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An Unsung *Pathan* Clan: Tales of Pakistan's Overlooked Communities

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Abstract:

It is a historical fact that Pakistani society, with its rich outlook, pleasant exposure, and fascinating tales, is composed of several communities, each with its own social fabric, subculture, and identity, entrenched in its beliefs and mindset. This diversity is a strength of the society on one hand, if the people are satisfied with their mode of life. At the same time, it reflects ethnic fissures, social layers, and economic chasms, as they face the hardships in economic or social aspects of life or the blurring of their identity. Several Scholars of the current era posit that the diversity of an inclusive society is its beauty; whereas, the voices of smaller, overlooked groups should not go unheard, because communities in remote villages, such as the Pathan community in Golewali, District Khushab, are usually more sensitive in this respect. This article uncovers one of the stories from overlooked communities in society and reflects on the ongoing interplay between identity and cohesion through inductive reasoning. It is also a typical research, which persuades writers to uncover similar stories for encouraging lovely diversity in our society.

Key Words: *Pakistani Society, Diversity, Communities, Tribes, Pashtun, Tribal Identity, Clans, Niazis, Unity in Society.*

Introduction:

The history of Pakistani Society spans centuries, with large-scale population movements for trade, transformation, and settlement shaping it into its present configuration. Simultaneously, it is marred by a lot of debate because Pakistani society is combination of various communities with unique identities, and traditional narratives that are frequently overlooked (Bates, 2003, p. 03). This research work focuses on the identical tale of a Pathan clan, living in the far-flung village of Golewali, District Khushab. Its journey through its life span is marked by resilience and struggle to maintain its identity. It is not only a tale of an overlooked community but also a typical example of countless such groups across Pakistan, especially in Punjab, facing various challenges (Markovits, Pouchepadass, & Subrahmanyam, 2003). This article manifests that the identity of this clan lies at the crossroads of Punjabi and Pathan subcultures by studying its tribal affiliations, demographic structure, and socio-economic contributions,. It also shed light on a community often overlooked in historical accounts.

The Niazis, a clan of the Pathan tribe, trace their roots to the Betanni branch, whose origins are linked to the mythical figure Qais Abdul Rashid (al-Harawi, 1986, pp. 84-9; Caroe,

1958, pp. 8-15; Quddus, 1987, pp. 20-25). However, current genetic studies suggest that their heritage is linked to Iranian and Central Asian zones, mingled with South Asian influences (Achakzai, et al., 2012, pp. 304-310; Firasat, et al., 2007, pp. 121-126). It is a unique story of the *Saddo Khel* Clan, which, along with other Niazi clans, migrated from Sulgar and Logar, areas of Afghanistan near Ghazni, to Mianwali and then to Khushab (Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi, 2003, pp. 692,698,703). During the migration, they faced various challenges, including tribal conflicts, resource scarcity, geographic hardships, and seclusion from their Pashtun Tribes. However, their transformation of lifestyle and advancement from a far-flung settlement to a modern, cohesive community with worldwide ties highlight their adaptability. The *Saddo Khel* clan, particularly, living in UC Golewali, District Khushab, is proud of its village, which is known for its scenic beauty and numerous historical sites around it; among its people are many notable figures. However, people are struggling with unmet requirements and contentious appreciation, similar to several overlooked communities. Despite their remarkable role and rich legacy, the historical records of the colonial era, like the Shahpur and Khushab Districts (D C Shahpur, 1897, pp. 8,97; D C Khushab, 2021, pp. 16,58) often presented them as a Pathan clan in a stereotypical manner while overlooking their contributions as good agriculturists and hospitable persons (Caroe, 1958, p. xvi).

It is a reality that Pakistani society is a fascinating combination of diverse communal identities, social fabrics, and cultural shades enriched by the historical events and socio-political dynamics of Southeast Asia. Scholars such as Roth (1995, pp. 163-75) and Deol (1995) examine the interplay between diversity and social cohesion, highlighting that these are distinctions of a pluralistic society. The same is true of Pakistan; however, the cultural richness of Pakistani society is both its strength and its challenges, marked by social legacies, ethnic identities, and economic disparities (Alam, Bhatti, & Khan, 2022, pp. 122-143). Communitarian scholars who also emphasize the role of communities in a society which shape moral values and social practices to maintain identity. They offer an alternative discourse to understand these dynamics, challenging the overemphasis on individual liberty in liberal ideologies (Kymlicka, 2002, pp. 208-9). They postulate that inclusive pluralism demands recognising diverse identities, addressing grievances, and promoting policies of fair treatment that can integrate smaller groups into society, fostering social integration and national unity (Jamal & Khan, 2022, pp. 1-15).

This research, drawing on data and information from various publications, District Gazetteers, Census Reports, Interviews, Electronic Media, and the author's firsthand knowledge as a Golewali resident and community member, highlights an overlooked community through an analytical, descriptive approach. It aims to address the challenges confronting smaller communities in a specific area while encouraging further studies to uncover their contributions and significance, thereby enhancing their positive role in society.

Theoretical Framework:

(A) Significance of Communities:

Communitarianism is an ideology that describes the significance of communities in a society, which helps in knowing its legacy, current situation, and prospects, unlike liberal theories that emphasise only individual liberty. Communitarianism emphasizes that people have a strong affiliation with their communities through shared culture, traditions, and values. Scholars such as Sandel (1982, pp. 150-152) and MacIntyre (1981, pp. 186-187) advocate that our sense of morality and standards of justice are drawn from these communal setups. None of

these values and beliefs is attained through personal choice. This perspective urges us to pay attention to often-overlooked smaller communities, whose values and practices shape the whole fabric of society.

(B). Why Unnoticed Communities Matter?

A society consists of diverse communities which work as the backbone of a nation. These communities strengthen a sense of belonging and shared values that foster unity among the diverse groups. Communitarianism posits that a nation is barely a group of individuals working under a legal framework but a collective structure built on shared values and cultural heritage (Kymlicka, 2002, pp. 208-9). These bonds create trust and a sense of responsibility, which are essential to promoting a stable society and practical solidarity. Smaller ethnic or cultural communities in a specific area often go unnoticed, despite their significant role in promoting unity and reducing conflict. By giving these groups due appreciation through balancing individual community rights with collective national needs, a nation can nurture unity from diversity (Bell, 1993, pp. 55-89).

The Overlooked Pathans of Golewali:

Though the Pathans residing in Golewali are a single ethnic group in District Khushab, they play an active role in the community. Despite their modest numbers, they are often overlooked in historical accounts and even in discussions of equal opportunities. Thus, their story deserves attention for its proper documentation within the broader narrative and for proper consideration in official deliberations.

a. **Unnoticed in History:** The account of Pathans residing in Golewali is not mentioned correctly in the official records of the colonial era. This trend continues in the present-day approach. The Shahpur Gazetteer of 1897 briefly mentioned their presence in the north-west corner of Khushab (then a tehsil), noting that they had two villages covering 8,936 acres. It describes them as "fairly good agriculturists but somewhat extravagant and hot-tempered" (Deputy Commisioner Shahpur, 1897, pp. 8,97). The Gazetteer of District Khushab, 2021, copied and pasted the account, offering little new description and no fresh details about the village, its people's current way of life, or their contributions (Deputy Commisioner Khushab, 2021, p. 58). This lack of detail reflects the colonial tendency to ignore smaller groups while focusing only on larger, loyal communities.

b. **Impact of Linguistic and Cultural Shifts:** The Pathan population speaks Punjabi, with a dialect more or less akin to the customary dialect of Mianwali, a sign of adaptation to the local culture. This linguistic shift from Pashto to Punjabi distanced them from Pashto-speaking Pathan tribes. The linguistic transformation has weakened their ethnic visibility in the tribal belt. While their adaptation to the local culture of Punjab, though beneficial on one hand, has blurred their original Pashtun heritage, leaving them ignored by Pashtun historians.

c. **Stereotype Treatment:** As capable farmers, the economic role of these people is documented slightly, with little mention of their current livelihood and social activities. That is because of the stereotyped treatment during the colonial era, which gave them the label of "extravagant and hot-tempered", perpetuating the idea of Pathans as a "martial

> race" (Caroe, 1958, p. xvi), while ignoring their virtues of hard work and peace-loving nature. Such a disposition, mentioned in colonial records, downplays their diligence and attention to detail compared to those of larger tribes (Newpakhistorian, April 3, 2020).

The tale of this clan reflects the neglect often accorded to smaller communities living alongside larger ones. That is why, Caroe laments, the history of Pathans "has never been unrolled" (Caroe, 1958, p. xvi). Their historical ignorance underscores the need for localised studies to provide a proper account for preserving the identity and dignity of peripheral communities, an idea echoed in current research (Devasher, 2022). This article aims to reclaim their place in present-day history, criticising the ignorance of colonial and modern writings that overlook such communities.

Objectives:

The article aims to shed light on one of the tales of overlooked communities, particularly the Pathan community of Golewali, and to address their historical neglect by District Gazetteers and modern chronicles, which often overlook far-flung villages and their socio-cultural significance, or mention peripheral villages as mere footnotes. Most researchers have often misrepresented smaller communities, either because of limited knowledge or because they focused only on larger tribes and influential communities. Unlike Caroe's authoritative yet critiqued work (Mehmood, Shahzad, & Hussain, 2022, pp. 797-803), the authors of this article offer a refined, localised history.

Moreover, this article seeks to explore the answers to the following question: Who are Pathans? What is the Origin of Pathans? From where have they migrated to settle here? How are they living now? What is their role in present-day society? What type of challenges are they facing?

Who are Pathans?

The origin of the Pashtuns, also referred to as Pathans, is a highly contentious subject, full of confronting descriptions, ranging from mythological theories to scholarly hypotheses supported by historical, linguistic, and genetic evidence. A concise description of various narratives regarding the origins of Pashtuns and research work supporting or refuting such claims by genetic science is as follows:

i. **Traditional Theories of Pathan's Origin**:

The origins of the Pathans are overlapped with mystery, and no single theory has universal acceptance due to the complex and lengthy tribal history of their confederation. The primary traditional theories, critically evaluated with historical and genetic evidence, are as follows:

ii. Buni-Israel Theory:

A prominent narrative, recorded by al-Harawi (1986, pp. 84-91), claims that all Pashtuns are descendants of a person named Afghana, a grandson of King Saul of Israel. This narrative asserts that the Pashtuns are one of the "Lost Tribes of Israel," particularly linked to the tribe of Joseph. It is also stated that Qais Abdul Rashid, claimed to be a legendary ancestor, once led a group of people to Medina and embraced Islam by taking an oath of allegiance to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He was given the name "Pathan" (derived from "Bataan," meaning the deck of a ship in Arabic). By the proponents of this narrative, some Pashtun tribal names, such as Yusufzai,

meaning "Sons of Joseph" and Afridi, possibly derived from "Ephraim", are cited as evidence, along with cultural practices of Pashtuns such as lighting candles on the Sabbath or using a canopy during weddings, presented as proof of linkage. This narrative was also mentioned by (Caroe, 1958, pp. 44-45).

Contrary to those claims, many critics of the theory say that Pashtuns' Jewish Origin was professed in Makhzan-e Afghani, which was written during Emperor Jahangir's period. Prior to this book, no publication has mentioned that Afghans are descendants of Jewish tribes. Thus, the Buni-Israel theory lacks long historical evidence. This theory has also been refuted by current genetic research and is considered more mythological than empirical. It may reflect the author's religious and cultural aspirations rather than a factual line of ancestry. The author of the book may have been influenced by a desire to establish a noble Pashtun lineage linked to monotheistic traditions. Moreover, Buni-Israel theory is supported by a few unreliable biblical references, unconvincing geographical and linguistic evidence, while its claim is refuted by DNA investigations (Quddus, 1987, p. 28; Stanizai, 2023, pp. 1-50).

iii. Iranian Origin (Eastern Iranian Tribes):

It is a widely accepted theory that claims that Pathans are descendants of ancient Eastern Iranian tribes, such as the Sakas, Kushans, or Hephthalites, who were residents of the eastern Iranian plateau. An Afghan historian, Abdul Hai Habibi (1967, pp. 21-22), has connected Pashtuns to the Pakthas, a Vedic Tribe mentioned in the Rig-Veda (c. 1500–1200 BCE), describing the Battle of Ten Kings. Herodotus (430 BCE) also mentioned the "Pactyans," a war-hardened people living in the area now known as Northwestern Pakistan, thereby establishing a link to the Pashtuns.

This theory, though, is supported by evidence drawn from linguistic, historical, and even genetic sources. As the structure of the Pathans' tribal confederation presents a complex multi-ethnic genesis, hence, it is unlikely to conform to a single origin for Pashtuns (Quddus, 1987, pp. 29-30).

iv. Rajput Origin:

Henry Walter Bellow, the British physician during colonial India, claimed in his work that Pashtuns are descendants of the Rajputs, an Indo-Aryan warrior people from northern India. He stated that there are similarities between Pashtun tribal names and Rajput names. Likewise, the Pashtuns' initial settlements can be traced back to Rajput settlements in Gandhara (modern-day North-west Pakistan), which coincides with the Rajput migration narrative. (Bellew, 1880, pp. 25-30).

According to some researchers' analysis, the Rajput origin theory is primarily criticised because of linguistic differences between the two races, as Pashto is an Iranian language. It has no similarity with the Indo-Aryan language of the Rajputs. Additionally, Pashtun genetic evidence indicates their closer ties to Central Asian populations rather than to Rajputs (Quddus, 1987, p. 28; Ali, 2025).

v. Greek Origin:

Some scholars stated that Pathans (Pashtuns) are descendants of Greeks who arrived in the 4th century BC during the campaigns of Alexander "the Great" and stayed here afterwards. This

narrative is based on historical evidence of the Greeks' presence in regions such as Bactria and Gandhara, where later Greek colonies existed. (Caroe, 1958, pp. 44-45)

This theory also seems speculative and lacks solid historical and genetic support. Such migration and cultural exchanges in the region do not imply that Pashtuns are descendants of Greeks (Khattak, 1984, pp. 112-113)

vi. Aryan or Mixed Origin:

Some scholars, such as Yu. V. Gankovsky (1981, pp. 45-50) described that Pashtuns are descendants of a mixed confederation of various groups, including Turkmen, Kushans, Sakas, and Hephthalites, who later mingled with the local Iranian population. They highlight the Pashtuns' Origin as a tribal confederation consisting of various groups rather than a single ethnic group.

According to many critics, this theory aligns with the Pashtuns' complex tribal structure and genetic diversity, making it a plausible narrative for explaining their origins (Quddus, 1987, p. 28).

2. Genetic Research regarding Pathan Origins:

Genetic studies of the present era offer a somewhat accurate and deep understanding of Pashtun origins, evaluating a person's genetic profile to trace their ancestry, with a primary focus on Y-chromosome paternal haplogroups and Autosomal DNA. These studies compared DNA findings with historical documents and archaeological evidence to verify various hypotheses regarding their origins and biological relationships.

Y-Chromosome Studies: Exploring Paternal Lineages

The European Journal of Human Genetics conducted a study in 2012 to analyse the genetic profiles of 190 male Pashtuns from Afghanistan. The study finds a predominance of haplogroup R1a1a*-M198 (>50%), which is a common haplogroup in Central Asia and West Eurasia. This haplogroup genetically connects the Pashtuns to Central Asian and Iranian groups, rather than to South Asian or Semitic (Arabic or Jewish) populations. This study also noted the presence of the L3-M357 haplogroup, highlighting South Asian influence on Pashtun tribes, especially those living in the Southern Areas of Afghanistan (Lacau, et al., 2012, pp. 1063-1070; Haber, et al., 2012, pp. 313-320).

Another study conducted by Achakzai, et al., (2012, pp. 304-310) analysed the genetic profile of 125 Pashtun males from Kandahar. He identifies 92 unique haplotypes having a diversity of 0.987. This high diversity indicates a complex genetic history and highlights some genetic differences between northern and southern Pashtuns living on either side of the Hindu Kush Mountains. Sadaf Firasat et al., (2007, pp. 121-126) and Mohyuddin, et al., (2001) who studied genetic origin of Pakistanies especially Pashtuns and found a limited Greek connection in Pashtuns' genesis, further clarifying that Pakistani Pashtuns' DNA samples, which are predominantly R1a1a*-M198, reinforce their ties with the Central Asian population.

Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) Studies: Tracing Maternal Lineages

Pashtuns' diverse mtDNA lineages mostly belong to West Eurasian haplogroups, showing maternal connections to populations in Europe and the Middle East which indicate

historical interactions with various populations, including those from Central Asia, Middle East, and South Asia (Hussain, 2025).

Autosomal DNA Studies: A Comprehensive Overview

The Harappa Ancestry Project (2013) compared Pathan DNA samples with those of neighbouring groups, such as Sindhis and Tajiks, and found some genetic similarities with Sindhis from Pakistan and Tajiks from Tajikistan. However, samples of Afghan Pashtuns show lower South Asian components than those of Pakistani Pashtuns. This study also highlights the influence of regional factors on the population's genetic profile (Project, 2013).

Similarly, Several genetic studies and researchers where exhibit significant genetic difference between the Punjabi, Pashtun, and Bloch populations in Pakistan; they also noted a genetic deviation among Pashtuns (Shan, Børsting, & Morling, 2020), and their varying alignment to contiguity groups based on geographical context (ArianGang, 2022).

Key Points:

a. Pashtuns' DNA profiles reveal high genetic diversity, suggesting lineage connection with various ancestral groups such as East European Hunter Gatherers (EEHG), Iranian Neolithic Farmers (INF), Anatolian Neolithic Farmers (ANF), Caucasus Hunter Gatherers (CHG), Central Asia groups, and Ancient Ancestral South Indian. This narrative is compatible with their tribal confederal structure (Ali, 2025).
b. The predominance of R1a1a*-M198 connects them with Iranian and Central Asian populations, supporting the theory of Iranian Origin.
c. Limited evidence through haplogroups such as G2c-M377 (relatively minor, a possible link to the *Khazars*) supports Pashtuns' Israelite or Greek ancestry, however, it is a weak evidence.
d. Southern Pashtuns display more South Asian influence (similarity of L3-M357, haplogroup). It is likely owing to their proximity to the Indian subcontinent.

Overall Analysis:

According to a researcher, Zahid Hussain (2025), the current genetic studies have constructed a comprehensive picture of Pathan (Pashtun) ancestry by examining paternal (Y-chromosome), maternal (mtDNA), and bi-parental (autosomal DNA) markers, for tracing their ancestral roots. He posits that Y Chromosomes' haplogroup R1a1a (R-M198) indicate a strong Indo-Iranian lineage, haplogroup L3-M357 connects Pashtuns to populations in the Middle East and South Asia and rather lower frequency haplogroups G-M201 and J2 indicate their connection with the population of Caucasus and the Middle East .

Similarly Pashtun mtDNA lineages stipulate connections to populations in Europe and the Middle East, however some tribes reveal a mix of West Eurasian (55.7%), South Asian (33.9%), and East Asian lineages. Pashtuns of Afghanistan share genetic markers with neighboring ethnic groups, such as Tajiks and Uzbeks, regarding to Autosomal DNA analyses highlighting historical gene flow and intermarriage. Pathan from Pakistan's Northwest Province display genetic variations that connect them with Central Asian and South Asian populations, manifesting a blend of ancestries (Hussain, 2025).

In short, each theory of Pashtun origin has variety of supporting arguments, such as the Theory of Iranian Origin, which is supported by linguistic evidence (as Pashto, being an Eastern Iranian language), and the Aryan or Mixed Origin, based on historical evidence (ties to the Sakas, Kushans, and White Huns, among others). Genetic Research regarding Pathan Origins presents genetic evidence (predominance of R1a1a*-M198). The Israelite theory, though culturally important, lacks empirical support and is considered a mythological narrative to prove a noble lineage. Similarly, the Rajput and Greek theories are only speculative narratives which have not been proved by genetic data. However, the Mixed Origin Theory, embracing various Iranian and Central Asian groups, is compatible with the diversity of the Pashtuns' tribal structure and genetic profile.

Genetic research mainly supports and validates the Pashtuns' ancestral lineage as Central Asian and Iranian. Its high genetic diversity indicates a confederation of multiple groups. The North-South genetic deviation reflects geographic influences, as southern Pashtuns show greater South Asian linkage due to their vicinity to the subcontinent.

From Where Pathans Have Come?

A prominent Pashtun group, the Niazi tribe, is a part of the Bettani confederation. The people of the Niazi tribe have endured a centuries-long cycle of suffering, after leaving their ancestral homelands in Sulgar (Shilghar) and Logar near Ghazni (Afghanistan) and gradually moving to the regions of Isa Khel, Mianwali, and Khushab. The brief account of this journey through key locations of settlement which culminated in various areas of Mianwali, particularly, the chronicle description of migration regarding the Sarhang (Niazi) clans, the Sultan Khel, Pai Khel, Burri Khel, and Saddo Khel has been drawn, and integrated upon information given by the Gazetteer of Mianwali District (1915), Gazetteer of Shahpur District (1897) Gazetteer of Bannu District (2022) Gazetteer of Khushab District (2022) and from the researchers works such as Ibbotson (1916), Caroe (1958), Syed Abdul Quddus (1987), *Tareekh Niazi Qabail* by Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi (2003) and several other historical writings.

1. **Historical Account of Migration:**

The Pathans' circulation began for several reasons, including historical events and tribal factors, most importantly, resource-driven factors. Their early contact with the Indian subcontinent began in the late 10th century, when Mahmud of Ghazni recruited Afghan soldiers for his campaigns, as noted by the Ghaznavid historian Al-Utbi (Quddus, 1987, p. 31) The Ghorid (1173-1206) invasions of the late 12th century and the establishment of the Turkish Slave Dynasty in 1206 brought more Pathans, including Niazis, into northern India (Caroe, 1958, p. 127). The Lodhi dynasty (1451–1526), founded by Behlul Lodhi, elevated Niazi influence as they were brethren of the Lodhis (Deputy Commisioner Bannu, 2022, p. 42). During the Suri dynasty (1539–1555), Niazis held high military and administrative positions, though a feud with Islam Shah Suri (1545–1552) led to rebellion by Haibat Khan Niazi (Isakhel), who was assassinated in exile at Kashmir, forcing some Niazis to seek refuge in the mountains (Caroe, 1958, pp. 145-147). Contrary to the aforementioned cooperation, during the Mughal period under Babur (1526) and Akbar (1556), the Niazis remained a source of unrest on the north-west frontier, contributing to regional instability. The decline of Mughal authority after Aurangzeb died in 1707, coupled with Nadir Shah's invasions in 1739 and Ahmad Shah Durrani's campaigns, created opportunities for the Niazis to expand their influence in the region (Quddus, 1987, pp. 32-57).

2. Departure From Ancestral Homeland, Sulgar And Logar Near Ghazni:

The Niazis, being a tribe of the Battani confederation, trace their ancestral lineage to Ibrahim *Lodhae* (the great), as Niazi (*Niazai*) was one of his sons. There were three sons of Niazi, named Khaku, Jam, and Bahi, whose descendants are presently represented by the Isa Khel, Mushani, and Sarhang clans. (Caroe, 1958, p. 15; al-Haravi, 1986, p. 446). Initially, the Niazis were nomadic pastoralists, people devoted to the Pashtunwali code of honour, tribal loyalty, and hospitality. However, some of them were involved in trading alongside their original occupation. (Quddus, 1987, pp. 86-88). The Sulgar and Logar areas, with fertile grazing land, were also connected by natural trade routes, helping foster the Niazis' early circulation for economic activities. After some time, due to growing oppression of the Ghilzai tribe, particularly the Ander branch in the area, Niazis began considering shifting to another safer and reasonable place regarding the availability of resources. In the late 14th century (circa 1370–1400), Niazis started a gradual movement from Sulgar (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, p. 26). Thus, the final departure, compounded by the Ghilzais' hostility, marked the beginning of the Niazis' southward displacement as they sought new areas for sustenance and even settlement. However, a large number of the Niazi tribe still reside in parts of Afghanistan, primarily in Qalaye Niazi, Gardez, Logar, and Paktia provinces. (Ibbetson, 1916, p. 82).

3. Migration to Tank:

The Gomel pass was once a key trade route for caravans connecting Afghanistan and India. It had been used not only as a trade route but also as a seasonal mobility route between summer and winter by the Ghilzai and other Pashtun tribes, such as the nomadic Pawanda (Kochi). Contrary to the nomadic pattern, a gradual migration of Pashtun tribes from Koh Suleiman to Tank began in the early 13th century, coinciding with the time of Shahabud-Din Ghori (1173-1206). Initially, the Prangi and Suri tribes of the Lodhi branch, along with their relatives, settled in Tank and Rori. Around the beginning of the 15th century, the Niazi, another part of the Lodhi tribe, followed their relatives from Shilghar (Ghazni) to Tank, where they lived quietly as *Pawandahs* for over a century. In Tank, they found peaceful respite, where they lived for several generations, transitioning from pastoralism to agriculture as well as traders and carriers, similar to their Lohani relatives, the Pawandahs (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, p. 26).

4. Expansion to the Marwat Plains:

By the late 15th century, the Niazis expanded northward from Tank into the Marwat Plains, crossing the trans-Indus Salt Range and settling in a country situated south of the Bannu district, then almost uninhabited except by a small number of scattered pastoral Jats, where Babur mentioned them as cultivators in 1505. (Ibbetson, 1916, p. 76). They stayed approximately 15 miles below the Bannuchi settlements as grazers and agriculturists, living peacefully for over 50 years, likely from the 1490s to the 1540s (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, p. 27). During this period, Niazis established settlements along the banks of the Kurram and Gambila rivers to gain easy access to the region's pastoral and agricultural resources. At the same time, an internal conflict emerged between the brethren Miar (*Mehyar*) and Sarhang clans over a piece of land on the riverbank. The Mehyar clan, seeking help to resolve the dispute, invited the Marwats, a younger branch of the Lodi group, to intervene. The Marwats exploited the situation to their advantage, leading to a significant battle at *Thathi Michan Khel* (the Battle of Maddi). This event occurred during the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556–1605), when the Sarhang leader was

slain (Deputy Commisioner Bannu, 2022, pp. 42-43). The Sarhangs had to move eastward across the Kurram River at *Darra Tang* (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, p. 27). Some Mehyars and the Michan Khels, known for their neutrality and religious standing, were spared to remain in the Plains, also known as *Thal*.

5. Early Presence & Consolidation in Isa Khel:

Following their expulsion from the Marwat Plains in the early 16th century, the Sarhang (consisting of Musa Khel, Totazai, Zakku Khel, Watta Khel, Ballo Khel, Tajae Khel, Sherman Khel and other Ismail Khel), along with Sunmbuls, Kundis and Mehyars, moved onwards, some Sarhangs (Totezais) settling at the place named Sultan Khel (Maddi Sarhang) in the tract of Isakhel, where Isakhel and Mushanis had already consolidated their settlement in the Isa Khel region. At the same time, the majority of the Sarhangs crossed the River Sindh in the cis-Indus area (Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi, 2003, pp. 692,698,703).

Historical records, such as *Tuzk-e-Babri* (1494-1526) and Hayat-i-Afghani (1867 AD), indicate that the Niazis established a presence in the Isa Khel tract by the early 15th century, before Babur arrived in 1526 AD (Caroe, 1958, p. 17). These accounts mentioned that Niazis (Isa Khel) alongside Lohani Pawandahs were present in the areas of Chobara (Redstone hills) south of Bannu, and along the Indus near the Deenkot fort (near Kala Bagh). Some of them were inhabited in Sinkers (man-made caves) in the barren mountains, suggesting a pre-1526 presence in the Isa Khel tract (Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi, 2003, p. 225). The early presence in the Isa Khel tract was marked by coexistence with pastoral Jats, Awans and other minor tribes, such as Khattaks, whom they gradually displaced or subdued. The account also underscores that the Niazis' initial circulation was from Tank to Marwat Plains; however, some of them, particularly Isa Khel and Mushanis, probably continued their gradual onward movement, before the battle of Maddi, in search of new locations for more resources (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, pp. 26-27). The region, which was sparsely inhabited without any governance, facilitated Niazis' settlement, mentioned as:

a. **Isakhel Clan**: Descended from Jam, the Isakhel clan settled in the southern part of Isa Khel, rapidly adopting agriculture. They expelled the Awans and reduced the Jats inhabitants to quasi-serfdom, establishing themselves as dominant landowners and agriculturists (Deputy Commisioner Bannu, 2022, p. 43).
b. **Mushani Clan**: The Mushanis settled farther north around Kumar Mushani, initially maintaining a pastoral lifestyle before transitioning to agriculture.
c. **Sarhang Clan**: Some Sarhangs, particularly the Totezai tribe, took up settlement in a region known as Maddi Sarhang (later Sultan Khel), near Isa Khel, where they stayed for over a generation, while others directly went across the river Indus. This settlement happened only as a transitional base for their further mobility to the cis-Indus area of Mianwali (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, p. 27).

6. Consolidation in *the cis-Indus* Territories of Mianwali:

During the circulation in the cis-Indus area, the Niazis were encountered by the Ghakkers, who had held influence in northern Mianwali since at least the 16th century, when Emperor Akbar granted *jagirs* to two Ghakker chiefs. At last, they capitalised on the civil commotions during Aurangzeb's reign (1658–1707), driving the Ghakkars across the Salt Range, weakening their hold on the region. It has been noted that the Isa Khels had previously settled, while the Sarhangs

established their settlements about 150 years later. They initially continued a temporary stay, shifting from one place to another within the cis-Indus area of Mianwali. Awans and Jats already inhabited the country under the hold of Gakkers (Ibbetson, 1916, p. 81). After a long time, they finally took possession of land following the destruction of the Ghakker's fort (the epicentre of the stronghold) of Muazzam Nagar in 1748 by the attack of Ahmad Shah Abdali's lieutenant (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, p. 27).

The destruction of Muazzam Nagar, which ended the long hold of the Ghakkars over Mianwali, enabled the Sarhangs, in particular, to establish permanent cis-Indus settlements, marking the culmination of their migration into Mianwali. *Biluch* Pathans also came across the river Indus from the Paniala hills at that time. Some of them stayed in Piplan, while the others moved to Thal and settled in Jandanwala (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, p. 28).

7. Stay at Musa Khel and Further Circulation:

Around 1650, the Totezai tribe, descendants of Mira Khan Totezai (comprising the Sultan Khel, Pai Khel, Burri Khel, and Saddo Khel clans), relocated from Maddi Sarhang (Sultan Khel) across the Indus River to the *Trimmu* hill-torrent, the area of Musa Khel, Mianwali. They resided there for over half a century, mainly engaging in pastoralism and pursuing resources such as water, pastures and land for cultivation (Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi, 2003, p. 704). By the mid-18th century, conflict arose with the Musakhel tribe over these resources, prompting the Totazai Sarhangs to disperse to their next abodes, where they are now settling. The period of this displacement can be assessed by narrated coinciding events like the decline of Mughal reign from Aurangzeb's death 1707; the Sikha Shahi (Bhangi Misal) period (1752-1799); Malik Alam Sher Khan Tiwana's (d. 1767) possession on a part of Warcha after the death of Gul Jahanian Awan; expulsions of Gakhers in 1748; period of Hot Blochs ended in 1770 and after the new settlement, attack of Nawab Muhammad Khan Saddozai (1792- 1815) on Wan Bhachran and Mitha Tiwana, (Deputy Commisioner Mianwali, 1915, pp. 28-34). The final settlements of the Totezai clans were as follows.

a. **Sultan Khel:** Returned to their original abode, Maddi Sarhang (now Sultan Khel), near Isa Khel, re-establishing their presence in the region after their temporary stay at Musa Khel.
b. **Pai Khel:** Settled close to Mari Indus, where they established a new permanent base.
c. **Burri Khel:** Migrated north-west to the base of the hills in Mianwali, likely in the rugged terrain near the Salt Range (Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi, 2003, p. 705)
d. **Saddo Khel (Saddozai):** Moved northeast, establishing present abode, Golewali (*Kirri* Golewali as mentioned in the Gazetteer) on the banks of *Dhoda Wahn* at the base of Salt Range hills in the northwestern corner of Khushab District (Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi, 2003, pp. 692,698,703) and (Deputy Commisioner Shahpur, 1897, p. 97).

It is evident that there is little recorded history, but as narrated by the ancestors of this clan, part of a broader tribe. The *Pathans* are a warrior race entrenched with attributes of hospitality, friendship, and even enmity. They are indomitable people, and freedom is deeply ingrained in their blood. They have always contributed to every freedom movement, whether against the Ghakkar, the Sikhs, and the British, or the Kashmir freedom movement of 1947 against the Dogra Raj. It is a matter of pride for their generations that Niazis participated intensively in the Kashmir freedom movement under the leadership of former Senator (Late) Amir Abdullah khan

Rokhri (*Mujahid-e-Kashmir*), along with Afridis and Mehsud Tribesmen who helped to liberate a part of Kashmir which was announced independent Jammu & Kashmir (IJK) on October 24, 1947. (Alam, Bhatti, & Awan, 2020, pp. 9-20).

8. **Presence in Khushab District:**

The Pathans (*Saddo Khel*) hold the area of Golewali, in the northwestern corner of Khushab District, where they, as a minor land-owning tribe, are less numerous than the Pathans in Mianwali. They speak Punjabi with their native dialect. (Deputy Commisioner Shahpur, 1897, p. 97). Their engagement and contributions in agriculture, as well as other professions such as medicine, engineering, legal practice, and politics, are notable in Khushab District, reflecting their integration into the region's socio-economic fabric. Besides these engagements, people from the area have gone abroad, mainly to the Gulf countries, to earn a living. These people are leading figures in foreign remittances, contributing to the country's foreign reserves. (Deputy Commisioner Khushab, 2021, pp. 43,58).

9. Description of Golewali

a. Historical Background:

Golewali, previously known as *Dodha*, derives its name from a hill torrent called *Dodha*, which irrigates the *Barani* (rain-fed) agricultural lands of the village. Over time, the village's name evolved from *Kirri* Golewali (Deputy Commisioner Shahpur, 1897, p. 8) to simply Golewali, named after a notable figure, Gola Khan, from the Saddo Khel clan of the Niazi tribe. The village's origins trace back to step-by-step migrations from Sulgar near Ghazni (Afghanistan) to Musa Khel (Mianwali) and then to Golewali (Khushab district) around the mid-18th century. The Pathans eventually established themselves in *Daman-e-Mohar*, a region adjacent to the southeastern boundary of Mianwali district, at the base of the Salt Range hills, near the prominent Sakesar Hill.

b. Geographical Location:

Golewali is located southwest of Sakesar Hill, the highest peak (4,992 feet) in the Salt Range, at the foot of these hills in District Khushab (then Shahpur). Originally situated over a kilometre from the hill's base, the village was once devastated by the *Sach* hill torrent due to 'the heaviest rainfall within living memory in 1892' (Deputy Commisioner Shahpur, 1897, p. 9). It was subsequently re-established at the hill's foot. Whereas many Pathan families dispersed across the village, creating new dwellings called *Deras* or *Bhans* on their landholdings.

c. Boundaries:

North West: Chidru (Mianwali),
South West: Wan Bachran and Shadia (Mianwali),
South: Bandial
East: Warchha and Rukhla Mundi.

d. Topography

The village encompasses a diverse topography, including:

- Mountainous terrain: Extending from the Sakesar peak to the base of the hills.
- Barren land: Found near the foothills.

- Fertile plains: Cultivated by the *Dodh*a and *Sach Wahns* (hill torrents), which collect rainwater from Sakesar and *Amb* hills. Over centuries, these torrents have deposited substantial detritus, enriching the soil of the plains for agriculture (Deputy Commisioner Khushab, 2021, p. 139).

10. Scenic and historical significance:

Golewali is surrounded by sites of natural beauty and historical importance, including:

- **Sakesar Hills**: Known for their scenic landscapes and as the highest point (4992 ft.) in the Salt Range. At the very top of Sakesar are the ruins of a small Buddhist shrine. (Deputy Commisioner Shahpur, 1897, p. 9).
- **Amb Temples**: A site of historical and archaeological significance. The ruins at Amb are considered the southernmost example of ancient and distinctive Kashmiri architecture, dating back to approximately 800-950 AD. On the hills a little to the east of Amb are seen the remains of a long wall with a gateway, which may have been erected for defensive purposes, probably against the inhabitants of the plains. (Deputy Commisioner Khushab, 2021, p. 28)
- **Warchha (Rukhla) Salt Mines**: The largest salt mines in Pakistan, adding economic and historical value to the region.

11. Political and Administrative History:

Golewali's political history is tied to the Northern Sindh Sager Doab region. Key historical milestones include:

- **Pre-British Era**: The village was part of the Sindh Sager Doab region of Multan Province.
- **British period (1849–1947):** After British control of the Punjab in 1849, Golewali remained part of Layyah District until 1857, when the district was abolished, the area was incorporated into Shahpur District. The village remained under the administration of Shahpur district till the inception of Pakistan in 1947.
- **Post-Independence Administrative History**: The village continued its administrative life under the Shahpur district until Sargodha was officially announced as a district in 1960. Although the district headquarters were shifted from Shahpur to Sargodha city in 1914, which was founded in 1903 in Jhelum Colony, the district remained known as Shahpur at Sargodha (Rassol, 2006, pp. 177-181). Latterly, Khushab district, the former Tehsil of District Sargodha, came into being on July 1, 1982; Golewali became part of Khushab District, where it falls today.

When Khushab was elevated to district status on July 1, 1982, after being separated from Sargodha District, its headquarters were established in Jauharabad Town, founded in 1953 and named after Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar. It became the district headquarters, planned as a potential federal capital before Islamabad was chosen. The Khushab district was initially divided into two tehsils, Khushab and Nurpur Thal, with Quaidabad and Naushera later becoming tehsils in 2007 and 2013, respectively. Administratively, Golewali is now a Union Council within Quaidabad Tehsil, Khushab District, and is included in modern governance structures. (Deputy Commisioner Khushab, 2021, p. 36)

12. How They Are Living Now

a. Social and Economic Profile:

All the Punjabi Pathans, primarily settled in areas such as Attock, Mianwali, Rawalpindi, and other parts of Punjab, trace their roots to Pashtuns of Khyber Pakhtunkhawa and, more distantly, to Afghanistan. Their lifestyle, somewhat similar to that of ancestral Pushtuns, reflects a blend of long-lasting tribal heritage and adapted socio-cultural changes, particularly of the region where they live now in Pakistan, while maintaining their identity everywhere (Quddus, 1987, pp. 77-99).

The social fabric of Golewali's Pathans is also deeply rooted in their brethren's heritage, particularly that of the Niazi tribes of Mianwali, due to their proximity. The residents' lifestyle is simple, and their occupation is primarily land cultivation and animal rearing. Recently, the shift from traditional agricultural practices to modern irrigation systems, using tube wells has boosted productivity and, hence, earnings. However, with the splitting of landholdings, agricultural income has become insufficient to sustain livelihoods, prompting many to go abroad for work, particularly to the Gulf countries. In this way, people are earning significant amounts of foreign remittances, contributing to the village's economic prosperity and the country's foreign exchange reserves (Deputy Commisioner Khushab, 2021, p. 43).

In short, Golewali's Pathans maintain a lifestyle that balances their tribal traditions with modern socio-cultural changes. Their social fabric, rooted in the *Beradri* System, reflects loyalty, hospitality, a sense of honour, and even traditional rivalries; however, socio-economic progress in Punjab has promoted education and introduced diverse professions, as well as cultural integration. As reported in the Gazetteer, feuds are less common due to the legal framework enforced in Punjab; these may still arise over land disputes or honour killings, etc., and are usually resolved through elders' mediation or by the courts (Deputy Commisioner Shahpur, 1897, pp. 677-69). The current situation of law and order, however, is not satisfactory, perhaps owing to its remote location and the lack of official attention in the area. Nevertheless, their core traditions are intact, keeping alertness for their identity as both Pathans and Punjabi residents.

b. Insufficient Public Facilities:

In the overlooked and under-mentioned village of Golewali, public facilities tell a story of neglect that's hard to ignore. Schools, meant to coach the young generation, are few and in a crumbling position, lacking official oversight and support. The healthcare facility, once a lifeline through the Basic Health Unit (BHU), has been transferred to private hands, leaving people practically without access to the public healthcare system. The roads, the only means of transportation, are few, rough, narrow, and poorly maintained, making every journey a challenge for people, whether needy or patients. Electricity flickers in and out, due to lengthy power lines so old and tangled that electricity outages stretch for days, not hours. The village's locality lacks paved streets and clean drinking water, forcing residents to make do without proper facilities. Even a proper community graveyard, a basic need, is missing, despite the availability of Government land. Like many forgotten villages and overlooked corners of the country, the people of Golewali face a daily struggle to access the essentials of a dignified life (Adv Muhammad Akram Khan, 2025).

c. The Demographic Composition:

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (Census, 2017), the total population of PC Golewali is 16,171 (7955 males and 8216 females), of which persons aged 18 years and above are 9178. The total area is 20,701 acres (PBS, 2017).

The demographic composition of Golewali is predominantly Pathan, with the Niazi tribe's Saddo Khel branch forming the majority. This branch descends from Saddo bin Mira Khan Toti, son of Behrut, son of Sarhang, son of Aala, son of Isa, son of Khaku, son of Niazi (*Nazai*). Hence, it is called the Saddo Khel clan of the Niazi tribe. (Muhammad Iqbal Khan Niazi, 2003, pp. 692,702-703)

The Pathan population is organised into four *Warhis* (revenue areas managed by a *Numberdar*), each with its own clan and *Numberdar*. However, Golewali has a total of five *Warhis* (four *Warhis* of the Pathan *quom* and one of the Bhatti *quom*), listed below.

- *Warhi Golekhel*: Numbardar, Fateh Khan (Golekhel)
- *Warhi Darzai*: Numberdar, Muhammad Zaman Khan (Isabkhel, Darzai)
- *Warhi Budde Khel*: Vacant.
- *Warhi Bilundi Khel*: Vacant
- *Warhi Bhatti*: Vacant

The Pathan quom is further divided into sub-clans and family groups, each with a name derived from their common ancestor; these groups now reside in separate *Deras* or *Bhans* (homesteads) on their respective landholdings. The Bhatti caste maintains a distinct presence. Other castes, though in smaller numbers, have been residing in the area for a long time, including the *Joiya, Thethie, Aheer, Ganjulli, Dhilli, Shamukhel, Tiraer, and Jat-Miana.* The highly skilled craftsmen, i.e., *Lohar, Tirkhan, Dhabbae, Mochi, Machhi Naei, Sunar, Kumhar, and Mirasi*, are also an instrumental part of the village population (Adv. Muhammad Akram Khan, 2025).

d. Political Personalities:

Golewali has produced several prominent figures who have contributed to the village's social, political, and professional landscape. Some key notables include:

- Late, Mian Mehr Ali: *Kursi-Nasheen* was a respected social and political figure of the British period.
- Late, Muzaffar Khan (Moqarabkhel): A political figure, who, along with all the Pathan sub-clans of Golewali, fully supported the Pakistan movement and led the village population to vote for the All India Muslim League in the General Elections held in 1945-46.
- Advocate Amir Khan Niazi (Daukhel) is a former member of the District Council of Khushab, an active social and political figure.
- Advocate Muhammad Akram Khan Niazi (Darzai): Former Chairman of Union Council Golewali and a PTI candidate for NA-88 (Khushab-II) in the General Elections 2024, the highly controversial elections, as described by independent observers and NGOs like Pattan, alleging widespread electoral fraud in its report released in February 2025. Pattan had released a report on the general elections, describing them in its statement as "unprecedentedly rigged" with "vote-rigging, fraud and manipulation," as reported in Dawn on February 23, 2025 (Dawn, 2025).

- Former Union Council Chairmen: Late Fateh Sher Khan (Golykhel), Late Amir Khan (Barrykhel), Mian Muhammad Munir, Abbas Khan Gaarh (Warhi Darzai)
- Former UC Nazims: Muzaffar Khan (Saidu Khel), Muhammad Khan (Bilundi Khel)

- **Local Govt. (2016-2020):**

- Chairman: Advocate Muhammad Akram Khan Niazi (Darzai).
- Vice Chairman: Advocate Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti

e. Religious Figures:

- Late Mian Chanan Din: An Islamic scholar and preacher of Din-e-Islam, one who actually possessed the attribute implicit in his name.
- Late, Mian Muhammad Manzur: An Islamic scholar and *Khatib* of Jamia Masjid of the village.
- Mian Sardar: A sincere man whose selfless devotion to serving humanity is commendable.
- Mian Ishaq: Administrator of the Islamic Madrassa, offering a great service.

All the people are descendants of Mian Kourha.

f. **Professional Personals:**

- **Educationists:**

- Alam Sher Khan, (Darzai): The author of the article, Professor(r) of Political Science, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Sargodha.
- Late, Feroz Khan (Golekhel): A subject specialist and former DEO Khushab.
- Habib Ullah Khan (Biludikhel): A reputed educationist and a Headmaster (r)

- **Police Services:**

- M. Afzal Khan (Golykhel) DSP; Habib ur Rehman (Daukhel) Inspector; M. Sher Khan (Inspector); Late, M. Iqbal Khan (Golekhel) Inspector.

- **Medical Professionals:**

- Dr Muhammad Atique Alam Khan (Darzai): Dr Mrs. Atique, both working in the United States of America, Dr Abdur Rehman (Gorangikhel, Darzai), Dr Amir Abdullah (Mehrkhanikhel, Darzai), Dr Amjad (Gulbaigkhel), Dr Fazul Rehman, and Dr Imtiaz (Shahnawazkhel), Dr Amjad (Daukhel), Dr Sajida Bhatti, Dr Hajira Bhatti, Dr Tahiran Yasmeen Bhatti

- **Engineers**:

  - Zafar Khan (Barrekhel) in the USA; Javed (Garh) in the UK; Abdul Ghaffar (Mehar) in the UK; Arshad Khan (Darzai) in S.A.; Habib Nawaz, Hafeez Ullah and Imtiaz (Mehrkhanikhel, Darzai); Matti Ullah (Barrekhel); Hmeed Khan (Mehar) in the UK; Imran Khan (Muqarkhel); Shafqat Ullah Bhatti (PhD Chem. Engr. in China), Muhammad Junaid Bhatti and Aftab Khan, as well as numerous diploma holders in various technologies.

- **Sportsmen:**

  - M. Afzal Khan (Golekhel): An International player, Asian titled Racer;

- Allah Bakhsh (Shadda, Golekhel): A renowned player of (*Lumbi-kabaddi*) at the national level.
- Late Khizar Hayat Khan (Gulshahi): A Pakistan Colour title holder in Boxing.

These individuals reflect the village's contributions to diverse fields, including politics, law enforcement, education, medicine, and engineering. It is also worth noting that a significant number of young people are jobless, a situation that prevails in all rural areas of the country.

g. **Religious Life:**

People are Muslims, mostly Sunny due to the influence of local Saints (*Auliyas*), owing to Golewali UC being a home to significant religious and spiritual landmarks, including:

- Shrine of Sultan Sahib Sarhiwala (1094-1244 *Hijri*): Located in Amb Sharif, this shrine serves as a spiritual centre for the local community. Sultan Sahib, belonging to the Awan family of Uchhali, is highly respected by the local community for his spirituality and piety. His descendants, the *Mianas*, are also notable figures who have influenced the area's socio-political and religious life. They are now settled in three villages: Amb Sharif, Sarai Miani, and Mahorian wala, near Sakesar.
- Shrine of Mian Kourha: It is located near the village of Golewali. Mian Kourha, a revered saint belonging to a local Pathan clan, was almost contemporary with Sultan Sahib Sarhiwala. His descendants, the Mianas of Golewal (belonging to the Warhi Darzai), are also respected by the people for the services of their forefathers, along with their own nobility.

The regard for these shrines reflects the area's intense religious and spiritual devotion. (Adv. Muhammad Akram Khan, 2025), (Adv. Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, 2025), and (Muhammad Zaman Numbardar, 2025).

Conclusion:

The tale of the *Pathans* living in Golewali, a small village in District Khushab, uncovers a vibrant yet overlooked chapter of society. The Niazis' long journey of migration from their ancestral land, Afghanistan, to their present settlements in Isa Khel, Mianwali, and Khushab reflects their resilience in the face of various hardships and their capacity for adaptation. The adjustment from nomadic pastoralism to agriculture, and then to establishing themselves as landowners and in other spheres of life, is remarkable. One of the Niazi (Sarhang) clans, the Saddo Khel, is preserving its legacy in Golewali. The village of Pathan's population is tied to *Daman-i-Mohar*, blending traditions with modernity and evolving from a rain-fed farming community into one with global economic ties.

However, Golewali's people are continuously facing persistent neglect; they have crumbling schools, far-off healthcare access, poor condition roads, an unreliable electricity system, and scarcity of clean water, which reflect a day-to-day struggle for basic necessities. Colonial chronicle records, such as the Shahpur and Khushab Gazetteers, often underestimated this community, consequently, ignoring their socio-economic uplift, despite their remarkable role and contributions. This study, while questioning that disregard, highlights their unique capacity to harmonise Punjabi and Pathan cultures and their role in Pakistan's diverse mosaic. Communities like these need appreciation by promoting common values and shared trust that

strengthen society's unity, as emphasized by Communitarianism. Inclusive pluralism demands recognition of such communities by fulfilling their genuine desires. In this way, they can be integrated into the national fabric to enhance social cohesion.

Solution: Targeted public-sector interventions are needed to uplift peripheral communities. This goal can be achieved by investing in public infrastructure, such as schools, health units, roads, and water supplies, to meet the basic needs of the population. The local legends are promoted through educational and cultural programs to preserve identity. Participatory governance should be encouraged to amplify the voices of those who are often overlooked. It is the writer's foremost responsibility to undertake further research into peripheral villages and communities frequently to ensure that no community remains unsung.

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