

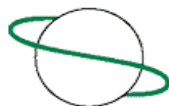


Eco Tourism Study

Gojal Conservancy
Northern Areas Gilgit

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Karim Ullah Baig



NWFP Wildlife Department
Govt. of NWFP

NA Forestry, Parks & Wildlife Department
NA Administration



IUCN
The World Conservation Union

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Executive summary

1. Introduction

This study was conducted by IUCN. The purpose of the study was to collect and provide primary and secondary information regarding eco-tourism in Gojal Conservancy^Ψ.

For the purpose of providing due coverage to various ecological zones and cultural and eco-tourism potentials in various geographic locations in Gojal Conservancy, the report has been divided into the following valley and area wise sections:

Section-1	Chipurson valley
Section-2	Misgar Valley
Section-3	Avgarch Valley
Section-4	Khyber Area
Section-5	Shimshal Valley
Section-6	Lower Gojal from Passu to Shishkat)

For each of the sections the report covers information on the:

- Existing and potential tourist destinations and natural/cultural properties in Gojal with specific information on history, culture, arts, crafts, music architecture, landscape, treks and jeep and yak safari etc. and potentials for improvement.
- Provides Quality maps and photographs for use in brochures and other eco-tourism promotional materials.
- Assesses existing infrastructure and facilities (area and facility specific) to support eco-tourism and specific needs for improvement.
- Provides information regarding existing and potential community-based eco-tourism initiatives in Gojal and
- Lists recommendations on how to promote eco-tourism in Gojal and suggestions to create linkages with Lower Hunza and other tourist areas in Pakistan for attracting tourists to the Conservancy.

2. Main Findings: Assessment of Eco-tourism Potentials

Gojal Conservancy posses beautiful and fascinating spring, meadows and pastures, awesome peaks and glaciers, and tributaries of Hunza River. Among these delightful and scenic spots, Batura glacier, Passu glacier, Ghulkin glacier, Gulmit glacier, Juntosh glacier and Shatubar glacier, Ptundass peak, Shatuber peak, Tpopdan peak, and like are remarkable. The famous plateau of Shimshal is also falls in the Gojal Tehsil.

These mountains in Gojal have lapped variety of valleys and sub-valleys within themselves that provide the habitats especially for the humankinds. Five major unifying valleys in terms of its historical perspective do exists here in this region that are Chipursan valley, Misgar valley, Khunzhrave valley, Avgarch valley and Shimshal valley. The areas consisting of Passu, Hussaini, Ghulkin, Gulmit and Shishkat termed as Lower Gojal, is a popular tourist destination. Batura glacier, Passu Peak, Shisper Peak, Patundas Pass, Borit Lake, Shatubar glacier and a number of treks, rafting, paragliding and Yak safari sites are located in lower Gojal regions of the Conservancy.

The Conservancy is rich in flora and fauna. Details of the species are found in each section.

^Ψ Gojal is an international border tehsil, magistracy, within Hunza sub-division; and in terms of its extensive territory, it is the largest tehsil of the Northern Areas of Pakistan. This region borders internationally with the People's Republic of China through the famous Khunzhrave (Khunjerab) Pass, Perpk pass and Mintika pass; while the on the other, Gojal frontiers with the Afghan Wakhan -Little Pamir (Pamir-i-Khurd) through Kilik Pass and Irshod Pass

Besides natural wealth and beauty, Gojal conservancy harbors diverse and endangered cultural traditions. The people of Gojal speak three languages, namely Wakhi (Xhikwor), Brushaski (Verchikwor) and small number of Berichaski (Domwor) speaking families. Wakhi speakers-the majority communities are immigrants from Afghanistan, Tajikistan and the Sirikol in China, who have settled in these pastures for the last two hundred years. The majority of the population is agro-pastoralites and small number of people is engaged in trading, tourism and non-farm sector employment, mainly working in government departments and with civil society organizations. Almost all the people belong to the Shia Ismaili tradition of Islam, with the exception of one family in Misgar who are Sunni Muslims.

Some of the important findings regarding the physical and cultural sites in the different valleys of Gojal during the survey have been designed that follows as under:

2.1 Chipurson Valley:

The key cultural sites to visit are Bobo Ghundi (shrine), Kumpir Diyore, and Reshit Fort is viewpoint and Panja Shoh Shrine on the way to Chipurson. The Reshit Coal mine is also an important tourist point, which is 5 km from Reshit village. Besides traditional Buzkashi and Polo are played in the valley and local festivals are organized annually. Kuchkhamak is a traditional festival where the flocks from the pastures return to the village in late autumn. It is quite fascinating event for tourists and a joy for local youth, women and children.

More details about the cultural and natural resources in the section on the valley.

2.2 Misger Valley:

Along with some of the beautiful landscapes that consist of the glaciers, mountains with their treks offer an opportunity to visit the cultural sites including Qalandarchi Fort, the first Post Office in Gojal during the British period, and Astan (a shrine of a great saint) along with the man made caves for the defense purposes situated on a mound in the village.

More details about the cultural and natural resources in the section on the valley.

2.3 Avgarch Valley:

The Khunjerab National Park (KNP) is the place to be seen and for the trophy hunting.

The Khunjerab Zero Point where the Pakistani and Chinese border guards and posts fascinate tourists and visitors, besides the natural beauty and heaviness of 4742m height above sea level and the serenity of snaky metalled Karakoram Highway (KKH) going up and into Chinese territory.

The community conservation area in Dhee managed by KVO is also a unique eco-tourism attraction.

In Avgarch Valley, there are very attracting and also very interesting sites both in physical and cultural. In physical sites, the Juntosh glacier presents a very fanciful view especially during the moonlights of summer. In addition, Pyryar meadows and pasture are another resort whereon summer camps could be held and the beautiful scenery could be captured both in the form of man-made cameras and in the human memoirs. In cultural sites, the Avgarch Fort and the defensive post, Kungras are remarkable.

More details about the cultural and natural resources in the section on the valley.

2.4 Khyber Area:

The trek from Khyber to Lupghar in the Chipursan Valley near Raminji and Yarzrich. Most attracting pastures are in Khyber; the most prominent include Mulungqir, Krale Goz and Vndan. In cultural sites, the ruins of Darwoza of fort are present. Furthermore, an old house that belongs to Zohir Shoh in 1922-3 when he was on his visit to and from China and Central Asia.

More details about the cultural and natural resources in the section on the area.

2.5 Shimshal valley:

Besides the prominent peaks and glaciers, the Pamir Plateau is very much fascinating resort. In this valley, the opportunities of skiing, expeditions, treks and Yak Safari are the best to be availed.

In cultural sites, the shrine of Shoh Shams is very inspiring, if some one has true belief in the spirituality and miracles.

More details about the cultural and natural resources in the section on the valley.

2.6 Lower Gojal

There are also many delightful and attractive sites for trekking expeditions. These include trekking and expeditions to the Batura glaciers and peaks, Ptundas Pass and Passu Peak, and swimming in the hot spring of Hussaini. Furthermore, in the cultural side, yak safari, rafting in the Borit Lake, visit of some of the cultural heritages are remarkable.

Cultural sites in Lower Gojal include the shrine of Shoh Talib, Museums in Hussaini, Ghulkin and Gulmit, Ondra Fort (centuries old), Khalifa Alyars Old House, Diwon Shoh's Old House, and especially 1850s Blockade of Hunza River and the escaped Old House as point of reference, Mir's Palace, suspension bridges, Shoh Chirogh's Shrine, Khoja Mardi Wali's Shrine and many more.

More details about the cultural and natural resources in the section on the valley.

3. Assessment of existing infrastructure and Facilities:

The Karakoram Highway (KKH) serves as the lifeline of economic development in the Northern Areas. It is an important means to connect Gojal Conservancy with China and Hunza/Gilgit and down country. KKH is the single most important infrastructure that serves as a vehicle to bring tourists and other visitors to the area and enables local people to have access to development resources and mobility outside the region.

The hydel power grid at Khyber illuminates most of the Gojal Conservancy. The second phase built recently lighted up Chipurson for the first time. However Shimshal and Misger have their own micro hydel projects.

The telecommunication services are monopolized by the Special Communication Organization (SCO) in the Northern Areas. Like other parts of the NAs, Gojal also suffers from the low teledensity, noisy lines and worst services provided by SCO. Gojal is the least connected Tehsil in the Northern Areas. There are two switch rooms, one in Gulmit and the other in Sost. Both have a cumulative capacity of around 1500 lines. However due to i) high fixation charges ii) high line rents iii) high charges per unit and iv) customer unfriendly services access to telecom services are denied to common people. Moreover, there is no rural telephony where the rural people could use inexpensive technologies to get access to Internet and could have direct dialing to mobile and other communication systems. This also constrains local, national and international tourism, as due to lack of access to information and for safety and security reasons, many of the tourists are denied the opportunity to visit unexplored sites.

There are a number of hotels and restaurants in the Gojal conservancy serving the different classes of tourists. However these facilities are mainly concentrated in Sost, Khyber and lower Gojal region. Chipurson, Misger and Shimshal still require investments in these sectors.

In order to facilitate the tourists the safety and security support and regulation is very important, especially when we talk of promoting eco-tourism. It requires highly trained guides, porters and cooks. Besides the role of the local magistrate and the police becomes important in providing full security support and information about any prohibited and dangerous zones. There is always a lapse on this score as our forces are mostly less informed and non-educated.

The health facilities in the area are not adequate. The government has established a Civil dispensary in the Tehsil headquarter at Gulmit, which is a ten bed hospital with one doctor (who most of the time remains absent from the area). In Sost there is a health checkpost for passengers travelling through the Khunerab border to China and vice versa, and there is one doctor. In this way for a population of around 20,000 and tourists, visitors, traders, employees and labours from other regions numbering around 10,000 there is only 1.5 doctors! The Aga Khan Health Service runs primary health care programmes in the villages. There are three maternal and child health centres one each in Reshit, Sost and Gulmit. There are two LHVs in each unit. No registered Nurse or doctor available.

Another key problem is with the development of micro infrastructure around the eco-and cultural tourism sites. Most of these sites are not developed; there is no proper access to these sites; no civic support system like water, sanitation, camping sites and trek lanes are available. Nor have these sites properly being promoted. Most of the sites are not on the popular guidebooks. Tourist maps and information leaflets for most of these sites are not developed.

The local cultural and conservation initiatives are the most important vehicle to support and promote eco-and cultural tourism in the area. However these institutions are weak and lack proper training and human and institutional capacities to handle all the issues. It is important to invest in the capacity building of these institutions so that they steward their natural and cultural resources in a sustainable way.

4. Specific Recommendations:

1. How to link Gojal with Lower Hunza and other tourist areas in Pakistan for attracting tourists to Gojal?
 - Through advertisement at local media that includes the regional newspapers, local radio stations, inter and intra regional programmes in shape of festivals, workshops, excursions, friendly visits etc.
2. How to promote Eco-tourism in Gojal abroad? For the purpose of promotion of Eco-tourism in Gojal, the following steps could be taken:
 - Special awareness and training workshops through community-based organisations for local people in order to sensitise and inform them about the ethics of tourism.
 - Build special culturally and environmentally friendly Huts and local Kerchs (Shepherd huts) in popular eco-tourism sites and provide all necessary facilities.
 - Promote the conservancy through print and electronic media: documentary films on physical and cultural sites and their significance, radio commentary at national level, taking the experts on eco-tourism on TV and radio; brochures, newspapers, festivals, workshops and conferences, seminars etc.
 - Develop an integrated web page of Gojal Conservancy and promote it through popular tourism and conservation portals.
 - Provide training to local youth in cooking local, national, Chinese and continental foods.
 - Hotel management and Tour operations management training should be provided to local people and where possible local educated youth should be awarded special scholarships to attend short to long courses within the country and abroad.
 - Community-based Tourist Information Centres should be promoted so that tourists should be well equipped by appropriate information and trained tourists guides ought to be there to facilitate them.
 - In order to ensure safety and security of tourists in campsites, local conservation and development organisations should be promoted to arrange local tours and manage these camps. Proper infrastructure in terms of clean water supply and development of the camping sites should be assured.
 - There should be toilet facilities at the tourist spots both on the trekking and expedition routes as well as the campsites.
 - There should be the signboards while going to the trekking and expeditions.
 - While going for trekking, the guide must take fully care of the weather in order to ensure the security of the tourists

- The native people and the domestic tourists should be taught to take fully care of the environment and must not degrade it.
- The foreign tourist should be taught not to deteriorate the cultural sensitivities and cultural environment of the areas.

Conclusion

Gojal Conservancy presents a beautiful spot for eco-and cultural tourism. The landscape is fascinating, presents contrast and is rich in biodiversity potentials. The oral and physical cultural heritage of the conservancy presents a tradition of peaceful co-existence, hospitality, cheerfulness, honesty and hard work. Most of all the local cultural and conservation initiatives speak for the resilience and commitment of the local people to steward their natural and cultural assets and promote it through self-help. The openhearted support to international development efforts show that the local people have a global vision and are ready to develop partnerships with national and international agencies to embark on the road to sustainable development.

However in order to embark on this road, the communities require initial support from various quarters to develop necessary infrastructure, positively promote local eco-and cultural tourism potentials nationally and internationally and develop local human and institutional capacities to serve as sustainable partners along with international agencies and to promote a vibrant private sector and civil society in the region.

1. Acknowledgement

Problems do not remain problems, if they are coped energetically and friendly with the hel of fellow human being anywhere on the earth. In the field, during the survey of carrying this study project, I encountered many, but they remained no more scraping or troubling because of many availed assistance in different perspectives from different peoples in different areas. I feel guilty without mentioning the names of few of the personalities while helping me in the field as well as in the office of the IUCN.

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2. Introduction

According to the Terms of Reference (TOR), the Consultant was asked to collect and provide primary and secondary information regarding the eco-tourism in Gojal Conservancy.

The Gojal Conservancy is spread over an area of 4,830 sq.kms. The site is bordered with Peoples Republic of China and Afghanistan on the North. It includes permanent snowfields, alpine meadows and dry alpine habitat and is contiguous to Khunjerab National Park. Three rare ungulate species are found namely the endangered Marco Polo Sheep, Tibetan Wild Ass and the Blue Sheep. Population of these species (restricted to high grounds above 4000 metres in elevation) use seasonal home ranges and drift between the Conservancy and neighbouring areas in Afghanistan and China. The area supports a healthy population of snow leopards and other predators, including the Himalayan Lynx and Wolf. Among large birds, the Lammergeier, Himalayan Griffon Vulture, Golden Eagle, Himalayan Snowcock and Chukar are found. (Source: UNDP, MACP Project Document 1999-2006).

2.1 Objectives of the Study

The study was designed to collect information regarding eco-tourism in Gojal Conservancy that include:

1. Collection of existing and potential tourist destinations and natural/cultural properties in Gojal specific information on history, culture, architecture, landscape, treks and jeep and yak safari etc. and potentials for improvement.
2. Quality maps and photographs for use in brochures and other eco-tourism promotional materials.
3. Assessment of existing infrastructure and facilities to support eco-tourism and specific needs for improvement.
4. Existing and potential community-based eco-tourism initiatives in Gojal and
5. Recommendations on how to promote eco-tourism in Gojal and suggestions to create linkages with Lower Hunza and other tourist areas in Pakistan for attracting tourists to the Conservancy.

2.2 Methodology of the Study

Different methods and techniques were brought into exercise in order to have an objective study. The report has been divided valley-wise which has, to a greater extent, a historical significance. These valleys include Chipursan Valley, Misgar Valley, Avgarch Valley, and Shimshal Valley. On the other, the area falling between Passu and Shishkat has been named as Lower Gojal.

In order to get precise and reliable data on the theme, some literatures were reviewed firstly. Then the interview schedule and questionnaires were made. Afterwards, the major informants on both physical and cultural sites of the entire Gojal region were identified. The questionnaires, interview schedules were open ended. Apart from this tool, through general discussions data were also collected. Along with these tools, meetings were also held with the heads and members of different social institutions focussing on the given theme.

Totally, 98 respondents were interviewed that comprised on different age groups, gender and nearly all stakeholders of tourism. I was really fortunate to have such co-operative respondents including some key informants. And in this connection, I could say that I was indeed very fortunate.

On the other, I encountered some limitations also. Firstly, some respondents did not want to share their ideas and experiences, as they were sceptics of the IUCN as well as WWF. And that is why I had to hide my identity in few places.

3. Existing and Potential Tourist Destinations and Natural/ Cultural Resources

3.1 Chipursan Valley: An Orientation

Chipursan Valley is located on the borders of Little Pamir in Afghanistan. This region borders Afghanistan through the famous Irshod Wiyin (Pass), which is above 4,000 metre high above sea level. This region is connected to the KKH via a jeep-able road infrastructure, and is 20 minutes to five hours drive from Sost.

This valley is very rich in both its physical and cultural sites. The prominent physical sites include the great passes, pastures, glaciers and peaks multiplied by some of the beautiful lakes. Along with these physical sites, Chipursan valley is also very fertile in terms of its cultural heritages and sites. It may not be exaggerating to describe that this valley is the particularly known for its sophistic impressions. Almost in all main villages, Chipursan valley has got the ritual prints. Among whom the great Bobo Ghundi the first, which still plays its vital role in fulfilling the aspirations, desires and intentions of the faithful disciples through the spiritual means.

3.2 Physical Sites

3.2.1 Track to the Irshod Wiyin (Pass) and beyond

After arriving in Bobo Ghundi Ziarat (Oston), there comes an enthusiastic track from this sacred place onward the Irshod Wiyin (Pass) that leads and encourages one beyond this pass to the Little Pamir of the Wakhan Corridor. This track could take four to five days and the trackers would enjoy the serene valleys, snow-capped mountain and the lush green steppe, indeed. It must be remembered that every age group of individual would, of course, enjoy it by tracking for five to six hours each day. It is noteworthy that the Irshod Pass remains open only for four months that are from May to August.

3.2.2 Track along Lasht Khund to Qarumber Valley via Chilenji Pass

It is interesting to note that Chipursan valley provides a junction role especially in terms of its physical settings. One such role pertains with regard to the Qarumbar Valley. A nice track starts from Lasht Khund in Chipursan and proceeds ahead via Chilenji Pass (approx. 5000 m above sea level), and ascends to Qarumbar valley Ishkoman. This round track takes 15 days. During this adventurous journey, one goes through the white-snowy glacier, named as Chatibhoy, and fascinating crevasses. Furthermore, this track provides a golden opportunity to see the beautiful pastures and lakes plus lush green valleys. Services as porters are made through yaks and donkeys, which remains indeed an inspiring view and experience. It should be kept in mind that the French nationals have been to this track many times, as this route provides sound facilities for the camping sites that include green and flat physical settings, provision of water and the like. The highly experienced guides, when surveyed and experienced this track, would indeed be very fruitful in exposing and facilitating the tourists onto this track.

3.2.3 Zudkhun to Pomiri Pasture

Zudkhun is the last settlement of Chipursan people' From this village, a nice track proceeds ahead to the Pomiri of the Yishkuek, a historically rich and physically more attractive setting. This track, when started from Zudkhun, takes four days to end. When one starts towards Pomiri Pasture, one feels proud and jubilant to cross the Pomiri Glacier and river, and view the Pomiri Peak. This attractive and specified valley possesses snow to its left and right banks.

3.2.4 Zudkhun to Wiyin (four days track)

3.2.5 Zudkhun to Lupgharsar (Raminj)

This is another route to go for tracking that takes 7-days. While advancing to the destination, one passes through the *Eigas*, the pasturelands' houses, and crosses *Wiyin*, the pass. This is an easy track and the porters are available easily; the trackers can enjoy fully because of its easy accessibility.

3.2.6 Bobo Ghundi to Pomiri and back to Zoodkhun: 5-days track

This route provides an opportunity to start the track from the Bobo Ghundi Oston (*Ziarat*) goes up to Istiman and horizontally advances towards the Pomiri then descends down to the Zudkhun. During this track, one can see the variety of flora and fauna, especially to the latter, rabbit, snow leopard and foxes. Furthermore, the locals also state that marmots have also been seen there. The areas on this route are a free grazing and the indigenous peoples take full benefit out of these areas.

3.2.7 Zudkhun to Misgar via Dilisang: 6-days track

Dilisang is a famous nala, which connects Misgar with Chipursan. When trackers in Zudkhun, they could be taken to this historic track and they can arrive in Misgar via Dilisang in 6 to 7 days.

3.2.8 Bobo Ghundi to Sekrzhav (stream) upto Sekrsar Peak Base Camp: 3-4 days

This route is a bit steep and the physical setting is composed of red soil and that is why it has been given the name as Sekrsar Peak. The campsites are very beautiful and enjoyable. This track starts from Bobo Ghundi and passes through the Sekrzhav and reaches up to the base-camp of Sekrsar Peak. The track days include three to four days. The best season for the track is May-September and the average altitude is 4000 m or above sea level.

3.2.9 Bobo Ghundi to Kla Goz in Little Pamir: 2-days

This is an adventurous track and fits for those interested in adventurous trackers. This begins from Bobo Ghundi Oston and goes beyond the Pakistan's border and reaches to Kla Goz in the little Pamir of Wakhan. The tracking period includes two-days. This track may require special permission from both the government, as it runs across the borders.

3.2.9 Expedition to the Pomiri Peak: 25-days

This is interesting to note that so far no one has dared to summit the Pomiri Peak. According to the natives, the period to venture for this expedition would take 25 days.

3.2.10 Expedition to the Yishkuek Peak: 30-40 days

This peak, Yishkuek Kuh, is another challenging peak, as still there has not been any person to ascend this giant peak. A Japanese team, two years ago, has attempted to summit it, but could not get through. The period of venturing this peak would remain between 30 to 40 days.

3.2.11 Kirmin to Misgar via Shuew Gardan

3.2.12 Yarzirich to Kundahel, Shimizhrav and back to Sost

This is an interesting as well as adventurous route that starts from Yarzirich, a new Wakhi settlement in Chipursan Valley, and proceeds to Kundahel, a pastureland, then continues up by viewing the beautiful flora and fauna of this area that reaches to Shimizhrav Hel (pasturage) on top of Khudaabad. The trackers would, of course, enjoy the jubilant and fascinating landscape, and then could descend to Sost.

3.2.14 Yarzirich to Kundahel and Lupghar of Raminj and back to Yarzirich

Another attractive and ventures route for tacking, which is still not exposed yet, starts its way from Yarzirich, goes to Kundahel via Wirkhun and turns right then proceeds ahead to the Lupghar in Raminj, a Burusho Settlement in the valley.

3.3 Cultural Sites

3.3.1 Bobo Ghundi Oston: the Shrine of Bobo Ghundi

Whereabouts and Identification of the Shrine

Bobo Ghundi in Persian language literally means the 'Father of the Ghund': *bobo* for 'father, and '*Ghund*' for the place, which is situated in the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Physically, Bobo Ghundi is shrine of an Ismaili saint that is located in the Istiman of Chipursan valley of Gojal. The actual name of Bobo Ghundi is said to be Muhammad Baqir. Some informants are of the opinion that this transcendent person was the fourth *Imam* of the Shia, both Ismaili and Ithna'atharia (the dwellers) school of thought in Islam. Whosoever is the person, but one thing is crystal clear that he was spiritually exalted man who has, so far, been becoming a great source for the spiritual and physical healing for uncountable individuals throughout its history.

It has been describing by the reliable narrators of Hunza as well as Wakhan and Badakhshan that Muhammad Baqir, being an Ismaili preacher, dhai, and saint, thought to visit his followers of the former Hunza State, Gilgit and Kashmir; and for this purpose he made his way towards these regions from Ghund.

En route to Hunza, Bobo of Ghund arrived in Panja, on Panja a River, and stayed in Mir Shah Qamber's house. After spending couple of days with the Mir's family, Bobo Ghundi willed to marry daughter of Shah Qaimbar, which was accepted by the Mir. After marriage, Bobo Ghundi, his wife and one of his followers, disciples, took their way to Hunza Valley via the Irshod Pass. When they arrived in Istiman of Chipursan valley, Bobo Ghundi did not feel his health conducive. He gradually lost his health and became aware of his death. Bobo Ghundi, therefore, asked his disciple to return the dowry of his wife, which was given during their wedding that included golden ornaments of laden camel.

Bobo Ghundi, however, died and he was, in accordance with his testimony, buried in the graveyard in Istiman. After sometimes, the wife of Bobo Ghundi also died; and according to some narrations, wife of this saint was also buried beside him; on the other, there is also another tradition that she was buried in the same place but in separate grave.

This story is being related during the period that becomes centuries ago. However, about the identification of the grave of Bobo Ghundi there have been different sources, written and oral, which are also being narrated by some key informants these days and the gist follows as under. It was

during the reign of Mir Silum Khan IH (death 1824 AD) which worked out on the issues of shrines and defensive posts.

Regarding the identification of the Bobo Ghundi Shrine, it is being described that after the erection of the Istiman fort in Chipursan the guards were watching through the holes of fortress. One of the guards saw that a lame wolf came down from the mountain of Istiman and started circling around the one the graves in the graveyards in Istiman (some of old the graves could be seen presently as well). The wolf, after revolving that particular grave, started growling thrice while turning its mouth towards the sky. In response, there came out voice from that grave and directed the wolf "to go to Hindi, a village in Shinaki (Lower Hunza), and eat the herds of goat and sheep of ... on Thursday". The wolf took its way down and continued for its destination in Hindi. In the meanwhile, the guard, who saw and observed this conversation, sent another guard to Shinaki to check the consequences and reliability of the conversation between the wolf and the departed soul in the grave. The wolf, which started its journey on Wednesday, travelled on the day, the night and the next day, and arrived there in Hindi, and did complete the task, ate the sheep and goats of the prescribed person: and the conversation got endorsed here. Thus, the grave of Bobo Ghundi was identified, as the people were aware of the great saint's burying in the graveyard but unaware of the grave. And Mir Silum Khan 111 demarcated the grave and constructed the boundary and brought it in shape of shrine that was rebuilt in Mir Nazeem Khan's period and branded as the mausoleum of Imam Baqir. Since bringing the shrine in shape of mausoleum during the reign of Mir Silum Khan, the people of Hunza started to visit Bobo Ghundi for the purpose of getting relief, and spiritual and physical healing: and, without doubt, this shrine, since then, has been playing its role as a major source of healing for thousands of individuals. Today, a considerable number of individuals have sincere faith on this shrine, and not only from Hunza, but rather out of this valley many people, whether literate or non-literate, men or women, rich or poor, pious or impious, do visit Bobo Ghundi in order to get psychological and spiritual satisfaction, and physical healing, which in accordance with the belief or the concerned individuals. If someone, who doesn't have any creed upon this shrine, but say some thing bad then something could happen badly with them.

3.3.2 Bobo Ghundi and its Cultural Potential for Tourism

The shrine of Bobo Ghundi is staying fascinatingly in Istiman of Chipursan, attracts greatly the visitors from different angels: from the aesthetic stand point, it is fully decorated by the colourful flags indicating that it could be something special. from the perspective of faith, still a major source for the believers in order to fulfil any intention; and for the unbelievers, a special opportunity to observe its consequences. and for the nature loving people, a beautiful scenic spot of the landscape. and the famous Irshod Pass, the gateway to *Pamir-i-Khurd*, Little Pamir, is visible from here.

On the bank of the Chipursan River, down to the shrine, there is a spring, which is thought to come out of the grave of Bobo Ghundi. This fanciful spring becomes a medication, drunk by the visitors, after paying the sincere tribute to the shrine by bringing all sorts of requirement in completion/formality.

In front of the Bobo Ghundi shrine, altitude above 10,000 ft above sea level, there is beautiful meadow, which could be a special spot for polo game and *Buz Kashi* provided that some sort of special strategies are taken for the eco and natural tourism.

3.2.3 The Story of Yishkuek and the story of Rvayezhuy

Yishkuek is presently a *nala* and Rvayezhuy is a flat and open place in the Chipursan valley. It is being related that there was an old settlement with the name of Yishkuek, *the grey spring*, in Chipursan valley. This settlement was in a fortress and the fortress included nine iron gates. Yishkuek comprised of 600 households, three hundred tent dwellers and three hundred proper house dwellers. This land was very fertile with great produces, from the wheat to other crops and livestock. The people, therefore, were rich.

A time came that these people became very luxurious and arrogant and did not pay attention towards the God's great boons/blessings; and the arrogance reached to its climax.

The Rvayezhuy, means the lake of Ravay, was a big lake at the time of the settlement of Yishkuek. Herein, was a habitat of a gigantic crocodile with nine heads. When the people of Yishkuek reached to the height of arrogancy the crocodile appeared and demanded the inhabitants of Yishkuek for the food to eat otherwise all the dwellers would be eaten and the fortress of Yishkuek would be destroyed. The food of the crocodile included a live person, around 40 kg of butter, and a bull. The period is unknown whether it was per day, or per week or per month. The taxes levied by the crocodile were fulfilled through rotary system.

In rotation, the turn of a household came, and these household members were very pious and God frightening. The members of this household included the husband and his wife along with their young daughter. While discussing about a person from this house, the husband presented himself voluntary and said that both, his wife and daughter should survive and he would be the lump of the crocodile; on the other, his wife denied this suggestion and voluntarily presented herself for this purpose. But their daughter disagreed with both of them and said that both of them could produce a daughter so that if she is absent, the gulf could be filled later; so she sincerely offered herself and did not heed the proposals of either of her parents. However, finally their daughter convinced the parents.

Now, the parents took their daughter to the Rvayezhuy; and with great sorrow the girl was left on the bank so that the crocodile would come out of the lake and eat her and other concerned contributions.

The girl, on the one hand, frightening of the crocodile's eating; and, on the other, proud of her volunteer on behalf of their parents, was waiting for her consequences. In the meanwhile, a great saint appears on the spot that is thought to be the Bobo Ghundi. The girl surprisingly asked the man referring him as 'father', and stressed him to leave the place because the crocodile is in the lake and she is a contribution for it; otherwise, the crocodile would also eat him. In response, the holy man hearted him 16 and assured that he would kill the crocodile. After such conversation, the holy-man, put his head in the girl's lap, asked the girl to see whether there is any lice in his hair. The girl started searching in his hair; in the meanwhile, the water of the lake started waving and the crocodile raised its head sooner it arrived at the bank of the lake. The girl started tearing. The tears dropped on the face of the holy man and he woke up; the girl intimated him about the crocodile's arrival. The holy man stood, took his swords out and cut the head of crocodile. Sooner the second head was raised and that was also cut. In the same manner, the holy man cut all the nine heads of the crocodile, and the lake became bloody. Thus, the girl escaped and the holy man told the girl to leave the place and tell the dwellers of the Yishkuek to live peacefully and there won't be any calamity provided that the people would again forget the blessings of Almighty Allah. Before the disappearance, the holy man gave his sword-case (cover) to the girl, and said the girl referring her as his daughter 'take this *nayam* with yourself and show it when the need would require, because firstly the people would not believe that the crocodile has been killed; but later when they will see the bloody lake then every strong man would claim that he had killed the crocodile. At his moment the *nayam* would be needed.'

The girl now reached back to the fortress of Yishkuek. Her parents became nervous to see her, and the other dwellers started cursing her that the crocodile would reach here in fortress and destroy it. This sincere daughter tried to convince them but they did not heed her, even she was tortured both

physically and mentally. At this moment, one of a wise person suggested that the people should go to the spot and review the place whether or not the crocodile is survived then they should treat the girl and her parents. Accordingly, the spot was examined and the found out that the crocodile was dead and the lake is full of blood. The situation abruptly changed, and the jubilancy came. Now each strong person wrongly claimed that he had killed the crocodile, and the quarrel began. At last, the girl, as directed by the holy man, asked those people that they should be calm and not quarrel, the *naywn* of sword is with her, if any sword fits into it, the concerned sword holder has killed the crocodile. Thus, all claimants tried their best to fit their swords into the *nayam* but could not get through. At this moment, the holy man reappeared on this spot/screen; the girl pointed towards him, and said 'this was my holy father who killed the crocodile, and the holy man entered his sword into the *nayam* and that fitted fully in it. Thus, the arguments of the concerned people became false and they embarrassed. *The holy man advised the people of Yish Kuek and said that when there would be any trouble again then call him by Ya-Ali, one of the great names of Allah* Keeping in view the advice of the great saint, who is considered to be the Bobo Ghundi, the dwellers of Yish Kuek acted upon them for sometimes. But sooner, the people forgot the blessings of God through such a holy person as the source of relief, the people attempted to test the advice of the saint. They once again became arrogant and disobedience, and started shouting "Ya-Ali" in jockey manner to call the great holy man. The holy man appeared in order to give salvation to the concerned dwellers of the fortress. and the people surprised and made pretension that the forces have come from the south; thus, they accompanied the holy man upto Reshipzhrev in the Chipursan Valley. But could not find anyone. Thus, the holy man raged and made his finger prints on a boulder in Reshipzhrev, which is known as *Panja Shoh*, means the **five** fingers' prints of the king, as it seems that five fingers have its sign upon the boulder in print form. This sign of the holy man has been surrounded by walls and is a small shrine in Reshipzhrev. After returning back from this spot, it is said that holy man left *the tuqum*, horse's blanket under saddle, which is known as the Khijime Ghar and imprinted on a stone, in Yarzirich while entering this village. When the holy man arrived back in Kirmin, he left his saddle here, which is imprinted on the stone. When the holy man reached in Sherisabz, he left *his joyi namoz* here. It is said that he cursed these people for their wrong doing again and then disappeared. After sometimes, their came flood from the Yish Kuek valley and destroyed the entire fortress and settlement of Yish Kuek; and there remained no signs; and this natural calamity was witnessed by a grandfather of the Gulbast ktor, whose naine is said to be Bieg Murod.

3.3.4 Rvay Lake as a Tourist Destination

Even though, the legendary, famous and historical Lake of Rvay has dried but still this place can better play its vital role as a tourist resort provided that this could be brought into exercise by restoring it artificially. In this manner, the lake could be fed by water from the stream of Yish Kuek during the summer days thus, small shops, cabins, etc. could facilitate this take's surroundings; and within the lake boating could be practised. On the other, during the wintertime, this lake, when fed by water, may become a beautiful skiing resort as well.

3.3.5 The Story of Kuempir Diyor

Like the story of Yish Kuek, the relation of this story also resembles in terms of the arrogance and in terms of the holy man's appearance, and finally the devastation of the village by the curse of Allah. It has been and is being related that Kuempir Diyor, the village of the Old Woman, was inhabited by a number of people. These people became very lavish and did not heed towards the gratitude for the blessings of Allah. All things they associated with themselves rather than God. In nights, there was no recognition to both the sexes among wives and sisters or mothers. In contrast, there was an old lady who was very pious among all these people; because of her honesty, a small piece of land saved

from the natural disaster and that is why the village has been named after her. In connection with the haughtiness and lavishness of the people, the day came that they had to go through a great Divine examination. Once, there was a wedding in Kuempir Diyor and these arrogant people were busy with preparations in the wedding house. A holy man appeared in shape of a beggar in order to further test their lavishness and deceit. He started entering in all the houses of this village and asked for food because he was hungry. In each house, he was severely disgraced and nothing was given to him. Then he reached to the wedding house and he was also disgraced in this house. The owner of this house told the beggar to come the next day as the wedding is on this day and he would be given food and he will be full stomach. The beggar insisted that he should be given the stuff the same day because he is very hungry. The owner stood in hatred terms with the beggar and gave a piece of cooked meat, tendon, and the beggar went out.

Finally, this day, the beggar arrived in the house of the old woman. When he entered therein the old woman welcomed him very warmly and got surprised that no one was visiting her because of her poverty, as the old woman had a black sheep as her only source of livelihood. And that is why the visit of this beggar she thought as a blessing of Almighty God. Before begging for food, the old woman said to the beggar: "my father! I haven't got any thing for you except for this little quantity of milk", as it was in a bit broken lut, a stone pot, "so if you don't mind, kindly have this milk". The beggar thanked the old woman and put his walking stick into the *lut*, the milk raised high and became full in the stone pot. and further, the broken stone pot also renewed. The beggar did not drink any milk, as he tested the truthfulness of the old woman that fully proved her honesty. Before leaving the house, the holy man, in shape of beggar, directed the old woman that day after tomorrow she should come out of her house in sunrise, stand on the mound of the village, and watch the drama; but before that she should collect all her assets, if lying with any person. Then the beggar went out and disappeared. The next day, as it was the wedding day, the same beggar appeared in shape of a rich man by riding a horse. The people of Kumpir Diyor astonished the owner of the wedding house, astonished that such a rich man has come to their village and thought it as an honour for them to be their guest. These people, of course, did not recognise that he is the same person who came the previous day in shape of beggar and whom they had disgraced to the whole extent. Anyhow, this wealthy person was taken to the wedding house and given full honour, and about the hypocrisy, the holy man is full aware of. When the time of meal came, the rich man was asked to eat but he did not share with them and said that he is full. Now, the holy man revealed that he had had the piece of meat given to him the previous day. The holy man added that yesterday he was in their village but was fully disgraced when he was in a position of beggar, and today, it is the other way round. Then he showed them the piece of meat, which was in his pit. The people of Kumpir Diyor got humiliation and embarrassment. The holy man added before his disappearance that all dwellers would see the consequences of their hypocrisy and dishonesty.

The next day, day-after-tomorrow given to the old woman, at sunrise the old woman went to the mound in accordance with the directive of holy man; the people of Kumpir Diyor are seeing the curse of God in terms of the heavy flood. The flood was coming onto the settlement; the holy man holding his walk stick is in the front. When the holy man stops, the flood behind him also stops, and when he starts walking the flood also moves forward behind him. Thus the holy man accessed the mound whereon the old woman along with her black sheep is watching the situation. A sieve came on top of the flood, which belonged to the old woman and she had forgotten to collect, and the holy man took it (sieve) on the tip of his stick and threw towards the old woman. Thus, all people of Kumpir Diyor along with their assets destroyed. and the only *Kuempir*, the old woman, along with her sheep and sieve survived.

3.3.6 Old Colony of Reshit

As has been mentioned earlier in relating Bobo Ghundi that Mir Silum Khan IH constructed the forts, fortresses and defence Posts in different areas, and more particularly in the Chipursan valley so is the Reshit Fort one of his constructions. In the entire Chipursan Valley, Reshit's Fort remains as a model of old colony. The inhabitants of Chipursan have been settled during this Mir's reign. The purposes were to ingress and watch the invasion of the Kirghiz of the little Pamir; and to generate taxes for the state through agro-pastoralism. Vis-A-vis tourism attraction, the Reshit's old colony could be maintained as the people do dwell here. And this spot, indeed, is on a nice landscape and an attractive viewpoint to the surrounding hills and snow-capped mountains.

3.4. Flora & Fauna

In the Chipursan Valley, different kinds of flora and fauna are found. Among the flora, varieties of mountain flowers are there, which prominently include amber, sosan, ect. Snow leopards, wolves (coming from the Little Pamir) and foxes are distinguished better; while among the birds, kirgas, kherz, buspur, yirgot, crows and pies are prominent.

4. Misgar Valley

4.1 Introduction

Misgar is a very strategic valley within Gojal, which is situated at a distance of 12 km from Sost, the border check post of Pakistan with China. The most important passes, like Khunzhrav and Irshod, lie here, which are Mintaka Pass and Kilik Pass. Both these passes link Pakistan with the People's Republic of China. Mintaka valley along with its pass has great historical significance whereby the Old Silk Road has gone through. The valley has been connected with the KKH though a link road at Belay Fuel Filling Station; and every sort of vehicles can go to Migar.

This valley was settled especially in the reign of Mir Nazim Khan, a ruler of the former Hunza State. Misgar is inhabited by the Brosho people, a minority ethnic group in Hunza. Very significant cultural and especially physical sites are found in this valley that offer full fanciful views and attractions. Some of the sites, both physical and cultural, are being identified so that tourism could be attracted to this valley along with its sub-valleys, and many things could be learnt.

4.2 Physical Sites

4.2.1 Treks

- Misgar to Mintaka and back (12 days)
- Misgar to Kilik and back ((14 days)
- Misgar to Dilisang and back (14 days)
- Round track from Misgar Rech to Kirmin Top to Chipursan and back to Sost (5 days)
- Round track from Misgar to Misgar to Mintaka to Kilik (recently identified) round track from Misgar to Kilik to Mintaka (recently identified)

4.2.3 Peaks and their expeditions

- Jurjur Peak (roughly 25 days)
- Gurgun Pert (30 days)
- Mintaka Peak (17 days)
- Shepk Shepk Peak (not for expedition)
- Quez Peak (20 days)
- Hapuchang (21 days)
- Wiyin Pert Peak (unknown)

4.2.4 SubValleys

- Mintaka Valley
- Kilik Valley

4.2.5 Pastures & Meadows

- Murkushi
- Lup Jingal
- Rume Hel
- Boy Hel
- Shirin Meydon
- Sikh Hel
- Dilisung
- Wadh Washk
- Mulung Hel

- Rech Mulung Hel

4.2.6 Glaciers

- Mintaka Glacier
- Kilik Glacier
- Dilisung Glacier
- Hapachung Glacier
- Quez Glacier
- Jurjur Glacier
- Hagh Glacier
- Shepk Shepk Glacier

4.2.7 Springs

4.2.8 Misgar Spring

4.3 Cultural Sites

- Shrine/Astan of Misgar
- Kalandarchi Fort and the Graveyard of the Kirghiz People
- Post Office of the British Period
- Old House
- Graveyard of the Kirghiz People in the Village
- Defence Caves in Misgar

5. Avgarch Valley

Avgarch, according to the narrator, has derived from the combination of two Persian words 'ab-for water and *Kerch for Hut*. Thus, together they make a sense to 'water camp area'. Historically, there was a campsite in Avgarch, which had a spring, and beside this spring the camp was located, and that is why this area was named as Avgarch. In our interpretation, Avgarch would define the valley itself along with the villages settled firstly by the decedents of the epical ancestor of this valley that comprise the villages from Ghlapan to Sost; while Khyber has a separate geographical that would be discussed separately.

5.1 Introduction

Avgarch valley is situated at a distance of about forty kilometres from Gulmit, the headquarters of Gojal *tehsil* Avgarch Valley possesses varying landscapes within itself that include the beautiful and small valleys, distinctive glaciers, attractive pasturages, and fascinating springs. Prominent among these landscapes are Pryar, Boybar, Juntosh Glacier, War (a viewpoint) and Mulungqir. Avgarch proper is a historical settlement of Bobo Sufi, the epical ancestor of the native people of this valley. This settlement is situated at a distance of more or less 10 kilometres from Murkhun/Jamalabad, and is accessible by jeep that takes 25 minutes drive. This **valley**, like others, is also very rich and has got much potential for tourism. Some of its physical as well as cultural sites are being described hereunder.

5.2 Physical Sites

5.2.1 Old Juniper Tree of Avgarch

An old juniper tree still exists in Avgarch proper, and through carbon dating it has been estimated to be four thousand years old. The older this tree, the richer its legend connected within itself, which would be related in the part of cultural sites.

5.2.2 Baj Goz of Pryar

Baj Goz means '**thick meadow**' and is located in Pryar of Avgarch valley. This greenish site with reference to its meaning is indeed a location of 'thick meadow'. On this meadow, different kinds of flora are founds densely provided that posturing on this place is made later. This sloppy meadow provides comfortable sights to individuals.

5.2.3 View of Qorun Peak and Mountain from War

Above Pryar Elga, there is a steep meadow that is called as War. It is very interesting to climb up to this hill. On the right side, there lies the stream of Grandma Ja and others. When this greenish hill is climbed up, this spot provides a best opportunity to view the surrounding landscapes, and especially the Qorun Peak and mountain. Here one feels that s/he has arrived in paradise.

5.2.3 Spring of Grandma Ja

After arriving at Prayer, one can find his or her way more above. Grandma Ja's spring is located opposite War, as mentioned earlier. This spring is of great importance, especially in the history of Avgarch people, as this has become a source of continuing the progeny of Bobo Sufi.

5.2.4 Round Track from Murkhun to Avgarch Valley and Murkhun

A new track, which has not been identified yet and in turn exposed to the tourists, is Murkhun-Avgarch Valley-Murkhun route. This round track takes its way from Murkhun passes through Jamalabad and proceeds ahead to Avgarch. After arriving in Avgarch proper, the route diverts left from the side of Pisundhur and along the Pryar stream on the Tpop side it goes ahead and traversing the stream reaches Pryar Elga. From there one can further advance and reach to War and then to Ja Kuek, and on the way back taking either of routes to Boybar. From here, the route goes up to Yarzin Boybar then reaches to Mulungqir, and via Sangghar this track comes to an end back to the other part of Murkhun.

5.2.5 Moonlight Track: Boybar to Juntosh Yaz (three hours)

The spectacular Juntosh Glacier, Yaz, is ever shining landscape of Avgarch valley. During the daytime, it is very attractive, but especially during the nighttime, when moonlight embraces the glacier, this glacier, yaz, gets the most valuable golden sight. Therefore, particularly, during the nighttime, the moonlight tracking indeed becomes stimulated and fanciful in order to fully enjoy the nature. From Boybar, the moonlight tracking takes more or less three hours to reach the Yaz of Juntosh.

5.3 Some Other Tracks in Avgarch Valley

- Qorun Kuh Track from Avgarch to Kuksel KKH via Qorun Pass: Ten days
- Qorun Kuh 11-Phase
- Wiyinben to Ghuzhrav KKH
- Wiyinben via Chafchingol Pass and to the KKH
- Yorch along the Qorun Ben

5.3.1 Peaks of Avgarch

- Jurjur Khun Sar
- Juntosh
- Boybar Peak
- Qorun Peak
- Prighar Sar
- Sachkatr Peak
- Quez
- Sukhtarabad Peak

5.3.2 Lakes

- Sukhtar Lake
- Juntosh Lake
- Khure Zhuye

5.3.3 Glaciers

- Pryar Yaz
- Boybar Yaz
- Qorunku Yaz
- Sukhtarabad Yaz 5. Sukhtarabad Yaz

5.3.4 Pastures

- Mulung Qir
- Dest Goz
- Juntosh hel
- Pryar

- Yarzin Boybar
- Saro Goz
- Tpop
- Wadh Khun
- Sukhtar
- Quez
- Rech
- Sukhtarabod
- Sangar
- Meydun
- Kerch Kerch

5.4 Cultural Sites

5.4.1 Sost Old House (400 years old) of Bobo Sufi)

Sost, which is at a distance of one hour drive from Gulmit, is these days a hub point among Pakistan, China and Central Asia. and that is why the Cheek Post of the Customs and Immigration of Pakistan lies here. Its intra-strategic significance is also obvious. From its south, Sost rendezvous the Avgarch Valley, Shimshal Valley and Lower Gojal; while from the north, it connects the Chipursan valley, Misgar Valley and Khunzhrav Valley. From the historical perspective, Sost is rich in one of its most crucial cultural heritages that possesses centuries old house of Bobo Sufi, the apical ancestor of the Avgarch People who had come from Afghanistan on the Amu Daryo.

5.3.2 Sost Tunnel

In the contemporary context, Sost's importance further multiplies when one goes through another cultural site and it is indeed a miraculous heritage. This awesome site is the Sost's long irrigation tunnel. This rock tunnel was a mega and venturous project of the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme whereby the dwellers of Sost constructed this frightening tunnel without any loss of lives in 1980s. and the work was carded out with the help of gas lamp. So this tunnel is, of course. of great attraction, if it is exposed to the tourists.

5.3.3 Old House of Bobo Sufi in Avgarch Settlement

In the Avgarch Valley, especially in Avgarch Proper, there is the Old House of Bobo Sufi. This is of great interest when one is in the valley. Bobo **Sufi**, the apical ancestor of Avgarchiks, the Avgarch People, is said to have arrived firstly in Sost, but later on, due to the defence purpose, as Sost was not more secure due to its strategic position. has searched ahead to access a defensive place, and who finally had got Avgarch Proper as secure and facilitating due to its pastures, flatland for irrigation, and spring and glacial water. That is why he made Avgarch as his permanent habitat and the history's old house still stands in Avgarch, which today presents a unique opportunity to learn from this house and environment in such an arduous terrain.

5.3.4 Avgarch Forts (Upper & Lower)

As has been mentioned above about the Old House of Bobo Sufi, this lies in the Avgarch Fort. This fort has, because of strategic reason, two parts: lower and upper. Within these forts are the *kungras*, the watching towers, and mosque of Ghulom Ali Shoh-a native scholar. In addition with this mosque, there is now a Jamatakhana, which is run under *Mukhi*, the religious head of the settlement.

Avgarch Proper, and other sub-valleys within it, is no more isolated but rather is accessed through a small vehicular link road. One can easily drive from the KKH in Murkhun and reach the proper settlement within half an hour; and could be entertained by the beautiful landscapes of the valley (see the physical sites' section).

5.3.5 Shohi Shams Tonov in Boybar

After reaching at Avgarch Proper, the link road proceeds ahead for the Boybar, another fascinating site in the valley; but before accessing to Boybar, in Chilkhun, the *tanov*, line of reference, of the Shohi Shams's Shrine come. This line of reference has been constructed in shape of shrine recently for the last one year. The objective of this *tanov* is clear to the native peoples of Gojal that one must regard the valley in the perspective of faith and spirituality that the people should not involve themselves in evils here; and must regard the areas from all angles of behaviour. After reaching here, one ought to pay tribute to the great saint, Shohi Shams, whose shrine is in Shimshal valley.

5.3.6 Elga of Pryar

In the section of the physical sites of Avgarch valley, Pryar Pasturage has been discussed briefly. This is a beautiful meadow, and hereon the *Elga*, the residences of the pastoralists who used to spend the summer time here. In the summertime, this pasturage cannot only provide opportunity in terms of viewing the nature but rather the people's warm hospitality that visit them there.

5.3.7 Mosque of Ghulom Ali Shah in Gircha

The villages of Ghlapan, Murkhun, Jamalabad, Gircha, Sareez and Sost are predominantly inhabited by the descendents of Bobo Sufi. And, therefore, Ghulom Ali Shoh, being one of his progeny, had great fame in terms of his scholastic contributions. Ghulom Ali Shoh had, like in Avgarch, built a mosque in Gircha, which still exists here. This mosque is full of architectural potential; and the front side of the mosque has got very fascinating and meaningful carvings. Along with these carvings, there are wooden inscriptions as well, which has, of course, great knowledge for the knowledge loving visitors.

5.3.8 Qur'an Khona of Murkhun

In the earlier period, when for the first time Quern was brought to this area then for the purpose of this Holy Book's sacredness *Qur'an Khana*, literally Qur'an's Rooms, were constructed. The Holy Book brought later by different persons was kept in the *maktab*, and their concerned houses. The Qur'an Khana of Murkhun is one of such objectives as well. Later on, when the Ismaili missionaries used to visit these areas, they brought along with them *the farmans*. The directives of the Ismaili Imams and these farmans were also kept in this small room. With regard to religion, these Farman Khanas have therefore great significance and learning.

5.3.9 Khunjarab Villagers Organization (KVO)

The Khunjerab National Park (KNP) is the place to be seen and for the trophy hunting.

The Khunjerab Zero Point where the Pakistani and Chinese border guards and posts fascinate tourists and visitors, besides the natural beauty and heaviness of 4742m height above sea level and the serenity of snaky metalled Karakoram Highway (KKH) going up and into Chinese territory.

The community conservation area in Dhee managed by KVO is also a unique eco-tourism attraction.

In Avgarch Valley, there are very attracting and also very interesting sites both in physical and cultural. In physical sites, the Juntosh glacier presents a very fanciful view especially during the moonlights of summer. In addition, Pyryar meadows and pasture are another resort whereon summer camps could be held and the beautiful scenery could be captured both in the form of man-made cameras and in the human memoirs. In cultural sites, the Avgarch Fort and the defensive post, Kungras are remarkable.

More details about the cultural and natural resources in the section on the valley.

6. Khyber Valley

6.1 Introduction

The trek from Khyber to Lupghar in the Chipursan Valley near Raminji and Yarzrich. Most attracting pastures are in Khyber; the most prominent include Mulungqir, Krale Goz and Vndan. In cultural sites, the ruins of Darwoza of fort are present. Furthermore, an old house that belongs to Zohir Shoh in 1922-3 when he was on his visit to and from China and Central Asia.

6.2 Physical Site

6.2.1 Treks

Khyber via to Batura to Raminj (15 days trek)
Khyber to Khudaabad via Sarnichin Glacier (3 to 4 days trek)
Khyber to Batura via Destgoz Glacier (3 to 4 days trek)
Khyber to Karelgoz and back (4 to 5 days)

6.2.2 Viewpoint

6.2.3 Karelgoz

Karelgoz is a unique place where tourism can attract for the viewpoint of different valleys, passes and peaks. This viewpoint is situated in the pasture of Khyber area, which could be a top attraction for eco-tourism.

6.2.4 Glaciers:

- ◆ Destgoz Glacier
- ◆ Chuck Hel
- ◆ Sarnichin Glacier

6.2.5 Pastures

- ◆ Karelgoz
- ◆ Schav zarav
- ◆ Shanoz
- ◆ Lakhch
- ◆ Schav conock
- ◆ Lop gar
- ◆ Vandan
- ◆ Hub karch
- ◆ Harchish

6.3 Cultural Sites:

6.3.1 An old house in Khyber

A 100 years old house in Khyber of Mr. Muhammad Hameed s/o Muhammad Kabir, the significance of this house is that once an Ismaili Dai Agha Abdul Samad Shah came and stayed in this house. He delivered a Ismaili Farman (religious message) to the Jamat in Khyber and declared a new name for Khyber valley that is Shahi Khyber. Furthermore, he felt excited with the warmest welcome from the local and he said specially *Khyber Kheli Khub Aast* its mean Khyber is very interesting place. He came in the area in 1922-23 to visit the sub continent, China and Central Asia.

6.3.2 Cave

On the top view of Karelgoz there is a huge concave which is still unidentified and unexplored. It can attract the tourist with the attraction of cultural and sustainable tourism for this particular spot. The main informants said it is hundreds of meters long but with the less of oxygen the people can't go further instead of few meters long.

6.3.3 Spring

Only one spring found in Khyber valley which comes from Loggar nala. The irrigation of Khyber and Hydropower station are fully depending on this spring water.

6.3.4 Darvoza (doors)

In the former time the significance of these doors were to protect the area from the far coming enemies. When the time the Kirgiz people were coming down to violate the rolls and regulation of the local settlements, for those purpose the Darvoza were using on the top high cleft to control and reduce these violation. Every evening the door was suppose to close by the local guard and every morning it was going to open for the Caravans and incoming and outgoing communities of the area. Now there are the only elegant story and sign of the doors left, but for the interest of tourist it has the interesting spot to visit.

7. Shimshal Valley

7.1 Introduction

Shimshal valley, like the valleys of Khunzhrav, Misgar and Chipursan, borders internationally with the peoples' Republic of China and is one of the most important and extensive territories within the Gojal Tehsil of Hunza. So far, the valley is not accessible by the road infrastructure and it is still in progress. Greater portion of the road has been completed and some works along with the few bridges are due to be accomplished. The people of Shimshal are the Wakhi speakers and like other areas of Gojal, they belong to the Ismaili interpretation of the Shia Islam. The social structure of the people include three clans that consists on Bakhti *ktor*, *Ghozi ktor* and Boqi *ktor*, and these three clans have the same apical ancestor who was called as Mamusing, emigrated from Chaprot of Nagar. The valley has two middle schools for girls and boys, which are on behalf of the Govt and AKESIP. Govt of Pakistan has facilitated the people with a dispensary, which subsist the people in the first aid. Besides, Shimshal has the village and women organizations, which was introduced by the AKRSP. For the last couple of years, the Shimshal people have formed an NGO, which is called as "**Shimshal Nature Trust**" (SNT). Furthermore, the people of the valley has established a: "Mountaineering Training School", which orientates the interested youth of the area in the field of climbing.

It is very fascinating to travel to Shimshal and see that the vaster the area of Shimshal, the more attractive the landscape of this valley. These extensive landscapes include especially the physical sites that are the prominent peaks, mountains, glaciers, plateaus, meadows and pastures, and lake. A brief identification of these landscapes is being described hereunder so that to further expose, improve and promote the ecotourism in Shimshal valley.

7.2 Physical Sites

7.2.1 Treks

- Shimshal to Ghuzhrav via Maydhur Pass to Sherilik (explored and identified by Dr. John Mock)
- Shimshal to Shimshal Pass
- Shimshal to Chafchingol Pass to the KKH
- Round trek from Dut to Lupghar, and back to Shimshal
- Round trek from Dut to Mumhel Base Camp and Shimshal
- From Shimshal village to the Shimshal Pass via Spodhin to Ghuzhrav and then to KKH
- Shimshal to Khurdhopin and back
- Shimshal to Ghuzhrav via Ghadimchts to Sherilik and back
- Shimshal to Mulungudi and back
- Shimshal to Askoli (Baltistan) via Hispar (Nagar) (Identified by Dr. Schornber accompanied by Momin of Gulmit; Ghulam and Daulatu of Central Hunza, and fifteen persons from Shimshal)
- Shimshal Ghurvedhur to Ghuzhrav to Wiyinisar to Sherilik
- Shimshal to Yazghel Pass to Hispar (Nagar).
- Shimshal to Brandu Glacier (Skardu) to Biafo Glacier (Nagar) Shimshal to Khurdhopin Pass to Biafo Hispar (unidentified)

7.2.3 Expeditions to the Peaks

- Lupgharsar Peak (30 days)
- Tlewarsar Peak (35 days)
- Qorun 1 (30 days)

- Dastgisar (45 days)
- Kunjudh Sar (30 days)
- Kunyankishx 1 (35 days)
- Kunyankishx (30 days)
- Pomiri Kishx (30 days)
- Yukshin Garden (3 5 days)
- Mumhel Sar (30 days)
- Mulungudi (30 days)
- Yirgutak (25 days)

7.2.4 Glaciers

- Mumhel Glacier
- Mulungudi Glacier
- Khurdhopin Glacier
- Yazghel Glacier
- Yukshgrdansar Glacier
- Verzzhrav Glacier
- Lupghar
- Odyer Glacier
- Khizrabod Glacier
- Prokshira Glacier

7.2.5 Lakes

- Shimshal Pass Lake
- Khurdhopin Lake
- Pomir Lake
- Ghuzhrav Lake

7.2.6 Pastures and Meadows

- Lupghar
- Mumhel
- Yazghel
- Khurdhopin
- Shuew wuert
- Ganje Dhur
- Shuew Zhrav
- Gozkhun
- Shuew Khun
- Sherilik
- Fuerzin

7.2.7 Wiyins/Passes

- Chafchingol Pass
- Qorun Pass
- Maydhur Pass
- Ghadimchts Pass
- Khurdhopin Pass
- Verse Sara Pass
- Dest Pass
- Braldo Pass
- Sherilik Pass

7.2.8 Plateaux

- Pamir Plateau
- Sherilik Plateau: meets with Raskam

7.3 Cultural Heritages

7.3.1 Suspension Bridges

There are more suspension bridges found in the Shimshal valley because this valley is not yet fully accessed by vehicles. Thus, the suspension bridges are met en route to Shimshal, but more particularly two suspension bridges are very prominent that are Khurdhopin Suspension Bridge and Chafchingol Suspension Bridge, who have, been made from the earliest time. These bridges are used to go for the concerned areas; especially the latter connects the famous Chafchingol Pass.

7.4 Special Festivals

7.4.1 Hoshligram

This is a unique feast that is found among the Shimshali people. The major objective of this festival is to welcome the spring. In this festival, the people make soups preferentially apricot, *qurut* (a sort of cheese), milk, and others; and taken to the *jamatkhanas*, community and prayers halls, and drank by both sexes.

7.4.2 Spundr Vishing

This is another festival, which is, like *Hoshligram*, not found among the Wakhis of Gojal. This festival is celebrated in response to the end of ploughing. The objective is thanks giving to God for the ploughing. The people cook the special diet of their choice and take them to *the jamatkhanas* in order to eat the foods together. On the one hand, this festival provides multiple meanings: (1) Thanks giving; (2) to get together and unifying the community; and (3) to discuss the communal affairs and development.

7.4.3 Foods

Normally, the food of all Wakhis of Gojal is the same; but one food, which distinguishes the Shimshali Wakhis from others, is *Chilpindok*. This is made up of *chapattis* that are plastered with *qurut*, a sort of cheese but in liquid form, and finally a huge quantity of hot/melted butter is put on top of the *chapattis*. For the eaters, especially visitors, it becomes a sort of ventral challenge to eat; and on the other, if someone gets the taste of *Chilpindok*, here it becomes very addicted of this food.

7.4.4 Folk Songs

Osmonen xamde raw zhxue k-uebuetsore by Mulo She in 1926. The Shimshali people are very traditional in terms of their cultural heritages, especially oral. These people are known for their hospitality and folk songs. Few of the folk songs have especially recognised by Dr. John Mock of USA, who had come to Gojal and did his Ph. D on the Discursive Construction of Reality among the Wakhis. These folk songs include "*Osmon en khamde raw zhue kuebuetsore* and "*Da bandev diyetk chirir* " S. *mevdogar*: Silk Route Caravan. The last is very famous at international level festivals and this troupe has performed twice the Silk Route Caravan in Islamabad as well.

8. Lower Gojal

8.1 Introduction

Gojal is an extensive territory that possesses different valleys within it, which are the Chipursan valley, Misgar Valley, Avgarch valley and Shimshal valley. Each of these valleys has its own importance in geographical as well as cultural perspectives; and the latter possess a strong historical bond and knowledge. Besides these valleys, a considerable land, which has no historical term of reference or address so that to unify them under such term. But, if we try to unify this region with a geographical fact that terms the region as Lower Gojal, which includes the areas of the villages of Passu, Hussaini, Borit, Ghulkin, Gulmit and Shishkat in the southern part of Gojal.

8.2 Passu

8.3 Physical Sites

8.3.1 Peaks and Expeditions

- Batura Peak
- Batura Wall
- Passu Peak
- Passu Wall
- Kueksar Peak
- Wurtum Peak
- Suney Peak

8.3.2 Glaciers

- Batura Glacier
- Wurtum Glacier
- Yukhsh Goz Glacier
- Kumpir Diyor Glacier
- Sabzig Glacier

8.3.3 Pastures & Meadows

- Avdegar
- Zakhazkh
- Ghetghet
- Mumhel
- Kuekhel
- Yash Pert
- Yuskh Pert
- Wurtum Hel
- Gutsesm
- Gulbutuer

8.3.4 Passes

- Wurtum Pass: connects Batura & Khyber
- Yukhsh Goz Pass: connects Batura with Khyber
- Passu-Raminj Pass
- Passu-Yishkuek Pass

8.3.5 Lakes

- Batura Lake (along the Batura Bridge on the KKH)
- Passu Lake (down to the Passu Glacier)

8.3.6 Treks

- Batura Trek (11 days)

- Passu-Raminj Trek via Batura valley over Passu-Raminj Pass [5,400 m] (15-days): this has newly been identified.
- Passu-Wurtum Pass Trek 11-days)
- Passu-Yish Kuek Pass (Chipursan) over Batura valley (21 days)
- Passu-Yuksh Goz Pass (7-days)

8.4 Cultural Sites

8.4.1 Rock Carving in Passu

A rock carving has been identified in Passu village along side the Passu Glacier stream down the KKH, which seems a nice progress in terms of some historical findings. This needs to be explored academically and exposed to the outer-world in order to know or speculate the history of the concerned peoples living or passing through this area. This rock carving is being associated in the period of 7th Century AD.

8.4.2 Old House of Odob Khon

In the historical perspective, this house of Odob Khon possessed a very significant role in the context of Passu, in particular; and in the entire Gojal, Hunza, and the British-Indian Empire, in general. Odob Khon, who was the *arbob* of Passu during the reign of Mir Ghazan Khan s/o Nazeem Khan revolted against the Murdom, the Hunza State in 19 September 1940, and took all the subjects from Hussaini, Passu and onward in order to enter either in China or the Communist Russia through Misgar Valley. This house, which presently in use as well, was a platform for the meetings of those leaders of Passu who made the plot against Mir as well as for the development of Passu.

8.4.3 Mir's Residential Quarter

In Passu, there is a residential quarter of the Mir, ruler of Hunza, who used to stay herein whenever he was on his visit to Passu and especially the Bobo Ghundi Oston in order to pay his respect to the shrine. This residential quarter is presently in some use.

8.4.4 Passu Development Organisation (PDO)

Passu Development Organisation has been formed in order to have an umbrella organisation for other institutions and committees made for the local developments: ranging from the socio-economic fields to the tourism and cultural areas. PDO is serving the community very well and have integrated all levels of people.

9. Hussaini

9.1 Physical Sites

9.1.1 Treks

- Round trek from Hussaini to Batura via Ptundas Pass to Ghulkin (6-days)
- One-way trek from Hussaini to Batura—Mulung Hel (5-days)
- Hussaini to Zarabod and up to Zarabod Sar View Point (2-days)
- One-day hike from Hussaini to Passu via the suspension bridge
- One-day hike from Hussaini to Borit, viewing the lake and then up to Mughdaar Hel and down to the Passu Glacier and reaching the KKH in Passu
- One-day hike from Hussaini to Borit and crossing the Hussain-Ghulkin Glacier to Ghulkin and down to the KKH

9.1.2 Pastures and Meadows

- Borit Ruy
- Zarabod Sar
- Gardan
- Mulung Hel
- Mum Hel
- Ting Ben
- Gul Butuer

9.1.3 Glaciers

- Hussaini-Ghulkin Glacier
- Zarabod Glacier (recently developed)

9.1.4 Spring

- **Hot spring of Hussaini** (this is a unique spring in the entire Hunza as it is hot and the local community do go to this spring for swimming purpose on rotary bases: women in the morning; while the men in the evening.

9.1. Cultural Sites

9.2.1 The Shrine of Shoh Tolib

Like the shrine of Shohi Shams and Shohi Chirogh, this whereabouts of this saint is also not known. But it is one of the prominent shrines in Gojal; and the entire communities of Hunza do pay their respect to this shrine whenever one passes through this village. They contribute in terms of monetary as well as in kind to express their feelings and intention in order to fulfil their intentions.

9.2.2 Suspension Bridges

Like the suspension bridges of Gulmit and Passu, this village has also a suspension bridge, which connects their new settlement of Zarabod with Hussaini. This becomes an attraction for the tourists especially when they pass from the KKH and view this bridge down the road over the Hunza River. Along with this bridge, there is also another bridge that increases the significance of this bridge.

10. Ghulkin

10.1 Physical Sites

10.1.1 Peaks & Expeditions

- Passu I (40-days)
- Passu II (45-days)
- Shisper Peak (35-days)

10.1.2 Glacier

- Ghulkin-Hussaini Glacier
- Passu Glacier

10.1.3 Treks

- Ghulkin via Borit to Ptundas and back (6-days)
- Round trek from Ghulkin to Talengshi via Borit to Ptundas to Batura and the KKH (8-days)
- Round trek from Ghulkin via Zhraiv to Ghutulchi to Kamaris down to Gulmit (8-days)
- One way trek from Ghulkin to Dash Hel and back (4-days)

10.1.4 Lakes

- Borit Lake (the only prominent lake in the entire Hunza which can provide boating facility during the tourist season. Further more it is also a resort for the Siberian ducks as they visit this spot while migrating seasonally from Siberia)
- Ptundas Lake (seasonal lake for three months in summer)
- Past Jingal Lake

10.1.5 Pastures & Meadows

- Zhraiv Hel
- Talengshi Hel
- Dash Hel
- Ghulingal
- Passu Ghar
- Luzhdur Hel
- Ptundas Hel
- Yorch
- Warun Goz
- Juntar
- Bokhtar of Ghulkin
- Yuksh Band Hel
- Darwoza (the only arduous trail whereby the goats and sheep pass through)
- Chibjew Goz

10.2 Cultural Sites

10.2.1 Old Mosque of Qurbon Shoh

This is an Ismaili mosque that was constructed by Qurbon Shoh of the Nakhchieri Ktor in Ghulkin. Before the introduction of the Jamatkhanas (1922-23), the Ismailis of Hunza and Gojal used to have their own mosque for the purpose of meditation. Now, this mosque, which was restored by the Aga Khan Cultural

Service, Pakistan, is a heritage of Ghulkin community. The tourists can visit this site, and enjoy and learn the architecture.

10.2.2 Old Mosque of Khalifa Bieg Nazar

This another old mosque in Ghulkin, which has been built on the top of the house of *khalifa* Bieg Nazar of the Nakhchieri clan, and the wood carvings on the door and pillars are of great significance.

10.2.3 Old House Museum

This is one of the old houses in Ghulkin, which belongs to the Kirghiz clan, and it is estimated to be more or less three hundred years old. The house has sophisticatedly been constructed and reflects the living style of the people of the past. For the last few years, this old house has been transformed into a museum and different kinds of antiques of the Ghulkin community have been gathered here that provides a good opportunity for the visitors to view and perceive the previous living conditions.

10.2.4 Handicrafts Centre

For the last couple of years, the Karakoram Area Development Organisation (KADO), a community-drive local NGO in Hunza, took the initiative to support economically weak families, and this connection, handicraft was introduced as one of the additional sources of income for the local women. This Handicraft Centre was, therefore, introduced in Ghulkin as well and many women started working in this centre and are working interestingly for both their qualitative handicraft productions and ultimately support to their economic gain.

Any tourist or visitor who wishes to buy any sort of indigenous handicraft can visit this centre and purchase the commodities of their choice.

10.2.5 Dari Centre

Like the handicrafts' centre, this is another local factory where women prepare the *Daris* and are available for the sale. The visitors can take full benefit out of this centre, if are to visit Ghulkin.

10.2.6 Ghulkin Educational, Social Welfare and Nature Conservation Association

This organisation was formed in 1992 for the purpose of educational development. Along with education, this association serves in the fields of social welfare and conservation of nature within its areas of nature's conservation, and special focus on the conservation of the wild lives.

Under this umbrella is an educational project with the name of Nasir Khusraw Model Academy that provides the primary level education in English Medium, which is running very successfully.

10.2.7 Ghulkin Tourism Development Committee

This organisation has been established recently for the purpose of tourism facilitation. This committee is responsible for the identification and exposure of potential tourist destinations and resorts within the territories of Ghulkin village.

11. Gulmit

11.1 Introduction

Gulmit is three hours drive to north from Gilgit, and has been the winter capital of the former Hunza State; and these days, it is the headquarters of Gojal tehsil, magistracy, within Hunza sub-division. This is the biggest settlement in terms of its population; and has got potential in physical, and especially cultural sites. The physical sites include Shutubar Peak and glacier, Gulmit glacier, Gulmit Tower, Zhraiv Pasture and springs, Sarnichin View Point, Darwoza above Zhraiv etc.; while the cultural sites are comprised on Ondra Fort, Shrine of Shohi Chirogh, Shrine of Khoja Mardi Wali, Khazina of Chamangul, Khalifa Aliyar's Old House, Arbob Diwon's Old House, Historical Flood Accessing Old House, Mr's Palace, Maktab of Bai Nazar, Mosque of grandma Daulat Sultan, Suspension Bridge etc.

The inhabitants of Gulmit all Wakhi and, like other settlements in Gojal, belong to the Ismaili School of thought in Islam.

11.2 Physical Sites

11.2.1 Treks

- Round trek from Gulmit via Zhraiv to Ghutulchi to Ghulkin and back
- Shutubar Trek: Gulmit via Zhraiv to Bulikish crossing the fascinating rock gate (Darwoza) to Shutubar and back from the same route.
- Shutubar-Chamangul Round Trek (six days): from Gulmit via Zhraiv to Bulikish entering Darwoza and to crossing Shutubar Glacier and via Sarnichin to Chamangul
- Gulmit to Bulbul Keshk and then to Bildihel and down to Sarat then back to Gulmit via the KKH (3 days)
- Gulmit to Burundubar and back (5-days)
- Gulmit to Ghawush and back (4-days)
- Gulmit to Baltbar and back (5-days)

11.2.2 Peaks

- Shutubar Peak
- Gulmit Tower
- Zhraiv Peak (also known as Shisper Peak)

11.2.3 Glaciers

- Zhraiv (Gulmit) Glacier
- Shutubar Glacier

11.2.4 Pastures and Meadows

- Zhraiv
- Shutubar
- Zhuy Hel
- Sarnichin
- Bildi Hel
- Rajab Hel
- Mulung Hel
- Yuksh Band Hel
- Ghawush Hel
- Burudubar Hel
- Baltbar Hel

11.2.5 Lake and Springs

- Zhuy Hel

- Zrave Kuek

11.2.6 Pastures

- Ghawush
- Brundubar
- Baltbar

11.2.7 Glaciers

- Brundubar Glacier
- Baltbar Glacier

11.3 Cultural Sites in Gulmit

11.3.1 Ondra Fort

Ondra fort has been built on the top of a mound in Gulmit. This defensive fort has been built on order to fight with their neighbouring princely states that used to be in constant rivalry with one another. The reason of rivalries were varying that were from the political point of view to the economic realm; and from the ethnic stand point to the religious domains. It is being narrated by some of the informants that Ondra Fort is not constructed during the reign of Mir Silum Khan III. If it holds true then this fort is not too old, which corresponds to more or less two hundred years. The people of Gulmit previously used to stay in this fort as the ruins are still witnessing the residences of the people. In relation to the tourism potential, this fort can very beautiful viewpoint to the landscape from Passu to Shishkat. The restoration of this fort, in would indeed be a paradise point for tourists, and on the other, the local people can benefit from the socio-economic perspectives.

11.3.2 Shrine of Shohi Chirogh

In Odver, a sub-village of Gulmit, there lies the shrine of **Shohi Chirogh**, literally as “the Kingly Light” or “the light of the king”. It is being describe that across this shrine on the rock, there used to be lightening like a lamp. About the whereabouts of Shohi Chirogh, no one is aware, but the people are sure that he was an exalted saint, and that is why they started adoring Chirogh. And that is why the indigenous people made the point of reference of light on across the shrine and on top of the rock.

The graveyard has very interesting stories, as the native people have observed in their dreams and brought faith in it. The grave of was brought in shape of shrine later. It is said that no one could dare to repair the grave because of its sensitivities; but, one, Sikandari father of the present Ulfat Shah of Odver along with Sumbul, the carpenter, took some people and moved the stone of the grave on order to bring it into its original shape. In the meanwhile, some kind of gas has come up, and the hand of the concerned individual went down and touched a very sot thing. They repaired the grave and constructed it in the form of shrine. Thus, this shrine has been a source of reverence and healing for many individuals whoever has creed upon this saint and his spiritual power.

11.3.3 Shrine of Khoja Mardi Wali

In the north of Gulmit and on the foot of Ondra fort, there lies a shrine whose name is said to be Khoja Mardi Wali His whereabouts is also unknown; but some people have faith in it. The rulers of Hunza, especially when used to come to Gulmit, there made sacrifice in the name of this shrine. Some informants narrate that Mr. Shahbaz Khan father of Bahadur Khan has seen a dream and he has identified this spot as the shrine of the aforementioned saint.

11.3.4 Old House of Khalifa Aliyar

In the history of Ismailism in Hunza, in general, and Gojal in particular, the old house of Khalifa Aliyar plays its vital role. As it is being described through different sources that Mir Silum Khan III, the foster brother of Bai Nazar of the Budul clan, was the first who accepted the Ismaili faith. His death in 1824 has been in this house, being the house of his foster family. and the *Chiroghi Roshan*, funeral rites was performed here. And that is why it is a cultural heritage of the Ismaili of Hunza. This house still

exists in its position but restoration requires. And this house, of course, would be an attraction for the tourists provided that it is well exposed to them like other cultural heritages.

11.3.5 Ismaili Mosque and Makatab of Bai Nazar

Bai Nazar of the Budul family was a headman of Gulmit and the foster brother of Mir Silum Khan 111 (death 1824)-the first Ismaili ruler of Hunza. Being an influential and political leader, he was also a devout Ismaili, he had constructed a mosque wherein he used to offer his prayers. Furthermore, this mosque, like others in Muslim world, had been serving as *maktab*, teaching place. This mosque is very attracting and full of Islamic architecture depicting the Ismaili thoughts. It must be noted that previously the Shia Ismaili community had their own mosques known as Ismaili mosques; and the introduction of the Jamatakhana in Hunza is latest, which was in 1922, when Agha Samad, one of the representatives of His Highness Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, Aga Khan III, visit Hunza and introduced Jamatkhana here.

This Ismaili mosque was restored by the Aga Khan Cultural Service, Pakistan and these days it serves as the office of the Ismaili Boy Scouts. This would be very interesting, if someone is in Gulmit, to pay a visit to this Ismaili Mosque and *Maktab* of Bai Nazar.

11.3.6 Old House of Arbob Diwon Shoh

This is another house of significance in Gulmit in the political perspective. Before the construction of the Mir's Palace in Gulmit, the political activities were run in this house. This old house still exists and has been transformed in Cart Weaving Centre.

11.3.7 Historically Flood-Escaped Old House

This is another old house, which needs to be restored. The significance of this house in relation with the River blockage of the Hunza River, which has blocked down to Shishkat and in a period of many weeks, the water stopped and Gulmit was under this water. This blockage is said to be in 1856. When the water started bringing half of Gulmit under its domain, this old house in Dalgiram escaped, although some water started entering in the house through the threshold. This house also exists and is an asset of the community, which remembers the people the natural calamity of the 19P century.

11.3.8. Graveyard of Mir Silum Khan III

As has been mentioned earlier that Mir Silum Khan 111 has died in 1825 in Gulmit and he was buried in this village. The graveyard of this first Ismaili Mir is still present in its actual form. On the other, it is very remarkable to describe here that when the Hunza River had blocked due to the rock sliding and half of Gulmit had sank, so in those days the grave of this Mir also was in risk of sinking. The people of Gulmit, especially the foster family of this Mir, dug out the grave and carried the skeleton of Mir Silum Khan up on the Ondera Fort and buried temporarily there. When the Hunza River opened his skeleton was brought back to the same place and reburied here. In the graveyard of Mir Silum Khan, the grave of Mir Ghazan Khan father of Mir Jamal Khan also lies; who was a devout Ismaili ruler of Hunza.

11.3.9 Suspension Bridge

Down the KKH in Gulmit, there is a suspension bridge over the Hunza River, which connects Shishkat and Goharabad. This provides a nice opportunity for the visitors to venture over the river on this suspension bridge and enjoy the nature.

11.3.10 Khazina of Chamangul

This is an archaeological site that has not yet been identified but has a great potential for tourist resort. Khazina in Wakhi means "treasure" and it is being said that treasure has been buried in this spot, which is situated in Chamangul, another settlement of Gulmit. This treasure belongs to a family of Boriktor.

11.3.11 Mir's Palace

The Mir's Palace has remained the Centre of Gulmit village and herein the rulers of Hunza used to reside during winter. These days, this palace has been maintained but not in use. For the visitors, this site would also be of an interest and they can learn more things provided that the concerned owner makes it more effective in attracting tourists here.

11.3.12 Old Colony of Gulmit

After Ondra Fort, the people of Gulmit changed their residence and rebuilt the new colony, which is called as *qulha*, means fort. The purpose of this colony in the historical context was especially in terms of security, and that is why they used to live in the unified form. This *Qulha* was gradually left especially in the 1970s, when the former Hunza State was abolished. Now a day, very few inhabitants do live in this colony, and other have not only left their houses but rather also ruined them, but the boundaries and remainders are there. This *qulha*, therefore, would be of great interest, if this were restored as this has got many streets.

11.3.13 Hunza Cultural Museum

This museum has been made in a Wakhi traditional house in Gulmit, as is owned by the owner of the Marco Polo Inn. This is of great interest for tourists as it has been facilitated by the cultural heritage tools.

11.4 Wakhi/Tajik Cultural Association Gojal Hunza

The Wakhi people are linguistically and ethnically the old eastern Iranian people in the Indo-Iranian family of languages and ethnicities. The Wakhi, who are also know as the Mountain Tajiks, have been living in the valleys of Wakhan and other surrounding mountainous parts of Central Asia for millennia. These people have settled in Little Gojal, as Wakhan was known as big Gojal, for centuries. These people had their own kingdom in Wakhan; but in Hunza, as have been narrated, they came under the rule during the period of Mir Silum Khan HI. and thus, the Wakhis who had settled in Gojal became the subjects of Hunza rulers-Mirs.

In Hunza, the Wakhi people in line with ethnicity could not get their due significance mainly because of discouragement of their language by another dominant ethnic group. And the time came that the Wakhis reserved themselves from their ethnic identity. It was so even after the abolition of the former princely state of Hunza in 1974. Until now, many educated youth and intellectuals felt their identity crisis and took initiatives in order to encourage their people for their language and culture. After some initiatives, in the second half of 1980s, strong and cordial attempts were made to form a forum for the

preservation, documentation, exposure and development of Wakhi culture and language. Thus, in 1991, a forum with the name of **Wakhi/Tajik Cultural Association Gojal Hunza** was brought into existence, which is registered with the government of Pakistan, and its head office is Gulmit in the historical old house of Khalifa Aliyar. This association has a central body that is headed by the president. Five main organs units, under the central body, are on functions that are led by the unit conveners who are executive members in the central body. These organs of the central body are known as Chipursan Unit, Avgarch Unit, Shimshal Unit, Gulmit Unit (lower Gojal unit), and Gilgit Unit. Since its inception, the Wakhi/Tajik Cultural Association has been arranging different local, national and international programmes in terms of cultural shows, cultural festivals, musical shows, poetry contests (*Mushairas*), and Wakhi language learning programmes. Thus, the morale of these people has been made up and the people have got full confidence and positive pride over their language and culture. One of the major achievements of this cultural association could be seen in shape of relay of Wakhi programme from the Radio Pakistan Gilgit with the name of *Sado-i-Bom-i- Dunyo* (the voice of Roof of the World) whereby the concerned artistes try to develop the Wakhi language and culture from different angles.

It would, therefore, be interesting to visit the head office of the Wakhi/Tajik Cultural Association in Gulmit as it could provide ample information about the Wakhis living in Gojal and other regions in Pakistan along with other adjacent countries: China, Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Furthermore, if any sort of cultural programme were desired to be carried out, this association would love to coordinate and collaborate because such cultural activities for development are in the mandate of the association. Visiting the head office would provide at least two fold opportunities: to see the activities and development on Wakhi culture; and secondly, to see the historical house in terms of its tradition and architecture.

11.5 Gulmit Organisation for Local Development (GOLD)

Like other villages of Gojal, Gulmit has also its umbrella organisation for other community-driven or initiative local organisations. At present more than thirteen organisations are under GOLD functioning autonomously in accordance with their specific mandates. Presently, tourism development & natural resources management committees have been formed so that to have a sustainable development taking into accounts the environmental issues.

12. GOJAL Tourism Development Committee

Gojal being an administrative area in Hunza valley possesses, as has already been mentioned, possesses a vast territory of land that is full of physical sites and fascinating landscape. Furthermore, being the only gateway to China, and an alternative routes to the modern Central Asian Republics (CARs), has is another crucial significance when the tourists, both domestic and international, take their way from this valley. Keeping into accounts these facts, tourists influxes, economic benefits and their impacts, all tourism-related groups thought to have a Tourism Gojal Tourism Development Committee was formed recently in 2002 in order to work specifically for the development of Tourism in Gojal so that cope with different challenges for the development and have a sustainable development. The head-office of this committee is in Silk Route Lodge, Gulmit that is headed by a President along with other office bearers and advisors.

13. Assessment of existing infrastructure and Facilities

The Karakoram Highway (KKH) serves as the lifeline of economic development in the Northern Areas. It is an important means to connect Gojal Conservancy with China and Hunza/Gilgit and down country. KKH is the single most important infrastructure that serves as a vehicle to bring tourists and other visitors to the area and enables local people to have access to development resources and mobility outside the region.

The hydel power grid at Khyber illuminates most of the Gojal Conservancy. The second phase built recently lighted up Chipurson for the first time. However Shimshal and Misger have their own micro hydel projects.

The telecommunication services are monopolized by the Special Communication Organization (SCO) in the Northern Areas. Like other parts of the NAs, Gojal also suffers from the low teledensity, noisy lines and worst services provided by SCO. Gojal is the least connected Tehsil in the Northern Areas. There are two switch rooms, one in Gulmit and the other in Sost. Both have a cumulative capacity of around 1500 lines. However due to i) high fixation charges ii) high line rents iii) high charges per unit and iv) customer unfriendly services access to telecom services are denied to common people. Moreover, there is no rural telephony where the rural people could use inexpensive technologies to get access to Internet and could have direct dialing to mobile and other communication systems. This also constrains local, national and international tourism, as due to lack of access to information and for safety and security reasons, many of the tourists are denied the opportunity to visit unexplored sites.

There are a number of hotels and restaurants in the Gojal conservancy serving the different classes of tourists. However these facilities are mainly concentrated in Sost, Khyber and lower Gojal region. Chipurson, Misger and Shimshal still require investments in these sectors.

In order to facilitate the tourists the safety and security support and regulation is very important, especially when we talk of promoting eco-tourism. It requires highly trained guides, porters and cooks. Besides the role of the local magistrate and the police becomes important in providing full security support and information about any prohibited and dangerous zones. There is always a lapse on this score as our forces are mostly less informed and non-educated.

The health facilities in the area are not adequate. The government has established a Civil dispensary in the Tehsil headquarter at Gulmit, which is a ten bed hospital with one doctor (who most of the time remains absent from the area). In Sost there is a health checkpoint for passengers travelling through the Khunerab border to China and vice versa, and there is one doctor. In this way for a population of around 20,000 and tourists, visitors, traders, employees and labours from other regions numbering around 10,000 there is only 1.5 doctors! The Aga Khan Health Service runs primary health care programmes in the villages. There are three maternal and child health centres one each in Reshit, Sost and Gulmit. There are two LHVs in each unit. No registered Nurse or doctor available.

Another key problem is with the development of micro infrastructure around the eco-and cultural tourism sites. Most of these sites are not developed; there is no proper access to these sites; no civic support system like water, sanitation, camping sites and trek lanes are available. Nor have these sites properly being promoted. Most of the sites are not on the popular guidebooks. Tourist maps and information leaflets for most of these sites are not developed.

The local cultural and conservation initiatives are the most important vehicle to support and promote eco-and cultural tourism in the area. However these institutions are weak and lack proper training and human and institutional capacities to handle all the issues. It is important to invest in the capacity building of these institutions so that they steward their natural and cultural resources in a sustainable way.

14. Recommendations

1. How to link Gojal with Lower Hunza and other tourist areas in Pakistan for attracting tourists to Gojal?
 - Through advertisement at local media that includes the regional newspapers, local radio stations, inter and intra regional programmes in shape of festivals, workshops, excursions, friendly visits etc.
2. How to promote Eco-tourism in Gojal abroad?

For the purpose of promotion of Eco-tourism in Gojal, the following steps could be taken:

 - Special awareness and training workshops through community-based organisations for local people in order to sensitise and inform them about the ethics of tourism.
 - Build special culturally and environmentally friendly Huts and local Kerchs (Shepherd huts) in popular eco-tourism sites and provide all necessary facilities.
 - Promote the conservancy through print and electronic media: documentary films on physical and cultural sites and their significance, radio commentary at national level, taking the experts on eco-tourism on TV and radio; brochures, newspapers, festivals, workshops and conferences, seminars etc.
 - Develop an integrated web page of Gojal Conservancy and promote it through popular tourism and conservation portals.
 - Provide training to local youth in cooking local, national, Chinese and continental foods.
 - Hotel management and Tour operations management training should be provided to local people and where possible local educated youth should be awarded special scholarships to attend short to long courses within the country and abroad.
 - Community-based Tourist Information Centres should be promoted so that tourists should be well equipped by appropriate information and trained tourists guides ought to be there to facilitate them.
 - In order to ensure safety and security of tourists in campsites, local conservation and development organisations should be promoted to arrange local tours and manage these camps. Proper infrastructure in terms of clean water supply and development of the camping sites should be assured.
 - There should be toilet facilities at the tourist spots both on the trekking and expedition routes as well as the campsites.
 - There should be the signboards while going to the trekking and expeditions.
 - While going for trekking, the guide must take fully care of the weather in order to ensure the security of the tourists
 - The native people and the domestic tourists should be taught to take fully care of the environment and must not degrade it.
 - The foreign tourist should be taught not to deteriorate the cultural sensitivities and cultural environment of the areas.

15. Conclusion

Gojal Conservancy presents a beautiful spot for eco-and cultural tourism. The landscape is fascinating, presents contrast and is rich in biodiversity potentials. The oral and physical cultural heritage of the conservancy presents a tradition of peaceful co-existence, hospitality, cheerfulness, honesty and hard work. Most of all the local cultural and conservation initiatives speak for the resilience and commitment of the local people to steward their natural and cultural assets and promote it through self-help. The openhearted support to international development efforts show that the local people have a global vision and are ready to develop partnerships with national and international agencies to embark on the road to sustainable development.

However in order to embark on this road, the communities require initial support from various quarters to develop necessary infrastructure, positively promote local eco-and cultural tourism potentials nationally and internationally and develop local human and institutional capacities to serve as sustainable partners along with international agencies and to promote a vibrant private sector and civil society in the region.

16. List of Main Informants

S.No	Name	Age	Profession/ Designation	Place/Village
1.	Mr. Asmat Ullah Mushfiq	65	Intellectual	Chipurson Valley/Sherisabz
2.	Mr. Sher Ullah	55	Business	Reshit
3.	Mr. Sarfraz Khan	50	Mountainer	Zudkhun
4.	Mr/ Ruzi Muhabat	65	Member Conservation Committee	Sherisabz
5.	Mr. basher Ahamed	67	Do	Kirmin
6.	Mr. Alam Jan Darya	35	Do/Trekking Guide	Zudkhun
7.	Mr. Nasir Khan	56	Do/High Altitude Porter	Kirmin
8	Mr. Mirza Muhammad	70	Hunter	Reshit
9.	Mr. Dawlat Khan	55	Farmer	Spenj
10	Mr Sarwar Khan	25	Hotel	Zudkhun
11	Mrs. Khanda Begum	35	Housewife	
12	Mrs Guli Lola	32	Housewife	
13	Mrs. Gulshad Begum	25	Housewife	
14.	Hatam Sodiq	23	Housewife	
15	Mr. Saeed Jan	35	Tour Operator	Misgar
16	Mr. Sher Ali	38	Hotelier	Do
17	Mr. Niyat Shah	45	President VO	Do
18	Mr Farman Ali	42	Business	Do
19	Mr Iqbal	43	Do	Do
20	Mr. Karimaullah Baig	45	Driver	Do
21	Mr. Jan Alam	40	Porter	Do
22	Mr. Sartaj	29	Head Cook	Do
23	Mr Qurban Mohd	42	GM KVO	Murkhun
24	Mr. Mohd Wasi	62	Member KVO	Do
25	Mr Amjad Ali	40	Do	Jamal Abad
26	Mr Mohabat Karim	37	Accountant KVO	Gircha

S.No	Name	Age	Profession/ Designation	Place/Village
27	Mr. Bahadur Khan DolBodur	65	President KVO	Sarteez
28	Mr. Gul Baig	32	Member KVO	Sarteez
29	Mr. Jalal uddin	68	Do	Sost
30	Mr Rahim	55	Do	Ghulapan
31	Mr Raziq	42	Do	Khuda Abad
32	Mr Muzaffar uddin	40	Do	Sarteez
33	Mr Iran Shah	48	Do	Do
34	Daulat Amin	61	Teacher	Shimshal
35	Mr. Ghulam Baig	43	Teacher/Member SNT	Shimshal
36	Mr Mohd Raza	37	Chairman SNT	Shimshal
37	Mr Majnun Khan	43	Member SNT	Shimshal
38	Meymon Khon	52	Teacher/Mukhi	Do
39	Hosil Shoh	35	Climber. Tour operator	Do
40	Mr. Khushan Baig	62	Farmer	Do
41	Mr Ejaz Ahmad	22	Porter	Do
42	Mr. Jahan Baig	26	Do	Do
43	Inayat Ali Khan	26	Cook	Do
44	Mr Ali	30	Head Cook	Do
45	Mr Mehrban Shah	52	Climber	Do
46	Mr. Ashraf Khan	57	Teacher/Mukhi	Passu
47	Mr Ghulam Mohd	64	Hotelier	Do
48	Mr Sanjar Baig	55	Tourist Guide/VP PDO	Do
49	Mr. Abdul Rasheed	46	President PDO/Tourist Guide	Do
50	Mr. Ahmad Karim	46	Teacher	Do
51	Mr Imtiaz Ali	40	Tour Manager	Do
52	Mr. Ghulam Murtaza	33	Tour Manager	Do

S.No	Name	Age	Profession/ Designation	Place/Village
53	Mr Aman Ullah	40	Trekking Guide	Do
54	Mr. Fida Ali	34	Tourist Guide	Do
55	Mr. Azeem Ahmed	26	Tour Operator	Do
56	Mr. Sultan Baig	25	Trekking Guide	Do
57	Mr. Amin Khan	23	Trekking Guide	Passu
58	Mr. Dost Mohammad	58	President Hussaini/Conservation Committee	Hussaini
59	Mr. Piyar Ali	48	Mukhi/Member HCC	Do
60	Mr Ogo Bek	72	Hunter	Do
61	Mr. Ali Rehmat	27	Secretary HCC/Hunter	Do
62	Mr. Mehmon Shoh	55	Member HCC/ Hunter	Do
63	Mr. Bozik Bai	78	Farmer	Do
64	Mr. Nawruz Bai	60	Hunter	Do
65	Mr. Ghulam Nasir	40	Teacher	Do
66	Mr. Jaleel	31	Accounts Officer KADO	Do
67	Mr. Muhammad Rafi	25	Principal NKMA Ghulkin	Do
68	Mr. Aman karim	30	Teacher	Do
69	Mr. Ayub Khan	24	Tour Guide	Do
70	Mrs. Zalekha Begum	43	Housewife	Do
71	Mrs. Nukri Jahon	36	Housewife	Do
72	Mrs. Koghaz Beigim	40	Do	Do
73	Mrs. Jodat Bakht	73	Do	Do
74	Mrs. Zumrad Beigim	37	Do	Do
75	Mrs. Izat Beigim	26	Do	Do
76	Mr. Noor Ghulam	62	Ex-President NCC Ghulkin	Ghulkin
77	Mr. Mohammad Aman	50	President GESW&NC	Do
78	Mr. Sifat ud din	38	Convenor NCC	Do
79	Mr. Attaur Rehman	36	Secretary GESW	Do
80	Mr. Ayub khan	72	Mountaineer/Tracking Guide	Do

S.No	Name	Age	Profession/ Designation	Place/Village
81	Mr. Mohammad Rehber	53	Head Teacher	Gulmit
82	Mr. Safar Baig	57	Climber	Do
83	Mr. Muzafar ud din shah	48	Tracking Guide	Do
84	Mr. Afzal Khan	44	Hotelier	Do
85	Mr. Zafar Iqbal	43	Tour Guide	Do
86	Mr. Feraz ud din	85	Khalifa	Do
87	Mr. Shayun Khan	73	Farmer/ Story Teller	Do
88	Mr. Ghulam ud din	60	Community Leader	Do
89	Mr. Zafarullah Baig	73	Do	Do
90	Mr. Mohammad Jafar	45	Do	Do
91	Mr. Ibrahim Khan Khalil	58	Do	Do
92	Mr. Bahadur Khan	61	Do	Do
93	Mr. Ali Baig	60	Do	Do
94	Mr. Mohammad Baig	74	Do	Do
95	Mr. Shahgul Aziz	65	Community Leader	Gulmit
96	Mr. Nasir Iqbal	43	Do	Do
97	Mr. Sultan	38	Do	Do
98	Mr. Niyat Ullah	50	Driver	Do
99	Mr. Farman Baig	41	Teacher/President SKIDO VCC	Khyber
100	Mr. Safdar Karim	32	Businessman	Do
101	Mr. Asif Ali	35	Tour Guide	Do
102	Ms. Khan Bibi	32	House wife	Do