

## **CHAPTER 14**

### **CULTURAL HERITAGE & SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

The North West Frontier Province possesses a unique cultural heritage. It has many fascinating buildings, archaeological monuments, human cultures, native tribes, and folklore that are the product of a rich cultural history enhanced by the natural beauty of the varied landscapes of the province. The cultural heritage includes a sense of identity, place, and meaning that has influenced successive generations and their living traditions.

Heritage resources have both social and economic value: they can stimulate tourism, business enterprise, entrepreneurship, research, and academic interest; they can provide visual and recreational enjoyment for residents and visitors alike; and they can serve a wide range of practical functions within a community. The challenge that faces the NWFP now is to use these advantages while ensuring that the cultural resources are conserved for future generations. Like any resource or asset, they must be used wisely and not be squandered for once gone, they cannot be replaced.

Unfortunately, many of the provincial historic sites, monuments, buildings, natural sites, distinct human culture and tribes, and unique traditions are rapidly deteriorating and disappearing. While natural forces have in part been responsible for this, it is also being accelerated by human intervention. The reasons for this neglect are deeply rooted in economic, social, educational, political, and legislative indifference.

#### **14.1 Key Issues Regarding the NWFP's Heritage**

##### **14.1.1 Archaeological Resources**

The NWFP is the only region in Pakistan where a complete cultural profile from the Stone Age to the Islamic period has been established through excavations done by various organizations. These archaeological treasures represent the glory and grace of civilizations in the past, and they badly need attention for their preservation and protection before they disappear forever. Previously, most of the attention focused on the excavations but very little effort has been applied to the subsequent conservation and preservation of the sites and monuments. Lay people are often unaware of the importance and benefits of this resource, and known sites and monuments are being damaged by current human activities.

Realizing the need for the preservation of archaeological and cultural heritage, the Government of NWFP created the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in 1992. It has excavated ancient sites at various places, such as village Dina in District Swabi and the village of Aziz Dheri in District Charsadda. Work is still in progress, and antiquities are being shifted to museums. The directorate has also completed the conservation and restoration of the arched gateway of Edwards High School, Peshawar, as well as the excavation of nine baolies (step-wells) in Peshawar Valley. The restoration on these baolies has already started.

The University of Peshawar is also playing an important role in the excavation, conservation, and preservation of archaeological assets of the province. The Department of Archaeology in the University, the only one in the country to award a

Master's degree in Archaeology, has successfully excavated many archeological sites in the province since its establishment. Recently, with the financial assistance of the Norwegians, it has started conservation and preservation of the Shikh Imam Dean Tomb, near Peshawar.

To prevent further deterioration and decay of these resources, future programmes for archaeological resource development must concentrate on the preservation and conservation of both potential and previously excavated sites and monuments. A survey of all the excavated sites is needed to identify and select those whose existence is in danger and those that require immediate conservation and restoration. A public awareness programme is also needed to highlight the importance of the sites. The economic benefits of these sites for the local communities need to be identified.

Many existing sites need to be strictly protected from encroachments. The infrastructure facilities and means of communication in and around these sites and monuments need to be upgraded and improved, with publicity campaigns nationally and internationally to make them attractive to tourists and to maximize economic benefits for local communities. Future conservation and preservation programmes must also be based on strong elements of local community involvement.

To sustain the development of archaeological resources of the NWFP for future generations and to recognize the historic and cultural importance and economic potential both for local communities and for the province, the roles and responsibilities of the Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums and the provincial directorates need to be more clearly defined. The powers and functions under the Antiquities Act, 1975, should be devolved from the Federal to provincial Government, and the Act should be reviewed to allow for sustainable development of the cultural resources of the province. Meanwhile, the possibility of provincial legislation for cultural conservation also needs to be explored. Further collaboration and linkages between the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, the Archaeology Department of Peshawar University, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working for cultural heritage preservation need to be strengthened in order to capitalize on mutual experiences, technical capabilities, and human resources.

#### **14.1.2 Architectural Resources & Historic Buildings**

There are a wide range of practical reasons why the buildings and monuments of the NWFP should be preserved. No building, whether old or new, exists in isolation. It is part of the fabric of society and interacts with social, economic, political, technical, and ecological systems. The rapid deterioration of many historic monuments in the NWFP represents a misunderstanding of their economic importance. Without these buildings, little will be left of the material culture of the province. Traditional buildings provide models and a history of how architecture has evolved in the region to meet the local requirements of materials, labour, and climate. Building conservation is labour intensive, but would create employment and business for small-scale builders. The change of use of pre-served buildings may in itself generate new local economic opportunities, as heritage houses are, for example, transformed into museums, galleries, hotels, and rest houses.

The conservation and preservation of historic monuments in the NWFP is growing more urgent. The Government is aware of the need to conserve the cultural heritage

of the province and to restore the NWFP to its formal glory. In 1986, the Peshawar Development Planning Programme identified the significance of cultural assets in the old city of Peshawar.

The Conservation Cell in the Project Management Unit (PMU) of the provincial Urban Development Board took the initiative and prepared a pilot conservation scheme, the Conservation and Rehabilitation of Historical Buildings in Peshawar, for the old city of Peshawar. This had three components: the Gor Khattree complex, the Sethi Houses, and the Kotala Mohsin Khan, selected for their historical significance and architectural quality. The conservation cell in PMU, with the technical assistance of Oxford Brookes University in the United Kingdom and with the close collaboration of the National Heritage Foundation, a local NGO, has completed the documentation of various historic buildings. The conservation work on these sites has already been started by the PMU. However, conservation of individual sites and buildings will have only a slight impact on the region. There is an urgent need for the conservation and preservation of historically and culturally important buildings and sites in the NWFP within a comprehensive framework of heritage interpretation.

### **14.1.3 Museums**

There are four museums in the NWFP, located in Peshawar, Chakdara, Saidu Sharif, and Mardan. The museum at Peshawar is the largest facility and serves as the central museum in the province. The museums in Peshawar and Chakdara were man-aged, administratively and financially, by independent boards of governors until 1992, when the new Directorate of Archaeology and Museums took over management responsibilities. The museum in Saidu Sharif is controlled by the Federal Government. The distribution of museum management and control among the Federal and provincial departments has badly affected the performance and image of these facilities and has constrained their development.

The northern valleys of the NWFP are famous and have a rich legacy of Gandhara, Buddhist, Hindu Shahi, and Islamic civilizations. However, the illegal trade and trafficking of antiques has increased during the past years and requires the immediate attention of the concerned departments and decision makers, to allocate sufficient financial resources and get assistance from donors for the maintenance, upgrading, and extension of services in existing museums. Funds are also required for the establishment of new museums to preserve and protect the historic treasures of the province.

To make the museums self-sufficient in terms of finances, the present entrance fees should be raised, facilities like restaurants and book shops should be provided, trained guide services could be made available at each museum, and national and international publicity about existing museums and their facilities should be improved to attract more visitors.

### **14.1.4 Arts & Crafts**

The arts and crafts of the NWFP show a diversity in their ingenuity, style, and variety, reflecting the lifestyle and behaviour patterns of people living in various parts of the province and their local cultures. Scant attention has been paid to the promotion of art in the province, and many cities and towns (other than Peshawar) do not have proper facilities for musical concerts, dramas, literary gatherings, or art

exhibitions. Also, not enough attention has been given to understanding the role of art and culture in the pro-motion and development of civil society.

The provincial department of tourism, sports, and culture is the lead department for the promotion of cultural arts, but its efforts are small and fragmented. The Abasin Arts Council Peshawar has played a considerable role in the promotion, development, and propagation of arts in the province, but its efforts are limited due to its meagre financial resources. The potential of the Sarhad Arts Council has also been underused, and the regional art councils supported by this group remain under financed. Local radio and television management is also trying to promote and keep local arts alive, but their efforts are constrained by limited resources. Many local musicians have already moved from the province to other parts of the country as there are very few opportunities for local performances. The arts of the province can only be promoted and developed if artists get more opportunities for performance and due recognition from the public and Government. Facilities should be provided at each division level in the province, and more financial resources need to be provided to the Art Councils and to the artists community.

Local radio and television management should provide more opportunities for local artists. The private sector needs to be encouraged to take part in the organization of cultural and art shows.

Handicrafts of the NWFP are in great demand both inside and outside the country. The Small Industrial Development Board (SIDB) of the province has made a very valuable contribution to crafts development and promotion; it has provided training in different crafts, collection and display galleries, marketing, loan facilities to artisans, and promotion centres for various crafts in different parts of the province. SIDB craft and art centres given in Table.

Promotion and development of local crafts and economic incentives for local people are needed. Such efforts could include the establishment of artisan villages at the district level, where common facilities for work, display, marketing, and skills training could be provided to encourage more people to become involved in this profession and contribute to the economic development of the area. Arti san villages would not only provide facilities to the crafts-people, but could also become tourist attractions in their own right. Also, financial institutions and the private sector need to introduce financing schemes for local craft development, marketing, and extension services to provide more opportunities to the artisan community in the province.

<b>ARTS &amp; CRAFT TRAINING CENTRES &amp; MODEL PILOT PROJECTS IN THE NWFP</b>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERSONS TRAINED</b>
<b>Training Centres</b>		
Carpet training centres	16	2,813
Textile handicrafts training & development centre	9	806
Embroidery & knitting centres	6	1,195
Ready-made garments centres	2	119
Arts & crafts galleries display	4	–

<b>Model Pilot Projects</b>		
Wood working centres	8	302
Leather goods service centre	1	92
Electronic development centre	1	75
Ceramic development centre	1	–
Light engineering/metal centre	2	4,088

Source: Shinwari, Ahmad Nawaz. 1993. Small Industry in NWFP: Problems & Prospects. Small Industrial Development Board, Government of NWFP.

## **14.2 Ecological & Cultural Tourism**

Tourism in the NWFP is only in an embryonic state, but it is already causing environmental problems. Pollution and litter left by mountaineering expeditions and trekkers are found in the remote northern areas of the province and this is but one example of the harmful environmental impacts. It is therefore essential that tourism development is environmentally sensitive and responsive to local communities, while remaining attractive to tourists and profitable to trade.

Many schemes to develop tourism in the province have been launched and completed over the last few decades. With the financial assistance of the Austrian Government, ski resort facilities were built at Malam Jabba in Swat. The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation runs hotels and motels in the northern parts of the province and in the Hazara Valley. The chair lift in Ayubia, camping and trekking facilities in Galiat, Kaghan, and Lake Saiful Maluk, and construction of Kund National Park have also been practical steps for the development and promotion of tourism in the province.

In 1991 the Government also set up the Sarhad Tourism Corporation to motivate the private sector to support tourism in the province. There is a need to develop sustainable tourism, a concept that implies that actions taken now should be for the benefit of, and not at the expense of, future generations. Such a system should avoid environmental degradation and excessive resource depletion. Conventional mass tourism is seen as a triangle of forces, with host communities and habitats, visitors, and the tourist industry in a stable relationship. The aim of sustainable tourism is to bring the groups into equilibrium for the long-term benefit of all parties.

To be successful, sustainable tourism needs a system of sophisticated management that is sensitive to heritage and nature, to grassroots community feeling, and to the demands of an increasingly mature and demanding visitor market. So a Cultural Heritage Strategy will be developed with a system of clear planning controls and a model Heritage Trail Network, which will be based on a system of heritage centres of different sizes linked by a transport infrastructure. For this purpose, any village, town, or city with two or more sites may be considered a heritage centre and will be given the capacity to upgrade facilities so as to optimize the social, economic, and historic value of the routes between the sites. Key sites, such as important buildings, can be upgraded first. Subsequently, the routes between them will be developed, and then secondary and tertiary facilities will be upgraded.

Sites will be upgraded initially by setting priorities for particular Heritage Centres. These will be identified as part of a planned and incremental programme for the

implementation of specific heritage trails. Priority will be given to centres that satisfy criteria developed in the Heritage Strategy, that have good access and links to other centres, that involve minimal environmental impact, and that take into account where there is most potential for local community support.

### **14.3 Conserving Human Culture**

The NWFP served as gateway for many civilizations and invaders who came to the Asian subcontinent and had many impacts on the local society and culture. Due to this sequence of cultural invasions, different regions now possess different cultures, values, traditions, norms, and languages. Even the predominant majority, the Pukhtoons, are divided into many tribes; their dialects, customs, traditions, values, and norms vary from tribe to tribe, depending upon the ecology and geography of the area.

The process of transformation and interaction of societies, cultures, and people with others is a continuous phenomenon, and this affects a society's behaviour and human culture to a considerable extent. These processes cannot be stopped, as human nature and culture are not static and stagnant. It is rather a reflection of collective behavior, and as people and individuals change, cultures also undergo changes. Moreover, the administrative setup, the fast pace of development, so-called modernization, and urbanization have induced change in human culture and to an extent have affected the values, traditions, customs, and lifestyles of people in different areas of the NWFP. In the process, people have lost many of the 'original' customs, values, dialects, games, and music that were once an integral part of life and culture. Some human cultures are in danger of disappearing if care is not taken for their survival. Examples of endangered cultures include the Kalash in Chitral Valley and the Kohistani in upper Swat Valley. In addition there are more than 20 separate ethnic groups and many native tribes in different parts of Kohistan.

Efforts are needed to conserve the human cultures of the province, as they represent the rich history and cultural heritage of each area. Special programmes and research are required to study all the human cultures, to document the original pattern of their societies, languages, norms, and customs, and to identify elements that are in difficulty. In light of these studies, a comprehensive programme for the conservation and protection of endangered human culture should be prepared and implemented with the participation of the local communities.

Tourism activities should be strictly controlled in areas where cultural communities are in danger. Alternate social and economic development programmes should be initiated to improve people's socio-economic conditions and to safeguard their survival. Chronological museums should be developed in each such region to display the main features of the human culture of the area and to encourage local crafts-people to keep indigenous arts and crafts alive for future generations.

### **14.4 Conserving Traditional Games & Sports**

The behaviour and the life style of the people of the NWFP is a true reflection of the hard and harsh natural and ecological conditions of the various regions and of people who adopt collective working systems, tribal cultures, and often adventurous ways of life. These elements of human behaviour dominate the entire culture of the people of

the NWFP, and traditions, customs, values, norms, languages, and sports are heavily influenced by these elements. A close look at traditional games and sports indicates that, in addition to recreation, they are aimed at building physical strength; developing an attitude of accepting challenges, adventure, and encounters; improving judgement and response abilities; learning how to share responsibility; and bringing discipline and confidence into a person's life. The basic theme and principles of many of the traditional games and sports played in the various regions of the province are similar, but they are often played under different names, rules, and styles in different areas.

The very well known, commonly played traditional games and sports, largely for young men, in various parts of the NWFP include nezabazi, kabady, mukha, Polo, yunda, guthka, lambi coodi, ano doghal, cheetrung, guli danda, toop danda, and pididi uthana. For very young boys, there are dubgub, dull doghal, perpatoonia, soraly, and shinki. Young and little girls play merghate, laluna, chen-duru, dabaly, guda gudi, and tapnitapane. These are all important and significant in the rich folklore of the NWFP's cultural heritage, but many of them are disappearing. Steps must be taken to conserve and pro-mote these traditional games and sports before they are lost forever.

To promote these traditional games and sports, to keep them known and alive for future generations, people need to be encouraged to play them both in villages and in urban areas. This can be done by arranging an annual festival and regional competition at the provincial level. The Shandur Pass Polo tournament and its publicity are the best example of how a traditional sport or activity can be maintained. People should be urged to participate and demonstrate their skills and command on these traditional games and sports. The provincial Government's Sports and Culture Department will take a lead in the organization of such a festival, along with the private sector. Later, there can be a permanent partnership in the organization of such festivals at different locations and in the provision of sponsorships to teams, players, and sports managers of the traditional games. This will not only help promote the traditional games, it will also give people a chance to familiarize themselves with the folklore of other parts of the province.

## **14.5 Commitments**

During the next three years, a commitment is made to:

- ?? seek delegation of powers to the provincial Directorate of Archaeology and Museums under the Federal Antiquities Act, 1975;
- ?? survey potential or excavated sites, monuments, and historic buildings whose existence is in danger, and document them in monographs;
- ?? get the Government to take over the identified endangered archaeological and historic sites;
- ?? prepare an action plan that assigns priorities to the conservation of endangered sites, monuments, and historic buildings;
- ?? improve the Peshawar museum with the aim of eventually having it support

- itself;
- ?? review and strengthen the provincial Directorate of Archaeology and Museums and Sarhad Tourism Corporation;
  - ?? prepare the nominations of the important archeological sites for the UNESCO World Heritage list;
  - ?? initiate measures to manage tourism sustainably in over crowded areas such as Kalam;
  - ?? prepare a programme for cultural heritage and eco-tourism development and a phased development of heritage trail networks in different parts of the province, beginning with the cultural heritage trail in Peshawar;
  - ?? establish at least one artisan village on a pilot basis in the province;
  - ?? carry out a research study on the different human cultural systems in the province to document the original pattern of those societies their norms, customs, traditions, language, dresses, arts and crafts, sculpture, beliefs and life-style;
  - ?? restore management of the museums to autonomous boards and undertake a self-financing scheme for their maintenance under the frame-work of cultural heritage trails;
  - ?? develop a programme to strengthen and support cultural NGOs and facilitate them to assist in the implementation of this strategy;
  - ?? give wide publicity at the national and the international level to the cultural heritage of the NWFP;
  - ?? initiate measures to control tourism in threatened cultural areas such as Chitral, Swat, and Kohistan;
  - ?? initiate provincial cultural conservation legislation; and
  - ?? organize a provincial-level annual festival of traditional games and sports in Peshawar and facilitate the organization of such festivals elsewhere in the province each year.

Over the long-term, a commitment is made to:

- ?? continue implementation of the programme for cultural heritage and tourism, and review and amend it as necessary;
- ?? continue the institution-strengthening programmes;

- ?? complete the conservation of endangered sites and historic buildings;
- ?? review the experience of the artisan villages and create more if feasible;
- ?? construct four more museums in different divisions of the province;
- ?? construct seven public galleries in all divisions of the province; and
- ?? continue to facilitate the organization of an annual festival of traditional games and sports;
- ?? complete the implementation of the cultural heritage trail network.