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**Title** Chitral-Shandoor /Baroghal Pass:  
Karakoram Highway and Central  
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## Chitral-Shandoor / Baroghal Pass: Karakoram Highway and Central Asian Republics Human / Physical Connectivity

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### Abstract

*The Baroghil pass connects the Northwestern District, Upper Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Afghan Wakhan, a narrow strip, that separates Pakistan from Tajikistan and connects Afghanistan with China. Almost a thousand years ago the nomadic pastoral Turkic tribes from the Central Asian steppes began migrating westwards to Anatolia and towards Wakhan in the southeast. Around ten million pastoral nomadic people, mostly Turkic speaking Muslims including: Kirghiz, Kazakh, Turkmen, Uzbek, Karakalpak, Bashkir, Nogai, Karachai and others, inhabited large expanses of the arid and semi-arid steppes of Turan/Central Asia. Migration, in the modern times, culminated in terms of arrival of a small number of Turkic Central Asians to Anatolia marking the end of a significant historical process. Turkeyia, because of her historic, ethnolinguistic and cultural ties to the peoples of Central Asia, has traditionally offered refuge to the Turkic peoples displaced by the Russian and Chinese Communist revolutions. Haji Rahman Qul, the Kirghiz request for immigration to Turkeyia, received an especially favorable review when their plight was brought to the attention of General Kenan Evren, the president of Turkeyia, during his 1981 official visit to Pakistan. The Kirghiz community, along with nearly 3,000 other Afghan refugees of Turkic origin, was accepted for resettlement in Turkey. The arrangements for their transfer were made remarkably quickly and the Kirghiz were airlifted on August 3, 1982 to Adana. Political situation/borders at times created hurdles and at other occasions accelerated human migration/connectivity. The paper assesses co-relation between human/physical migration/ connectivity.*

**Keywords:** Chintar Glacier, Karamber Valley, Lashkar Gaza, Paroo, Pamir Knot, Yarkhun Valley, Kishmanja, Lasht, Kirghiz Khan, AK RSP, Baba Ghundi Festival, human migration/connectivity, infrastructure

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## Introduction

The Wakhan Corridor comprises mainly of arid valleys and craggy mountain passes. A narrow strip of territory carved out as a consequence of the 19th century Great Game, fought between the British and Czarist Russian Empires to gain influence in Central Asia, served as a buffer zone between these expanding powers. Its inhabitants including the Kyrgyz at one end and the larger Wakhi tribe at the other end of the corridor, call this land *Bam-e-Dunya*, the “roof of the world”, due to its location, the convergence of three highest mountain ranges — the Hindu Kush, the Karakoram and the Pamir, in Asia, together forming the famous Pamir Knot. The nearest town of Ishkashim is a three-day ride on the back of a horse or yak at a trail that cuts through sharp mountain passes and narrow valleys, where a single wrong step can be deadly.

Chitral Scouts<sup>1</sup> organize Baroghal Festival at the edge of the 14,460 feet high Baroghal Pass, Wakhan, one of the last far-off wild territories, nomadically independent, filling the maps as insignificant blank spaces. In 1883 the ruler of Badakshan<sup>2</sup>, a vassal of *Amir* of Kabul, forcibly occupied it.<sup>3</sup> The corridor was formalized, following Border Agreement, in 1893, between Afghanistan and the British Empire, concluded by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand (1850-1924)<sup>4</sup>. The Wakhan corridor served as a buffer that separated the mighty Czarist Russian and the British Empires. The eastern end of Wakhan borders China’s Xinjiang region<sup>5</sup> served as insurmountable hurdle to human/physical connectivity between Western, Eastern Turkistan, Afghanistan, India, now Pakistan.

In the 1950s the Afghan King Zahir Shah (1914-2007)<sup>6</sup> granted permission to a young American couple, Franc and Jean Shor to ‘cross the forbidden and forbidding’ Wakhan. The voyage began a lifelong association of Jean Shor with National Geographic Magazine to which she became a regular contributor. Their adventures narrated in a book, ‘*The Trail of Marco Polo*’, mark passage through Wakhan. Finding the Chinese border shut due to infighting between Nationalist and Communist forces, in 1951, they turned eastward on the advice of Rahman Qul, the Khirgiz Khan<sup>7</sup> of Afghanistan and crossed into Pakistan via the Baroghal Pass. Water gushing down from the mountain on the left got naturally divided into two streams; one flowed west into Afghanistan and other eastward to Kabul River.<sup>8</sup> Jean Shor was startled when found a fresh track of a motorbike tire, in Wakhan. The mystery of the motorbike dragged them to a white-bearded Afghan trader leading a pony, Rahman Qul, a Kirghiz/Wakhi Khan who migrated to the Pamir Valley and was airlifted to Turkey along with his tribesmen in 1979.<sup>9</sup>

Earlier, Rahman Qul, a Turkic<sup>10</sup> speaking Kirghiz Khan from Sirikol in Pamir alongside tribe was driven by the Soviet military, in 1946, into the Chinese Pamirs. Three years later, in the wake of the Chinese Communist Revolution, in 1949, these nomads retreated again to the Afghan Wakhan. The closure of the Chinese borders resulted into further isolation of the Kirghiz from Turkic/ Central Asian centres of commercial and cultural activities, finding themselves, the only group of Kirghiz nomads left outside Soviet and Chinese control.

In July 1978, following Afghan Saur Revolution, Haji Rahman Qul with more than 1,300 Kirghiz crossed over into Pakistan. These refugees brought their herds and most of their household belongings too. These events serve as formidable evidence, how political situation impeded/accelerated human migration/connectivity. Jean Shor in '*The Trail of Marco Polo*', provided a candid description of the swashbuckling character called Rahman Qul. Deep into Wakhan towards the Chinese border, deteriorating physical condition, forced Shor to take refuge with Kirghiz nomads despite reluctance of guards. They found Kirghiz friendly in amazing contrast to the backward Wakhis.<sup>11</sup>

Rahman could speak Urdu, Persian, Pashto, Russian and some Chinese in addition to his native Turki. Shor narrates, she was typing a letter to her parents; Rahman Qul entered the yurt and started reading the letter loudly. Rahman had learnt to read English years ago from a British archaeologist working in western Sinkiang.<sup>12</sup> Shor was impressed by his hospitality and was grateful for his help in crossing the Baroghil pass safely into Pakistan; for the name of Rahman Qul, was enough to ensure sanity in times of ordeal.<sup>13</sup> Rahman Qul wanted to migrate to Alaska because of similar climatic conditions but the permission was denied. Kenan Evren (1917-2015)<sup>14</sup>, the President of Turkey visited Pakistan in 1981 and came to know about the plight of Rahman Qul and his band of Kirghiz. He ordered their resettlement in Turkey on the basis of historic Turkic, ethnic and linguistic affinities. In August 1982 the Kirghiz Khan and his tribe were airlifted to a village near the shores of Lake Van in Eastern Anatolia. This also marked the end of a historic process that began almost a thousand years ago - the westward migration of nomadic pastoral tribes from the Central Asian<sup>15</sup> steppes to Anatolia.<sup>16</sup>

The Kirghiz odyssey is indeed a sad commentary on the plight of millions of nomadic pastoralists who, for the sake of their cultural integrity, managed to adapt for centuries to extremely unfriendly natural environments, only to be destroyed by the revolutions of this century which, ironically, promised or promise to liberate humanity. No formal record existed in Gilgit regarding the Kirghiz exodus from the

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Pamirs. Rahman Qul died in 1990 and is buried in Turkey, far away from the Baroghil pass. Rahman Qul, the Kirgiz Khan, was truly the last victim/ player of the classical Great Game.<sup>17</sup>

The residents of Baroghil valley, district Upper Chitral region insist that the construction of an all-weather road to Baroghil may be prelude to the increased physical/human connectivity leading to development of the remote valley in Wakhan. The valley lacking basic facilities remains inaccessible for months due to harsh weather. The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme built a 32km long road with four suspension bridges at the cost of Rs102.28 million<sup>18</sup> providing all-weather access to the valley enabling develop agriculture, tourism sectors and improved both physical and human connectivity. Earlier, prolonged winters cut off the 50km long valley with rest of the country. The residents suffered due to the unavailability of essential commodities, healthcare, educational facilities, and live in abject poverty due to limited sources of income. Bridges and protective structures had saved the road from glaciers and rockslides between Kishmanja, the first village of Baroghil, and Pechaus. The reconstruction of a jeepable track from Ishkarwaz village to Lashkarga under the Agha Khan Rural Support Program has connected the valley's central part to the outer world for most parts of the year. The road began bringing tourists to the valley's snow-clad peaks, lakes, green meadows, glaciated passes, Chiantar Glacier<sup>19</sup> and wildlife. Tourism increased commercial activity, providing additional sources of income to the locals from working with tourists as porters and guides, open guesthouses and sale of local products. Baroghil valley borders Wakhan Corridor<sup>20</sup> of Afghanistan, hence, an all-weather road ensures cross-border trade. The road initiative broadened the base of livelihood by promoting agricultural and cattle breeding. Cattle's farming is the sole source of sustenance, people raise yaks and goats for hard cash. The extreme weather conditions limit agricultural activities though, a local rural development programme indicates solar greenhouses a possible initiative in the area.<sup>21</sup>

### **Baba Ghundi Festival in Wakhan Region**

The 12th International Baba Ghundi Festival kicked off on 22-07-2022 in Chipursan valley, Upper Hunza, close to the Pak-Afghan border. The festival was held every year at the shrine of revered Sufi saint Baba Ghundi to pay homage to his services in spreading Islam in the region. The festival, held near Afghan Wakhan, brings together the Wakhi speaking people from the numerous countries. The three-day festival was inaugurated by Force Commander Gilgit Baltistan Major General Jawad Ahmed. The ceremony was attended by a large number of tourists, locals and

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officials. The festival was being organised by the Chipursan Local Support Organisation in collaboration with the Gilgit-Baltistan government. Sufi night, Buzkashi competitions, polo matches, traditional sword dance, Yak Safari and race, traditional food and folk Wakhi music were part of the festival. The residents of the Wakhan having ancestral, cultural ties with the people of Chipursan and Gojal valleys in Upper Hunza, travel on yaks, crossing glaciers and mountain peaks for days to attend the festival. The people of Chipursan and Wakhan had been carrying out barter trade for centuries. Afghan traders cross the Irshad Pass<sup>22</sup> and exchange yaks, sheep and goats with shoes, garments, utensils and other products procured from the Pakistan side. The festival provided an opportunity to the people of both Chipursan and Wakhan to interact and develop trade links with Tajikistan and Sinkiang. A large number of devotees also visited the shrine from various parts of Gilgit-Baltistan and enjoy Buzkashi and yak race competitions held there. The three-day festival concluded on 24-07-2022.<sup>23</sup> It seems physical infrastructure road/bridges improve connectivity at par with human i.e., cultural, linguistic connectivity.

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## **Bridge: A Game Changer**

The jeep-able bridge at Ishkarwarz of Broghil valley has led to connect about three-fourth area and population of this border valley with the rest of the country, opening avenues of progress and prosperity there. The bridge a ‘game changer’ for the hitherto backward valley. Before the construction of the bridge by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme under its Central Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme, five out of seven villages, of Broghil valley, were without road facility and lived in the primitive age. One had to travel on foot for twelve hours from Ishkarwarz to the Lashkargaz village, taking additional five hours, to reach the famous Qurambar lake prior to the construction of the bridge. Following construction of this crucial bridge, the era of development has begun since government buildings are approved and being constructed as transportation of construction material became possible. Previously, the residents were unable to bring even the patients and seriously injured to the hospitals resulting in death without any treatment. Broghil is the paradise of eco-tourism with 35 bio active lakes and scores of glaciers and lush green meadows with rich biodiversity but remained unexploited in the absence of road connectivity.<sup>24</sup>

## **Barter Trade via Wakhan Corridor**

Trader Afzal Baig tugs at his horse, frustrated by its stubborn refusal to take another step along a treacherous, snow-covered mountain pass that is peppered with the skeletons of those who have already failed the journey. The Irshad Pass, a narrow trail more than 16,300 feet above sea level, is part of the ancient Silk Road network, used for centuries by traders from northern Hunza valley to cross the Karakoram mountains into Afghanistan’s windswept, barren Wakhan Corridor. One wrong step through the ragged mountains can end in a fall of thousands of feet, and as Baig’s horse refuses to budge a blizzard is growing. “Don’t trust this route,” Baig tells those in his group. “It can betray you anytime.”<sup>25</sup> They are riding to meet the Wakhi tribe, inhabitants of the remote corner of Afghanistan, who will barter yaks and cattle in exchange for the traders’ wares. It is a treacherous journey made by only a handful of people each year through the “Pamir Knot”, where three of the highest mountain ranges in the world converge. Baig knocks snow from the horse’s shoe, and the party resumes their careful journey. The storm has reduced visibility to just a few feet forcing each man to follow the sound of the horse in front of him. Human skulls and other bones are scattered in caves along the route, skeletons that Baig says are the remains of other traders. He has already lost six of his travel partners, buried in

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avalanches along the trail. Three of them were killed in one accident, their bodies not found for nearly a year.<sup>26</sup>

Baig's customers in Wakhan have no money, but neither does he. The basic currency unit is livestock. Three warm hats equals to one sheep, half a dozen plastic watches equal two sheep or a goat, and 10kg of tea or 5kg of flour equal to one yak. A secondary currency is yak butter, stored in the stitched stomach lining of a dead goat or a sheep. Highly prized, one such package can be traded for 10 packets of cigarettes, or three pairs of shoes, or six to eight pairs of socks. "I hope to get three yaks," Baig says after the group make camp later that night. Trade with the people of the Wakhan Corridor is his "ancestral legacy", he explains. His elder brother and his father both walked these trails before him until old age finally brought their trading to a halt. The residents of Hunza, once a princely state that now forms part of Gilgit-Baltistan, say barter trade with Wakhan is a centuries-old tradition that has helped cement peace between them.<sup>27</sup>

Aziz Ali Dad, a social anthropologist who has studied the tribes of the mountainous region known as High Asia, describes the present-day barter trade as a small artery of the Silk Road. "In the old days, the tribes on the border of China, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan used to trade with each other," Dad says.<sup>28</sup> The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan ended most such interactions. But the route between Wakhan and Hunza survived, he says, largely because trails such as the Irshad Pass are one of the few ways in and it is mainly those with a historic connection that dare to travel them. "The people on both sides of the border share the same culture, the same language and kinship, which is an added advantage,"<sup>29</sup> As Baig reaches the first settlement in Wakhan, men and women rush to him. The men hug him and take the reins of his horse while the women kiss his hands, a traditional greeting of the Wakhi tribe. "Did you bring me the buttons that I asked you for last year,"<sup>30</sup> one woman asks eagerly as she serves him tea. The women of the Wakhan Corridor have a strange relationship with time: many of them do not know how old they are, but plastic watches brought by the traders are their most cherished ornaments. Brightly coloured objects from plastic buttons and bottles to nail clippers can all be sewn onto women's clothes as decoration. One woman already wearing four plastic watches on one arm asks Baig if he has any more. "I need some for the other arm, may be three or four,"<sup>31</sup> she says. The woman's family trades a yak, a packet of butter and four sheep for buttons, watches, six pairs of socks and some woolen hats. Two other yaks are given on credit. A male member of the family will travel to Hunza this year and return with flour and rice. He explains: "This is based on trust (that) has existed as long as the trade itself."<sup>32</sup>



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## **Afghan Kyrgyz Trapped on the Pameer Knot**

For centuries, the nomadic Kyrgyz people travelled freely across Central and South Asia, fording rivers and cutting across snow-capped mountains with their herds of livestock. They are stuck on the “roof of the world” caught in Afghanistan’s remote, mountainous Wakhan Corridor with little hope of a way out. Political upheaval and violence in the region have slowly boxed them in. There are no roads, and one by one the nearest borders have closed, condemning the Kyrgyz to a treacherous life. “We are accidental Afghans,”<sup>33</sup> says Jo Boi, the frail Kyrgyz chief with heavy-lidded eyes and a somnolent voice. “We didn’t choose this land but we have no other place to go,”<sup>34</sup> he explains of his tribe, which numbers just 1,100 according to analysts. An inhospitable place where temperatures rarely rise above freezing and crops cannot grow, life expectancy here is low. One in three women die from complications in childbirth while 53% children do not survive beyond age of five, says Jeff Walkes, the Bishkek-based director of NGO Crosslink Development International.<sup>35</sup> “They live on a precipice between survival and succumbing to the realities of living in such a remote area,”<sup>36</sup> he said. “They continue to exist... as they have for hundreds of years.”<sup>37</sup> He said in the absence of doctors or clinics even minor ailments can be deadly. “Death is more frequent than birth,”<sup>38</sup> agrees local shepherd Tilo, his hands so chapped the skin is cracked and bloodied, a common feature among inhabitants of the corridor. Previously the Kyrgyz only stopped in Wakhan for the summer, says Kate Clark of the Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN), travelling to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and the Xinjiang region of China to escape the harsh winters. “After the 1917 Russian and 1949 Chinese Communist revolutions, many fled to Wakhan preferring the numbing cold to communist-enforced collectivization. The independence of British India and creation of Pakistan in 1947 hardened another boundary to the south, and by the mid-20th century the group was cut off in the northern portion of the corridor. A communist coup in Kabul in 1978 spurred them to flee, led by their leader Haji Rehman Qul over the 16,300-foot Irshad pass into Pakistan. But after several hundred died due to water-borne diseases, most of the group returned to Wakhan. Following the disastrous exodus, Rehman begged the US government to resettle the group in “yak friendly” Alaska, but their requests were denied by Washington. A small group of Kyrgyz was later given asylum in Turkey, but the rest still battle for survival in Wakhan. The Afghan government considers the Kyrgyz citizens, but the group view it as a foreign land and have been lobbying to be relocated to Kyrgyzstan since the USSR collapsed. Their resettlement is not seen as a burning problem in Kyrgyzstan. Successive governments have announced initiatives over the years to assist repatriation and provide citizenship for some 22,000 ethnic Kyrgyz abroad, including the group in

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the Wakhan Corridor, but securing such a move remains rare. “Finally the government of Kyrgyzstan has started repatriation and some families moved this year,” says Jo Boi.<sup>39</sup> The Kyrgyzstan embassy in Kabul, however, denied any efforts to repatriate the community, insisting that the small number taken to Kyrgyzstan were sent for educational purposes only. “The ethnic Kyrgyz are citizens of Afghanistan,” said Uchkun Eraliev, chargé d’affaires at the Kyrgyzstan Embassy in Afghanistan, adding that his government simply provides humanitarian assistance including food, warm clothes and medicine to them annually. But for Tilo, securing a future in Kyrgyzstan is his peoples’ best hope for survival.<sup>40</sup>

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## Conclusion

The critical role of the Kirghiz Khan, Haji Rahman Qul, now referred to in the modern Turkic vernacular as Agha (chief), cannot be overestimated in the continual struggle of his community for survival. Through the strong will of this remarkable traditional tribal leader, the Kirghiz have been able to preserve the integrity of their community, although in the process a way of life has vanished forever. With the completion of their permanent village at Altin Dara, in Eastern Turkey the Kirghiz of Afghanistan will face yet another challenge to rebuild new lives for themselves. For this small group of Kirghiz nomads, the political and economic uncertainties may appear to be over, at least for the moment. The same cannot be said of the estimated 2-3 million nomadic pastoralists and the millions of others who are suffering from the tragic war in Afghanistan. The Kirghiz odyssey is indeed a sad commentary on the plight of millions of nomadic pastoralists who, for the sake of their cultural integrity, managed to adapt for centuries to extremely unfriendly natural environments, only to be destroyed by the revolutions of this century which, ironically, promised or promise to liberate humanity.

## Appendix-i



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## Appendix ii



*Across Baroghal Pass into Wakhan*

Source: **Raheel Siddiqui**, *The last Kirghiz khan in Gilgit*, *Daily The News*, Islamabad, December 1, 2019

## Appendix iii



Source: *Daily Dawn*, Islamabad, 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

A newly-built suspension bridge in Baroghil valley, District Upper Chitral

**Source:** Daily Dawn, Islamabad, 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

### Appendix-IV



A polo match was played on 23-07-2022 as part of the annual Baba Ghundi festival. A Sufi night, Buzkashi competitions, sword dances, Yak Safari, and a food and folk Wakhi music show took place.

**Source:** Jamil Nagri, *Baba Ghundi festival brings together Afghans, Pakistanis*, Daily Dawn, Karachi, Dated, July 24, 2022

### Appendix-V



KYRGYZ nomad families travel on yaks in the Wakhan Corridor in Afghanistan in this file picture taken on Oct 7, 2017.

**Source:** Retrieved from: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1388038>, accessed on 26-02-2024

## Appendix-VI

### Ancient Silk Road trade in remote Afghanistan



Centuries on, barter trade through Wakhan corridor continues

**Source:** Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1388279>, accessed on 26-02-2024

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<sup>1</sup> The Chitral Scouts, known as Chitral Levies, originally raised in 1903 as the militia of the princely state of Chitral, currently, a unit of the Frontier Corps of Pakistan, headquartered at Lower Chitral town. Recruits mostly belong to Chitral Lower/ Upper, though commanded by officers of the Pakistan Army, falls under the Federal Ministry of the Interior. The Chitral Scouts Upper/Lower have seven wings, each headed by army officers with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel or Major. Its role is to keep guard over Pakistan's western borders in peacetime and to assist the civil administration in maintaining law and order in the district of Upper/ Lower Chitral.

<sup>2</sup> Badakhshan is a historical region comprising parts of north-eastern Afghanistan. The name is retained in Badakhshan Province. Historic Badakhshan lies within Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved from: <https://patrip.org/fr/portfolios/broghil-valley-fra/>, accessed on 15-07-2024

<sup>4</sup> The Durand Line is the 2450 kilometers border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It's the result of an agreement between Sir Mortimer Durand, a secretary of the British Indian government, and the Amir / Ruler, Abdur Rahman Khan (r.1880-1900), in Afghanistan. The Durand Line as served as the official border for more than one hundred years, it has caused controversy for the people who live there.

<sup>5</sup> Constitutionally speaking, Xinjiang, an autonomous territory in northwest China, its home to many ethnic minority groups, including the Turkic Uyghur people. The ancient Silk Road trade route linking China and the Middle East passed through



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Xinjiang, a legacy that can be seen in the traditional open-air bazaars of its oasis cities, Hotan and Kashgar.

<sup>6</sup>Zahir Shah came to the throne at the age of 19, after the assassination of his father in November 1933, having previously served as a cabinet minister. For a number of years Zahir Shah remained in the background while his relatives ran the government, but he asserted his power through the constitution of 1964, which established a constitutional monarchy and prohibited royal relatives from holding public office.

<sup>7</sup> Haji Rahman Qul led more than 1300 Kirghiz a crossed the border to the Pakistan. Some 500 Kirghiz living in the Pamir Valley. The Kirghiz were living in the major town of the Gilgat Baltistan

<sup>8</sup> The Kabul River, the classical Cophen, is a 700-kilometre-long river that emerges in the Sanglakh Range of the Hindu Kush mountains in the northeastern part of Maidan Wardak Province, Afghanistan. It is separated from the watershed of the Helmand River by the Unai Pass. It originated from Chintar Glassier situated in the Braghlo Valley.

<sup>9</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.induscaravan.com/blog/re-discovering-afghanistan-the-kyrgyz-buzkashi-wakhan-corridor/> accessed on 02-06-2024.

<sup>10</sup> The term Turk, refers broadly to ethno-linguistic groups of people residing predominantly in the Azerbaijan, Chuvash, Kazakhstan, Tatarstan , Kyrgyzia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Uyghur autonomous region of China<sup>1</sup>,Uzbekistan, Bashkiria, Qashqai, Gagauz, Yakut, Crimea Karaites, Krymchaks, Karakalpak autonomosus republic, Karachay, Krymchak, Nogais in addition to historic jurisdictions of the Kumans, Kipchak, Avar, Bulgar, Turgesh, Seljuk, Khazar, Ottoman ,Mamluk, Timurid and Xiongnu and Hun. The Turktribes such as Oghuz, Toquz Oghuz, Qipchaq, Qirqiz (Forty Girls), Tolis, Tradush, Trughish, Chik, perphas, cchigil of Kashgari Az, Baiyiqum Wuriqan, Tongra and Basmil.

<sup>11</sup> Raheal Siddiqui, *The last Kirghiz khan in Gilgit*, Daily The News, Dated, December 1, 2019

<sup>12</sup> Alison V.G. Betts, Marika Vicziany, Peter Jia and Angelo Andrea Di Castro, *The Cultures of Ancient Xinjiang, Western China: Crossroads of the Silk Roads* (edt), Archaeopress Archaeology, 2019, P.6

<sup>13</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.induscaravan.com/blog/re-discovering-afghanistan-the-kyrgyz-buzkashi-wakhan-corridor/> accessed on 02-06-2024.

<sup>14</sup> Ahmet Kenan Evren was a Turkish politician and military officer, who served as the seventh President of Turkeyia (r.1980-89). He assumed the post by leading the 1980 military coup.

<sup>15</sup> The term central Asia is rather a vague geographical designation. It refers have to that region of Asia which intervened between the Russian Empire in the North and the British Empire in the south, it also includes the province of Turkistan in the East. The term central Asia and Turkistan are used synonymously in the paper.

<sup>16</sup>Retrieved from: <http://www.turkishhan.org/history.htm>, Accessed on 15-07-2024.

<sup>17</sup> The term is used for the strategic rivalry between the British Empire and the Tsarist Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia/ Turan. The Coinage of this phrase is

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sometime wrongly attributed to Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) but is actually used by Arthur Conolly (1807-42). For further details see Peter Hopkirk. *The Great Game: on secret service in high Asia*. London: John Murray, 1990

<sup>18</sup> The writer is a civil servant, conservationist and animal rights activist. He can be reached at [dr.raheal@gmail.com](mailto:dr.raheal@gmail.com)

<sup>19</sup> Chiantar Glacier region, Eastern Hindu Kush, Kabul River is originated from Chiantar glacier which is suited to the Barghol valley and Kurambar river / pass

<sup>20</sup> The Wakhan Corridor is a narrow strip of territory in Afghanistan, extending to China and separating the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan from the Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan-administered Kashmir. From this high mountain valley the Panj and Pamir rivers emerge and form the Amu Darya.

<sup>21</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1632290/all-weather-road-promises-baroghal-valleys-development>, accessed on 30-06-2024

<sup>22</sup> Retrieved from: <https://asianthinktank.com/baba-ghundi-festival-brings-together-afghans-pakistanis/>, accessed on 04-08-2023

<sup>23</sup> Jamil Nagri, *Baba Ghundi festival brings together Afghans, Pakistanis*, Daily Dawn, Islamabad, July 24, 2022

<sup>24</sup> *Bridge to usher in development in far-off villages* Daily The News, Islamabad, February 25, 2024

<sup>25</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1388279>, accessed on 02-06-2024

<sup>26</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1388279>, accessed on 24-07-2024

<sup>27</sup> Ibid;

<sup>28</sup> *Centuries on, barter trade through Wakhan corridor continues*, Daily The News, February 9, 2018

<sup>29</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1388279>, accessed on 02-06-2024

<sup>30</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.brecorder.com/news/4580095>, accessed on 24-07-2024

<sup>31</sup> Ibid;

<sup>32</sup> Daily Dawn, Islamabad, February 9th, 2018

<sup>33</sup> Ibid;

<sup>34</sup> Gohar Abbas, *Afghanistan's Kyrgyz trapped on the 'roof of the world'*, Daily Dawn, Islamabad, Dated February 8, 2018

<sup>35</sup> Ibid;

<sup>36</sup> Retrieved from: [https://central.asia-news.com/en\\_GB/articles/cnmi\\_ca/features/2018/02/19/feature-01](https://central.asia-news.com/en_GB/articles/cnmi_ca/features/2018/02/19/feature-01), accessed on 15-07-2024.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid;

<sup>38</sup> Ibid;

<sup>39</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1388038>, accessed on 27-07-2024

<sup>40</sup> Daily Dawn, Islamabad, February 8th, 2018