFP, Pir Baba, whose *Ziarat* (Shrine) is thronged at all the times by all and sundry, the district is also archaeologically rich though still needs a systematic study and survey. The same is the case with its mineral wealth, which has not been exploited fully. It abounds in hill forests and is, thus, rich in timber though emphasis is being laid on the agricultural development as well.



Ziarat (Tomb) of Pir Baba in Buner.

The *Ziarat* (Shrine) of Pir Baba near Pacha Kale is the rendezvous of people not only from NWFP but also other places, who come here in search of solace and comfort. With his real name as Syed Ali Tirmizi, Pir Baba, was a descendant of Hadrat Imam Hussain. His father, Syed Qamar Ali, was a commander in the army of Emperor Babur. According to folk version, he was married to a daughter of Babur, who was to become the mother of Pir Baba. He came to Buner during the reign of Emperor Akbar and devoted his life in the preaching and teaching of Islam.

The place is located over a height of 1,000 metres from the mean sea level at the foot of a beautifully wooded spur descending from the outlier of the Ilam, which bifurcates two delightful valleys – Swat and Buner – through Karakar Pass, a real adventurous approach.

Mansehra, which used to be the part of Abbotabad known as Hazara district, became an independent district in 1976. It has a total area of 4,579 square kilometres with a population of 1,231,750 scattered in the whole area.

It is one of the most enchanting lands of NWFP with beautiful hills and woodlands, where also ooze springs



A Sikh in Buner.



Shogran, district Mansehra.

and flow clear water streams and rivers. The district consists of the sub-divisions of Kala Dhaka, Mansehra, Balakot and Ugi. Its boundaries meet Kashmir, Northern Areas administered by the Federal Government and the Malakand area. The Karakoram Highway passes through it, giving its economy quite a boost. A zigzag hilly road, surrounded mostly by tall trees of ground-nuts, leads to Balakot, which is not only important as a historic site of the War fought with the Sikh by Syed Ahmad Bareilvi and Shah Ismail Shaheed, now lying buried here, but also as the gateway to Kaghan's scenic valley and Lake. Through this district roads also lead to Murree, in Punjab, via Abbottabad and Azad Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Balakot is also called the gateway to the paradise that is Kaghan Valley, which has in it the Lake Saiful Maluk, a real treat to the eye. In general, a holiday retreat with captivating scenic beauty, the Kaghan valley stretches to a length of about 160 kilometres with height varying from 2,000 to 4,000 metres above the mean sea level. The skyward rising peaks of Himalayan Range, glaciers, water falls and crystal clear waters of the lakes make it a beauty that can be appreciated most when seen face to face. The Kunhar River with plenty of trout fish flows through the valley and, in addition to the small town of Balakot, has the equally small settlements of Kaghan and Naran on its banks. In the company of colourfully attired women the nomads, mostly known Gujjars, come down to the warmth of the plains to avoid its severe winter and go back with their flocks of cattle to the high pastures of the Kaghan valley in spring.

Perched as if in a bowl at a height of 3,500 metres from the mean sea level, the Lake Saiful Muluk is situated at a distance of 10 kilometres from Naran. It provides an excellent view of the Malika Parbat (Queen of the Mountains), with its peaks touching a height of 5,290 metres. The lake and its surroundings have a legendary setting, as if taken out of a fairytales book. The story connected with this charming site is equally enthralling telling of a prince called Saiful Muluk, after whose name it is known, who fell in love with the fairy of the lake.



Lake Saiful Muluk. Kaghan.



A panoramic view of Abbotabad.

Emperor Asoka's famous Rock Edicts, just by the side of the Highway almost within the town of Mansehra, are the main attraction for Buddhists, general tourists and historians. In addition, one of the early sanatoriums built at the health resorts is also situated in this district.

About 120 kilometres from Islamabad – and 205 kilometres from the provincial headquarters of NWFP, Peshawar – **Abbottabad** is situated at an altitude of 1,225 metres (4002 feet) above mean sea level. It is the district headquarters best known as one of the finest hill-resorts of Pakistan. It is refreshingly surrounded by the Sarban Hills, and right at the Kara-koram Highway. Its summers are pleasantly cool while winters moderately cold with occasional occurrence of snowfall. It lies on a plateau at the southern corner of the Rash (Orash) Plain and is the gateway to the picturesque Kaghan Valley. Connected by road with the Indus Plain and Kashmir and by railhead (at Havelian, 16 kilometres [10 miles] south) with Peshawar and other destinations on the Pakistan Railways, it serves as a big market centre. Founded in 1853 and named after Major James Abbott, the first British deputy commissioner of the region, Abbottabad is a modern city with two parks, a preparatory school, two colleges affiliated with the University of Peshawar, and a forest research centre. The Pakistan Military Academy at Kakul is 8 kilometres (5 miles) northeast of the city. Three major iron-ore deposits are located nearby but not yet fully exploited.

The district covers an area of 1,257 sq. kilometres while a population of 881,000 persons inhabit it.

One of the beautiful attractions is the Haro River Valley. This valley is located at the back of Islamabad, in the feet of Murree Hills on Abbottabad-Lora-Ghoragalli Road. Some Mountains of the valley are nearly of the same height as the Muree hills. It has beautiful pine, scrub and shrub forests, streams, waterfalls, peaks and gorges to watch. The forests of the valley are full of wildlife including leopards, monkeys, pheasants etc. All the wild animals seen in Margalla and Ayubia basically belong to this valley. There are a number of jeepable tracks though three main roads connect it with Islamabad, Murree, Abbottabad, Haripur and Khanpur. The Khanpur dam is also a part of this valley. The weather of the valley remains pleasant.

The last district of the Zone may be taken as **Haripur**, though a portion of it lies on the foothills and descending the hills, on the plain. The name of Hari Pur was kept on the name of General Hari Singh Nalwa one of the ablest generals of Maharaja Ranjit Singh during his rule in the area. The Tehsil of Haripur, which had for quite some time made part of the Hazara district with its headquarters at Abbottabad, was upgraded into a district in 1992, giving it an independent identity separate from Abbottabad. This district has high importance from geographical point of view, especially serving as a gateway to the Hilly Zone of Abbottabad and beyond to the Northern Areas through Karakoram Highway.

The area of Haripur is not only scenically beautiful it is also culturally very rich with scores of Buddhist sites lying scattered, especially in its part of the Taxila valley. The most important and the best preserved of them all is the Jaulian Monastery. It is located some 10 kilometres from Taxila Museum while going towards Khanpur. It is spread at an ideal place on the top of a sleek hill. The

overview of the surrounding hills and valleys from this 90-metre high religious establishment is simply enchanting and invigorating for the spirit, even if marred a bit by the concrete monster of the canal that supplies water to Islamabad from Khanpur Dam, built on the Haro River in a narrow gorge, on the Taxila-Haripur Road. (The Dam also supplies water for irrigation purposes to the valley of Taxila).

The monastic establishment here at Jaulian was founded in the second century during the Kushan rule. Addition of buildings, along with repairs and re-embellishing the old ones, continued up to the fifth century. Soon after the last repairs, it met with its death as a living '*Sangharama*' when whole



Brick-kiln emitting smoke, indicating development in progress in Haripur area.



Jaulian Monastery.

of Gandhara region was devastated by Ephthalites or the White Huns, a barbaric people from Central Asia, as agreed upon by most scholars. Other important sites also in the Taxila valley, located in the NWFP are: the third city site of Sirsukh, Jandial Temple, Pipplan Monastic Establishment, Badalpur Stupa and Monastery etc. The whole of the Taxila Valley stands inscribed on the World Cultural Heritage List of UNESCO.

The biggest Tarbela Dam made of mud is also situated here on the river Indus. This dam produces 2200-Megawatt electricity. From industrial point of view, it is one of the most important districts in NWFP. There are many factory units here e.g. Telephone Industries of Pakistan, Hazara Fertilizers, Pak-China Fertilizers, Tarbela cotton mills etc. Furthermore, many factories of different capacities are located in the Hatar Industrial Estate.

Apart from industrial development in the district, agriculture still stays main occupation of a sizeable population. This district especially provides fruits and vegetable not only to Peshawar but also to Islamabad and Punjab. With the completion of the projects like Ghazi Barotha Hydro-electric and the construction of the Islamabad-Peshawar Motorway section (M-I) there is every likelihood that the region will further develop economically. The total area covered by the district is 1,725 Square kilometres with a population of 803,850 persons.

The Karakoram Highway (KKH), which is one of the biggest wondrous feats of engineering that connects Pakistan with China, enters the never-ending highland areas from this district, although it starts from Hasan Abdal in Punjab's Attock district.

2. The Peshawar Basin

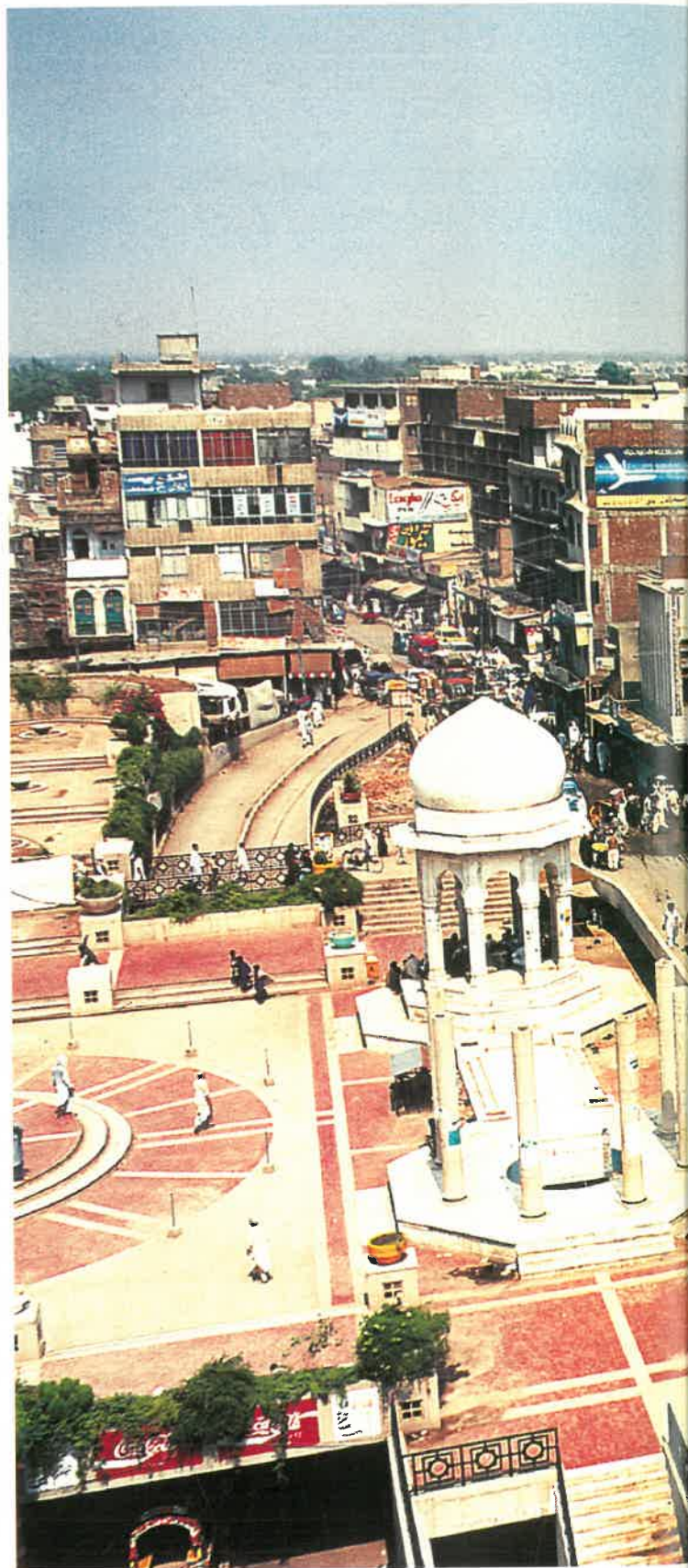
The Peshawar Basin, fashioned in the form of a saucer, is the highest of all the four Basins that step down, one after one, towards south in NWFP. Although the plain area is very fertile, and well irrigated too, the hills that surround it are all barren. Towards east, however, it opens up to the Indus with an access to Punjab, with Attock Fort lying just across the River Indus that divides the two provinces. It is quite an expansive region, which extends for almost 116 kilometres from east to west and is some 84 kilometres on its north-south axis.

Named after the biggest, and the oldest living city of Peshawar, it also includes the districts of Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Charsadda and some Tribal area adjoining the settled districts.

Peshawar, the cultural hub of the North West Frontier Province, which is also the provincial headquarters, is one of the oldest living cities of Pakistan. Although the archaeological excavations in its vicinity have proved man's achievements in the cultural field around 1,500 BC yet its continuous history is easily traceable from around the beginning of the Christian era to the modern times. It hosted as first camp, east of the charismatic Khyber Pass, to the wave after wave of invaders from the west. As martial migrants pushed forward further to the east or southeast in the South Asia Subcontinent, it was not uncommon that they left their marks here.

Peshawar, to many Paikhawar, derives its name from a Sanskrit word "Pushpapura", translated as the 'city of flowers'. The beauty in its flowers has also been mentioned by Emperor Babur in his famous memoirs. It also once served as the capital of Gandhara and had been known by different names in its history, such as Parasawara, and Purusapura or even Begram. The present name, Peshawar, (Pesh - Awar meaning the frontier town or the one that comes first) is said to have been given to it by Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556-1605).

The district, which covers an overall area of 1,257 square kilometres with a population of over 2,242,000 persons, mainly consists of the cultivable plain, the part of a huge basin drained and irrigated by the Kabul River and its tributaries. In the southeast it is covered by low hills of Cherat. The chief crops are





An aerial view of Peshawar city.



The famous seat of higher learning, Islamia College, Peshawar.

wheat, corn, sugarcane, barley, cotton and an assortment of fruits – apples, pears, peaches, pomegranates, quinces etc. Its industries, mostly based on its agricultural produce, include textile and sugar mills, fruit canning, and manufacturing of *Chappals* (sandals, known as Peshawari *chappal*) and other shoes, leatherwork, glazed pottery, wax and embroidery work, furniture, ivory work, knives, copper utensils, cotton *lungies* (loin cloth), turbans, carpets, decorative woodwork and small arms. The ‘Qissa Khwani Bazaar’ (Story-tellers’ street) has always been the rendezvous of foreign traders, who deal in dried fruits, woollen products, rugs, carpets, *pustin* (sheep-skin jackets), *karakuli* (lambskin) caps, and the Chitrali cloaks made of woollen *patti* (strip).

In this famous street, now only a shadow of its past activities, the visiting travellers or the local townsmen sat and relaxed over a cup (special sized and styled) of Qahwa – sort of green tea – and listened to the stories by professional story-tellers in the evening. There are quite a few teashops that still adorn the bazaar front with their large brass samovars and numerous hanging teapots and teacups.

The city lies just west of the Bara River, a tributary of the Kabul River standing guard at the mouth of the Khyber Pass. It has a long historical past with references going back to the early Sanskrit literature and the writings of the classical historians like Strabo and Arrian and the famous geographer, Ptolemy. During the heydays of the Buddhism, much religious activity was witnessed here. Among the remains of the past were several mounds in the quarters on its east bearing the name of Shahji ki Dheri, where was situated the largest Buddhist stupa in the subcontinent, going back to the 2nd century CE.

Originally styled as a walled city Peshawar also used to be encircled by a fortification with as many as sixteen openings in the shape of gates, the most important among them was perhaps Kabuli Gate-



Mahabat Khan's Mosque, Peshawar.



The rich repository of Gandharan antiquity, Peshawar Museum.



Aerial view of Bala Hisar, Peshawar.



Peshawar city, Clock Tower.

opening towards Khyber – which though remains now only in name. The old structures in the city used to be two or three storey houses built mostly of unbaked bricks set in wooden frames to guard against earthquakes.

The historic buildings of Peshawar that remind of its glory include Bala Hissar, a fort built by the Sikhs on the ruins of the state residence of the Durrani, which was destroyed by them after the battle of Nowshera, and Gor Khatri, once a Buddhist monastery and later a sacred Hindu temple, which stands on an eminence in the east and affords a panoramic view of the entire city. There are quite a few other monuments of different periods within the limits of the city and around it, most notable among them being the Mughal period tomb of Sheikh Imamuddin (1650) and the adjoining mosque, tomb of Nawab Sayed



Artisan at work, making brass decorative plates in Peshawar.



Tea-shop in Qissa Khwani Bazaar, Peshawar.

Khan – a Mughal governor of Kabul who died in 1651, the white marble Mosque (1630), with extensive embellishment, built by Mahabat Khan, who remained governor of Peshawar twice during the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. Close to the Mahabat Khan's Mosque, through which it is also approached, is the contemporary Chowk Yadgar with a monument of the *Shuhda* (martyrs). The grave of Rehman Baba (1632-1706), in its modern state, rebuilt in 1956, also lies in Peshawar.

The British period is represented in architecture by the magnificent Governor House, Peshawar Museum - with their colonial architecture - the Provincial Legislative Assembly, St. John's Cathedral in the Cantonment and All Saint's Church in the old city, and the magnificent and imposing Islamia College built in beautiful so-called Neo-Mughal or Mughal-Gothic style. The Peshawar University (founded 1950) with its Forest College – first of its kind in Pakistan – State Bank, High Court, Pearl Continental Hotel, and Nishtar Hall among others, mark the post-independence era, although not representing any particular type of architecture.

Many old houses have beautifully carved heavy wooden doors and almost all have extremely ornamental wooden balconies. Some traditional houses are of great historical value and aesthetic satisfaction in the old city. These houses are situated in Mohallah Sethian and can be approached from Chowk Yadgar. These are exceedingly decorated buildings with carved wooden doors, partitions, balconies, mirrored and painted rooms. The Sethis are the traditional business community of Peshawar. The main house was built in 1882 by Haji Ahmed Gul, who migrated from Chamkani – a village in the vicinity of the city – some six generations ago.

Perhaps the most enchanting attraction around Peshawar is the Khyber Pass situated in the Sulaiman Range, which form the western barrier of Pakistan. The hills dip down here, leaving a passage sometimes as broad as 1½ kilometre and at other place as narrow as 16 metres. After crossing the Bab-e-Khyber, the modern structure, the pass begins near Jamrud Fort 18 kilometres from Peshawar and extends beyond the border of Pakistan at Torkham 58 kilometres away. The historic Ali Mosque and Sphola Stupa still attract a visitor to the Khyber Pass as do the Plaques of different army outfits, which remained busy here.

Right at the eastern end of the Pass lies the town of Jamrud, in the Khyber Agency of the Peshawar Division, lying at a height of 461 metres above the mean sea level. It is connected by road and rail with Peshawar and with Landi Kotal, and Torkham beyond, through the pass towards the Afghan border. Noted for its fort built with 3-metre thick walls around 1836 by the Sikh Hari Singh Nalwa, one of Ranjit Singh's generals, it was originally named Fatehgarh to commemorate the Sikh victory over the disunited Pukhtoon tribes. The fort gained importance as a British frontier outpost in the Second Afghan War (1878-79) and was their base of operations during the Tirah campaign (1897-98) when the Afridi tribe of the Pukhtoon rose in a rebellion against the colonial masters.

Nowshera, sometimes also spelled Naushahra or known locally as Nokhaar in vernacular, was raised to the status of district from that of a tehsil of Peshawar only in 1988. Lying on a sandy plain delimited by hills on southern side, while on its north it meets the districts of Mardan and Swabi and Peshawar on the west. The Kabul River joins the Indus in its east side where the latter makes its frontier with Punjab, Attock being on the other side. The Kabul River flows from west to east in this district, with the district headquarters located on its banks.

It is a commercial and industrial centre, which is connected by rail and road with Dargai (Malakand Pass), Mardan, Peshawar and Rawalpindi. The town's industries include cotton, wool, and paperboard mills and chemical and newsprint factories. Nonetheless the basic occupation in the district is agriculture.

Across the Kabul River a little distance away from Nowshera town, is situated the Pakistan Air Force Academy at Risalpur, where also is located the railways locomotive workshop.

Nowshera district is perhaps one of the most-populated administrative entities of NWFP, next only to Peshawar, with 1,062,784 persons living over a total area of 1,748 square kilometres.

The district has the great reputation of being home to the founding father of Pukhto poetry, Khushal Khan Khattak. In religious circles it is well known because of the presence of the *Gaddi* (a headquarter of religious mentor) of Pir Saheb of Manki Sharif, who played an important role in the Pakistan Movement before the partition of the Subcontinent.

The district, in addition to being a home to a prestigious seminary at Akora Khattak, has historic places worth visiting. One such place is the so-called Rang Mahal near the village



The 'garam chana' (hot gram) vendor with cart, Nowshera.

Valai, only a few kilometres southeast of the district town. There is a spring by the foot of the hill, freshwater of which has been made use of to have a garden-like atmosphere with a Mughal period pavilion.



Familiar 'Samavar' and other utensils for Qahwa.

Charsadda, was still another tehsil of Peshawar, which attained the status of a district in 1988. It is named after the town that houses its headquarters. Lying north of Peshawar, and the Kabul River, it has a very fertile land where agriculture is practised for subsistence. It grows in abundance sugarcane, tobacco, vegetables and different kinds of fruit. Its industry is also based on its agricultural produce.

Charsadda is historically known to be the site of Pushkalavati, or Pukhalavadi in the Prakrit language, which the Greeks during their period pronounced as Peukela. It is an old capital of Gandhara, encompassing mainly the Peshawar or Yousafzai region of NWFP. It is virtually littered with the remains of that period and archaeological dig on some has proved, according to some scholars, 'in the history of Pushkalavati alone can be traced those elements of the culture that underlie the very bases of the Gandharan life'.

It is also thickly populated district with 1,241,000 heads living on a ground covering 996 square kilometres.

Mardan, lying east of Charsadda district, is one of the oldest districts, which attained this status back in 1937. It is called after the name of its headquarters. It has a total area of 1,632 square kilometres with a total population of 1,788,700 persons.

It is mainly inhabited by the Yousafzai tribe of the Pukhtoon, who had moved to this valley around

the 15th century CE and settled here after expelling the old inhabitants, the Dilazaks. With their spread even to other places in the valley, the area came to be known as Yousafzai plain. The other main tribe that inhabits this plain is the Khattak, who had been in perpetual war with the Yousafzais. During the reign of Aurangzeb Alamgir, Khushal Khan Khattak, fell out from the Mughals and made peace with the compatriot tribe of Yousafzai. After the construction of irrigation canals from the Swat River, Mohmands of the western areas also came down and settled here first as tillers of the land and then becoming masters of many a landed agricultural property. Besides these main tribes, the population of the district also includes Syeds and Gujjars, the latter taken by many as the original inhabitants of the region.

Very strategically situated almost in the middle of the vast Valley, which had been subject to invaders from north, west and even east the district is culturally very rich. In addition to the pre-historic cave at Sanghao, which amply proves it to be one of the most ancient areas, Buddhism flourished here during the Gandhara period. The sites like Takht-e-Bahi (perhaps the best preserved monastery perched on the hilltop with enchanting scenic view), Jamalgarhi, Shahbazgarhi are only a few among many located in this district.



An all-encompassing view of the Buddhist Monastery at Takht-e-Bahi,

Swabi, lying on the easternmost side of the Province, used to be a tehsil of Mardan until elevated to the status of a district in 1988, and named after the town housing its headquarters. It consists of two tehsils: Swabi and Lahore. The Tribal region of Gadoon has also been attached to it, giving it the status of Tax-free zone as Gadoon Amazai industrial area. In its town of Topi has been established the GIK Institute of Technology.

The district is virtually littered with mounds and sites of archaeological significance, in addition to the ancient Fort of Hund. As it is situated at the confluence of the routes from the west (via the

Khyber Pass) and from north (Swat, Dir etc via the Karakar, Buner Passes) has played 'host' to many an adventurer. The written records mention of its having been visited by Alexander, the Scythians and the Kushans, the Chinese Pilgrims, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, Sultan Shihabuddin Ghauri as also Timur on his return march. From the house of Timur, Babur also paid it a visit on his entry to the plains of Punjab. Before him it had been visited by the great Mongol conqueror, Chingiz Khan, who was in pursuit of Khwarizm Shah, Jalaluddin Mankarni. After the defeat of the Turki Shahis in Kabul, the Hindu Shahi rulers made Hund their capital in the 9th century CE. The 10th century Muslim traveller, Muqaddasi, eulogises Hund for its riches and congenial environs.

It is probable that Hund Fort lost much of its utility, hence prosperity, when Emperor Akbar installed a ferry at Attock, some 18 kilometres downstream, and built a huge fort on the cliff, on the left bank of the River, to guard the crossing and the region.

The district covers a total area 1,543 square kilometres with a population of 1,252,916 persons, majority of which sustains on agriculture. The main crops grown on the lands here are wheat, sugarcane, beet, maize, cotton and tobacco. The main factories in the district are those, which use the raw material of its agricultural produce.

In the contemporary history it has the honour of being the home of the brave soldier of Pakistan, Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed, who was awarded the highest national military award of Nishan-e-Haider for gallantry.

3. *The Kohat Basin and Adjoining Hill Zone*

It comprises of the Kohat Basin and the adjoining Kohat Hills and the district in addition to the districts of Hangu and Karak. The Kohat Basin is at a lower plain than that of the Peshawar Basin. It is a fertile trough, which has a naturally rich soil covering and fairly extensive irrigation system, so helpful in giving boost to the agricultural produce – the major mainstay for most of the population living here. It has an important strategic location, which has resulted in the establishment of communication lines with not only the tribal neighbours but also Peshawar and Punjab.

The basin sits within the Kohat Hills with four of their Ranges, some of them having a length of 80 kilometres, and certain of their peaks touching a height of about 610 to 1,220 metres. In between, rivers and streams have eroded the hills to make depressions, the largest of them all being that of the Kohat Toi, the Kohat Basin.

The main town of the Basin is **Kohat**, which is also the headquarters of the district named after it. It lies just north of the Kohat Toi River at the entrance to the Kohat Pass, through which a military road was opened in 1901. The new town lies at some distance from the original 14th-century town, traditionally said to have been founded by the Buddhist raja Kohat, who had come here with his brother. It is connected by rail with Thal and the main rail (Peshawar-Karachi) line via Jand, across the Indus River, and by road with Rawalpindi, and Bannu. Peshawar, with which it was connected by road through the Pass – Darra Adam Khel – has now been provided with an excellent Kohat Tunnel, named as Pakistan-Japan Friendship Tunnel, opened in 2003. The Tunnel, said to be the longest roadway subway (1.9 kilometres), along with the approach roads, offers an alternate passage to steep and long Kohat Pass reducing traffic congestion, distance and travel time between Peshawar and Kohat.

The district covers an area of 2,545 square kilometres with a population of about 700,000, which, in addition to taking to agriculture, also works in the home industry that produces *lungis* (cotton loincloths), turbans, textiles, shoes, and leather goods, mainly in its major town, Kohat.



A Kohati girl.

The oldest Inter Services Selection Board (ISSB) and a Cadet College are also located here, in addition to other schools and colleges.

Hangu, till recently a tehsil of Kohat, has been upgraded as a district – and named after its headquarter-town. Its boundaries touch the districts Kohat and Karak and the Orakzai Agency of the FATA. It is practically definable by the limits of the 72-kilometre (45-mile) long Miranzai valley.

The district covers a territory of 1,097 square kilometres that sustains a population of over 400,000 people. As a result of the traditions of the tribal society mixed with the settled element, the rate of educated class is quite encouraging in this district. The export of manpower to the foreign lands brings in a much-needed foreign exchange for the country.

Karak was another tehsil of Kohat till 1988, when it was upgraded to the status of district and named after its headquarter-town. It consists of three Tehsils namely Karak, Banda Dawood Shah and Takht Nasruty. The district, which has a total area of 3,372 square kilometres and a population of 536,146 souls, is mainly inhabited by the Khattaks.

In the face of acute shortage of water, coupled with the salt-affected soil, agriculture is scarce. It, however, has mines of mineral salt that help its economy. The main town of Karak remained out of the ambit of the major developments, as it did not have any direct links to other cities with the Peshawar-Bannu Highway passing a little distance away from it. Now that it is served by the major communication artery, the Indus Highway, there are signs of its growing at a faster rate.



The mule-train passing through the Khyber Pass.





Double-engined train through picturesque Khyber Pass.

4. The Central Highland and Hill Zone

The physical division of the Central Highland and Hill Zone consists of the Tribal areas sans the settled districts. It includes the Safed Koh, Tirah and Khyber Hills, Kurram Valley and the Kurram Agency and Khyber Agency.

In it is situated the famous Khyber Pass that connects Pakistan with Afghanistan. The general elevation of the hills and mountains in this Zone is formidable, including the sky-rising Safed Koh and the Khyber and the Kohat Hills, which march eastward and southward towards the Indus Plain.

The area being inhospitable with rocky and mountainous terrain has little to help sustain large numbers of population, as arable ground is scarce to cultivate. The hardy manpower has, however, exploited fully its strategic location over the centuries – or even millennia. The Safed Koh, Tirah, and the Khyber Hills are the rugged homeland to some powerful independent tribal groups like the Afridi and Orakzai.

The majority of the Afridis are migratory, the clans descending in winter from the snow-bound highlands of Tirah, bringing their flocks and herds to graze in the low country round Peshawar and Kohat, and returning to the hills before the pre-monsoon hot season sets in.

Kurram Agency is perhaps the greenest of all these. Its most important town, Parachinar, also serving as the headquarters of the Agency, is connected with Kohat by a very good road. Most of the villages and towns are found along the rivers and riverines just as the town of Parachinar.



Bab-e-Khyber, at the eastern end of the famous Khyber Pass.



A panoramic view of Khyber Pass.

Bannu Basin



5. The Bannu Basin

The Bannu Basin is the third in the row of descending troughs southward of Peshawar bowl. It is separated on the north from the Kohat Basin by the young tertiaries of the Kohat Hills. It is enclosed by barren and denuded hills that rise sharply from the rim of Basin, within which lies the land of the Kurram and Gambila (Tochi) Rivers, which represents a fertile crest. It consists of the districts of Bannu and Lakki.

Bannu is one of the oldest districts of NWFP. It has a rich archaeological past as is also proved by the recent surveys and excavations at different sites around the district headquarters town such as the Neolithic complex of Sheri Khan Tarakai in the Jani Khel area, Proto-historic site of Lewan and Tarakai Qila representing the Kot-Dijian period of Pre-Harappans in this part of the country. Even in historic period its mention is seen made almost around 2nd century CE. Amongst the other archaeological sites are the Akra mounds – four in number – near the village Bharat. The main mound seems to have accommodated a large city, possibly some capital. From the discovery of the coins it can safely be put as a site, which existed prior to c. 1st century BC.

With a total area of 1,227 square kilometres and a population of 817,182 heads the district is extensively exploited for agricultural activity in the plains as most of it is suitable due to availability of water from its rivers. It is mostly inhabited by Bannuchi and Waziri castes.

Lakki, also sometimes known as Lakki Marwat, used to be a tehsil of Bannu and was raised to the status of a district only in 1992. Due to inhospitable terrain, scarcity of water and other facilities, practising agricultural activity is very difficult in this district. This is why it has assumed the roll of a trade centre.

It is spread over an area of 3,164 square kilometres with a population of 607,488 heads. Most of the inhabitants belong to the Marwat caste.

6. The Southern Highland and Hill Zone



Draban Zam, Sulaiman Range.

It mostly consists of what is under the Federally Administered Areas of Waziristan and Waziristan Hills, Marwat Range and Sulaiman Mountains.

It is said about Waziristan that probably no other area in the NWFP has had the personality of the people stamped on it more than this place. 'Ever since the close of the fourteenth century when the Darwesh Khel Wazirs moved eastwards out of Birmal – Afghanistan – and pushed the Khattaks from Showal and the Khost border near of the Tochi River, this wild arid hill country has been the homeland for these restive people'. Due to inhospitable and barren terrain of these highlands, coupled with the inaccessibility from either Afghanistan or the South Asia Subcontinent, the tribes of Waziristan have long defied any outside authority.

Waziristan may be divided into two regions: North Waziristan and South Waziristan. The former is almost entirely composed of barren hills with the exception of the Tochi River Valley, where considerable part of land is available for cultivation. The other Division, not much different from the North Waziristan in its physical composition, the greener pastures are found towards the Afghanistan border. Most of the area here in the South Waziristan gives an empty look as the population is mostly concentrated

along the greener spots, the most populated spots being the Wana plain and the Makin-Kaniguram-Razmak areas.

The rugged hills of Waziristan have very definite bearings. On their south flows the Gomal River while on north they are delimited by Kurram River, the Afghan districts of Birmal and Khost make their western limit with Bannu Basin and the Derajat lie on their east. These hills face the eastern plains with a line of cliffs with an average height of about 305 metres, rising gradually towards west until at the Afghan Frontier they touch the height of about 3,050 metres above the mean sea level. The geologists believe that the younger series of rocks among them are found in the eastern or outer ranges, while the older rocks appear in the interior to the west.

The Marwat Range strikes out from the Waziristan hills, which separates the Bannu Basin from the Derajat. Although known as one, this barren hill area consists of three narrow but separate ranges namely Bhittani, Marwat and Khisor.

The Sulaiman Range, though present the same north-south bearing and the rock sequence as found in the Waziristan hills, is treated separately because of occurrence of these features in greater amount especially when the alignment is so much more regular. Along with Shirani hills, their peaks culminate in the Takht-e-Sulaiman or the throne of Solomon.

'The outer hills of this mountain system, the Siwaliks, rise abruptly from the plains of the Derajat to a height of approximately 5,000 feet (1524 metres). The origin of most of the rivers such as Gomal and Sowan, have their origin in the long longitudinal valleys to the west of the main Takht range.'



A general scene of a village in D.I. Khan.

7. The Dera Ismail Khan (commonly known as Derajat) Basin

It consists mainly of the expansive district of Dera Ismail Khan, which is the southern most district of NWFP, and the district of Tank.

According to tradition it was in 1469 CE when Sultan Hussain, the Governor of Multan, made over the Indus frontier to a Baloch Malik, Sohrab Khan, who founded the towns of Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Fateh Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan naming each of them after one of his three sons. However, another account gives the credit of its founding to a Baloch Sardar by the name of Ismail Khan.

The district of **Dera Ismail Khan** is bounded on the north by Tank and Lakki Marwat districts, while on its east is the River Indus with Mianwali and Bhakkar districts of Punjab Province beyond. On its south lies Dera Ghazi Khan, another district of Punjab. Its western side is bounded by the Sulaiman Range, with Sindh and Balochistan beyond. This is the only district of the Province, which may be said to be the integral part of the Indus valley and covers a total area of 1,805,225 square kilometres.

The Daman Area (called so because it is at the foot of the Sulaiman Range, including the Shirani foothills) has been made cultivable and in spite of their devastating effect in some seasons, it is mostly irrigated by Rod-kohis (hill torrents) though canal system from the Chashma Barrage is also very effective in making it a district suitable for cultivation.

The land of D.I. Khan has long been inhabited by man. The recent archaeological researches have proved this fact beyond any doubt. At Gumla, some 12 kilometres from the district town on the main DIK-Tank Road, remains of nomadic community of the fourth millennium BC have been



Agricultural produce to the market through camel-cart train - D.I.Khan.



Girls with water-pitchers at the Indus - D.I.Khan.



/ Harvesting in irrigated areas of D.I.Khan.

unearthed, while at Jhandi Babar, 60 kilometres southwest of DIK, the site that was excavated is being considered belonging to the Neolithic village culture in the 5th millennium BC.

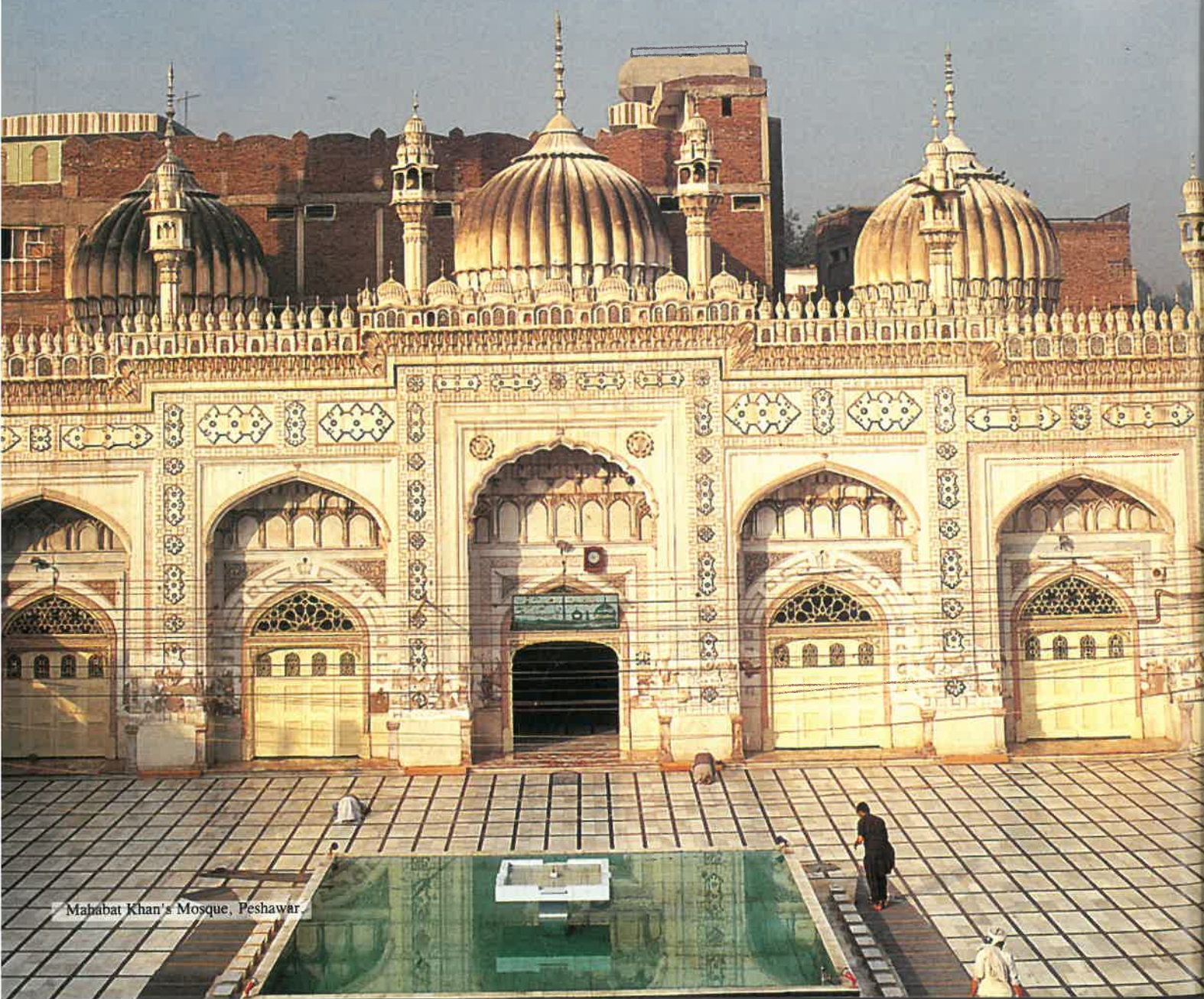
The excavations at Rehman Dheri, situated 23 kilometres on the main DIK-Peshawar Road is considered to be the first in this area that goes back to the proto-literate period. Although further probe is required to fill the gap yet it is certain that during the Hindu Shahiyas the land was occupied here. It is proved from the presence of the Northern and Southern Kafir Kots, having temple architecture and fortifications. At Lal Mahra Sharif is located an ensemble of four tombs of the Muslim period built on the style of Tughlaq architecture, probably following – or may be forerunning – those at Multan.

Tank, from a tehsil of Dera Ismail Khan district, was upgraded to the district level in 1992. Its borders touch Punjab on one side and Afghanistan on the other. Through the route of Wana-Zhob it makes access of NWFP possible to Balochistan.

It covers an area of 1,679 square kilometres with a population of 293,825 souls, the majority of the population being Bhattani and Mahsud.



Interior of a typical house in Tank.



Mahabat Khan's Mosque, Peshawar



Sanghao cave.

Through the ages

The story of human habitation in the NWFP, which had generally been thought going back only to the period of the Aryans not even a couple of millennia before the Christian Era, was pushed back tremendously after the excavations carried out in 1963-64 at Sanghao Cave located north of Mardan. The Cave yielded the stratified cave-materials for the first time in Pakistan. Among other later components, Sanghao contains an Upper Palaeolithic component and has generated consistent radiocarbon dates between 20,000 and 40,000 years before the present; the tool assemblage is primarily microlithic.

A recent survey, which still awaits publication and attestation, claims discovery of Middle Stone Age colonies in Bajaur and Mohmand Agencies, thus further extending the area of human activity to other parts of the Province. The authors of this work claim that the sites go back to 35,000 years, and the 'uniqueness of the new find is that they are in the form of clusters depicting the advance stage of Middle Stone Age, as compared to the primitive and isolated cave site of Sanghao.'

The archaeological researches conducted during the last 30-40 years, especially towards south in the Bannu Basin and the Derajat have brought many a fresh evidence to fill some gaps in the story of mankind in the region of NWFP. At Gumla, about 12 kilometres from Dera Ismail Khan, aceramic Neolithic period and the remains of nomadic community of the 4th Millennium BC have been brought to light. The site showed a gradual development in the people who then became hut-dwelling community and started farming. Signs of mature urban phase of Harappan culture were also encountered at the site at the later stages of its occupation.

Another site of considerable dimensions, Jhandi Babar, about 60 kilometres southwest of Dera

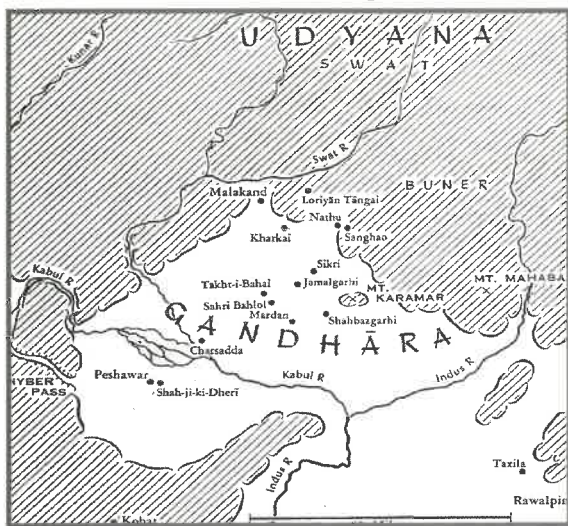
Ismail Khan, is thought to be the first Neolithic village of the NWFP going back to around 5th millennium BC. Still another site, Sheri Khan Tarakai in Jani Khel area of Bannu, has been put as Neolithic complex, which is located at the piedmont of Tochi Pass.

The Proto-historic site of Lewan, about 23 kilometres south of Bannu has been dated in 3200-2800 BC bracket while Tarakai Qila, again in the Bannu Basin, is thought to represent the final phase of Harappan period.

Perhaps the most important of all these discoveries is that of Rehman Dheri, nearly 23 kilometres north of Dera Ismail Khan, which has brought to light, what is considered by its excavators, to be the first Proto-literate and Proto-urban site in this part of the world. It is thought to be located on the ancient routes between South Asia, southern Afghanistan, eastern Iran, Balochistan and Central Asia. Its population is inferred to have consisted of about 12,000 souls.

After this there is perhaps quite a bit of period about which is known nothing. Its earlier historic period, however, shows the Iranian domination, when sometime after 516 BC Darius Hystaspes had sent Skylax, a Greek seaman of Karyanda, to explore the course of the river Indus, which is now called Abasin as far as it flows in NWFP. He was afterwards also able to subjugate the races inhabiting the areas west of this river, and north of Kabul. The modern Peshawar basin of Gandhara was also then incorporated in a Persian Satrapy.

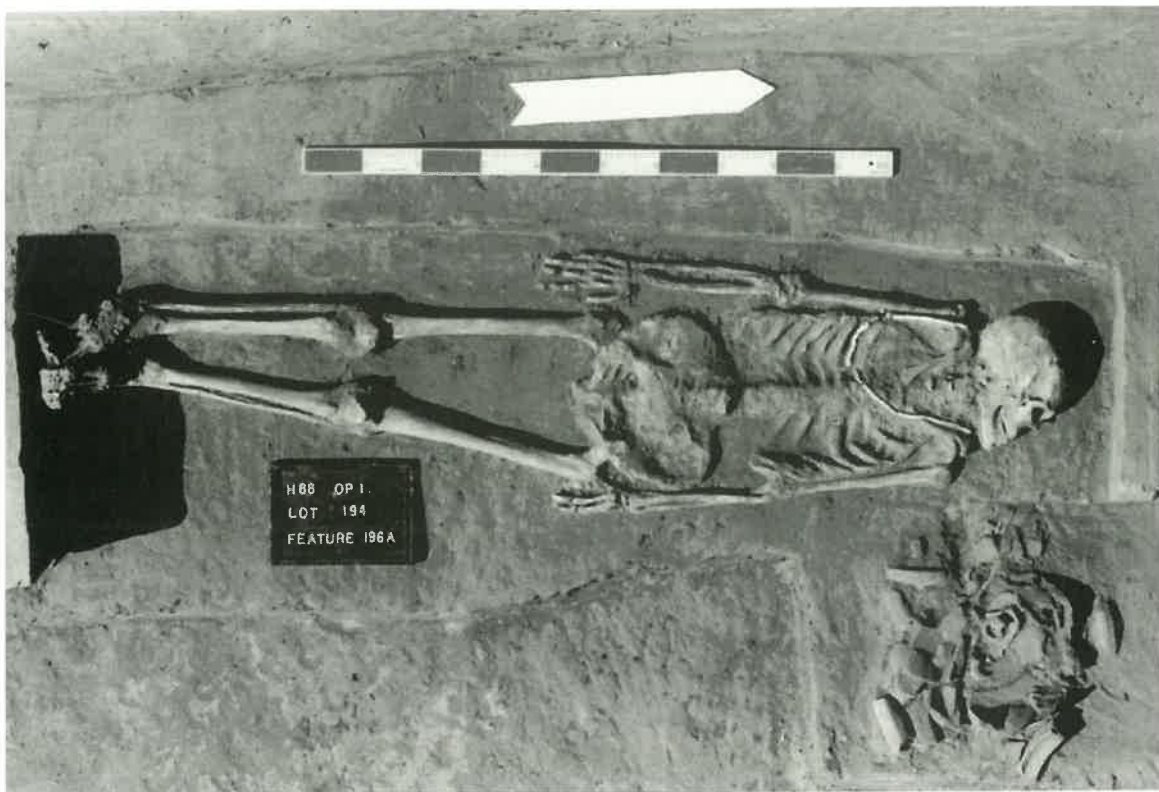
When Alexander of Macedonia crossed the Hindu Kush in the early 327 BC, he was joined by the King of Taxila and other native chiefs somewhere in Nicacea. From here he despatched some of his troops through the Vale of Kabul River. With his light troops he preferred to travel to Bajaur and Swat. It was perhaps in Bajaur where the local people on retreat had burnt Arigaion that he ordered to fortify and rehabilitate. After defeating the Aspasians from where he collected a large number of prisoners and oxen, he crossed the Goutaios (Panjkora) and entered Assakenoi. Soon after, Bazira (or Bazaar) and Ora fell to him. The people of this city abandoned it and fled to rock, where the famous bridge was constructed to subdue them. In the Hashtnagar near Peshawar, Peukelaotic submitted. Here he appointed Nicanor as satrap of the country west of the river Indus. Alexander, according to some historians then crossed the mighty Indus at Ohind (Hund) though there are others, who believe his crossing further downstream near Attock.



Hsuan-tsang's Description of Gandhara.

After the assassination of Nicanor's successor when Alexander himself had left India, Eudamos and Taxiles were put at the head of the country west of Indus. After the death of Alexander, Porus wrested with him the country of lower Indus but was murdered by Eudamos. It was after 317 BC that Eudamos left India with the result that power of the Macedonians collapsed. It was at this time that Chandargupta, the founder of the Mauryan Empire, took the province into his possession. His grandson Asoka, a great patron of Buddhism, held not only Gandhara but also Pakhli (modern Hazara). His rock-inscriptions at Shabbazgarhi and Mansehra sufficiently portray his edicts as Buddhist.

The Empire could not survive after the death of Asoka and one of the princes of Bactria, Demetrius, encashed on the opportunity and conquered part of Northern India around 190 BC. He was defeated in his eastern provinces by Eucratides. After his murder, the region split in to many small areas



Gandhara grave - Thana, Swat.

ruled by petty overlords. It was the time when the Bactrians were attacked from the west by Parthians and from the north by Sakas. Local Greek rulers, whatever their mettle, were wiped out by the Yueh-chi.

They had themselves been driven out from the highlands of Central Asia. But one of their branches, Kushan, was more enterprising and took territories extending south to the Kabul valley under Kadphises I. His son, Kadphises II pushed further and conquered North Western part of the South Asia Subcontinent. He ruled this new addition of territory through his generals. His successor, Kanishka extended his rule to the far off places in the east and in the south as well as Bactria and Kabul Valley. His successors, one after the other, were: Huvishka, and Vasushka or Vasudeva. Their dates are a contentious matter with the historians but from the excavated material they are regarded to have ruled during the early period of the Christian era. The archaeologists also ascribe the fine specimens of statues and bas-relief found in the Peshawar part of Gandhara and Swat (Udiyana) to this period.

After Kanishka's son Huvishka the following successors could not maintain the expansive limits of the empire when they shrank to just the valley of Indus and the parts of Afghanistan. The chief of the Yueh-chi tribe, Ki-to-lo, replaced the Kushan. His subjects, who ruled the valley of Peshawar, are known to the Chinese historians as the little Kushan. They were, however, soon humbled by the Ephthalites – or the White Huns – whose empire stretched from Chinese Turkestan to Persia. They, in addition to other regions on the west, also ruled India from Sagala, possibly Sialkot in Punjab. Mihirkula, of the same tribe had penetrated deep into the heart of the South Asia Subcontinent but was made to retreat to only Punjab and the Indus Valley.

After this the Muslims come to the scene, but after changing hands the region west of NWFP, in addition to Multan and Sindh came under their rule. In 902 the Kashmir forces from the east deposed the ruler of Ohind (Hund), when the kingdom was given to Kamalu. The dynasty of the



Ghaznavid was founded by Subuktagin in Ghazni in 977, eleven years after which he raided the Indian Subcontinent and defeated Jaipal with his allies at Laghman and not long after that he was in possession of the whole country up to the Indus, when he appointed his governor at Peshawar. His son, Mahmud made several excursions to India, in the first he defeated Jaipal (1001), Anandpal on the next (1006), both times near Peshawar. He also raided the Pukhtoon region (1024 and 1025) and annexed the whole area of NWFP (excluding Hazara region on the other side of the Indus) in to his empire.



Aerial view of Peshawar, showing main communication arteries connecting with North and East - onward to Attock. On the left is the Bala Hisar.

Sultan Shahab-ud-din Ghauri took Peshawar in 1179. On his murder in the Jhelum district, Tajuddin Yalduz, his general, took the reins in his hands and established himself at Ghazni. His stronghold, however, remained the Kurram valley till he was driven out to India by Khwarizmis in 1215. The Mongols wrested the areas from them when they also ravaged Peshawar around 1221. However, after being made in charge of Ghazni, Jalaluddin added Karman (Kurram) and Banian (Bannu) to his areas, eventually becoming independent ruler himself in 1236. He was driven out of Ghazni and Kurram in 1239, though Bannu still remained under his control. When he was killed during his attempt to take

Multan, his son, Nasir-ud-din, succeeded him and held Bannu in his rule.

The Mongol, Taimur, started his excursion to India entering through Chitral and after his series of fights in Punjab, he returned to Samarkand taking the route of Bannu in March 1399. He was able to establish his overlordship in this region, including Hazara. After the weakening of the Taimurrids, Lodhi Pathans furthered their hold on their seats south of Kohat. After the success of attaining Delhi in 1451, Bahlol Lodhi also prevailed upon the northern parts of the Subcontinent. Sometime later, the Khashi Afghans, when pushed out by Mirza Ulugh Beg in Kabul, they settled in Peshawar, Swat and Bajaur.

Babur, after getting hold of Kabul, moved to India in 1505, through Khyber, Kohat, Bannu, Isa Khel and the Derajat. He, however, returned home but taking the route of Sakhi Sarwar Pass. About 13 years later he invaded Bajaur and Swat but had to rush back due to problems arising back in Badakhshan.

Six years on, with the help of one faction of Pathans against the other, he crossed the Province and established his rule over India by capturing Delhi after the battle of Panipat in 1526. After his death in 1530, when Humayun succeeded him at Delhi, his younger son, Kamran became the Governor of Kabul. With his aid Ghwaria Khel vanquished the Dilazaks and took control of Peshawar. After the Ghwaria Khel were defeated by Khan Kaju with the help of Khashi tribes, Kamran was also ousted by Humayun, who entered Peshawar in 1552. The hold of the Mughals over the region was mostly weak and it went on changing hands.

The Mohmands had a tough row with Man Singh in 1586. The Mughal excursion sent to Swat to wrest the area from the Pukhtoon, who had earlier wrested it, met with disaster. It was here that one of the Nauratans (nine jewels) of Akbar, Birbal, was killed. The Pukhtoon invested Peshawar in 1592 but Zain Khan relieved the Fort. A year later he subdued Tirah, Swat and Bajaur. The Roshanias were still not fully under control, their stronghold still remaining Tirah. It was sometime around 1620 that the Mughal force sent to subjugate the tribals completely met with another defeat. However, after the death of Jahangir in 1627 the Pukhtoon revolted on a mass scale laying a big siege over Peshawar in 1630 though soon to be lifted for want of harmony and unity in their tribes. During the reign of Shahjahan, Kohat and Kurram remained under the control of the Mughals enabling them to keep the much-needed communication with Kabul.

In 1667 the Pukhtoon tribes of Yousafzai and Mandaur felt themselves strong enough to entangle with the Mughal seat. They, however, could not go beyond Attock near which they were defeated. At Khyber, the force sent by the governor of Kabul, Muhammad Amin, also met the same fate and lost his whole army. The Afridis were able to give a double blow to the Mughal army and at the end drove them to Bajaur. Such reverses brought the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir personally to Hasan Abdal, from where he sent a force to Kohat and the other to the Khyber. He also adopted a more conciliatory policy towards the Pukhtoon of the NWF, also awarding fiefs on some of them. After that the Pukhtoon, with their internal strifes coupled with the Emperor's policy, did not rise against the Mughal power.

With the Mughal dynasty getting weaker and ineffective by the day after Alamgir, Nadir Shah defeated the Mughal governor of Kabul but let him keep the control of the province, which also included Peshawar. It was perhaps Ahmad Shah Durrani, Nadir Shah's successor, who brought much more settled government than had been known for a long time in this area. The same disturbed conditions returned with the coming of Timur Shah, on whose death there was a complete chaos in the region when the local chieftains became independent of any central authority. The Peshawar valley went to the Barakzai family while that of Derajat to the Sadozais.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh started invading the region of the NWF from 1818 when Dera Ismail Khan surrendered to him. In 1823 he became the master of Marwat plain of Bannu. Two years after the

First Sikh invasion over Nowshera, they took control of Peshawar in 1834. It was also the time when Kohat and Teri were temporarily taken over. His general, Hari Singh Nalwa died in action against the Pukhtoon at Jamrud and though most of the Province was by then annexed to Punjab, skirmishes between the two rivals never ended.

With the annexation of Punjab to the Indian Dominion of the British, the Frontier territory also became its part in 1849. However, during the War of Independence of India in 1857, the reaction of the main players of the NWF was not encouraging or nationalistic by any standards. The British thus were all praise for them after the fateful event. According to the 'Mutiny Report', which extols them for their action – or inaction – "The attitude of the people during the Mutiny is the highest tribute that can be paid to the success of the internal administration".... "Of all the frontier tribes only a few Yusufzai villages within the British border took advantage of the difficulties of 1857. They were speedily punished, Narinji, the centre of disturbance, being stormed and razed to the ground." The Gazetteer also says: "Between the outbreak of the second Afghan War and the Pathan revolt of 1897 there were sixteen expeditions against the frontier tribes." During the British Empire the area, which seemed difficult to control and keep pacified was given special status and remained under the Maliks with Political Agent of the Government for each Tribal region to oversee and keep them under the desired level of control. NWF was separated from Punjab first as an administration unit under a Commissioner in 1901, and then attaining the status of a Province in 1932 with a Governor at the top.

The freedom-loving Pathans considered the British Raj to be their natural enemy and with the *Khudai Khidmatgar* Movement they were happy to find an ally in the All India Congress, one of the other enemies of the Raj. After World War II, when it appeared to them that the Congress was replacing the British Raj and assuming the control of the North West Frontier Province, the alliance could not last.

The Muslim League slogans of "no Hindu Raj" and "Muslim unity" appealed to the Pathans. Since October 1946, there was a definite swing of the people in favour of the Muslim League. By December 1946, the Muslim League had decided to extend its activities to the tribal areas as well. In March 1947, the Muslim League firmly planted its feet after it launched the Civil Disobedience Movement against the Congress government of Dr. Khan in the province.

The provincial government failed to suppress the movement in spite of assistance of the police and the armed forces. Mountbatten confirmed to the British government that due to the Muslim League campaign, the situation in the province was "very explosive."

So far as the NWFP was concerned, the Mountbatten Plan proposed a referendum to ascertain if the province wished to join Pakistan or Hindustan (independent India). The Muslim League wanted it to be held on the question whether the people of the province 'want to join Pakistan Constituent Assembly or the Hindustan Constituent Assembly'. The Congress accepted the League's demand but Ghaffar Khan decided to boycott the Referendum, reportedly on the advice of Gandhi to remain peaceful. The Referendum, held in the 2nd week of July 1947, was supervised by the British army officers of the Indian army. The results were overwhelmingly in support of Pakistan. Of the total Muslim electorates, about 60 per cent votes were cast for Pakistan. And thus the North West Frontier Province became one of the federating units of Pakistan on 14th August 1947.





The People

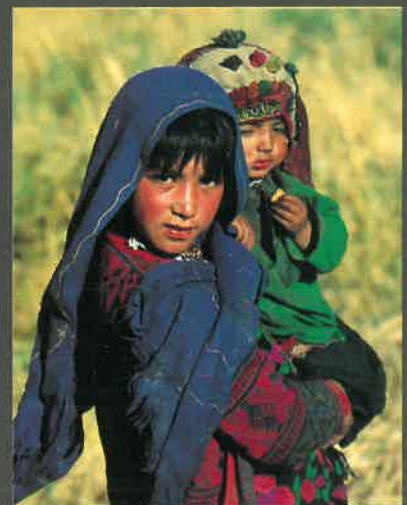
The natural physiographic characteristics, especially on the west, have facilitated a continued cultural flow not only over centuries but possibly millennia. It is interesting to note that when the populations were not moving actually through its passes, hordes or armies of adventurers and invaders had been attracted to this region to control or consolidate their powers in Central Asia and the northern part of the South Asia Subcontinent. The influence of such ventures throughout its history is very much evident in the language, customs and even features of the Pathans inhabiting this region.

The Pukhtoon, and also those people living outside the Pukhto-speaking areas in the NWFP, have their own way of life, which is peculiar to themselves in many ways. Their living, their family life and even their cultural traits have their own colours the basics of which are better understood when the outside world comes to know of them, and in some cases, of their background and evolution over the centuries of inhabiting the place. We discuss here briefly the way of life and their cultural and social traits.

Family

The foremost thing of their way of life that comes to attention is the feature of the Pukhtoon way of life, which in most cases – especially in the rugged hilly areas inhabited by their tribes – is the joint family system, though the pattern may also be followed in the northern districts of non-Pukhtoon areas. It signifies their deep love for the family's solidarity and welfare. The desire of communal life emanates from a consideration of economic security and integrity. All the family members, even the married sons, live jointly in a house large enough to separately accommodate each married couple under the authority of the father who, as head of the family, manages the family affairs excellently in his own sphere of influence, the house.

They work on the pattern of commonwealth of individual members where all the earning sons of the family, irrespective of having been married or not, contribute their share of income to the common pool of resources looked after normally by the mother or the grandmother. All expenses on food, clothing, education, health, birth, marriages and deaths are defrayed from this common fund. The mantle of authority falls on the eldest son's shoulders after the death of the father or when old age renders him unable to discharge his functions efficiently. The system of *Nikat* (ancestral line), which regulates the shares of losses and gains, debts and liabilities of each family, is the mainstay of Pukhtoon society.





The age-old tradition of the joint family system, however, is facing a gradual decay, especially with those groups, who have moved out of their ancestral abode for greener pastures in the cities. This individualistic trend may also have been triggered by the modern way of life to which the educated classes are more exposed, or even by the constraints of accommodation in the cities.

Code of Honour

Traditionally, the conduct of Pukhtoon has always been guided by a code of honour called the *Pukhtoonwali*. It is composed of some four very important, though unwritten, rules of general behaviour and attitude. The foremost commandment under this conduct is *Badal* or revenge. The obligations to take revenge for wrong falls not only upon the man who has suffered it, but also upon his family and tribe. Insults and retaliation hence involve clans and perpetuate blood feuds spread over many generations. The most frequent causes of trouble, as elsewhere in the Subcontinent, are money, women and land. In rare instance, feuds are terminated when the weaker party throws itself on the mercy of its enemy, the action called *Nanawati* or acceptance of one-sided truce, when blood money may be agreed to in lieu of revenge. The third component is *Kanrrey* or *Teega* (putting a stone). It is a temporary truce between fighting tribes declared by a *Jirga*. The fourth rule of *Pukhtoonwali* is *Melmashia* (from the Pukhto word *Melman* standing for guest), or hospitality towards a guest, even though he is a stranger or an enemy, if he seeks shelter or comes as a guest. A formal escort or assurance of safety to a guest or enemy under *Melmashia* is called *Badrappa*. The *Pukhtoonwali* provides for law and order in a harsh environment, and is still a strong force in the tribal areas. Even today, when Pukhtoon society cannot be described as tribal in the settled areas, its value system, not the legal system though, continues to be regulated by tribal codes and customs.



Pukhtoon Institutions

Pukhtoon as society strictly adhere to some norms and traits, which are regulated or facilitated by certain institutions, functioning since time immemorial.

HUJRA: The *Hujra*, which represents the sociable character of the Pukhtoon, is a useful institution and it plays a pivotal role in their daily life. It serves as a club, "dormitory, guest house and a place for rituals and feastings". It is a centre for social activities as well as a Council Hall for the settlement of family and inter-tribal disputes. It is used as a male dormitory where bachelors of the village sleep. It is a guesthouse where guests are jointly entertained by the village people, free of charge. It is like a community centre for betrothals, marriages and social functions. On the death of someone in the village, *Hujra* is the place where condolences are offered and sympathies expressed with the affected family. It is a place of public resort where village elders and youngsters get together in their leisure hours to discuss tribal, national and international affairs and matters of mutual interest.

The institutions of *Hujra* and *Jirga* are naturally interrelated. It is not only a meeting place of the villagers but it is also used as a platform for the *Jirga's* meetings where important decisions are made and family quarrels and tribal disputes are amicably resolved. In some places, especially in the settled areas, the *Hujra* may belong to a Khan but in tribal areas it is a common property. In a *Hujra*, hubble bubble (*Cheelam*), and *Rabab* or *Sarod* (string instrument) and *Mangay*, an earthen pitcher, are the usual 'musts'. With the fast moving world, there are also changes in the look of a *Hujra* of the yore. While the hubble-bubble to smoke might have still retained its place, the musical instruments are being replaced by transistor radios or even televisions.

The buildings of the *Hujras* are generally well fortified. They have one or two towers with a parapet provided with loopholes for the purpose of defence of the village and firing down and along the wall in case of any enemy action. The youngsters of the village in general and bachelors in particular sleep in the *Hujra* to guard the village in case of blood feuds. The *Hujra* usually consists of two or three rooms with adjacent veranda and a courtyard. A number of bedsteads or *charpaees*, pillows and quilts and praying rugs are always available in *Hujra* for the use of the guests and the village folk.



JIRGA: The system of *Jirga* is a unique feature of tribal life. It is a council or assembly of tribal elders, which closely resembles the Athenian democracy of the City States of ancient Greece. The particular sort of democracy has been practised by the Pukhtoon since centuries or rather millennia. While *Pukhtoonwali* is the code of ethics of the Pukhtoon, the *Jirga* acts as their Parliament or a Grand Assembly where intrepidity and frankness are essential traits of their character. An atmosphere of equality prevails in tribal area and even a poor man dressed in rags considers himself equal to his adversary or his rich compatriot. This spirit is well reflected in their *Jirga* system. In *Jirga*, no one presides its



proceedings. All the participants sit – either in *Hujra*, a mosque or in the open field under a tree – in a circle giving loudly the message of equality among all of them.

Their *Jirga* is an authority for settling disputes and dispensing even-handed justice to all and sundry irrespective of their social status, influence and wealth. All matters including the question of peace and war within tribal parameters fall within the purview of the *Jirga*. It consists of the leading Maliks and tribal elders. There are no hard and fast rules for the selection of *Jirga* members. All tribal elders, *Speen Geeri* (grey-beards), are considered eligible for its membership and each one of

them has a right to speak and freely express his opinion.

However, *Jirgas* generally consist of persons known for their honesty and integrity. The *Jirga* exercises both executive and judicial roles and settles all disputes pertaining to the distribution of land, property, blood feuds, blood money and other important inter-tribal affairs on the basis of tribal conventions, traditions and principles of justice. It performs judicial functions while settling a dispute and discharges police functions when a threat to peace and tranquillity or danger to the life and property exists within tribal limits.

The *Jirga* conducts its proceedings in a simple manner. It interviews both the parties, gives them a patient hearing and examines witnesses to ascertain the facts of the case. After searching enquiries, the *Jirga* makes every possible endeavour to find an impartial and acceptable solution of the problem. The *Jirga's* decision is generally based on religious or local traditions. In serious cases the *Jirga* asks a party to clear itself of the allegations by an oath on the Holy Quran. This seals the issue once for all, as the religion is extremely strong a force. It announces its decision only when the majority of its members reach an agreement. But *Jirga* members deem it prudent to obtain the consent of both the parties before making its verdict public. This practice is known as *Waak* or *Ikhtiar* (power of attorney). It is through the instrument of *Waak* or *Ikhtiar* that the *Jirga* commits both the parties to abide by its decision. The *Waak* also gives a binding force or some sort of legal cover to the *Jirga's* verdict and it becomes incumbent upon the parties concerned to honour it most sincerely.

The *Jirga* has the moral power to reprimand a party, which refuses to accept its award. In popular parlance this refusal to abide by the verdict of *Jirga* is called *Makh Arawal* (literally, turning of face) or expression of disapproval over the party's behaviour. In such a case the *Jirga* also resorts to punitive measures for enforcement of its decision, which may include fine in money and burning of the houses of the recalcitrant members. It is because of such stringent action that no one dares violate a *Jirga's* decision after customary approval in the form of *Waak* or *Ikhtiar*. The *Jirga* does not interfere in small and petty family disputes until a formal request is made by a party to intercede on its behalf. Moreover in cases of grave concern and serious nature, the *Jirga* takes *suo moto* action and assembles on its own and persuades the parties concerned to submit to its award.

Pukhtoon Attitudes



CHARACTER: The spirit of adventure and enterprise is characteristic of this hardy race of highlands. They have their own sense of dignity and would not submit to injustice or insult even at the cost of their own lives. The reason of blood feuds is not their vindictive nature or blood-thirstiness but a spirit of liberty and the will to uphold justice, defend the right and avenge the wrong. Pride of race, consciousness of natural rights and intolerance of injustice are the remarkable traits of the Pukhtoon character. H. W. Bellew has summed up their character as; "The pride of the Afghans is a marked feature of their national character. They eternally boast of their descent, their prowess in arms and their independence and cap it all by "am I not a Pukhtoon?"

NATURALLY INDEPENDENT: From all that goes before it is very clear that love for independent life is one of the main, and outstanding, characteristics of the Pukhtoon. Their history is full of tales of their passionate love for freedom, and violent reaction

to any infringement of their liberty, which they have preserved over centuries in spite of heavy odds against it. They have been able to hold most of the invaders with their, sort of primitive, warfare tactics and weaponry.

Though made to subjugate temporarily in between, they could never be held with peace even by the Sikhs or the British. Their skill to unite against a common enemy is well recorded by Edward E. Oliver when he says; "the most democratic and disunited people among themselves, uncontrolled and often uncontrollable even by their own chiefs, all the clans have uniformly joined in hostility to us whenever opportunity offered".

Not only that the Pukhtoon are hardy and warriors of excellent class, they are also fond of showing off this aspect of their capability with pride. They display on their self such firearms, especially *tamancha* – pistol or revolver – and gun or a rifle. The possession of such weaponry may also be needed for their personal protection, honour and defence of their homeland. It is commonly said about them that 'they are never without weapon when grazing their cattle, while driving beasts of burden; when tilling the soil. The love of firearms is a trait in their character, they will enlist or work in order to get the wherewithal and buy matchlock or rifle, the latter being preferred (until the late 1970s and 1980s when automatic arms like Klashnikov became freely available); and if one of them cannot do it at the end of his service for want of sufficient savings, he makes no scruples of walking off with his rifle and ammunition". However, the trait may not be followed by other dwellers of the Province.

RESPECT FOR AGE: Perhaps one of the best traditions of the Pukhtoon society is the visible attitude of their younger generations towards their *mashers*, elders. The Pukhtoon children are taught to show a high degree of respect and consideration to their parents and elders. Parents are looked after properly and reverently in old age and every effort is made to provide them with all possible comforts. They work sincerely hard to earn their blessings. It is generally believed that parents' curses bring sorrows, miseries and hardships. Sons and daughters, therefore, refrain from incurring the displeasure and curses of their fathers and mothers.

The elder's opinion prevails in all the important matters. *Kashars* or youngsters of the community rise from their seats as a mark of respect when an elderly person enters the *Hujra*. Youngsters are normally not expected to talk or laugh loudly or smoke a cigarette or *huqqa* in the presence of their



elders. Even in tribal *Jirgas* the younger members of the village are not allowed to speak. Even if someone, being smart or otherwise educated, tries to intervene, he is silenced with stern warning to let the elders handle the matter. Everything is, thus, left to the discretion of their elders.

MANNERISM: The Pukhtoon have several ways of greeting and salutation. Strangers passing on a road or thoroughfare exchange courtesies such as "*Starrey ma shey*" – usually pronounced '*tarray ma shay*' – (May you not be tired) and "*Pa khair raghley*" – mostly used as '*pa khair 'alay*' – (welcome). This is answered by "*Khudai de mal sha*" (may God be with you), "*Pa khair ossey*" (may you live in peace) and "*Ma khwaraigey*" (may you not be poor). The Pukhtoon usually make tight embracing with their friends and relatives when they meet them after a long absence and warmly receive each other by a hearty handshake. This is followed by a volley of sweet questions about each others welfare like "*Jorr yey*" (Are you alright?), "*Khushal yey*" (Are you happy?), "*Takrra yey*" (Are you hale and hearty?) "*Warra Zagga Jorr di*" or "*Warra marra kha di*" (Are your children etc. (meaning family members) okay?) and "*Pa Kor key Khairyat de*" (Is every body well at home?).

A visitor entering a village *Hujra* is greeted with the traditional slogan of "*Har Kala Rasha*" (May you come any time) and he replies "*Har kala ossey*" (May you always abide). Friends while parting commit each other to the care of Allah by saying "*Pa makha de kha*" (May you reach your destination safely), and "*Da Khudai pa aman*" (To the protection of God), to which the other party replies with "*Da Khuda-e ubo Kha*".

When meeting a pious or an elderly person, a Pukhtoon bows a little and keeps his hands on his chest as a mark of veneration and extreme respect. When talking about a deceased person, they often say "*Khudai de obakhi*" (May God forgive him). If a man suddenly appears at the time of conversation between some persons about him, they immediately exclaim "*Omar de ziyat de, Oss mo yadawalay*" (You have a long life, we were just talking about you). The Pukhtoon very often use the word "*Insha Allah*" (God Willing) "*Ka Khudai ta manzura wee*" (if God wills), "*Ka Khair Wee*" (if all goes well) when they promise to accomplish a task at a particular time.



RELIGIOUS RITES: As has been mentioned elsewhere, by and large the Pukhtoon are a religious society to the core. The land of these hill-dwellers has experienced the influence of religious leaders for a long time, who after making their way into the mountains aroused the religious sentiments of the local people and rallied them under the banner of Islam against the enemies of their religion. Besides less known saintly personages, who occasionally sprang up and played their short but spectacular part on the stormy stage of the Frontier, the names of Akhund of Swat, Hadda Mullah, Haji Sahib of Turangzai, Mullah Powindah, Faqeer of Ipi, Mullah Syed Akbar or Aka Khel Mullah, Gud Mullah, Lewaney (mad) Mullah, Karbogha Mullah, Faqir of Alingar and Chaknawar Mullah also figure prominently in the politico-religious history of the Province. These and other Saintly people have exercised immense spiritual and political influence over their minds and it was on account of their religious zeal and fervour that they proclaimed a holy war (*Jehad*) against infidels.



Palosi Piran - General View of the mosque.

A large number of Pukhtoon, especially the Afridis, serving in the British Indian Army in the First World War, deserted in large numbers while in France, Mesopotamia and Egypt only because they would not fight against Turkish brethren, who were Muslim. On this, the General Officer Commanding in Chief, Egyptian Expeditionary Force, was compelled in November, 1917 to repatriate three Indian officers and 202 other ranks and all Frontier Pukhtoon of 58th Rifles from Egypt and recommended ban on their recruitment on account of their "bad behaviour".

As to the punctuality with which the Pukhtoon offer their obligatory prayers and the fasting of the Holy month of Ramadan Major H. B. Edwards says, "whatever occupation they might be engaged in, whether business or pleasure, it was always interrupted at the hour of prayers". Adding "in my tent, which was always full of people concerned in some case or other, they would break off the conversation, and ask to be excused for a moment; then take a scarf and spreading it in the corner towards Mecca, devoutly commence their genuflections".

Each Pukhtoon village, as also other regions of NWFP, has a mosque in which a *Mullah* or *Pesh-Imam* (prayer leader) leads the daily prayers and imparts religious education to the village children. The *Mullah* is served free meals and he receives *Zakat* (obligatory charity to be given by Muslims, who can afford) and alms from village folk. The latter two acts are very common even otherwise, but performance of Hajj (obligatory pilgrimage to Makkah) is also performed by men of means. Alms giving is especially resorted to during Adversities and food is also served to the poor. On the special religious occasions like the two *Eids*, *Barawafat*, *Muharram*, *Shab-e-Barat* and certain other days of religious importance, rich food is prepared and distributed to invoke the blessings of Allah.

The holy men, Saints, Sayeds and Mians are held in deep reverence. They give amulets and charms to the people, which are considered to be antidote to illness, disease, calamity and evil spells of undesired powers. They are shown utmost respect and their hands are kissed in acknowledgement of their piety. The practice of *Piri-Muridi* (spiritual guide and disciple relation in Sufism) is also common. A *Pir* or religious preceptor guides his *Murid* or disciple in his spiritual progress. For this



PIFFER Mosque, Abbottabad.

Purpose he takes a *Bai'at* (affiliates himself) at the hands of the Pir, who enjoys the reputation of holy man and has the ability to guide him in establishing communion with God.

PRAYING FOR RAIN: 'After a persistent dry spell when drought conditions prevail, the people of the villages headed by the *Mullahs* come out to the fields and offer prayers, at least for three consecutive days. This is called "*Tobhay Westal*" or supplicating God for rain. Besides, children of the village come out in streets and collect wheat, maize and barley from the houses of the village. While collecting grain the children chant in a chorus:- *Ka cha ra karruloo ghanam - Khudai ba war kerri sra zaman* (God in turn will give sons to anyone who gives wheat), *Ka cha ra karraloo joowar, Khudai ba war karri war pa war* (God in turn will give sons one after another who gives maize) *Ka cha ra Karreley Orbashey - Khudaya ta war Sara Kha shey* (May God bless those who give us barley). After the collection of grain the children cook it and after serving it to the poor they pray for rains. They also go to the nearby graveyard and sprinkle water on graves'.

SHRINES: As has been mentioned earlier, the Pukhtoon being orthodox Muslims with strong religious sentiments, hold holy men and their shrines in high esteem. The devotees pay frequent visits to shrines (locally known as *ziarat*) and enter their vicinities bare-footed and entreat the saint's blessings for the restoration of failing health, wealth and success in certain other ventures. There are certain saints whose shrines command rather high reputation. These, then, are the ones, which attract larger numbers of devotees. Certain other *ziarats* are attached with curing one ailment or the other hence the rush of vow-makers. For example prayers are offered for the birth of a male child at *Ziarat Kaka Sahib* and *Pir Baba* and visits to several other shrines are considered effective for curing of madness, rheumatism, dog bites, hysteria and certain other ailments. The visitors and devotees, particularly women bring back a handful of salt or *gur* (raw lump of brown sugar), which is believed to be a cure for illness. For Muslims, Friday is a sacred day and visits to the shrines are



Interior view of Ziarat Pir Baba, Buner.



Elders hugging after Eid Prayers.

paid on Thursday or the night preceding Friday. Pukhtoon, like all good and devout Muslims, raise their hands and offer *Fateha* while passing by a graveyard.

Shrines are the safest places in tribal areas and the tribesmen keep their articles in them without any fear of pilfering. No one dares to lay hands on any article kept in a shrine due to the sanctity of the place and possible wrath of the buried saint. Reputable shrines are often under the charge of a caretaker (known as *Munjawar* in Pashto and *Mutawali* in Urdu) or a *fakir*, who lives on the premises and collects donations both in cash and kind from the devotees to provide water and food to future visitors (*langar*). The trees around a shrine are never cut and the birds enjoy complete safety. The observance of *Urs* or annual festival at various *Ziarats* is also common. The devotees attend these gatherings annually for two days in large number and engage themselves in *Zikar* or religious meditation.

FESTIVALS: Eid-ul-Fitr or *Kamkay Akhtar* and Eid-ul-Azha or *Loe* or *Star Akhtar* are the two main festivals, which are observed with great zeal. In some places a fair is held on the Eid day while at others on the day following of an Eid. The boys make large bonfires called *Katamirs* and kindle them on a hilltop in the evening, preceding the Eid Day. Young and old, like their compatriots in the other places of the country, wear new clothes on Eid Day, and the entire area wears a festive look.

Moharram and Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi or 'Bara Wafat' are also observed with deep reverence and due solemnity. Pious men among them engage themselves in prayers particularly during *Lailatul Qadar* or "the night of power" during the Holy month of Ramadan, especially during the odd nights of the last ten days. In addition to the religious festivals, there are also others, which are held

especially in the areas of different ethnic groups in the remote parts of the NWFP like the Kalasha. They celebrated annually the sex-oriented festival called Budulak. However, with most of the population embracing Islam, the festival, which goes against the teachings of the Faith, is said to have been abandoned altogether, though some claim that they still celebrate it in the remote areas and rather secretly.

SUPERSTITIONS: *Da ud Dastoor* or customs and traditions are in fact the product of historical, geographical or even economic conditions of a certain region or area. Evolved in process of time, social usages they become the guiding principles of everyday life and all individuals living in a particular society involuntarily feel bound to abide by them. It is a common phenomenon that customary laws of the masses are not free from the influence of a religion and even superstitions. The use of amulets and talismans also belong to the same category. In Pukhtoon society sometimes unusual ways and means are devised by them to protect themselves, and especially their children, from the evil eye and evil effects of *Jinni* and demons. Pukhtoon women believe that evil spirits cannot come near a newly born infant if a knife or a dagger is put near its pillow or at its head. Therefore, they always keep a sharp edged weapon besides the infant's pillow to ward off evil spirits. The child may be sick and suffering from some bodily ailment, but the old grandmother will ascribe it to the influence of some evil spirits. Instead of taking him to a doctor's clinic for treatment, she mutters charms and throws red hot metal in cold water to scare away the evil spirit or a possible evil eye. This, she believes, is the only remedy to cure the infant's illness. And if these charms do not work, she is convinced that the child is suffering from throat trouble. She takes him to some experienced man or woman of the locality for raising its uvula. This is called in Pukhto as *Jabai Porta Kawal*.

'Not contented with this the mother will put amulets (*tawiz*) round the child's neck as a protection against the evil eye or *Bad Nazar*. The amulets written by a pious man and woven in a string are suspended round the child's neck. Some of these amulets are sewn in a cloth, some are wrapped in leather or silver leaf inset with costly stones, depending on the financial position of the child's parents. Sometimes a black spot (*Kalak*) is put on the child's forehead in an attempt to protect him against the evil eye. In certain clans a child is deliberately kept dirty and ill clad for warding off the evil spirits. The claws of a leopard or a lion are also sometimes hung around their necks.

'The grandmother also believes in charms. She takes a handful of wild rue (*Ruta graveolens*; but locally called *Spailanay*), which is considered a panacea for warding off a malignant eye. She puts some wild rue on red hot coals and starts revolving the bowl round the ailing child while chanting some magical incantations. This is called "*Nazar Matawal*" or removing effects of the evil eye. After the wild rue is burnt it is kept in the doorway of the house with smoke emitting from it. Sometimes an old woman takes a few red chillies, revolves them round a sick person's head and then puts the pods in the fire. There is a famous maxim in Pukhto that *Da ranz ranzoor raghaigee, Da stargo ranzoor na raghaigee*", i.e. 'an ailing person may recover from illness but ailment caused by an evil eye cannot be cured'. On other occasions a goat or lamb is slaughtered and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the door or wall of the house to ward off possible natural calamities'.

'When a baby is carried out of the house, a veil is placed over its face to protect it against the possible affect of an evil eye. Some men and women are notorious for a malignant or evil eye. It is generally believed that their looks can break even a hard stone into pieces. Similarly mothers desist from carrying infants while visiting a house where death has occurred because of fear of *Bad Ghag* or evil voice.

'Besides this, several other superstitions are prevalent in Pukhtoon society. For example, the cawing of the crow on a house wall or top of a nearby tree is considered as a sign of the impending



arrival of some guests. Similarly, falling of flour on the ground at the time of kneading is interpreted to mean that some guests or visitors can be expected. The howling of dogs at night is considered a bad omen, indicating the coming sickness or death of some one in the family.

'The winking of the right eyelid is taken to mean a happy tiding and twitching of a left eyelid as a bad omen. In case of a hiccup, it is generally believed that an absent friend or relative is remembering. While removing shoes, if perchance, one shoe lands on top of the other, it is thought that the person would undertake a journey in the near future. If the right palm starts itching, it is believed that money will come into his hands. On the contrary if the left hand itches it is thought to indicate that the person will lose some money. The crowing of a hen, which is quite un-usual, is considered a bad omen and it is killed the moment it crows.

'The sight of a dirty man or a sweeper early in the morning is considered un-lucky. Similarly a distinction is made between fortunate and unfortunate days. Certain days are considered lucky for journeys while others are believed to be unlucky. If a person dies at a place other than his village or hometown, a black hen is slaughtered before the engine of a car or bus at the time of taking the corpse to its native place for burial. Similarly a black hen is slaughtered in between the forelegs of the horse or mare of the *tonga* in which the corpse is carried. The tribal Pukhtoon refrain from incurring the ill-will of *Pirs* and *Fakirs* (mendi-cants) and even men possessed with an evil tongue called *Tor Jabay* (black-tongued). The speech of *Tor Jabay* is considered more deadly than a lethal weapon and his curses harbingers of misfortune.'

The Pukhtoon generally rely on dreams. The sight of a white or green object, in a dream, is considered auspicious while black objects, fire, floods etc. are considered inauspicious. They have a strong belief in destiny. Fate is considered as absolute and unchangeable.

Some strange notions are found amongst the Pukhtoon about the "whirlwind of dust which spins about in autumn". It is generally believed that the whirlwind is caused by a *jinni*. Similarly when a storm blows for two or three days, the Pukhtoon are heard saying that some innocent man might have been brutally assassinated somewhere. A child born feet first is called "*Sakki*". It is generally believed that "a few gentle kicks from one, so born", can relieve pain in the back. During the winter when it rains continuously for a week or so, the children erect dolls made of flour clay called "*Ganjyan*", which are considered a means of stopping the rain. The taking of *fal* or omen from some religious book is commonly believed and practiced. On *Shab-e-Barat* the village women assemble in a house. Each woman puts a ring, comb or some other object in an empty pitcher and a small boy or girl is deputed to take them out one by one. At the time of taking out an article, a woman recites a few verses such as "*Ma jagh kawa ma spara, Khudai ba dar karri pa tayyara*" (God will provide you with food even without ploughing fields). The better the verse in composition, the more it is considered auspicious.

There is, however, a great change in the attitude of Pukhtoon, especially the educated class or who have moved out to cities and towns about the superstitions. They have now normally become prudent to the use of scientific approach than depend on the soothsayers.

Pukhtoon Customs

The customs of the Pukhtoon society are not very different from the rest of the population of the country or from other regions in their own Province. There may be some variations here and there or these may differ only in the manner how they are called at different places. However, they are not only interesting but also indicative of a continuous history of thousands of years, which though may be changing with the changing of the values due to education and migration of families to cities and



towns.

BIRTH: The expected arrival of the child is kept secret as far as possible. The expectant mother is kept secluded and only an old woman, who is the midwifery expert of the village, and one or two female relatives are allowed to attend to her. The birth of a female child generally passes unnoticed but the birth of a male child is a joyous event to be celebrated in a befitting manner. This takes root from the fact that the very existence of an individual under a tribal system, largely depends upon the strength of arms and men in the family. It is also because the tribal society is patriarchal in structure where the law of inheritance rests with the male line. In such a situation the importance of a male-child supersedes many times the one of the female child.

The news of a male child's birth is a happy tidings for parents as well as for near relatives. The news spreads like wild fire in the neighbourhood and special messengers are sent to distant places to break the good news to paternal and maternal families. This is called *Zairay*. The person who takes the happy tidings for the first time to a near relative receives a handsome reward in cash. Relatives and friends felicitate the proud parents and let off their guns as a mark of jubilation. The father warmly receives the guests, slaughters a *dumba*, ram or goat and serves a sumptuous feast to the visiting guests. Sweetmeats are also distributed among the young and old alike.

Female relatives also hurry to the house to offer congratulations to the child's parents. They bring presents, including clothes for the infant and also offer some money. A record of the money, so proffered, is kept for repayment on a similar occasion. All women who offer money are given Head Scarves in addition to sweetmeats.

The first important ceremony in the child's life is performed by the village Mullah or priest or an old pious man. The Mullah whispers *Azaan* (call to obligatory prayers) in his or her ears. The village Mullah receives some money for this religious service. The child is also given a dose of indigenous medicine called *Ghotti*, a liquid compound administered by a pious woman, preferably mother of several sons. Within seven days of the birth, the child is named, customarily after the name of a Prophet or a pious companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), whose name

Also adjoins or precedes the one already selected 'The infant is wrapped in swaddling clothes with his hands tied to his body. This binding practice continues for over six months. The idea behind the binding of infants from shoulders to toes seems to be to prevent him from exhaustion or causing an injury to himself. For most of the time during the day, the child is kept in a swinging cradle, which is in common use all over the sub-continent. At night the child is laid beside its mother. The child entirely belongs to the mother, who feeds it, at least, for two years and makes every possible endeavour to protect it from the malignant eye or the glance of evil spirits.

After the child's birth, precautionary measures are taken to protect the mother from evil spirits and genii. She does not take a bath, at least for a fortnight after giving birth to the child. The mother is never left alone in the house at least for first forty days for fear of evil spirits as, according to the general belief, both the child and the mother are susceptible to the influence of genii etc during this period.

The mother is refrained from doing any work during the first week but to resume her full chores of the house she has to wait for forty days.

HEAD SHAVING:

The second important ceremony in a child's life is the shaving off all the hair of his head, known as *Sar Kalai*. When the child is about 40 days old, his or her hair is shaved by a village barber. The barber is given some money for this service. This event is also celebrated with the slaughter of a goat or sheep for guests, and maybe shots from the guns into air.

CIRCUMCISION:

The third important ceremony is known as *Sunat* meaning the circumcision of a male child. The Circumcision ceremony is again performed by the village barber when the boy is over one year old. On this occasion the boy is made to sit on an earthen platter called *Khanak* in the compound of the house duly attended by his relatives. They also offer some money to the child. This ceremony is observed by wealthy Khans with much fanfare and sumptuous feast.

SCHOOLING:

In the fourth stage the child is generally sent to a Mullah in the village mosque for religious education, including learning by heart of *Munz* – the obligatory prayer – and reading of the Holy Quran. He also starts going to school at the age of five or six years. Along with spiritual and temporal education he makes a debut in sports of masculine nature, including wrestling called *Parzawal*. Later he adopts shooting as his hobby. After school hours he goes on shooting excursions and shoots down birds. He uses a catapult like weapon called *Ghulail* for hunting. In this stage of life he develops an aptitude for sporting excursions such as target shooting and finally starts going round with a rifle slung over his shoulder for self-protection. At that time he begins helping his father in his work. The young girl on the other hand assists her mother in household work and shares the domestic duties with her.

Pukhtoon are fond of rifles and young boys can be seen carrying rifles under their arms. Seldom will they be seen un-armed. Their fondness for arms is evident from a Pukhto proverb that though they might not have good food they must be in possession of fine arms.



MARRIAGE: Marriage called *Waadah* as a general rule, is arranged by parents in Pukhtoon society and the boy and the girl themselves do not play any role in the negotiations. This is because of the fact that Pukhtoon are conservative by nature. Their conservatism coupled with strict segregation of sexes make it impossible for a suitor to select a girl of his own choice even though they may have soft feelings for each other. It is said that 'the Pathan, in sentiment, will sympathise with lovers in poetry and fiction, but lovers in real life pay for it with their lives'. The Pukhtoon society frowns upon any one, who expresses any fancy for a particular girl. But, like many other fields, this trend is gradually undergoing a change with the spread of formal education and migration of families to cities and towns.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries several peculiar customs were prevalent among the Pukhtoon, particularly the Afridi, about betrothals. Some of them are: -

1. *Laman Shlawal*: (literally tearing skirt). Any woman who was first in tearing the swaddling cloth of the newly born girl could establish her claims on the infant. However, marriages under "*Laman Shlawal*" used to take place among the relatives, but with the spread of education this old custom is fast vanishing.
2. *Neewaka* (literally to catch or lay claim) can be interpreted as an assertion of claims. This is another custom under which marriage can be solemnized even against the wishes of the girl's parents. Public claim through *Neewaka* debars others from making overtures to the girl's family for her hand. Marriages under '*Neewaka*' often take place among relatives, especially the first cousins. This custom is also disappearing with the passage of time.
3. *Kwezhdan* (Betrothal): As is common everywhere, the parents cherish a desire to get their sons married to pretty and virtuous girls of respectable families. But in the tribal areas more importance was attached to the strength of arms and family influence of a girl's parents than beauty or other attainments of the bride-to-be. With the ushering in of an era of formal and higher education this trend has also undergone a drastic change. The boy is now also consulted while selecting a girl and his views are given due weight in educated families.

Customary approach for betrothal commences with a visit by the mother or sisters of the boy, to the girl's parents. Negotiations for matrimony are undertaken either by the parents themselves or by friends and relatives. As a precautionary measure the girl's parents make searching enquiries about the character, education, occupation and other attributes of the prospective son-in-law. After an informal agreement has been reached, the boy's parents approach the girl's parents in a formal way in a *Jirga* consisting of relatives and village elders, who call on the father or elder member of the girl's family. Similarly a female party calls on her mother on the day of public proposal. The *Jirga* settles terms and conditions regarding ornaments, clothes, *Mehr* (dowry) and *Wulwer* (bride's price or head money). The ceremony is rounded off with distribution of sweets among the people in the *Hujra*.

WULWER Or Head Money: *Walwar* or head-money, which forms part of the negotiations in the *jirga*, is also determined at the time of engagement. In accordance with the *Jirga's* decision the suitor's parents agree to pay in cash the stipulated amount to the girl's parents on the day of marriage. A part of the payment is made on the spot. The rest of the money is paid on the marriage day. The dowry is usually meagre.

The Pukhtoon say that the head money is criticised by some non-Pukhtoon terming it as a sort of selling price for the girl. However, it is only due to their ignorance as the money so apportioned is meant to give relief to a girl's parents in purchasing the necessary items for marriage that she would need in the new house. If viewed from the Pukhtoon point of view, the head money is a matter of honour for them. The more the bride's price the more she commands respect in her husband's family. Even wealthy and prosperous parents, who otherwise do not stand in need of the head

money, accept this for preservation of honour of their daughters in her in-laws.

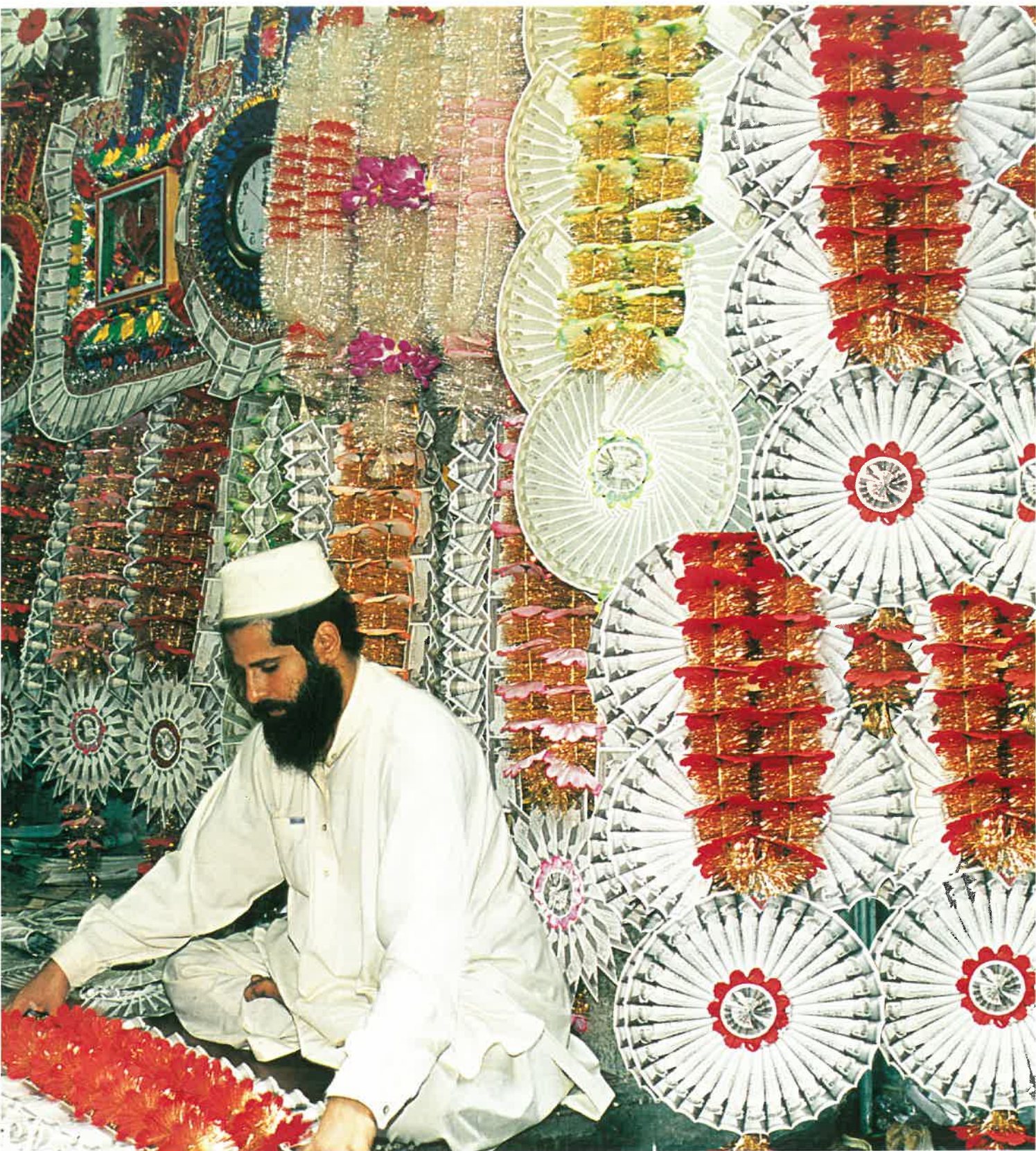
Irrespective of any medical opinion otherwise, the practice of consanguineous marriages, particularly with first cousins is a common phenomenon in Pukhtoon society. An exchange of betrothals, particularly cousins, is also generally affected. The Pukhtoon feel reluctant to marry their daughters outside the family or tribe and they, therefore, prefer marriages among blood relations. Preference is given to girls of one's own tribe or sub-tribe, in case no girl is available within the family. There is no fixed age for betrothals and they usually take place a year or two before the marriage. In some cases engagements are contracted in childhood.

PAKHA AZADA: *Pakha Azada* or *Pkhay Artha* means free visits between the fiancée and fiancé's families. They call upon each other a few days after the betrothal. The prospective bridegroom's parents pay a visit to the girl's house and present her with a gold ring or a pair of silken clothes. They also send her presents on Eid and other auspicious occasions. This is called *Barkha* or the girl's share. Once the girl is engaged, she starts observing *purdah* from her would be in-laws, both men and women.

MARRIAGE CEREMONIES: The ceremonies of marriage, called *Waada*, usually take place on Thursday and Fridays. Marriage festivities commence three days before the scheduled date of the actual marriage. At night village maidens assemble in the bridegroom's house and sing epithalamia called *Sandara* to the beat of drums and tambourine. Three or four respectable but elderly women visit the house of the bride a night before the marriage for dying her hands and feet with henna and for braiding her hair into three or more plaits. The braiding of hair is generally entrusted to a woman with several male children. The bride's *Jorra* or special bridal pair of dress and ornaments etc. are normally sent a day before the marriage. The bridegroom serves two meals to his own guests as well as the bride's villagers. Usually the feast is given on the wedding day.

MARRIAGE PARTY: The bridal procession is called *Janj*. On the day of a marriage, the village of the





Paper-flower and currency-note garlands for happy occasions.

bridegroom wears a happy look. Old and young alike, wear their best clothes. The marriage party or *Janj* generally starts for the bride's village at noon with musicians leading the procession. The *Wra* or female marriage party starts from the village to the sound of drums and the male participants let off their guns.

NAKHA WEESHTAL: The Pukhtoon are fine shots. Target shooting is one of their favourite games and a fascinating feature of the marriage ceremonies. The bride's villagers invite the bridegroom's party to target shooting competition. The challenge is accepted by the others to show their mettle. The target is generally placed in a cliff, a rocky defile or at a place where it hardly comes in the range of the bullet. It is also one of the tribal customs that the *Janj* does not leave the village without hitting the target. The man who hits the target first receives a *Lungi* (a turban) as a prize for his accurate marksmanship.

NIKAH: The target shooting over, friends and relatives of the bridegroom assemble in the village mosque for *Nikah*, the religiously ordained wedlock, to be solemnised by the Pesh-Imam or the religious leader. On this occasion the bride proposes the name of bridegroom's brother, uncle or any other near relative as her *Nikah* Father (Attorney). It becomes the moral duty of *Nikah* Father to give paternal love and affection to the bride and treat her at par with his own children.

The Pesh-Imam repeats the names of the bride and bridegroom three times and seeks the approval of the bridegroom in the presence of two witnesses and some village elders. After this he recites a few verses from the Holy Quran and declares the couple wedded to each other. The Imam is given some money for this service.

NAINDRA: At the time of *Nikah*, friends and relatives of the bridegroom contribute money individually on behalf of their families in fact to lighten his financial burden. This is called *Naindra*. It can be likened to a debt of honour or some sort of financial help repayable to the donors on a similar occasion. A proper record of the subscriptions is maintained and the names of the subscribers are entered into a notebook for future reference.

RUKHSATI: While men remain busy in target shooting, the female party gives a display of its skill in singing and folk dances. Divided into two groups they sing in the form of a duet. Sometimes they form a circle and dance and sing in a chorus. This is called *Balbala*. After this the parents bid farewell to the bride.

The bride is handed over to the bridegroom's relatives in a sober ceremony. One of her younger brothers conducts her to a *Doli* or a palanquin and a handful of money, normally coins, is showered over the *Doli*. The bride accompanied by the marriage party is led to a car or bus. The *doli* is carried on the shoulders if the distance is less than a mile. On the way back home one can witness scenes of merry making. The female party sings happy songs and men fire crackers and volleys of shots in the air.

On arrival at the village, the village youths carry the *doli* to the bridegroom's house. They do not place the *doli* on the ground till they are rewarded. After this the bride is made to sit on a decorated cot. All the women hasten to see her face. The mother-in-law or sister-in-law takes the lead in unveiling her face and other female relatives follow suit. This is called *Makh Katal*. The bride is presented with some money on this occasion. The record of such donations is also kept for repayment on a similar occasion. Thus the marriage ceremony comes to an end with the transfer of the bride from her birthplace to the house of in-laws. Sweets are distributed in the *Hujra* and the house.



Child marriages are un-common. Polygamy is practised on a limited scale. A Pukhtoon takes a second wife only when the first one is issueless or differences between the husband and wife assume proportions beyond compromise. Divorces are not common, as the Pukhtoon abhor the very idea of a *Talaq* or divorce. The word *Zantalaq* (one who has divorced his wife) is considered an abuse and against the Pukhtoon's sense of honour. Such an abuse sometimes results in murders and blood feuds.

DEATH: The Pukhtoon are very social, humane and friendly. They share each other's joys and sorrows. Their sympathetic behaviour can be judged from the fact that they give more importance to participation in funeral processions than festive occasions like marriages etc.

At the time of someone's death, the elders of the surrounding villages come to the village *Hujra* to express their sense of grief and sympathy with the bereaved family and the youngsters hasten to the graveyard for digging a grave and making necessary funeral arrangements. The women of the neighbourhood also go to the house of the bereaved family carrying articles of daily use such as sugar, *gur*, wheat, rice etc. and to offer condolences.

The moment any one expires, his eyes are closed, toes tied, face turned towards *Kaaba* (Makkah) and placed on a cot (*charpae*) in the courtyard. Women sit around the dead body in a circle and weep over it in unison. The lamentation is generally joined by the females of the neighbourhood. Embracing the wife, mother and sisters of the deceased and wailing over the passing away of their dear ones, is the traditional way of expressing their sorrow. The wailing also includes words in praise of the deceased. Such praise assumes "the form of the chanting of short rhythmical phrases of rhymed prose or verse". Some women, in a state of deep anguish, resort to *Weer* i.e. beating of face and chest with both hands and with loud sobs. The burial takes place on the day of death, if the death occurs in the morning, otherwise on the following day.

Weeping and crying in the house continues for at least three days but it sometimes continues intermittently for a fortnight or even forty days. No marriages take place among the deceased's near relatives till the first anniversary of the deceased is observed. Only in rare cases marriages take place within a year of the occurrence of death and that, too, with the consent of the members of the bereaved family. Music and jolly activities are avoided for at least forty days. The deceased's family is fed by relatives and friends for three or seven days.

FUNERAL: Before burial, the corpse is bathed by the village Mullah or some other elderly man. The dead body is usually washed in the veranda or in a corner of the house. A few candles or a lamp is lighted at this place in the evening for at least three nights to scare away the evil spirits, and people avoid passing over the spot. After the bath the dead body is wrapped in a shroud, placed on a bier, a sheet thrown over it and then taken to the village graveyard in a funeral procession. The funeral procession is preceded by a Mullah and three or four persons, carrying the Holy Quran on their heads. Friends and relatives join the funeral procession and carry the bier turn by turn. Even passers-by become the pal-bearers and accompany the procession for some distance for the body is lowered into the grave which is always dug north to south with its face turned towards the *Kaaba*. Later special prayers are offered for the eternal peace of the departed soul. After the burial, alms are distributed among the poor and indigent at the graveyard. This is called *Iskat*. The Pukhtoon consider the payment of *Iskat* as an essential part of the religious service and a question of their prestige. It is also one of the customs to present on this occasion a few copies of the Holy Quran to the Mullahs of the area for Quran Khwani (recitation) on the following four Thursdays.

KHAIRAT: The burial ceremony over, some food is served in charity to the poor. This is called *Khairat*. Rice is cooked in a few cauldrons and the participants in the funeral procession are invited

to partake of it.

DRAIMA: The third day of the death is called Draima in Pukhto or Qul in Urdu. The day is observed with due solemnity. The women of the vicinity assemble in the deceased's house on that day. They pay a visit to the graveyard in the morning, lay a floral wreath on the grave and offer Fateha. Meanwhile, friends and relatives continue pouring into the village Hujra for offering condolences. This practice continues at least for seven days.

SALWEKHTI: The 40th day of the death is called Salwekhti in Pakhto. The day is rounded off with Khatm-e-Quran, (completion of the recitation of the Holy Quran), Khairat, distribution of alms. It is observed on a Thursday, five or seven weeks after the day of death.

One laudable custom among the Pukhtoon is that the villagers take upon themselves to supply meals and tea to the bereaved family for three days following the death. They also look after the guests of the family in the village Hujra. In certain cases the food is continuously supplied for seven days. In some villages the expenses on account of the shroud cloth, Khairat and other matters connected with the burial are collectively borne by the fellow villagers as with each head of the family contributing some money for this purpose.

Pukhtoon Women

Although the position and status of Pukhtoon women has almost always been under discussion at all levels yet it was mainly during – and after – the Taliban rule in Afghanistan that the media, especially from the West, took it up for attack without knowing much about the correct situation on the ground. Pukhtoon women do not observe the customary *purdah*, so much trumpeted by these quarters. They do wear *Burqa* while paying visits to cities or distant places beyond their locality. In their outdoor functions locally, they cover the face and body with a *Chaddar* (cloth sheet) or *Dopatta* (customary headgear). It is in fact because the people of one stock bound together by common ties of flesh and blood dwell in villages while the general standard of morality is very high in Pukhtoon society and cases of moral turpitude are almost un-heard of. Moreover, the Pukhtoon are so jealous of the modesty and sanctity of their women that they cannot tolerate even appreciation of the beauty or other attributes of their women by an outsider or stranger. They consider such an admiration as an insult to their sense of honour. Immoral practices, especially adultery, elopement, amorous advances, infidelity and illicit liaison between man and woman are put down with a heavy hand and death is a normal penalty in such cases. The guilty pair is generally killed if caught. It is because of such deterrent punishment that no one dare cast an evil eye on a Pukhtoon woman.

According to the Pukhtoon code of ethics, strangers refrain from loitering about un-necessarily when women set out for fetching water or bringing in grass or wood etc. They also desist from speaking to a woman and similarly it is considered indecent on the part of a woman to talk to a stranger except when she is in dire need of his help. As Robert Warburton, the British Political Agent in the Khyber Agency, has put it; "A woman or girl above ten years old is never permitted to address any male not connected with her by relationship. A stranger has always to be avoided, and if by any chance a woman comes across one in a narrow lane or road, she generally covers up her face and stands with her back towards him until he has passed". Similarly the men would lower their eyes, gaze at the ground and step aside from the path when a woman comes across their way.

Respect for women is also evident from the fact that she is not interfered with in case of tribal hostilities, blood feuds, village affrays or brawls. During the prosecution of feuds women are exempt from reprisals. It is considered below the dignity of a Pukhtoon to fire at women and according to tribal customs they are at liberty to supply food, water and ammunition to their men engaged in firing at a hilltop or entrenchments outside the village.

while doing her outdoor chores a woman in no way is taken inferior to her men-folk, though like all other spheres of life, she subordinates her husband, who plays a dominant role. They duly exercise authority and influence in their own spheres. As a daughter she is loved, as a wife respected and as a mother venerated. There is a famous saying of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) that heaven lies under the feet of mother, and a Pukhtoon holds his mother in high esteem. She has a great deal of say in her domestic affairs. She controls the household finances and wields an over-whelming influence over her sons, daughters and daughters-in-law. Tribal women are hardy, industrious, devoted and trust-worthy. They do the entire household work and also help their husbands in the fields. They faithfully stand by their husbands both in weal and woe and resist every foul temptation.

Besides household work and superintendence of children, the Pukhtoon code of ethics enjoins upon women not to burst into laughter in the presence of strangers or persons with whom they are not closely related; not to address their husbands by name, nor to speak loudly, and avoid being heard beyond the four walls of the house'. It is, however, true that the traditionally she was not permitted to pursue formal education and was left content with reading of the Holy Quran, which she learnt from a pious woman of the village. But the times are fast changing. It is not only the families who have moved to cities and towns that their daughters are having equal opportunities of education but many girl-schools are also coming up within their areas, as the consciousness towards this end is furthered with the financial help from the government.

Toora (literally Sword, but means bravery) and *Marrana* (chivalry and courage) are considered essential traits of Pukhtoon character and women feel proud of husbands possessing such laudable attributes. They possess courage themselves and admire such qualities in others. Even in their folk songs they exhort their lovers to display bravery and courage on the field instead of running away like cowards.

Pukhtoon women wear simple dress. It consists of a *Partoog* (Trousers), *Qamees* (Shirt) and a *Dupatta* (*chaddar* or scarf, as headgear). Old women prefer loose and baggy trousers, long shirts with wider sleeves and coloured clothes. Pukhtoon women use a variety of jewellery such as pendants, bracelets and necklaces. The pendants include *Paizwan*, *Nata* or *Natkai* (large nose rings), *Chargul*, *Peeta* and *Maikhakay* (small nose ornaments), *Wallai*, *Jarmootey*, *Dewadi* and *Duroona* (large ear rings), and *Teek* worn on the forehead. The bracelets comprise of *Wakhi*, *Bavoo*, *Karrey* and *Bangri* or bangles. *Haar* and *Taweezoona* may be mentioned among necklaces. Besides the use of silver ornaments called *Sangley* (*Pazaib*) worn round feet near ankle, *Ogey* or necklace, *Zanzeer* or chain and finger rings, are also in common use.

The *Paizwan* is suspended below the nostril edge. *Chargul* and *Nata* are worn on the right side of the outer part of the nose and *Maikhakai* and *Peeta*, comparatively smaller ornaments, are worn on the left side of the nose. *Haar* and *Taweezoona* consist of three to five flat silver pieces about one and half inch square each, and worn over the breast. The *Zanzeer*, a silver ornament about ten inches in length and imbedded with shining stones, is also suspended from the shirt collar on the breast'.

Needless to add that this heavy jewellery is now being replaced with the modern light-weight items, or even the dress is changing with the rest of the country, due mainly to the interaction of the Pukhtoon with the people of other areas especially if they have migrated to the cities or towns.

Folk Music

Pukhtoon's is a unique society. In spite of their being hardy and war-like they are romantic people and extremely love music, but not the musicians. This seems strange and a sort of contradictory

character. But after knowing their traditions and way of life it is not difficult to understand this behaviour. The musicians belong to the lower caste of the society and they adopt music as their profession to earn livelihood while Pukhtoon on the whole are warriors and like manly professions like soldiery or agriculture. They probably run out of their patience in all other professions. The other reason for not liking this class by Pukhtoon may be the delicate and soft nature of this profession, which is considered to be the domain of the females. They have, however, promoted this art over the centuries, though indirectly, by lavishly spending and generously giving money to the musicians for their performances. It was this tradition that not only has kept the particular music alive but also helped in its development.

The Pukhtoon music has a rich legacy but so far its notation is not written. It has been transferred from one generation to the other only orally. It also has faced stern opposition from the *mullahs* (Muslim clerics) but the tradition went on especially at the times of the celebrations and ceremonies. Apart from the professional artists, the Pukhtoon themselves, especially the youth, would practice music in *Hujras* where they would play *Rabab/Sarod* or Sitar in the accompaniment of *Mangay* (water pitcher), beating as drum. They might like to sing folk songs but never to take the activity as profession.

Though Pukhtoon music has its own terminology in expressing its different chords but usually they follow the one being used in the rest of the South Asia Subcontinent. This may be so as most of the professional musicians had been coming to the region from the mainland, especially before the creation of Pakistan. The inhospitable terrain of the region has also influenced the music of the Pukhtoon, the folk side of which has become so rich with diversity of the heritage.

Traditional Music

Like all traditional societies, the Pukhtoon too have a great and rich treasure of folk music. The songs are characteristically those, which are sung with dancing. There are some others, which are performed in solo or even in chorus. Among them are the *Tappa*, *Charbeta*, *Neemkai*, *Loba*, *Shaan*, *Saakhmani*, *Badala*, etc.

Tappa: It is the oldest and most popular genre of the Pukhtoon poetry, which is sung with unsurpassed popularity. Lyrically, the *Tappa* is a composition of two unequal meters, in which the first line is shorter than the succeeding one, yet it reflects all human feelings and aspirations elegantly. It encompasses such a vast field that it portrays feelings of all ages and both the genders. It is not uncommon that young boys sing *Tappas* before the elders in a *Hujra*, or for the ladies in the house. Among the different tunes of *Tappa*, the ones used in Tirah, Bannu and Peshawar are very popular and enjoyed by the folks. It has so much universal appeal with the Pukhtoon that it is sung even at varied occasions. It is equally popular for singing at the times of grief or joyous moments like marriages etc. Although in the olden days it was sung without the accompaniment of music yet now it is common that the traditional musical instruments like *Rabab* or *Sarod* and *Mangay* are used to enhance its effect, especially when it is sung in the *Hujra*. However, in deep countryside it is still sung without the help of the above-mentioned instruments, though flute may often be used instead. With the changing of times, the city music directors have also started composing it to present with full orchestra.

Charbaita: It could be simply the next most popular of the Folklore genre of poetry and music. As the name goes, it is usually a poem with four lines – an epic poem with special rhythm of its own. However, in its traditional form there is no hard and fast rule to restrict it to only four lines as it may sometimes carry as many as six or eight lines. In the poem of *Charbaita* any thing under the Sun could be included or discussed but more frequent themes are the heroic deeds and tales of bravery by legendary heroes.





Chitrali girls in traditional dance

Sometimes it may also express the finer and romantic feelings of human beings. The Charbaita is sung with very fast but rhythmic music by two or more singers. One, usually lead person sings one line then the rest follow with the remaining lines in chorus. It is very common that *Charbaita* is sung after completing the Tappa.

Neemakai: It is another popular type of folk songs. It has a different form of singing, normally composed by women. It is simple in construction having usually 1½ lines, which may also vary to 2 or 3 lines as well. The first lines are repeated in the middle of the song. With *Neemakai*, *Tappa* is also added according to the subject and circumstances. However, there are also *Neemakai*, which can be sung with adding of *Tappa* when it has two and a half lines of its own. Most of the *Neemakai* songs in Pukhtoon culture are expressed differently but usually the theme of these stays around local legends or romances though other subjects from daily life may also make part of it.

Shaan: It is a song, which portrays happiness all the way through. It is sung on the joyous occasions like marriages and childbirths. *Shaan* is sung in private congregations and social gatherings.

Badala: It is like an epic poem or ballad and is very popular genre of folklore. It is sung by professional singers only with the musical instruments like *Rabab* or *Sarod*, harmonium, Drums and *Tabla*. The main theme invariably is the tribal traditions in which heroism, tragedies or even comic stories are expressed. It is usually taken as the folk version of the classic *mathnavi* (kind of verse in which the couplets rhyme regularly). Traditionally, it is sung at midnight when it is enjoyed more by the gatherings or the connoisseur Khans.

Amongst the other genres of poetry, which are sung by the Pukhtoon singer is also *Rubae*. Though it may not be included in the folklore yet the poetry of Rehman Baba has popularised it immensely in this region. Usually it is sung in special composition before starting the singing of *Badala* or any other folk song. Ghazals, though highly influenced by Urdu, are now also favourite but with educated classes, who might have developed taste for slower form of music of this genre of poetry.

The Pukhtoon of NWFP being almost an all-Muslim society the concept of religious music is closely associated with musical instruments of the sorts thought permissible, and thus the unaccompanied religious music is not considered music. The Holy Quran recitation is an important kind of unaccompanied religious performance, as is the ecstatic *zikr* ritual of the Sufis, which uses songs called *na't*, and the Shia solo and group singing styles like *marsia*, *manqasat*, *nowhah* and *rowzeh*.



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