

Archaeology and Heritage Handbook *Cholsitan*



The Urban Unit
Urban Sector Planning & Management Services Unit (Pvt.) Ltd.



NAWABS OF RIASAT
BAHAWALPUR



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1. CHOLISTAN: THE LAND OF HIDDEN TREASURES

The British annexation of Punjab in 1840 started the Agro-Industrial Revolution in this region. The agrarian industrialization gained further boom in the first three decades of the twentieth-century and is continuously on the rise. As a consequence, the archaeological heritage of Pakistan is diminishing fast. In the present day, the evaporation of material cultural heritage has entered its worst phase as more land is being utilized to meet the demands of the increasing farming footprint of the country. Moreover, vandalism and land grabbing have become other serious threats to the rapidly deteriorating situation of the archaeological heritage in Punjab.

The Agro-Industrial Revolution in Bahawalpur began relatively late and the first serious threat to the archaeological sites came in 1974. However, the Cholistan Development Authority (CDA) responded to the challenge by engaging the Department of Archaeology and Museums (DOAM) to survey and document the

archaeological heritage of Cholistan. The DOAM survey report of 1977 submitted by Dr. Muhammad Rafiqe Mughal and his later publications on Cholistan's archaeological heritage are a few rare sources on material cultural preservation and conservation planning for Cholistan. However, since the completion of the DOAM survey of 1977, the ground realities have drastically changed. The Arab game zones, the army-based farming, development of Chakuk and other infrastructure, water resource management, increasing population load, has dramatically altered the archaeological landscape of Cholistan which existed before 1977. Another factor responsible for the destruction and poor conservation of archaeological heritage is the trend of allowing non-professionals i.e. non-archaeologists to develop the conservation plans which has led to irreversible damage to the archaeological sites.

Cholistan Desert is located in the east of Bahawalpur which covers an area of about 15,000 km² and extends into the Thar Desert of India and semi-desert areas of Sindh. This region is among the richest archaeological landscapes of Pakistan. From Stone Age to the protohistoric eras of Hakra and Harappan civilization and from the Harappan civilization to the forts and palaces of the Nawab era, Cholistan presents more than 500 recorded archaeological sites, and a great number of unexplored archaeological sites. Cholistan's significant archaeological wealth provides a huge potential for profitable archaeological tourism ventures. The venture will involve documentation, preservation, contextualization, and making the heritage accessible for local, regional, national, and international tourism by linking it to mobility networks and infrastructures.

Since 1977, no first-hand archaeological data has been available to help the planning sector to glean through the complexity of the archaeological wealth of Cholistan. The immense pressure of urbanization and over-farming is taking its toll on the material cultural wealth of Cholistan. This overgrowth demands an immediate action plan to harmonize this disproportional development to produce a synchronization between modern Agro-industrial development and material past.



Map 2 The Modified Map of the Archaeological Sites

Today, Cholistan shows three important phases of Harappan civilization; Early, Mature and Late existed here. A huge portion of Indus valley civilization lies in the premises of the Cholistan desert out of which *Ganweriwala* marks as the important metropolitan city of Harappan civilization and its extension. The other sites include *Sadhanwala Ther*, *Ahmadwala Ther*, *Kalepar*, *Wattu wala*. Similarly, the site of *Sidduwala* was discovered in 1940 located in the heart of Cholistan. Other mounds identified by authorities are *Snaika Ther Mound* and *Parhara Thair* in the interior Cholistan. However, thousands of sites still lie unexplored covered by the dunes of Cholistan.

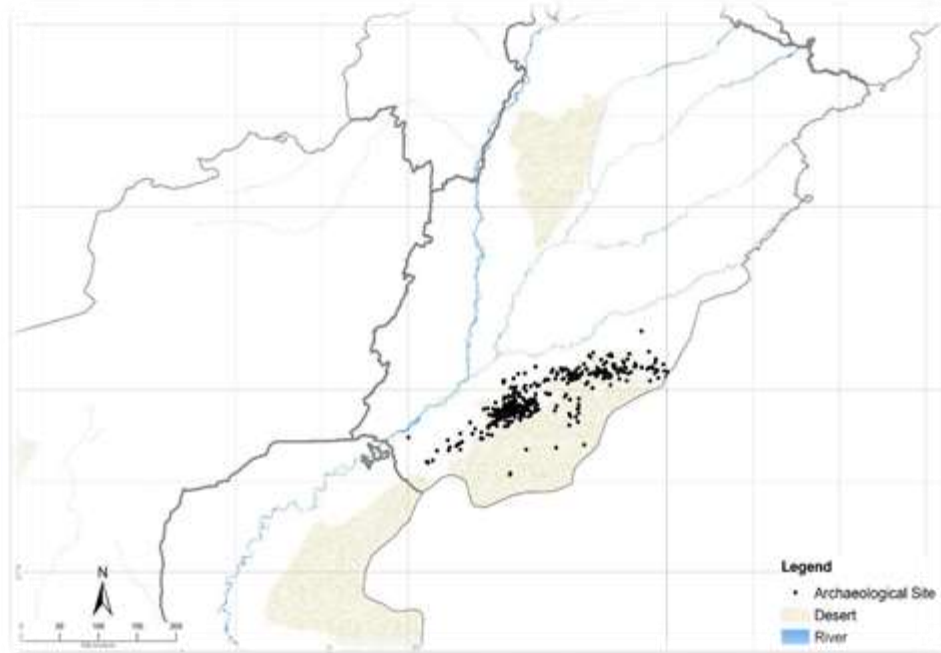
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MOUNDS

Cholistan has a lot of cultural debris in the form of scattered potsherds found in the domestic settlements buried there. Cholistan has not gone through rigorous economic development and therefore, many archaeological sites are still intact. These sites are closely related to the former flood plains of Hakra River with a high concentration around *Derawar*. The total of 414 settlements are categorized according to chrono-cultural significance into industrial sites, cemeteries, monuments, habitation, and campsites. Among them, only 377 are assigned to various periods. *Gamulawala Ther* (late Harappan), *Sidhuwala*, *Azimwali*, *Sarukhewala II*, and *Thoriwala* sites are re occupied. In addition, a total of 40 sites resemble *Kot Diji* whereas the *Gamuwala Ther* and *Waddan wala* sites have cemeteries. *Kuduwala* is the largest late harrapan site of Cholistan.

The other material evidence unearthed in Cholistan belongs to the 4th and 2nd millennium BC relating to the Early, Mature and Late phases of Harappan Civilization. On this basis, the expansion of the Indus valley extent was more westwards with at least 320 documented sites in India as well including Haryana, Uttar Pardesh and Rajasthan.

GIS MAPPING OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Geographic information system (GIS) mapping of the total archaeological wealth of Cholistan (visited site boundaries included) is essential. The GIS map of archaeological heritage of Cholistan is attached below. GIS mapping helps planners decide how to build roads infrastructure for archaeological tourism and to keep archaeological sites intact without losing protected areas. It also helps to determine whether to fence archaeological sites.



Map 3 Archaeological Sites in Cholistan

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MOUNDS

Archaeological mounds belonging to the *Hakra Ware* period, Early Harappan Period, Mature Harappan Period, Late Harappan Period, Post Harappan Period, and Historical Period exist in Cholistan. The elevation level of such mounds is considerably higher from the surrounding level which represents continuous habitation at one site. The mounds are scattered throughout the Cholistan desert and reflect the spread of the Indus Valley Civilization. Some of the important mounds include *Kuddwala* and *Kala Pahar*. These were the major settlements/cities of the Indus Valley Civilization. There are other such sites, such as *Siddhuwala Ther*. *Ther* is a local word used by the people for a mound or site. They are aware of the word and its meaning but they do not have the knowledge of the importance of these archaeological sites and neither do they have the necessary skills to preserve them.



Figure 1 Archaeological Mound “KuddWala”





Figure 2 The Archaeological Site of “Kalapahar”



Figure 3 Ganweri Wala: The third Metropolitan City of Indus Valley Civilization

GANWERIWALA: THE THIRD HARAPPAN CITY

Cholistan has numerous Harappan period archaeological sites related to each developing phase of Indus valley Civilization. The third metropolitan city, known as *Ganweriwala* is also located here. The site has been partially documented but never excavated. It is also facing troubles due to illegal digging and building of road networks.



Figure 4 Infrastructural Development Causing Irreparable damage to the Site – Ganweriwala

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF SIDDHUWALA THER

Siddhuwala Ther is another significant site belonging to the Harappan Civilizations and has been well documented by archaeologists, historians, and cultural experts.

The site needs the urgent attention of the authorities due to the cultivation process. Owing to fertile nature, the land is being used for agricultural purposes.



Figure 5 Siddhuwala Ther, Cholistan

2. BUDDHIST HERITAGE

Historical linkage of Bahawalpur- Cholistan region: The history falls back at the time of Aryans when Hakra river flourished the basins of Cholistan which was not always a desert. Cholistan remained a semi temporary site for the invading armies of all times and at the end of 4th c. BC Alexander captivated the area calling it as "Alexandria Uch". With the leading situation, Buddhism prevailed here in the presence of Kushans under the great warrior Kanishka evident from the buddhists monasteries and stupas that will be discussed later. The military architecture flourished under the Rai dynasty that left fort tradition here. With the Arab occupation in this region, marked the traces of Umayyad and Abbasid rule here. After the end of Arab khilafat, the Bahawalpur became independent after which the Ghaurid and slave king rulers turned their attention to Uch. The area continued to fall under dynasty after dynasty until finally in 15th century, Mughal rule canopied here. The state of Bahawalpur came under the control of Ameers of Abassi Family splitting into Daudpotras and Kalhoras. Their rule lasted for over 250 years and raising Bahawalpur to the rank of 2nd largest muslim state in the subcontinent. Their architectural contribution in the principedom of Bahawalpur is worth mentioning.

The Early Historical and Medieval Period sites: Buddhist and pre Islamic. The area of North Cholistan became attracted to human habitation close to the Sutlej River, for instance:

SUI VIHAR

Sui Vihar was discovered in 1870. It is a nonfunctional Buddhist stupa which lies in the midst of a graveyard and is made up of clay bricks. *Vihar* means monastic centric. Tracing its roots back to the Kushan period when Kanishka the Great, who propagated Buddhism in this region through his incursions and built sacred sites. This is evident from the inscription found in the large square chamber of the stupa. Scholars mention this site as a passage route for pilgrims and preachers of faith linking regions of Mathura with Sindhu.



Figure 6 Sui Vihar Stupa Bahawalpur

PATTAN MINARA

Other standing monuments include a few tombs and a Pre-Islamic shrine known as *Pattan Minara*. Named after Pattan Pur, an ancient city which nestled on the banks of Hakra and means "Tower of the ford". Scholars could not find a consensus on whether to call it a shrine (Rafique Mughal) or a Buddhist Monastery. This standing structure has a single doorway facing west however the second storey appears to be unreachable.



Figure 7 Pattan Minara, Rahim Yar Khan



Figure 8 Samadhi of a Jain Guru Sri Jinkusal, Derawar, Cholistan



Figure 9 Hindeera of Ashraf Baig, Khairpur Tame Wali, Bahawalpur,



3. FORTS OF CHOLISTAN

According to the archival records, it has been noted that in the entire Cholistan region, more than 47 forts were built in different areas. These forts were constructed with either mud bricks only or a mixture of mud and burnt bricks. The presence of so many forts in Cholistan clearly indicates how this region had been repeatedly invaded. The evidence of invasions is abundant at Moonday Shareef and as recorded during Nawan Kot Fort visit.



Figure 10 Nawan Kot Fort

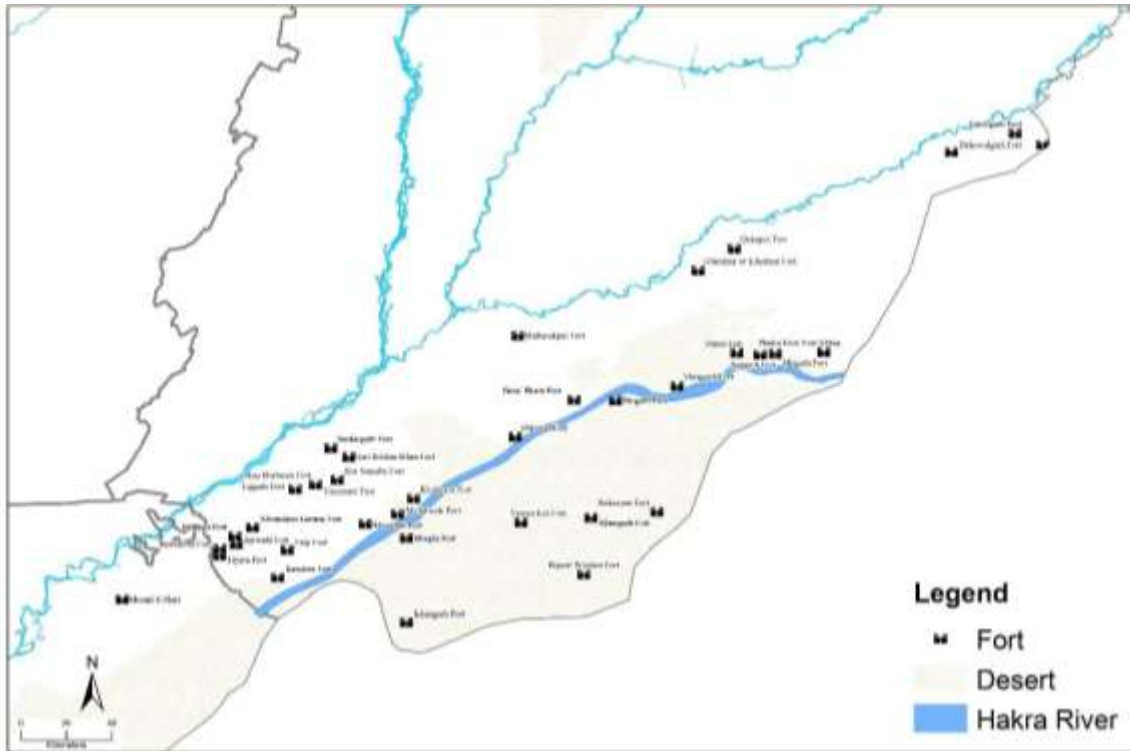


Figure 11 Map of the Forts of Cholistan

LOCATIONS AND COORDINATES OF CHOLISTAN FORTS

Dr. M.R. Mughal provided the first-ever list of Cholistan’s forts’ coordinates. The list was rechecked by A.U Baig in 2020 and partially reconfirmed by the PU expedition in 2021.

LIST OF THE FORTS OF CHOLISTAN

S#	Name of the Fort	Coordinates
1.	Derawar Fort	(28°45'54.88"N,71°20'35.96"E)
2.	Mojgarh Fort	(29° 0'48.98"N, 72° 8'21.51"E)
3.	Marot Fort	(29°10'37.11"N, 72°26'2.99"E)
4.	Jamgarh Fort	(29°10'3.87-"N, 72°32'53.06"E)
5.	Mirgarh Fort	(29°10'27.76"N, 72°37'16.31"E)
6.	Phulra Fort/ Fort Abbas	(29°10'49.16"N, 72°51'40.17"E)
7.	Nawan Kot Fort	(28°20'44.21"N, 71°22'21.21"E)
8.	Bijnor/ Winjhot Fort	(28° 5'24.05"N, 71°40'54.73"E)
9.	Khangarh Fort	(28°22'5.74"N, 71°43'2.49"E)

S#	Name of the Fort	Coordinates
10.	Rukanpur Fort	(28°23'51.79"N, 72° 2'23.97"E)
11.	Dingarh Fort	(28°56'34.05"N, 71°50'13.80"E)
12.	Moochki Fort	(28°20'20.47"N, 70°36'18.41"E)
13.	Khairgarh Fort	(28°27'42.50"N, 70°50'36.73"E)
14.	Islamgarh Fort	(27°51'18.22"N, 70°48'27.82"E)
15.	Bhagla Fort	(28°16'7.00"N,70°30'35.34"E)
16.	Bara/ Bhara Fort	(28°56'47.62"N, 71°38'0.38"E)
17.	Muridwala Fort	(28°23'14.21"N, 70°45'52.95"E)
18.	Mau Mubarak Fort	(28°31'52.11"N, 70°21'44.39"E)
19.	Ahmadpur Lamma Fort	(28°19'15.13"N, 70° 3'6.45"E)
20.	Mubarakpur Fort	(29°15'42.11"N, 71°21'26.23"E)
21.	Unnamed Fort (Mau Mubarak)	(28°31'52.11"N, 70°21'44.39"E)
22.	Momal Ji Mari	(27°58'1.43"N, 69°24'42.65"E)
23.	Fatehgarh Fort	30.2544, 73.802
24.	Qaimpur Fort	(29°41'21.76"N, 72°25'12.47"E)
25.	Tajgarh Fort	(28°30'33.77"N, 70°15'43.41"E)
26.	Liyara Fort	(28°11'2.18"N, 69°53'23.79"E)
27.	Kotsabzal Fort	(28°13'0.67"N, 69°53'29.16"E)
28.	Kandera Fort	(28° 4'29.58"N, 70°10'32.39"E)
29.	Fazilpur Fort	(28°16'39.5"N, 69°57'57.2"E)
30.	Jajjal Fort	(30°11'51.38"N, 73°56'11.56"E)
31.	Kot Samaba Fort	(28°33'16.11"N, 70°28'5.88"E)
32.	Sardargarh Fort	(28°42'34.39"N, 70°26'13.19"E)
33.	Bahawalgarh Fort	(30° 9'45.30"N, 73°29'18.78"E)
34.	Gari Ikhtian Khan Fort	(28°40'1.16"N, 70°31'32.15"E)
35.	Falji Fort	(28°12'37.37"N, 70°13'20.66"E)
36.	Sarwahi Fort	(28°14'23.46"N, 69°58'17.05"E)
37.	Ghanipur or Khairpur Fort	(29°34'54.40"N, 72°14'34.03"E)

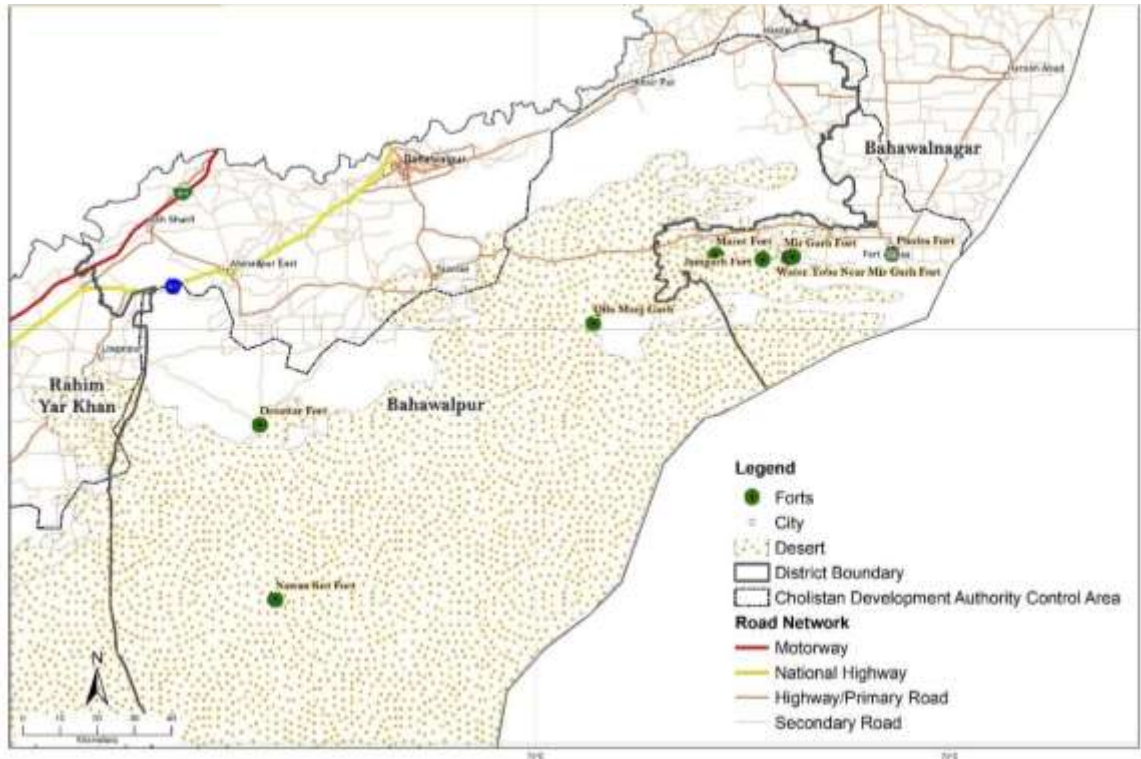


Figure 12 The Forts Near Yazman

MOJ GARH FORT

The Mouj Garh Fort was founded by Muhammad Maroof Khan Kehrani, in 1743 A.D. The fort is located in the administrative and territorial limits of Tehsil Yazman, District Bahawalpur, 90 KM Southwest of Bahawalpur on Fort Abbas Road and is at a distance of 32 km from Marot Fort. This beautiful structure is square in plan and has thirty bastions/towers out of which 14 are intact and the remaining are damaged. At present, the fort is in a dilapidating state. The outer burnt-brick facing and the interior facing of the fortification wall have collapsed in several places exposing the mud-brick core. The fort is almost square in plan, measuring 380 from south to north and 350 feet from west to east. The walls are strengthened with a series of semi-circular bastions. This fort is important in terms of area and size which makes it the second biggest fort in the region. The total area of the fort is approximately 5 Acre (217800 Sq Ft).



Figure 13 Different Views of Moj Grah Fort



Figure 14 Different Views of Moj Grah Fort

DERAWAR FORT



Figure 15 Derawar Fort

Derawar Fort is located Ahmadpur East Tehsil, Punjab, Pakistan. Derawar fort was first built in the 9th century AD by Rajput King Raja Jajja Bhatti.. It was later rebuilt in its current form in 1732 by the Abbasi ruler Nawab Sadeq Muhammad. The fort was initially called Dera Rawal but with the passage of time it became known as Derawar, The fort has 40 bastions which are visible for many miles in the Cholistan Desert. The walls have a perimeter of 1500 metres and stand up to thirty metres high. The fort itself is surrounded by many unexplored archaeological sites dating back to the the Indus Civilization.



Figure 16 Ariel View - Derawar Fort



Figure 17 Side View of Derawar fort



Figure 18 Another Ariel View of Derawar Fort

MIR GARH FORT

Mir Garh fort is situated in the middle of Cholistan district and is 15 Km away from Fort Abbas. It was constructed in 1799AD by Noor Muhammad Khan and is one of the forts built during the reign of Abbasi clan in Bahawalpur. The fort has one entrance, which is divided into two portions, and four minarets. The walls of the fort are around 28 feet high and have rounded corners on all sides. The fort also housed. The fort has a huge tourism potential and is in need of conservation and preservation.



Figure 19 Mir Garh Fort



Figure 20 Different Views of Mir Garh Fort



Figure 21 Different Views of Mir Garh Fort



Figure 22 Mir Garh Fort

JAMGARH FORT

The fort was constructed by Noor Muhammad Khan in 1788 and is one of the forts built during the reign of the Abbasi clan in Bahawalpur. A Persian inscription seen at the gates of the fort in 1872 recorded that he was a disciple of the Gillani Makhdooms of Uch. The fort is built of burnt-bricks, is square, measuring 92 feet on each side, and possesses 7 bastions, standing 39 feet in height. The fort was completed in three years. The distance between Mir Garh Fort and Fort Abbas city is 21 km. The fort has every potential to be developed as a model archaeological heritage tourism point.



Figure 23 Jam Garh Fort



Figure 24 Different views of Jamgarh Fort







Figure 25 Diferent views of Jamgarh Fort

KHAIRGARH FORT

Khairgarh Fort is located twelve miles southeast of Bhutta Sheikhan in Bahawalpur District. The Khairgarh fort was built by Haji Khan son of Ikhtiyar Khan Mandhani Daud Potra in 1775 CE with mud and burnt bricks. The fort is in a good state of preservation. It is 64 miles from Derawar Fort.



Figure 26 Khairgarh Fort

AHMADPUR LAMMA FORT

Ahmadpur Lamma lies 4 miles northwest of Sádiqabad station on the North-Western Railway and about 15 miles from the Indus. It is located on the border of Sindh and Punjab. The fort was built by Nawab of Bahwalpur who named it after a local Nawab Ahmed Khan Abbassi. The town was once protected by walls which are now in ruins.

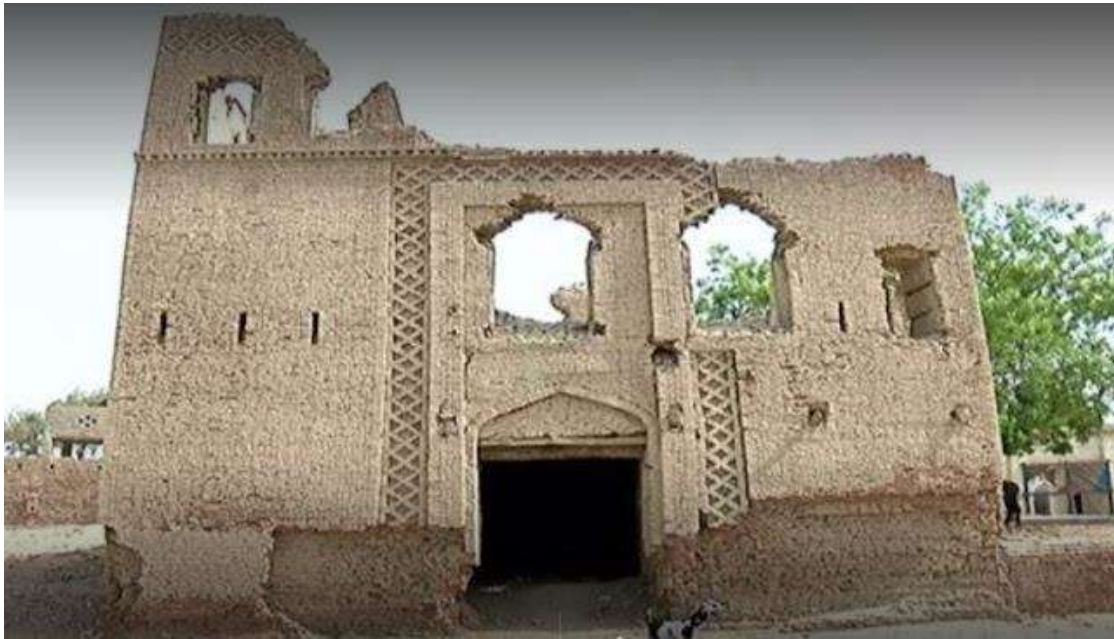


Figure 27 Ahmadpur Lamma Fort

BIJNOT/ WINJHOT FORT

Bijnot or (Winjhrot) is structurally an impressive fort. It was originally built by Raja Winjha or Bija Bhattia in AD 757 but was reportedly demolished by Shahab ud din Muhammad Ghauri in 1167 AD. In 1799, Ali Murad Khan repaired this fort. It is 90 kilometres from Derawar fort and is 163 kilometres from Bahawalpur city.

At the moment the fort is in ruins. Only its original features have survived. It is located only 23 kilometres from the Pak-Indo border. It is spread over 300 feet. Its walls are approx. 21 feet high. In the north there is also a 11 feet wide gate.



Figure 28 Bijnot/ Winjhot Fort

FAZILPUR FORT

Purana Qila Fazilpur is in district Rahiymyar Khan. The path to the fort leaves Sanjarpur at National Highway, and is 18 kilometers from Sadiqabad. It was built by Sardar Fazil Khan Abbasi some 300 years ago. Two bastions are in a very bad state of preservation while two bastions of the fort are in a relatively better condition. Fortification walls have been demolished and the fort is occupied by the local population.



Figure 29 Satellite View of Fort Fazlipur

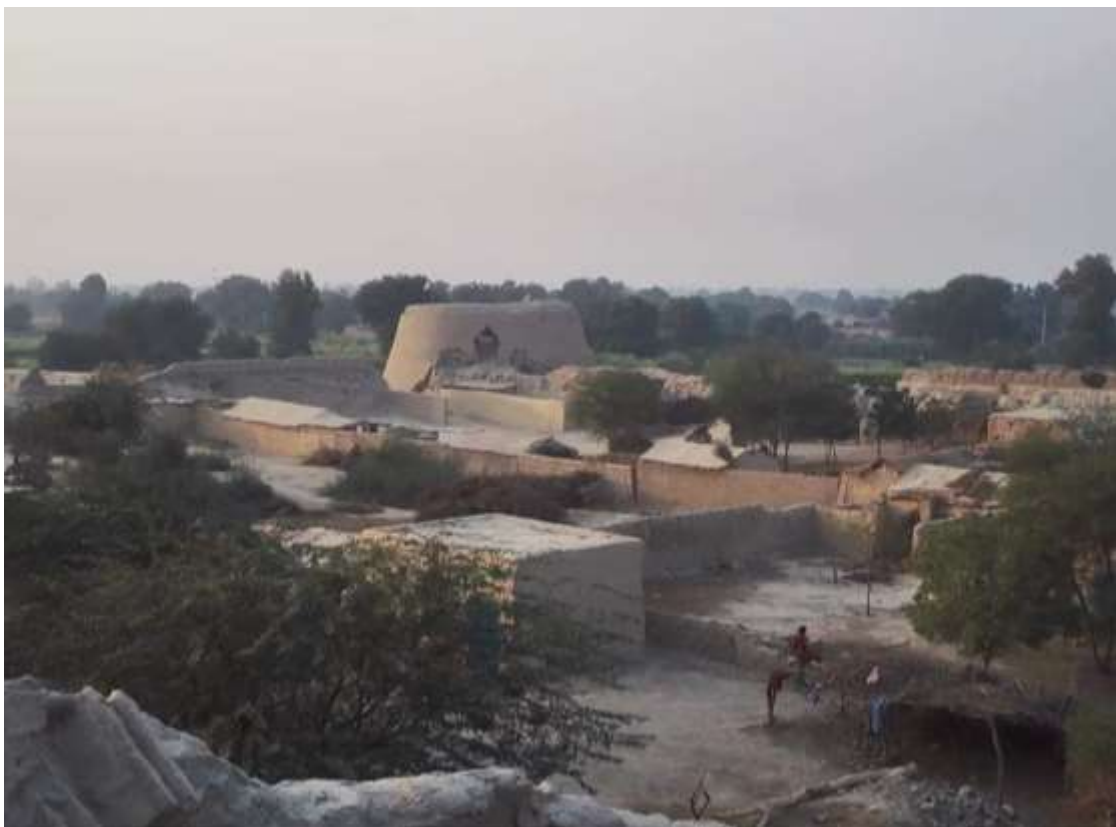


Figure 30 Fazlipur Fort



Figure 31 Different Views of Fazilpur Fort

GHANIPUR OR KHAIRPUR TAMEWALI FORT

Ghanipur is a mud fort situated on a mound. The fort was built in 1741 CE by Sardar Jadol Khan and was soon occupied by Daudpotra Sardar Maruf Khan. The layout and plan of the fort are easily traceable and a considerable part of the structure including a few low-height bastions, fortification walls, and traces of gates are still standing. Situated inside the fort are the fields and date gardens. Masjid Khanu Wali is an ancient mosque in its vicinity. Other than the fort, there are traces of some old Garhis as well. The Nawab period Heritage consists of traces of three gardens, an Anglo Vernacular Middle School, a theological school, and many other buildings.



Figure 32 Satellite View of Khairpur Fort

LIYARA FORT

Liyara fort was built in A.D. 1780/1775 by Sabzal Khan or Sabzal Khan Kahrani and was reportedly destroyed by floods in AD 1809. The remains of the fort are located 24 kilometers from Kot Sabzal in Sadiqabad. It was mostly a mud fort although some parts of the fort were provided with a burnt brick casing.



Figure 33 Liyara fort

SARWAHI FORT

The remains of Sarwahi Fort are in district Sadiqabad and are situated one kilometer east of Sanjarpur town on a high-raised mound. Sanjarpur is situated on the national highway. The fortification remains in a very bad state of preservation. The fort is now fully populated. There are two tombs inside the fort. The traces of a few bastions are still visible. It is said that the fort was built by Rai Sahnsi. Large cannon balls have also been discovered at the site.



Figure 34 Sarwahi Fort and Mound

FALJI FORT

Situated at a distance of three miles north of Manthar are the remains of a fort recorded as Falji on the topographical maps. The fort is rectangular in plan, measuring 240 feet from north to south and 160 East to west without corner bastions. It is built of mud brick with a burnt-brick exterior. The northeastern bastion survives to a height of 16 feet above the surrounding fields.



Figure 35 Falji Fort

TIBBA JAJJAL FORT

Tibba jajjal Fort is located close to Jajjal village near Hasil Sarhu. The mound is about eight miles from Hasil Serhu and is called *Tibba Jajjal*. It is believed that it was once a flourishing town and Sutlej used to flow beneath it, which now flows more than ten miles to the north. The town was built by Rajak Jajja.



Figure 36 Tibba Jajjal Fort

KANDERA FORT

This fort was built with a burnt brick casing on a mound called the Kandera in 1664 by Fazal Khan son of Bhakkar Khan Pirjani. It is located 125 miles southwest of Bahawalpur. The fort has a gateway and four towers. In 1220AH, it was demolished by Nawab Muhammad Bahwal



Figure 37 Kandera Fort

Khan II, and now only a ruined tower remains. The Cholistani people, especially the Mahrs, bring their cattle here in the rain.

QAIMPUR FORT

Qaimpur town is situated 10 kilometers north of Khairpur Tamiwali. Qaim Khan Arbani built this fort in 1747. The fort shows a square plan with bastions at the corners, among which those on the northern side are octagonal. In the northeastern



Figure 38 Qaimpur Fort

corner stand the remains of a three-storied palace with the fallen rooms but still retaining something of original woodwork.

FATHE GARH FORT

In 1213 AH Nawab Muhammad Bahawal Khan II built this fort with a pakka exterior on the site of Gaurjana or Gaurdiana, 15 miles northwest of Amruka railway station and 150 miles north-east of Bahawalpur. It is named Fatehgarh after his father Fateh khan. The well inside the fort is now filled up. Outside the fort are two pakka wells and a kaccha



Figure 39 Fathe Garh Fort

tank, of which the latter is used as a reservoir for rainwater. Before the agency time, it was garrisoned with batteries and placed in charge of the Arbani Daudportars, whose descendants still live in the village close to the now-ruined fort.

MUBARAKPUR FORT

In 1174 AH, Nawab Mubarak Khan built Mubarakpur fort located in the vicinity of Shahr Farid. Its walls are of mud and it also has a bungalow and other Kaccha buildings.



Figure 40 Mubarakpur Fort

BHAGLA FORT

Bhagla Fort is a mud-brick fort having a dimension of 128 x 192 feet. The fortification walls are 7 feet thick, and the corner bastions survive to a maximum height of 19 feet. The fort is totally in ruin, it was reportedly built in A.D. 1767 by Ali Murad Pirjani.



Figure 41 Bhagla Fort

MOOCHKI FORT

Machki/Moochki fort was built of burnt brick by Lal Khan, son of Ikhtiyar Khan Kehrani in A.D. 1777. It measures 125 feet between corner bastions, with 6 feet thick walls standing 18 feet high. The corner bastions are 42 feet in diameter and stand 40 feet high. Access to the fort is provided through the eastern wall which has the additionally engaged bastions 19.5 feet in diameter. The passage of the gateway is 8 feet wide, flanked by several rooms. The corner bastions are double-storied. It has a double-story bastion.



Figure 42 Moochki Fort

PHOLRA FORT/ FORT ABBAS

Phulra is an ancient fort and is said to have existed long before the domination of the Vikas, the founders of Bhikaner. It was almost in ruins but was repaired and strengthened by Karam Khan Arbani (son of Qaim Khan, the founder of Qaimpur). The pakka bricks and the inner part is filled with mud. Near the western wall, inside the fort, is a pakka well, 118 inches deep and 4 inches in circumference with sweet water, a rare thing in Cholistan. At each corner of the fort is a tower, with an inner chamber. The north-western tower is of burnt brick. In the southeastern part of the fort is a three-story house, a bungalow. On the front of the bungalow are inscribed the words: - *Malik-i mohall Muhammad Akram Khan Daudpotra dar Shar-i-Ramazan 1166 Hijri, "Muhammad Akram Khan Daudpotra master of the palace, in*

the month of Ramazan 1166 H. There are three wells outside the fort, well-built of stucco and containing sweet water.

TAJ GARH FORT

Tajgarh is situated about four miles to the northwest of Rahim yar khan railway station on a high mound. Its name was "Hurar" in the 10th century A.D. when it was built by rani Huran, the daughter of a Jaisalmer chief. Huran was converted to Islam by a saint called Sayyed Ahmed Billaury. It remained a fortified palace for a long time under the Sumra kings of Sindh and the Bhatia chiefs of Jaisalmer, but towards the close of the 18th century, Fasal Ali demolished this fort. Now it is a mound.



Figure 43 Taj Garh Fort

GARI IKHTIYAR KHAN FORT

Gari Ikhriyar Khan lies about 6 miles west of Khanpur. It was originally founded by Shadi Khan, an official of Khuda Yar Khan Kalhora, during the supremacy of the Kalhoras in Sindh. It was named Gari Shadi Khan. However, after the death of the Nur Muhammad Kalhora, the Kalhora power declined, and in 1753 Haji Ikhtiyar Khan Mundhani of Gundi by a sudden took control from the Kalhora officials. He fortified it and changed its name to Gari Ikhtiyar Khan.



Figure 44 Gari Ikhtiyar Khan Fort

BAHAWALGARH FORT

Bahawalgarh Fort was built by Nawab Bahwal Khan, II in 1791 on the site of a village called the Musafirwala. It is now a village of about 150 houses. A strong garrison was placed in it to oversee the *Bikaneris* and the turbulent *Joya* and *Watta* subjects, who were always in revolt. There was a royal garden of ten biogas in the immediate vicinity of the fort. The fort was demolished in 1870. Many canon balls were also discovered at the time of demolition.



Figure 45 Bahawalgarh Fort

MURIDWALA FORT

Muridwala fort is situated 43 kilometers southwest of Derawar. It is a square fort of burnt brick, 87 feet internally with four bastions at the corners, each 18 feet in diameter. The walls are 7 feet thick and stand 8 feet high. A 13 feet wide entrance is provided on the southern side. The fort was built by Haji Khan, son of Ikhtiyar Khan, in A.D. 1777 and was reportedly destroyed by floods in 1805.



Figure 46 : Muridwala Fort

BARA/ BHARA FORT

It was a square mud fort and has now totally vanished from the scenes. A few years back a bastion was left but it was also destroyed with time.



Figure 47 Bara/ Bhara Fort

WALHAR/SARDAR GARH FORT

Walhar is a village in Tehsil Sadiqabad of Rahim Yar Khan Punjab, Pakistan. It is 18.7 km away from Sadiqabad city. Nawab Mubarak Khan took the land of Wallhar on lease from the Raja of Bikaner in 1763 CE. He soon began to construct Sardar Garh fort on the ruins of Wallhar fort, but Raja Gaj Singh of Bikaner, alarmed at the proposed fortifications, sent a force under Diwan Mul Chand Brahila to recover the area from the Nawab.



Figure 48 Walhar/Sardar Garh Fort

KOTSABZAL FORT

Kot Sabzal is a small town, built on a mound about 20 feet high. The town was built by Sabzal Khan, son of Mundhu Khan Kehrani, in 1756, with a rampart of mud bricks. In 1806 Nawab Bahawal Khan II conquered Kot Sabzal and annexed it.



Figure 49 Kotsabzal Fort

4. PALACES

THE DARBAR MAHAL



Figure 50 The Darbar Mahal

The Darbar Mahal is a beautiful palace situated in the city of Bahawalpur. It was built by Bahawal Khan V in 1905 with a purpose of holding the courtly events and government offices of princely state of Bahawalpur. The Darbar Mahal was initially

named as Mubarak Mahal. After the war of independence in 1947, the Mahal was given to the services of Pakistan Armed Forces and government offices. The architecture of Darbar Mahal is like an amalgamation of Arab, Mughal and Sikh architecture. The elegant structure of the building is a blend of red on white, where the façade is built in the Mughal style with red bricks on the exterior walls which leads to the top of the building with stylish domes of white bricks which resemble the Sikh architecture. The four domes of the building are connected to each other with short corridors. The interior of the Mahal attracts the viewers with unique light gold tanned color walls with valuable painting hanged on them. The grandeur of the Mahal is further increased with the ceramic tiles in the archways, the furniture, the curtains and the chandeliers present inside the Mahal. The Darbar Mahal is potentially an amazing tourist attraction spot but a very little part of the property is accessible to the tourists.



Figure 51 The Darbar Mahal



THE NOOR MAHAL

The Noor Mahal (Light Palace) is located in the city of Bahawalpur. The fifth monarch of the Bahawalpur state Nawab Sadiq Muhammad Khan the fourth built this palace in 1872 and it was completed in 1875 after a period of three years. The state coins and a map were buried in the foundation of palace, considering it as a good omen. The palace resembles an Italian Chateau because of the style of its windows. However the state engineer Mr Heenan, designed the building in the style of Corinthian and Islamic architecture. The palace covers an area of 4,140 square meters. The palace has 5 domes, 6 verandas and 32 rooms in it. Later in 1906 a mosque was added to this palace by Nawab Muhammad Bahwal Khan. Under the Antiquities Act 1975 the Mahal was taken over by Auqaf Department. The Pakistan Army rented the palace in 1971 and purchased in 1997. The palace has been utilized by the Army as the Garrison club, a guest house and a venue for dignitary gatherings. The building is considered as "Protected monument" by the Department of Archeology of Governor of Pakistan. It is open for students trips, general visitors and the other interested persons.





Figure 52 Different views of Noor Mahal





Figure 53 Another view of Noor Mahal

SADIQ GARH PALACE

The Sadiq Garh palace is located in Dera Nawab Sahib in the city of Bahawalpur. In 1882, it was built by Nawab Sadiq Muhammad Khan the fifth. It is an epitome of beauty containing lush green lawns, bastions, a beautiful central dome, a court hall, and verandas.



Around 1500 laborers, artisans and other workers carried out its construction and its completion took 10 years. It covers an area of 126 acres. The palace has four

buildings which consist of 120 rooms above the ground with attached washrooms and kitchen, and 50 rooms in the basement. The palace served as Nawab Sahib's court where he used to decide on various matters and disagreements between different individuals and groups. Many special guests like lord Mountbatten, Quaid e Azam, Emperor Muhammad Raza Pehlavi of Iran and other renowned leaders have stayed in this palace. For over one hundred and fifty years the shroud of Holy Kabah was created in this palace and the old shroud was used in the palace as a source of blessing. The decline of this palace started in 1972, when Nawab Sahib had a dispute with Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto over Benazir Bhutto's marriage proposal. As a consequence to this dispute the palace was closed by Bhutto. In order to study its historic importance and to witness the beauty of the palace, students and tourists from all over the country visit this palace. Due to its long closure the palace is deteriorating.



Figure 54 Different views of Sadiq Garh Palace





Figure 55 Sadiq Garh Palace



Figure 56 Gulzar Mahal



Figure 57 Different views of Sadiq Garh Palace

GULZAR MAHAL

Gulzar Mahal is a palace situated in Bahawalpur. It was built in between 1906 and 1909. This palace is a surviving example of Indo- Saracenic architecture. During the reign of Sadiq Muhammad Khan, this palace was commissioned. The purpose of

building this palace was to build a residence for queen and also for the female members of the royal household of the princely state of Bahawalpur. Since 1966 the palace has been leased to the Pakistan Army and the general public is not allowed to visit this palace.









Figure 58 Gulzar Mahal

5. ROYAL GRAVEYARD

The Shahi Graveyard is located near Derawar Fort in Cholistan. It was built by the Abbasid rulers for the royal members. The ruling family of the Bahawalpur were the Nawabs of Abbasid family, and all of the previous Nawabs are buried in this graveyard. The surviving family members of the Nawabs are still the owner of this graveyard and it is still under their control. There are also many single tombs other than the main rectangular tomb, in which the wives, the brothers and the sisters of Nawabs are buried. These tombs have a beautiful architecture, having typical blue paintwork of Sindh and Punjab. A few of them are in marble and burnt bricks. It was a completely private domain of the royals. Only the members of the royal family were buried there. Outside the graveyard, there was a little settlement of the herd owners and cattlemen. The key of the graveyard always remains with the elder of the family. The graveyard was well maintained and a high wall was constructed around the graveyard.







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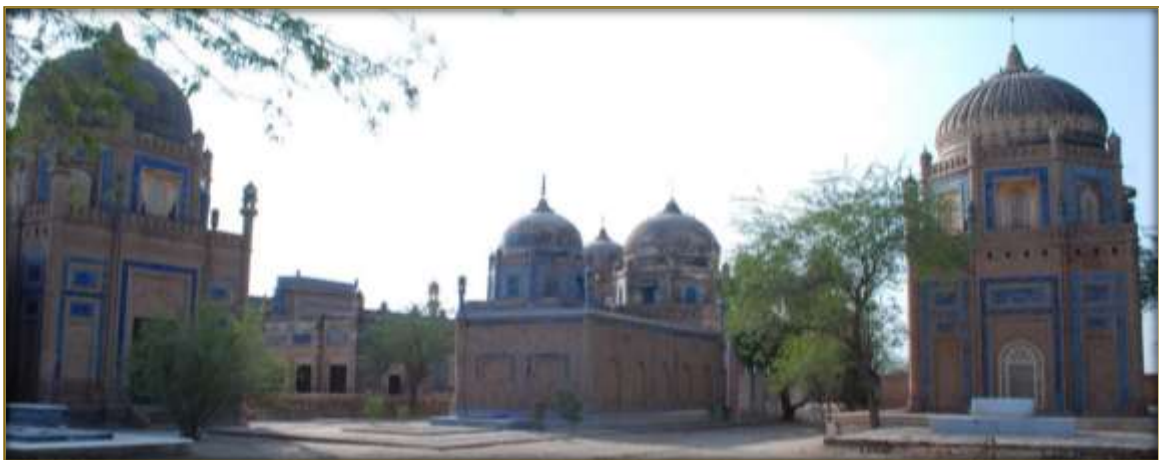
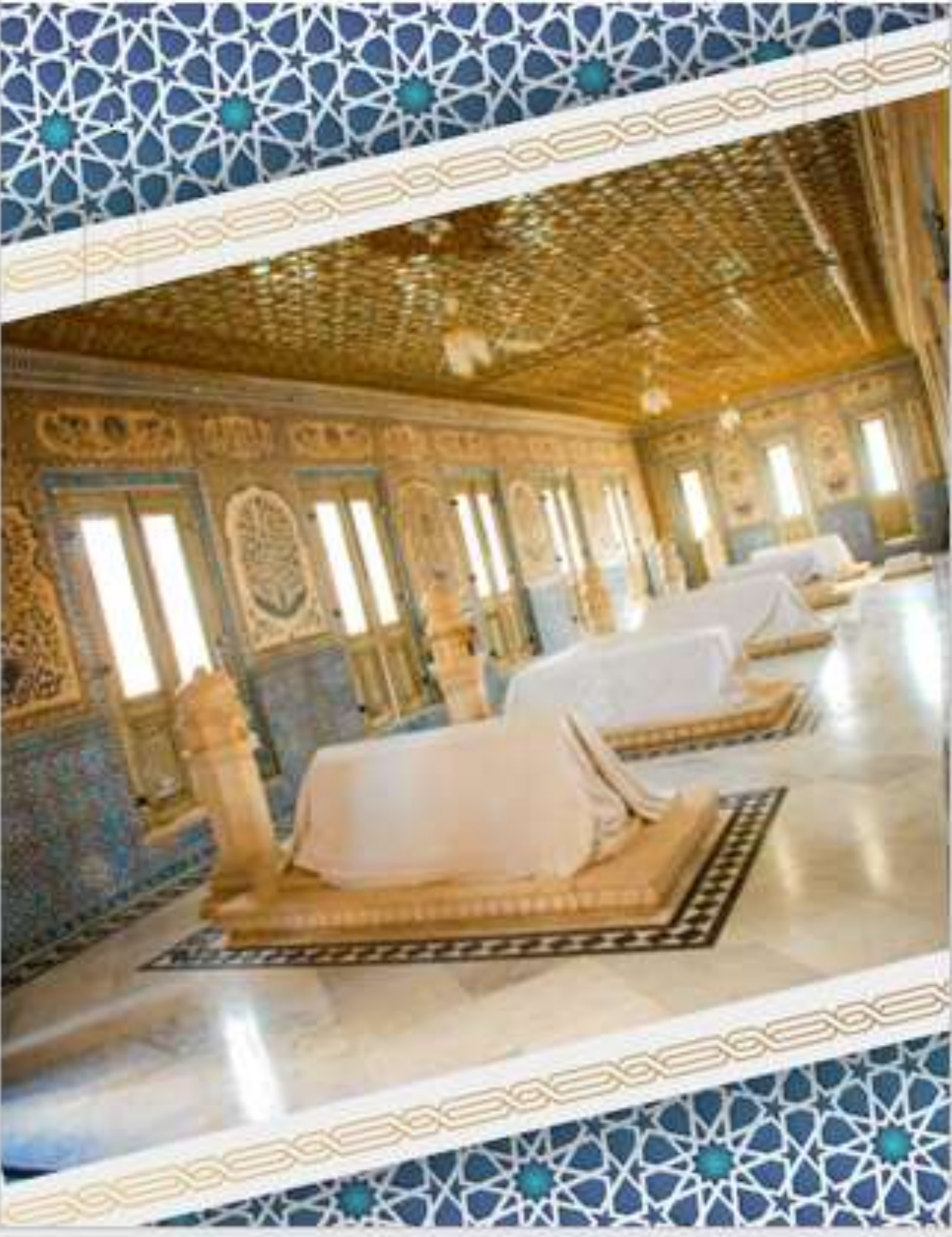


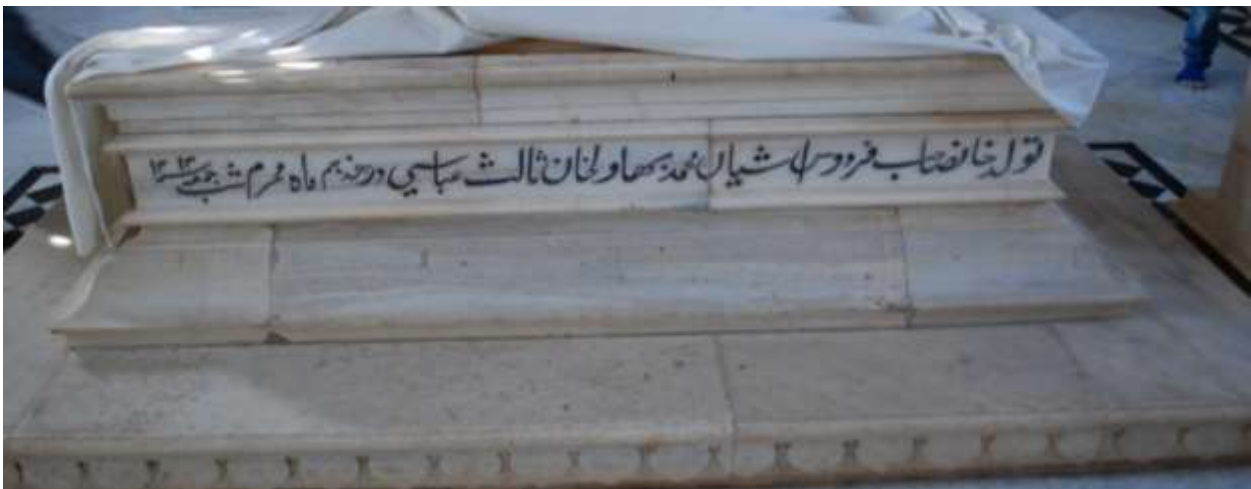
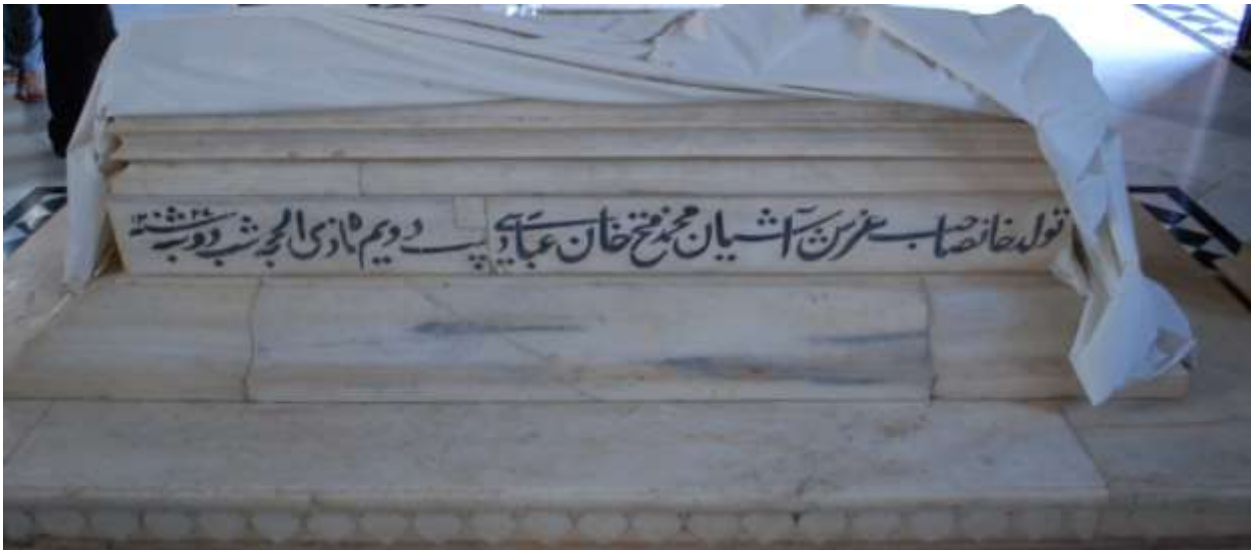
Figure 59 Abbasi Royal Graveyard, Derawar, Cholistan

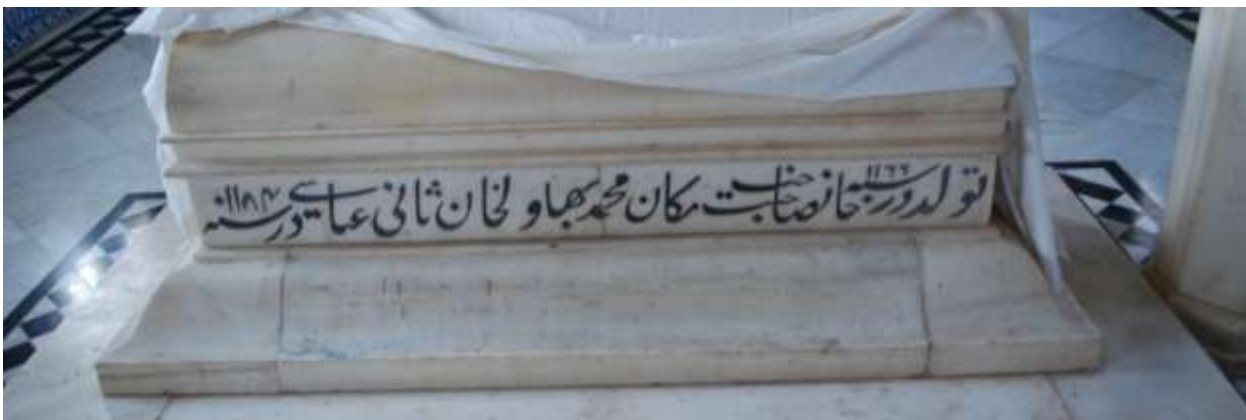
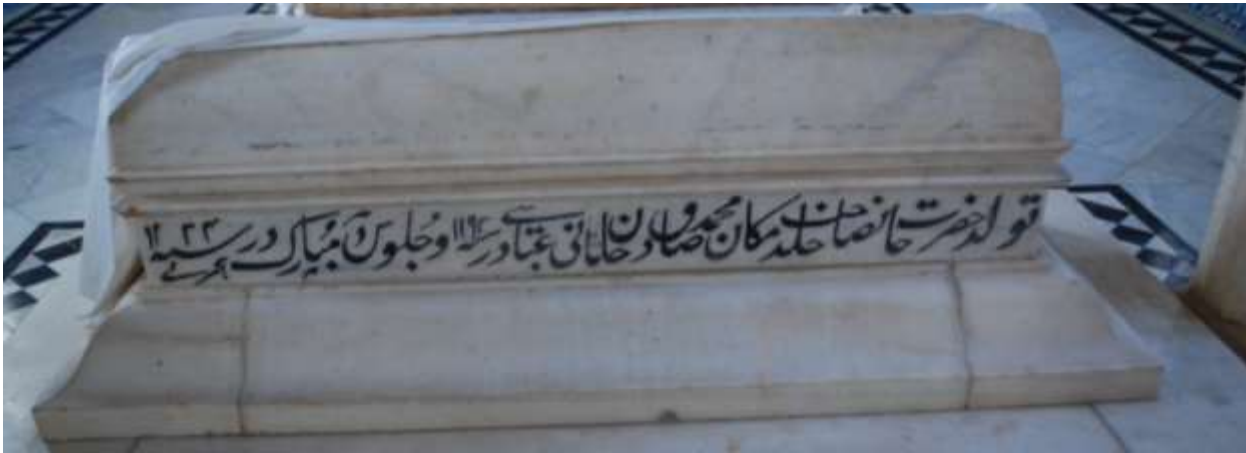
GRAVES OF NAWABS











6. BRITISH PERIOD BUILDINGS

BORSTAL JAIL

It was built in 1882 at the district headquarters of Bahawalpur. The British authorities helped the state to launch various training programs for the prisoners.



Figure 60 Borstal Jail, Bahawalpur

GOVERNMENT SADIQ COLLEGE WOMEN UNIVERSITY

In 1944, Nawab Sir Sadiq Khan Abbasi V established the college as an intermediate college. It was promoted to a degree college in 1957. In 2010, the college was upgraded to a post-graduate college once more, with the addition of Masters level programs. The College was accepted as a full-fledged university in December 2012.

It is Bahawalpur Division's only women's university, delivering excellent education to female students.



Figure 61 Government Sadiq College Women University

RAILWAY BRIDGE

The railway bridge on Sutlej River was built in 1826 during the reign of Nawab Bahawal Khan III by the British rulers for transporting goods and passengers. In order to construct a strong structure, long iron bars were joined together, and hundreds of labourers worked day and night to complete the mighty structure. Earlier, the bridge used to have one track and only one train could pass from Bahawalpur State. However, in 1926, the renovation and up-gradation of the railway track project were given to Rendel Palmer and Tritton Consulting Engineering Firm. The firm completed the project in three years and by 1929, the line was upgraded to two tracks. The route connects Upper Punjab to Sindh and is still considered the most vital part of the trade in this zone.



Figure 62 Colonial Period Railway Bridge, Bahawalpur

BAHAWALPUR'S ISLAMIA UNIVERSITY

Jamia Abbasia, Bahawalpur's Islamia University, was founded in 1925. Bahawalpur's Nawab was the first ruler of a princely state to lend his complete support and resources to the crown's war operations when World War II broke out in 1939. It was built during the reign of Muhammad Sadiq Khan-IV. During their student years, Nawab Bahawal Khan and Nawab Sadiq Muhammad Khan resided there. Bahawal House Lahore was given to the British government as a hospital in Multan during the First World War. In this context, there was also a Bahawal House, which was given to the British government. Victoria Hospital was founded in 1906 by Nawab Muhammad Bahawal Khan. Nawab Bahawal Khan enjoyed excellent ties with his neighbours. He used to sit in the gig of four ponies, wearing an Egyptian-style cap and Turkish faraak and general society would give him warm reception. He offered Hajj and, on his return, died in Adan in 1907. After his demise, Sadiq Muhammad Khan, who was just 3-years old, was given the throne.



Figure 63 Bahawalpur's Islamia University

SADIQ EGERTON COLLEGE BAHAWALPUR

Sadiq Muhammad Khan IV (Ameer of Bahawalpur) and Robert Egerton (Governor of Punjab) made the historical institution in Bahawalpur in 1886. This was called as Govt. Sadiq Egerton College because of their names. This old and historical college served the people of the state and region from 1886 to date.



Figure 64 Sadiq Dain High School, Bahawalpur

BRITISH PERIOD STEAM ENGINE

The engine marked No 1834/1902 with insignia "The Vulcan Foundry Ltd, Newton-Le-Willows, Lancashire", is about a century old. It has been shifted to the museum from the Head Panjnad Colony where it has been lying for the past several years.

History shows that the engine, along with its two passenger coaches and a back cart, was used to transport material from Ahmedpur East to Panjnad Colony for the construction of Head Panjnad in 1935. For this purpose, a 35-kilometre rail track was set up between Ahmadpur East and Head Panjnad site via Uch Sharif. The

engine continued to roll between Ahmedpur East and Head Panjnad till the completion of the project in 1938. Later, it was dumped at an abandoned place in Panjnad Colony.



Figure 65 The British Period Steam Engine

MUSEUM IN BAHAWALPUR

Bahawalpur Museum displays items ranging from calligraphy to artefacts from Mohenjodaro, Cholistan, and Harappa. It is less than 1km southeast of Farid Gate. The museum is divided into a Pakistan Movement Gallery of photos, an Islamic Arts Gallery of arms, textiles, graphic arts, and metalware; an Archaeological Gallery, a Coins & Medals Gallery with items minted by the former state of Bahawalpur; an Ethnological Gallery with handicrafts from Cholistan and Bahawalpur; a Fabrics Gallery with costumes from the region and a Manuscripts & Calligraphy Gallery.



Figure 66 Different views of Museum in Bahawalpur

CENTRAL LIBRARY

The Central Library building is a monument of the Raj era. The architecture is firmly British colonial style. The foundation stone of the library was laid on March 8, 1924, by two men: Sir Rufus Daniel Issacs, the Earl of Reading, who was also the viceroy and Governor-General of India, and the Amir of Bahawalpur. Back then, Bahawalpur State was ruled by Nawab Sir Sadiq Muhammad Khan V and was one of the wealthiest princely states in the Raj- prominent enough for even Queen Victoria to have visited. The state was later the biggest donor of funds and property when Pakistan was created and finally acceded in 1951.



Figure 67 Façade of Central Library, State Period, Bahawalpur

BAHAWAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL

It became a Civil Hospital with an outdoor department, a dispensary, and a working theatre in 1876. In 1906, this health unit was named Bahawal Victoria Hospital. In 1952, an extension of Nursing School Classes was added.



Figure 68 Bahawal Victoria Hospital

It is now a 2200-bed, fully equipped, tertiary-care hospital with all medical and surgical specialties, serving large number of patients in south Punjab. It facilitates undergraduate medical students of Quaid-e-Azam Medical College, nursing students of allied nursing school, paramedics and many post-graduate trainees.

BAHAWALPUR ZOO

This zoo became shaped in 1942 at a 25-acre vicinity of a zoological garden in Bahawalpur. The zoo loans Asiatic lions, Bengal tigers, and wild cats to different zoos in the country. The Zoo has an aquarium and zoological museum with mammals, reptiles, and crammed birds. The different animals in the zoo are jackals, home cats, Indian civet cat, hyenas, Indian Civet Cat, Cranes, Pelicans, Geese, Hog Deer, Blackbuck, Chinkara, European mouflon, and European pink deer.



Figure 69 Bahawalpur Zoo

7. RAILWAY STATIONS

DERA BAKHA RAILWAY STATION

Dera Bakha is a small town located on the outskirts of Bahawalpur city, at an approximate distance of 20 Kms, on the Bahawalpur/ Hasilpur road. The railway station is also located and named after the town, hence called Dera Bakha railway Station.



Figure 70 Dera Bhakka Railway Station



Figure 71 Aerial View of the Dera Bhaka Station showing the railway Track, Station, Well, Towers, Chawki and the Road – Bahawalpur/Hasilpur

The station is unique in its architectural setting as well. It is not an isolated building, but unlike other stations, it has other structures including a station, chawki, pumping Station, well and towers.



Figure 72 Dera Bakha Railway Station and the Town in the Background



Figure 73 The Chaowki at Dera Bakha Station



Figure 74 The Tower at the Dera Bakha Station



Figure 75 The Structures at the Railway Station

8. SHRINES

Kala Dhari Mandir which is located on a Phattay Wali Gali in Bahawalpur. It was built by Marathas. The mandir is around 300 years old. It is another ruined, abandoned, and non-functional temple near the Derawar fort. The authorities removed its original doors to place them in the museum, however only the main door is in the museum. However, its 2 to 3 walls are still somewhat intact with a visible dome. There is a story about this temple that an underground tunnel leads to delhi to this temple but there is no evidence about that. The Hindu community demands the restoration of the temple from the Government, so that their community can go there for their religious practices of worshipping and to hold their festivals in this temple.



Figure 76 Kala Dhari Mandir

CHANNAN PIR

It is a village which is located at a distance of 65 KM from Bahawalpur. It is famous for having a shrine of a sufi saint who is buried here in this village. As he wished, he was buried in an open grave covered with a green cloth. The shrine has a significant importance for the hundreds of people. Every year in the month of February a festival is celebrated in the Cholistan desert, the mela bears the name of the Channan Pir. The devotees come from all over the country to celebrate his death anniversary, commonly known as Urs, for 7 consecutive Thursdays. Both the Hindus and Muslims participate as one in different events of celebrations in this festival. The events include Sufi dancing, camel dancing and many other activities.





4 SAHABA GRAVE'S TOMB OR GRAVES OF PROPHET'S COMPANIONS

These graves are located at a distance of 2-3 minutes walk from Derawar Fort. There are some graves outside a small room and there are four graves inside the room which are believed to be the graves of companions of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H). Their names are Hazrat Tahir (ra), Hazrat Jawad (ra), Hazrat Jawaar (ra), Hazrat Tayib (ra). On their graves their time spent with the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) is also mentioned. These graves are open for everyone and people who visit Derawar fort, also visit these graves and pray for their souls.



DADI KARAM SHRINE

The shrine of Dadi Karam is located in the east of Rahim Yar Khan about 70 Kilometres near the border in Cholistan Desert. Due to her message of love and harmony people from both the religions i.e. Hindus and Muslims visit her shrine and she is equally popular in both religions. It is believed that she used to serve the travellers coming from Rajasthan, India, with water and milk. She made sure that no one would leave thirsty from her place.



KHAWAJA NOOR MUHAMMAD

The shrine of Hazrat Khawaja Noor Muhammad Maharvi (R.A) is located in Chishtian, Bahawalnagar. He is known for his spirituality and his islamic teachings. Every year in the month of Zil hajj his Urs is celebrated. People from all over the country visit his shrine for the celebration of Urs.





9. MOSQUES

DERAWAR FORT MOSQUE

The mosque is located within the Derawar Fort complex in Yazman Tehsil within the Cholistan desert in Bahawalpur district. This mosque is known as Abbasi Mosque. It was built in 1849. It was built on the orders of Nawab Bahawal Khan. The Abbasi mosque has three domes at the main building and one at the entrance. There are four minarets. The mosque is built in Mughal Style architecture, it has beautiful arches, calligraphy and decorative marble work. Almost one thousand people can pray at a time in this mosque.

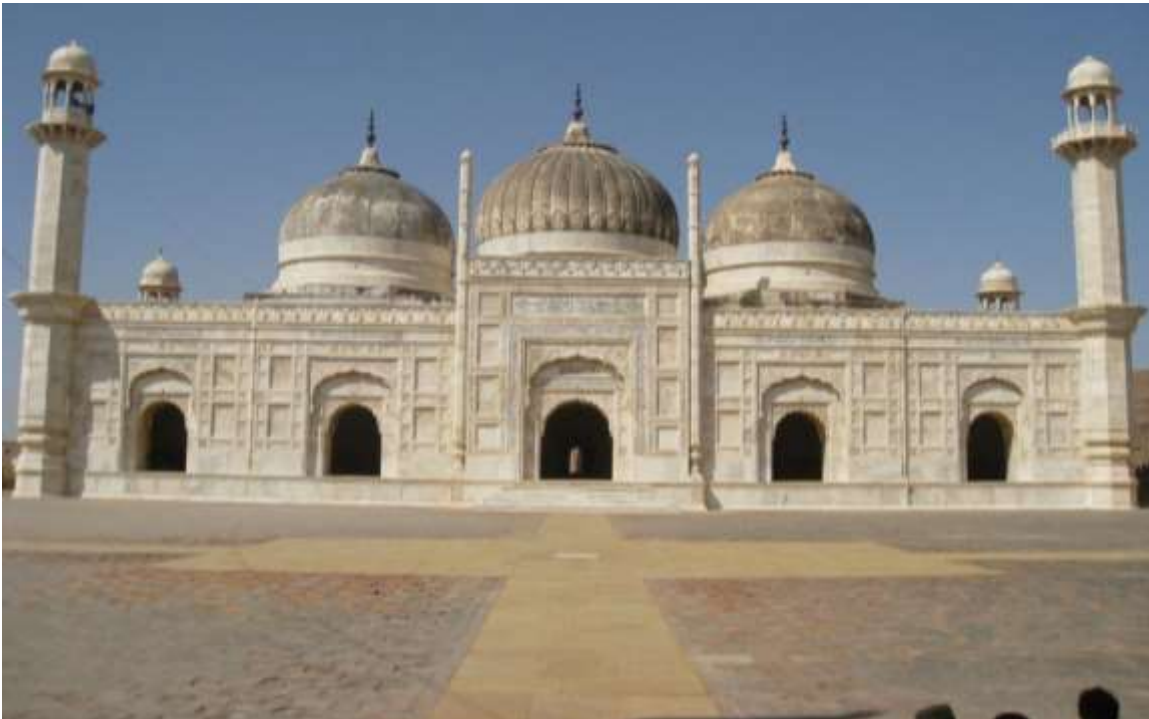


Figure 77 Abbasi Mosque, Derawar, Cholistan



Figure 78 Abbasi Mosque, Derawar, Cholistan



EID GAH BAHAWALPUR

The Eid Gah mosque of Bahawalpur is located at Shikarpuri gate. It is a central place for the people of Bahawalpur where they offer Eid prayers, Friday prayers and the funeral prayers.



Figure 79 Eidgah Bahawalpur



Figure 80 A view of Mosque and Fort

B

JAMIA MOSQUE BAHAWALPUR

Jamia Mosque Bahawalpur is a large mosque. Noor Muhammad Maharvi who was a great sufi and the spiritual master of Nawab of Bahawalpur, laid the foundation of this mosque. The building has about 21 domes; each about 16 feet in diameter, supported by pillars. Its main praying hall is quite spacious, and the courtyard is quite vast. The mosque covers an area of 24 canals and almost 60000 people can pray at a time in this mosque.



Figure 81 Al-Sadiq Mosque, State Period, Bahawalpur



THE GHAZI MOSQUE

The Ghazi Mosque at Bhung village is a picture of the craftsmanship of local artisans. The mosque has three marble domes, a picturesque verandah, and a colorful main hall with a very beautiful golden dome. The use of white and green marble, mirror work, and stained glass reflects light and creates beautiful images even in the low light of night. Its decoration includes Quranic inscriptions in golden colors including Islamic decorative motifs, and pencil-shaped small minarets. The mosque is a rare combination of Central Asian, Mughal, Iranian, and Saracen architecture. This is the mosque that received the Agha Khan award for the year 1986 for its uniqueness and diversity in style and can be considered to be a jewel in the desert.



Figure 82 Ghazi Mosque (Different Views)



ST. DOMINIC'S CHURCH

St. Dominic's Church was built in 1962. The parish also has a convent. In Bahawalpur, there are about 2,000 Catholic families and about 250 churches devoted to Pakistani families. Christians in the Pakistani community do not have a place of worship, so they were suggested to use St. Dominic's Church for their Sunday morning services. Father Zafar Iqbal, the first Pakistani Dominican priest, served as the local priest of St. Dominic's Church until his death on February 19, 2009, when he died in a motorbike accident.



Figure 83 St. DominicChurch, Bahawalpur

10. TRADITIONAL CHOLISTANI ARCHITECTURE

THE CHOISTANI HUTS

The huts are mostly found in the deep desert and close to the water tobas. These are semi-permanent settlements of the people living there with their animals. They use wood, reed, and palm tree leaves for the construction of these huts, which are mostly circular in shape. The overall environment of and around these small settlements reminds us of the typical nomadic style of the ancient people of Cholistan. The local culture is still existing in the tiny settlement.







The second part of the local heritage can be found along the mainland or at the edges of the desert. These areas are developing rapidly due to the ample availability of clean water. At the same time, gradual decline is also appearing and can be noticed everywhere. The people who used to build their houses by using clay/sun dried bricks and wood, are changing their approach. They have started using burnt bricks and cement. This element of urbanization has affected the local texture and style of building. They are also unaware with the fact that the new development is neither environmental nor eco friendly. However, ramanat of the old style of buildings are still there but in abandoned form. In order to save the originality of the region, the traditional building style needs to saved and patronized.





Figure 84 A Beautiful Example of the Traditional Local Architecture

11. CRAFTS OF CHOLISTAN

CROSS STITCH

In the cross stitch the needle is brought out at the lower right hand side. After that the needle is inserted four threads up and four threads to the left and then brought four threads down. In this way a half cross stitch is completed. The other half is completed by doing the same process. This stitch can be done from left to right or vice versa. The important thing is that the upper half of all the stitches lie in one direction.

DOUBLE CROSS STITCH

In this a cross stitch is done at first, then the needle is brought out four threads down and two threads to the left. After doing this the needle is inserted four threads up and brought out two threads to the left and two threads down. Following to this the needle is inserted to the right and brought out two threads down and four threads to the left in readiness to continue the next stitch or complete it at the back for a single double cross stitch.

BUTTON STITCH

This stitch is done from left to right. Firstly the needle is brought out on the lower line, then the needle is inserted directly above and a straight downward stitch is made by pulling the needle through over the working threads. A row of stitches aligned straightly with a closely knotted edge on the lower line is formed.

FEATHER STITCH

This stitch is done from right to left. The needle is brought through above the centre line of design. A small stitch is taken to the left, below the line catching the thread under the point of the needle. A series of stitches above and below the central line is made continuously, catching the thread under the needle each time. This results in a parallel line of stitches linked by a zigzag line. In the third step a knot is tightened and processed as the first stitch was done.

DOUBLE FEATHER STITCH

Its working is done same as the feather stitch but two stitches are taken in each direction.

CHAIN STITCH

In this stitch the thumb is used constantly so that the thread can be held in place for successive links.

MUQQAISH

It is embroidery with silver or gold plated copper thread on silky fabrics. The string of muqqaish used to be of pure silver. It is manufactured in Hyderabad Sind. This work is suitable on China Silk or other fabrics like crinkle, chiffon, lawn, georgette and silk. Its quality is measured in terms of weight. People also prefer muqqaish on Chunri. The different designs of muqqaish are Elfie, Chawal, Patti, Fish, button and phooldar designs.

AAR WORK

It is a very special type of embroidery. It is done by Cholistani women. Usually this work is done on headcrafts(dopattas), shirts also known as kurtas and on a long sheet of cloth that is chaddar which is used by women to cover their heads. The aar work is done by using silk thread that is resham, kora, naqshi, dabki, needle and aar. Wooden adda is used to fix cloth on it and with the help of aar kora and thread is applied on it. Needle is used for moti work and aar is used for embroidery. Different designs are used by tracing them from other sources.

OKAIR SAZI

It is the art of preparing a minute floral design on paper and then cutting the design as cutwork. These cut designs are pasted on the uppers or pannas of local shoes and then the embroidery is done according to design of cutwork. This is the special type of aar work which is done by women on leather. A wooden piece is held on the upper of shoes which is called daljeena , which is held between their knees. Then the tilla is applied , gold or silver thread on this leather with the help of aar.

GINDI WORK/APPLIQUE WORK

It is primarily used as a bed cover, as a floor spread or as a blanket. It is also used as decoration pieces and cholistani people also cover them with gindis in winter season. It resembles a mosaic work in which hundreds of small square and triangular pieces of cloth of different colours in an aesthetic combination of different colours and beautiful designs are put together.

TARQASHI

The reshmi(silk) thread is applied on cloth with the help of a needle and wooden frame. The woman makes designs according to her own mind. The thread is put in a long direction and then the thread in width form and the cloth on a frame is fixed and chain stitch is made with a needle. Flowers of Kashmiri stitch are also made along with the chain stitch. Kashmiri stitch is made in tarqashi work using reshmi nalki or reel for it.

12. GLIMPSES OF LIFE IN CHOLISTAN

The different shades of day to day life in Cholistan is fascinating and a treat to watch.



















Figure 85 Different views of Cholistan Li



