

Gulmit Gojal

Gulmit is today Gojal's largest settlement and is commonly referred to as the capital of Gojal, Pakistan's most northern area, also known as Upper Hunza. Together with its close neighbor Ghulkin, the two Wakhi villages on the Karakoram Highway can be considered Gojal's cultural centers. In both villages, traditional Wakhi culture still forms part of the people's everyday lives, but the arrival of the Karakoram Highway and with it tourists, modern amenities and new social influences are threatening to overshadow the old traditions. In recent years, several community based organizations have been established, which are now working hard on the revival and expansion of the cultural traits of their ancestors to pass them on to their children and to make them known to interested outsiders. Visitors to Gulmit are welcome to visit these initiatives, like the local women's handicraft activities, Wakhi music, traditional food and festivals.

Village Gulmit is situated in northward of Hunza district. It is 40 kilometers away from Aliabad Hunza and situated in a beautiful valley of Gojal. The Karakoram Highway (KKH) passes through this village along the Hunza River. Gulmit is situated at an altitude of 7,900 feet (2435 m) above Sea Level. There are six Mohallahs in the village under the name of Goze, Center Gulmit, Dalgirum, Odver, Kamaris, and Chamangul. Gulmit village is consisting of 500 households, with a population of 3715 in total.

The distance from Gilgit town to the village is 140 KM. The population of Gulmit village is rapidly increasing. Commercial and manufacturing centers are also increasing, being the area very attractive for tourists and Tehsil headquarter of Gojal Tehsil.

The communities of the target area is organized around 2 Village Organizations and 12 Men and Women Organizations. The communities have been actively participating in socio-economic development interventions led by governmental and non-governmental organizations. The V/WOs have been playing vital role in implementing and maintaining various community based initiative in the area, such as education, health facility, agriculture, irrigation channel and other interventions with cohesive participatory approach demonstrating the capacity of improved community based project management.

History in Brief

Perched high above Gulmit, Ondra Fort was built over 1,000 years ago.

Strategically placed it served to face invasions from neighboring Nagar and Hunza to the south and from Kyrgyz raiders from the north. A watchman was in charge of looking out for enemies and messengers were posted along the Hunza River to warn of any invading armies using fire signals. A popular way of fighting enemies at the time was to barricade behind the thick walls of the fort and push large rocks and boulders down the valley. Slingshots, axes and swords were other means of defense. To secure water supply under a longer siege a stream coming from the Gulmit Glacier was diverted to create a small lake just below the fort. The bed of this lake can still be seen beside the trail when hiking up from Kamaris Village.

Later, under the rule of the Mir of Hunza, a special house in Gulmit served as a part-time residence for the ruler, who usually spent three months in the capital to settle disputes, to oversee tax collection and to supervise his annual wheat production.

Mir Malaa known as Summer Palace Gulmit is a historical building standing on the edge of Gulmit Polo ground. It has got another name in Wakhi language, which is *šij̄un* or *shighun* (written in plain roman text).

In old days this Summer Palace used to be home of Mirs of Hunza state, which is now an abandoned place. Normally Mirs of that time used to visit Gulmit (was second headquarter of Hunza state) in autumn season with aim to collect taxes (in form of materials, ranging from livestock, wood, wool etc.) for their summer survival.

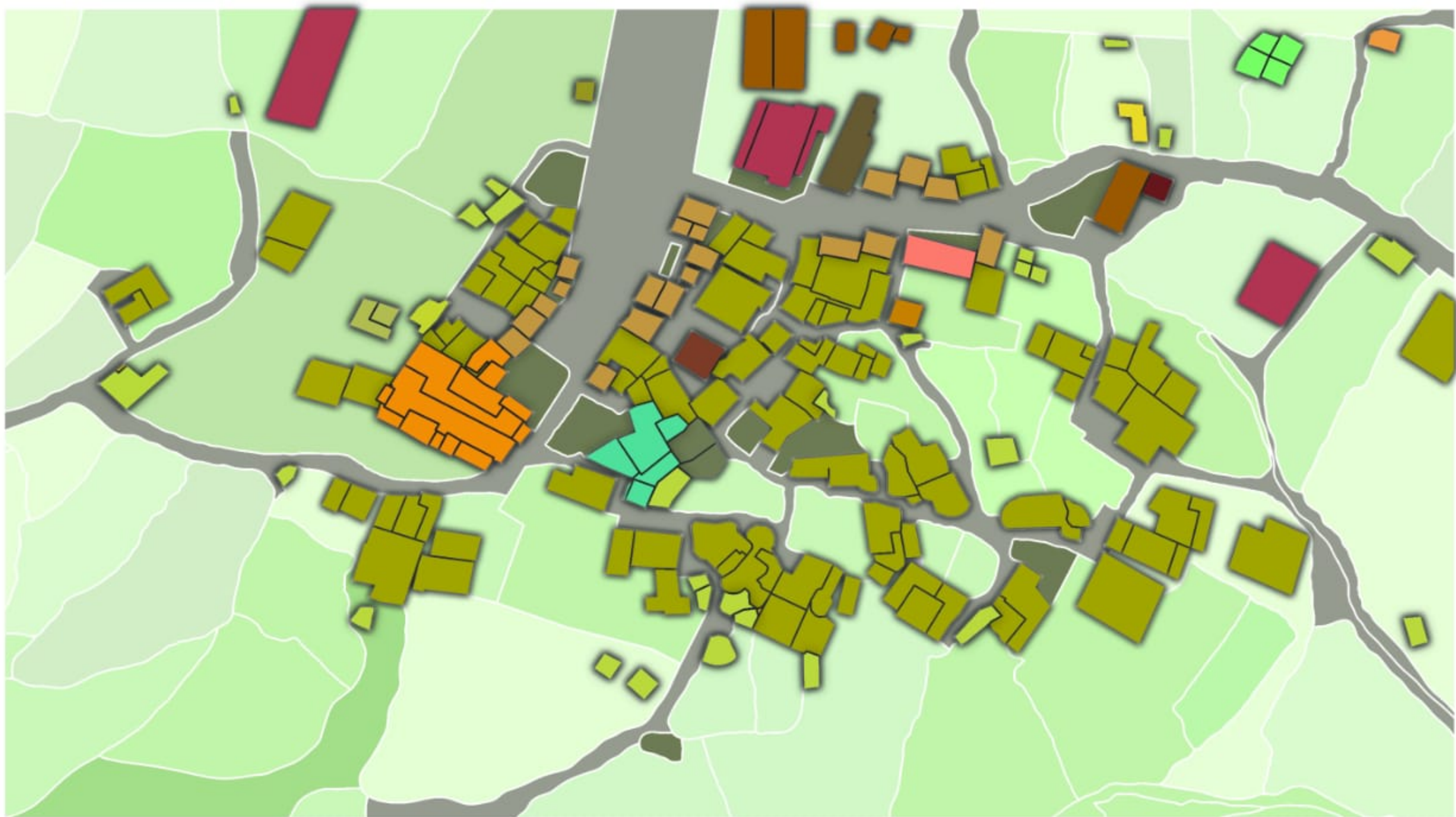
Around 1870 Mir Ghazan Khan (*first*) constructed the ground floor of Summer Palace Gulmit to stay in during his autumn and summer seasons. According to local historians the Mir constructed this Summer Palace after the disaster.

In 1960 Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan constructed the first floor of Summer Palace, and renovated the ground floor in preparation for the stay of Field Marshal General Ayub Khan. The Field Marshal stayed in this of Summer Palace during his visit to Gulmit Gojal.

Cultural Sites in Gulmit

- Old House of Khalifa Aliyar (near Polo Ground)
- Shrine Khoja Mardi Wali (bottom of the Ondra Fort Gulmit)
- Gulmit Cultural Museum (near Polo Ground)
- Flood-Escaped House in Dalgirum
- Shrine of Shohi Chirogh (Odver)
- Ismaili Maktab (Scouts Office)





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|---|---|---|---|--|
| ● MIR'S FORT | ● CARPET CENTRE | ● GUEST HOUSE/HOTEL | ● MASJID | ● BAND OFFICE |
| ● HOSPITAL | ● SHOPS | ● GOLD OFFICE | ● SCHOOL | ● GRAVES |
| ● RESIDENCE | ● RESTAURANT | ● ANIMAL SHEDS | | |

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION WITHIN THE SITE



- LEGEND**
- major programs
 - houses
 - shops



- LEGEND**
- 8'- 14' width
 - 6'- 8' width
 - 4'- 6' width