



Dr. Muhammad Azeem<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Muhammad Hameed<sup>2</sup>, Rizwan Nadeem<sup>3</sup>, Wajid Bhatti<sup>4</sup>, Shazia Ismat<sup>5</sup>

## Abstract

This study is an attempt to explore the historical and architectural significance of Kharpocho fort, situated in the Baltistan region. The Kharpocho Fort, built on a mountain in the Centre of the city of Baltistan. This study further encapsulates that the fort helps in understanding the state's efforts to guard the city from outside threats and to monitor the routes leading in and out of the huge city. The fort stands as a testament to the rich cultural heritage and historical significance of the area. Through an in-depth analysis of its historical context, architectural features and cultural symbolism, this study aims to shed light on the fort's importance and its role in preserving the cultural identity of the Baltistan region. This study dig deep regarding understanding of kharpocho fort's contribution to the region's cultural landscape. This research aims to give a simple, yet thorough understanding of Kharpocho Fort, celebrating it not just as a structure but as a resilient symbol embedded in the hearts of the people of Baltistan. This paper also examines and explores the questions as: What is the history of Kharpocho fort? What is the current status of Kharpocho Fort in terms of its physical condition, structural stability, and preservation needs? What are the key architectural features and design elements of Kharpocho Fort, and how do they reflect the historical and cultural context of the Baltistan region? What are the main factors contributing to the deterioration of Kharpocho Fort, and what are the most urgent restoration and conservation requirements?

**Keywords:** Kharpocho, Baltistan, History Architecture, Culture, Fort

## 1. Introduction

The main objective of this study is to understand the historical significance and architectural description of Kharpocho Fort. In Balti language Khar means "fort" and Pocho means "king". Ali Sher Khan Anchan (1560-1622 AD), a well-known monarch of Baltistan, built Kharpocho Fort Skardu Gilgit-Baltistan over 500 years ago. Ali Sher Khan Anchan is credited with uniting Baltistan for the first time in history during his reign. The site is connected to the Indus River. It can be approached through a narrow jeepable street, linking the main road to the fort. At the lower connected plains in the valley, near this site, there is a polo ground; remains of pre-Dogra fort; and a graveyard of historical significance, where one can still find the graves with inscribed marble cenotaphs<sup>6</sup>. The crown of the city is the Kharpocho Fort that towers high at the edge of a hillock, to which water was brought by a water channel, built of blocks of stone, from Satpara Lake<sup>7</sup>. This elevated location was historically important for defense and surveillance of the surrounding areas. Further this fort holds an important position because many rulers lived their life in this fort. Today, it offers visitors stunning panoramic vistas of the picturesque landscapes that define the Baltistan region<sup>8</sup>.

### 1.1. Historical Significance

The history of Kharpocho fort is very rich and deeply entangled with regional geopolitical structure. The Baltistan Region, located in Pakistan's north, is recognized for its breathtaking natural beauty and centuries-old history. The Kharpocho fort established within the stunning environment of the Baltistan region, stands as a tribute to the region's rich cultural legacy and historical significance. Kharpocho Fort is also known as "The King of Forts"<sup>9</sup>.

Among the rocky landscapes and high hills, the Kharpocho fort stands out as a fascinating relic of the area's past, embodying the essence of its cultural tapestry. As we delve into the historical context, we aim to unravel the enigmatic beginnings of the fort and understand the factors that shaped its construction. The fort, with its imposing architecture and strategic location, has been an integral part of the region's history, witnessing the ebb and flow of civilizations and playing an important role in maintaining its inhabitant's cultural identity. A renowned Archaeologist, Ahmed Hassan Dani in his book, "The History of Northern areas of Pakistan", sheds light on the architectural features of kharpocho fort, its connection to the Tibetan and Buddhist cultural influences, and the impact of various historical dynasties that ruled the region. He also explained the fort's role in regional geopolitical and its importance as a defensive structure in the mountainous terrain of the Baltistan region. The crown of the city is the Kharpocho Fort that towers high at the edge of a hillock, to which water was brought by a water channel, built of blocks of stone, from Satpara Lake<sup>10</sup>.

This fort holds an important position in antiquities not just because of the title, but also many rulers lived their life in this fort. Above all, this fort is called the king of forts because of its architecture, complex routes, and amazing wonders. It is also called the "Lion Fort" because there was a roaring lion's head on the outer gate of Kharpocho, which terrified the enemy. According to historians, the Kharpocho fort dates back to 1,200 years old and consists of seven to eight floors, standing majestically on a rocky hilltop at the foot of the "Sange Chho" (Indus River). The entire city of Skardu can easily be monitored from the three security rooms of this fort. Likewise, it also had special rooms for the king and the royal companions as well as separate rooms for soldiers, prisons, and criminals. This fort was known in its time as an impermeable fortress. History exemplifies that this lion fort, constructed in 1190, was the capital of the whole of Gilgit-Baltistan<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Archaeology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, [azeem.arch@pu.edu.pk](mailto:azeem.arch@pu.edu.pk)

<sup>2</sup> Chairman, Department of Archaeology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, [hameed.arch@pu.edu.pk](mailto:hameed.arch@pu.edu.pk)

<sup>3</sup> Ph.D. Scholar, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, [uogphd@gmail.com](mailto:uogphd@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup> Visiting Lecturer, Department of Archaeology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, [wajid.arch@pu.edu.pk](mailto:wajid.arch@pu.edu.pk)

<sup>5</sup> BS (Archaeology), Department of Archaeology, University of the Punjab, Pakistan

<sup>6</sup> Mueezuddin Hakal, "Kharpocho Fort Inscription from Skardu, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan," *Journal of Asian Civilization*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (July 2017), 73-85.

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad Hassan Dani, *The History of Northern areas of Pakistan* (Lahore: Sang e Meel, 2007), 27-28.

<sup>8</sup> Greg Child, "Thin Air: Encounters in the Himalayas (Seattle, WA: The Mountaineers Books, , 1998.), 72.

<sup>9</sup> Mueezuddin Hakal, "Kharpocho Fort Inscription from Skardu, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan, 73-85.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Hassan Dani, *The History of Northern areas of Pakistan*, 27-28.

<sup>11</sup> Syed Zejah Kazmi, "Lion fort Kharpocho- An ode to the History," *The Karakoram, Karakoram International University Gilgit*, March 20, 2023.

The various forts and royal residences of Baltistan were the center of social, political and social life of the rulers. These forts were built for defense purposes on high hills, which were a solid example of strong construction and were not easily conquered. Australian mountaineer and film maker Greg Child writes that the fort is “Perched high above the junction of the rivers and looking over the town from the rock of Skardu is the old Skardu fort, its stone and clay parapets decaying under the hot sun. Built in a commanding position overlooking the delta, the valley, and the town of Skardu, the fort was the stronghold of the old chiefs of Baltistan. Geographically, Baltistan is characterized by its mountainous terrain, and it is often referred as the “Tibet-e-Khurd” or “Little Tibet” due to its resemblance to the Tibetan Plateau. The region is surrounded by some of the highest mountain ranges in the world, including the Karakoram Range to the north and the Himalayas to the south. The town of Skardu, where Kharpocho Fort is situated, is perched along the banks of the Indus River. It is at an elevation of approximately 2,228 meters (7,310 feet) above sea level. Skardu offers breathtaking views of the rugged mountain ranges, including nearby peaks like the Nanga Parbat, which is one of the highest in the world. Kharpocho Fort itself is built on a rocky outcrop, which provides it with a strategic position looking over the Skardu Valley and the Indus River. This elevated location was historically important for defense and surveillance of the surrounding areas. Today, it offers visitors stunning panoramic vistas of the picturesque landscapes that define the Baltistan region<sup>12</sup>.

The fort was constructed in the 17th Century by Balti monarchs of the Maqpon dynasty and served as an essential spot for the military. The history of the Kharpocho Fort is exciting, extensive, rich and deeply intertwined with the cultural and political evolution of the Baltistan region. Ali Sher Khan Anchan (1560-1622 AD), a well-known monarch of Baltistan at the time, built Kharpocho Fort Skardu Gilgit-Baltistan over 500 years ago. Ali Sher Khan Anchan is credited with uniting Baltistan for the first time in history during his reign. He also extended his domain up to Ladakh, a place well-known for its lofty mountains, clear skies and beautiful views. Since Ali Sher Khan’s reign, this fort has served as a stronghold for subsequent rulers. The fort was near to completely destroyed as a result of an invasion by Ranbir Singh, the Kashmiri ruler, in 1857. After the partition of Subcontinent in 1947, the Jammu and Kashmir conflict erupted, and within Kharpocho Fort, Indian soldiers were stationed. In order to take Kashmir, which is technically a part of Pakistan, but is currently under Indian authority, Pakistani soldiers stormed this fort in February 1948 under the command of the Pakistan Army. Pakistani army besieged the fort for up to six months after the defeat. Luckily, one year after the creation of Pakistan, on 14 August 1948, the Indian soldiers stationed in this fort ultimately withdrew and surrendered after running out of supplies like weapons and ammunition. Since then, Skardu has been renamed as Gilgit-Baltistan and is now a part of Pakistan. The fort consists of seven to eight stories, situated majestically on a rock mountaintop at the base of the Indus River or “Sange Chho”. The whole city of Skardu can easily be observed from the three security rooms of this fort. It also contained specific chambers for the king and royal family as well as separate rooms for prisoners, soldiers and criminals. According to Italian photographer, anthropologist, ethnologist and writer Fosco Maraini, everything in Skardu was credited to Ali Sher Khan<sup>13</sup>.

Ibrahim Maqpoon, Astak Sange, Sik Sange, Baruq Sange, and Ghouta Cho are some of the Rajas that ruled this fort. Around 1300 AD, these Rajas were regarded as Muslim Sultans. The next king in power was “Braq Maqpoon Bokha” in 1400 AD, followed by Ali Sher Khan Anchan in 1500 AD, Raja Ahmed Khan in 1600 AD, Raja Dolat Naseer in 1700 AD, and Ahmed Shah Maqpoon in 1800 AD. Due to his expedition, Maqpoon Raja Ali Sher Khan Anchan had conquered Kashmir to Chitral and received the title of “Anchan,” which signifies a symbol of bravery. According to history, marriage arrangements with the Mughal monarchs and the establishment of diplomatic connections with the Iranian Safavid kings both took place at this fort.<sup>14</sup>

Fosco Maraini (a historian) describes the fort as, “This ancient pile is perched like a veritable eyrie on the rock of tawny hue rising sheer and to the immense height from the Indus. Its actual location is a large granite outcrop that rises 1300 feet above the ground and is washed by a river at its base. It is almost an island in the middle of the plain, therefore it is not surprising that the early valley residents chose it as a location for a fortress. Even now, the romance of the period of chivalry may be seen when its battle-minted flanks touch one of the promontory's lower peaks. The area has a reputation for impregnability, and even recently, Skardu locals came there for protection during the unrest that followed the 1947 India-Pakistan break apart<sup>15</sup>.

The fort was utilized by the Dogra warriors for 108 years while being rebuilt to their demands. In 1948, the locals fought unarmed against soldiers using very effective and sophisticated weaponry, forcing them to leave because the spirit of freedom running through their veins was like blood. As an example of Baltistan's former splendor, the fort is still standing today<sup>16</sup>.

## 2. Architecture and Design

The architecture of any place depicts the perspective of its inhabitants towards their way of life, which is further determined by the region’s current reality. Due to its isolated location in mountainous terrain and the region's harsh weather conditions, Gilgit-Baltistan has created a distinctive culture that is completely unique. The traditional understanding of the people who lived in that area is reflected in this unique society and its building. Ancient structures including the Baltit fort, Altit fort in Hunza, the Shigar fort, Khaplu fort in Skardu and other ancient mosques were constructed by the creative union of local materials skills and unique customs and cultural values of the area. Examples of this unique architecture include the frequent usage of community spaces like “Jataq” (a meeting place for spiritual and cultural activities), Shabaran, and Baldi<sup>17</sup>.

Baltistan, a wealthy region with beautiful natural beauty, is also home to a remarkable architectural history. Residents are familiar with the usage of stone, timber wood and mud as key architectural building materials. The use of rubble and stone masonry in

---

<sup>12</sup> Greg Child, “Thin Air: Encounters in the Himalayas (Seattle, WA: The Mountaineers Books, , 1998.),72.

<sup>13</sup> Syed Zejah Kazmi, “Lion fort Kharpocho- An ode to the History,” The Karakoram, Karakoram International University Gilgit, March 20, 2023.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Banat Gul Afridi, Baltistan in History (Peshawar: Emjay books International, 1988), 55-56.

<sup>16</sup> Syed Zejah Kazmi, “Lion fort Kharpocho- An ode to the History,” The Karakoram, Karakoram International University Gilgit, March 20, 2023.

<sup>17</sup> Amin khan, “Vernacular Architecture of Gilgit-Baltistan,” Aademia, June 23, 2023.

building construction is popular in Pakistan's Northern areas. Almost all ancient structures in Baltistan are built and ornamented with stone masonry and woodwork as the primary ornamental elements<sup>18</sup>.

The architecture and design of Kharpocho Fort encapsulate centuries of cultural and strategic evolution in the heart of Skardu, Baltistan. Perched on a rocky hill, this formidable structure commands breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape, embodying both a defensive stronghold and a testament to artistic ingenuity. Its origins, veiled in antiquity, are believed to trace back over 700 years, establishing it as a witness to the ebb and flow of history in this region. The fort's architectural style, a fusion of Tibetan, Central Asian, and Persian influences, showcases the dynamic cultural interplay that has shaped Baltistan's identity. Stone, the primary building material, harmoniously blends with intricately carved woodwork, creating a harmonious synthesis of form and function. It feels like Kharpocho Fort is a living record of Baltistan's past and a significant period in human history. The Kharpocho fort was comprised of a seven-story structure where the Diwan-e-Aam and Diwan-e-Khas were present for sitting and dismissal.

### 3. Strategic Location and Layout

#### i) Hilltop Positioning

Kharpocho Fort is strategically positioned on a rocky hill, offering a natural defensive advantage with commanding views of the surrounding terrain. This elevation allowed for surveillance and defense against potential threats. The rulers of the Skardu region constructed the fort as a military bastion to safeguard the town from invading forces. The fort served as a military barrier in several wars. The Dogra's were the area's rulers during the Subcontinent's division, and during the struggle against them, the local soldiers learned about the war and where the fort is in the city. In order to keep an eye on the entrance and leaving point of Skardu, they first look over the fort. The rock, or Qillah as it is known, has a length of around two miles, with its eastern highest point rising about eight hundred feet above the river. It is situated on a little flat that is roughly 300 feet above the river. The structure includes a state prison and a wooden mosque. The castle is made of stone and has a timber frame that is heavily protected against musketry. Gateways and wooden towers split the zigzag that leads to it, and similar fortifications are erected on several rock formations<sup>19</sup>.



Figure 1

#### ii) Defensive Features

Kharpocho Fort, situated on an elevated rocky outcrop in Skardu, Baltistan, boasts a range of defensive features that were meticulously designed to safeguard its occupants. The fort's layout is designed with defensive features in mind. This includes fortified walls, bastions, and watchtowers that provided protection against invading forces. The structure is constructed in a way that maximizes its defensive potential. These features serve as a testament to the fort's strategic significance in the region's history. Banat Gul Afridi the author of *Baltistan in History*, states about the defensive features of Kharpocho fort as:

Vigne and Cunningham support the view that Ali Sher Khan built the fort of Skardu. Vigne is the first European to have visited the fort in 1835. It is necessary to reproduce the description of the fort as he had seen it: -

*I once visited the stronghold, where everything seemed to be constructed for defense rather than comfort, being a confusion of break-neck stairs, low doors, and dark passages. I found a strong fortification of walls and square towers drawn across the slope, about two hundred feet above the plain. The flat on the summit may be called triangular, but is bare and covered with gritty sand, in which I picked garnets and small crystals. Towards the peak over the castle, it becomes a ridge, and on each side of it are piled huge stones, which the smallest force would seem sufficient to send thunder down upon the plain below. There is no water on the top of the rock but close to the river under the castle is a fine spring<sup>20</sup>.*

Here are the key defensive elements of Kharpocho Fort:

#### i) Elevated Position, Fortified Walls, Battlements/Crenellations and Watch Towers

The fort's hilltop location provides a natural advantage, offering clear sightlines over the surrounding terrain. This vantage point allowed defenders to spot potential threats from a considerable distance. The perimeter of Kharpocho Fort is encircled by robust

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Samina Naseem, "Architectural Ornamentation of Shigar Fort Complex Skardu Baltistan: Heritage of Pakistan," JRSP, Vol. 59, No 2 (April 2022), 9-10.

<sup>19</sup> Banat Gul Afridi, *Baltistan in History* (Peshawar: Emjay books International, 1988), 55-57.

<sup>20</sup> Banat Gul Afridi, *Baltistan in History* (Peshawar: Emjay books International, 1988), 55-56.



stone walls, providing a formidable barrier against hostile forces. These walls were constructed using large, sturdy stones, ensuring durability and structural integrity. The walls of this fort are not only built of wood, stone, mud, and lime, but in the background is the history of the grandeur and glory of the rulers, as well as the country and the nation. These are distinctive features of the fort's defensive architecture. Battlements are raised sections of the walls, while crenellations are the gaps or notches between them. They allowed defenders to shoot arrows, fire weapons, or pour hot substances down onto attackers, while still being protected. Positioned strategically along the walls, watchtowers offered an elevated platform for sentinels to observe the surrounding area. This facilitated early detection of approaching threats and provided an advantage in terms of preparedness.<sup>21</sup>

**ii) Arrow Slits, Strategic Layout and Storage for Provisions**

Narrow openings in the walls, known as arrow slits, were designed for archers to shoot arrows at attackers while minimizing their exposure to return fire. These openings were designed to be narrow on the outside, widening on the inside, allowing defenders to have a wider field of view and aim while providing limited visibility to attackers. This design ensured that defenders could effectively target and engage intruders, while remaining protected behind the fort's sturdy walls. The layout of the fort was planned with defensive considerations in mind. Features such as narrow passageways and concealed entrances made it harder for intruders to navigate within the fort. The fort likely included storage rooms for provisions like food, water, and ammunition. This ensured that the fort could withstand a prolonged siege, providing a crucial defensive advantage.<sup>22</sup>

**iii) Residential Quarters with Defensive Considerations**

Living spaces within the fort were likely designed to be easily defensible. This could include features like small windows, reinforced doors, and secure rooms. Various small and big rooms make up the historic and architectural layout of the Kharphocho fort, where the kings and their families used to live. The large chambers are separated by a wall. Rooms have deteriorated after cannon fires destroyed them during Gilgit-Baltistan's independence struggle in 1948. The entire city of Skardu could easily be monitored from the three security rooms of this fort. Likewise, it also had special rooms for the king and the royal companions as well as separate rooms for soldiers, prisons, and criminals.<sup>23</sup>

**iv) Natural Terrain Integration**

The rocky outcrop on which the fort is built serves as a natural defense, making it more challenging for attackers to approach.



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**

<sup>21</sup> Syed Zejah Kazmi, "Lion fort Kharpocho- An ode to the History," The Karakoram, Karakoram International University Gilgit, March 20, 2023.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

#### 4. Architectural Style

##### i) Entrance Control

The main entrance to Kharpocho Fort was carefully designed to be easily defensible. It likely featured mechanisms like drawbridges, portcullises, or other barriers that could be raised or lowered to control access. The main gate of Kharpocho was known as “Sange Staghu” meaning the Lion’s Gate. It is said that a lion and tiger's picture was engraved on it. When the door was closed, this city looked very formidable. This door was quite strong. Other suitable security systems existed. There was no formal route to Kharpocho; instead, the fort was reached via underground tunnels, according to local legend.



Figure 4

##### ii) Influences and Adaptations

Kharpocho Fort's architectural style is a reflection of the diverse influences that have shaped the Baltistan region over the centuries. Elements of Tibetan, Islamic, Kashmiri, and Persian architectural styles can be observed. Some monasteries were built in this region which shows signs of Buddhism architecture. Mosques were also built there, after observing these structures, we can say that the people of this region were converted into Islam later<sup>24</sup>.

Baltistan believed to be mainly dependent on influences from Kashmir, its large and powerful neighbour, for most of its religious structures, notably the matam-sarai (also known as imambargha), which is typical of Shia assembly places. Additional influences may have originated from Ladakh, which is linguistically and culturally connected to western Tibet where the Tibetan language is spoken. In fact, contact with Ladakh is simpler than with any other nearby cultural or political entity, especially along the Indus. Additionally, Iran has a significant effect on several crafts. In addition, the southern Tarim basin, including Khotan and Yarkand, may have made significant contributions to the development of the huge kind of khanqah-cum-veranda in Baltistan as well as the extensive repertory of carved patterns. We may thus assume that there was a significant south-north cultural movement, which was further enhanced by some impact from the east, Ladakh, Central Asia, and the further-off Shia civilization in Persia. “Two mosques, the one in Skardu fort and the other in Paroa near Tagas, stand out for their particularly high, heavy corbelled roof cornices, thereby emphasizing even more the ‘towering’ character of the roof and its crowning ensemble. This type of roof design is related with tower-like Buddhist stupas, pagodas and chorten<sup>25</sup>.”

#### 5. Masonry and Construction

The fort's construction predominantly employs local materials, such as stone and wood. Skilled craftsmen utilized traditional techniques, demonstrating a high level of craftsmanship. Large stones and massive walls make up the architecture. “Kharpocho” is inscribed in bright white letters on one of the stone walls. The fort's ceiling is about 30 feet high, supported by enormous tree trunks and stones. The fort is a great representation of the proverb that “the best view comes after the most difficult climb.”<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Max Klimburg, *Traditional Art and Architecture in Baltistan* (Turin, Italy: Umberto Allemandi & Co 2007), 149-156.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad Irfan Chourbati, “Kharpocho Fort: A Great Symbol of the Anchan Era,” *Pamir times*, November 19, 2015.



The excellent use of woodworking and artistic abilities in the construction of a fortress is impressive. In the past, the Skardu fort was erected to guard against invaders and enemies. And the building style depicts how kings and queens used to live in the past. A water canal known as "Gango pi Khrongh" is also found near the fort. Persian was formerly considered the official language of Baltistan, that's why you may find some inscriptions engraved on the walls in Persian. "The fort's building involved incredible woodworking and creative talents. Every year, thousands of visitors visit this fort and inspired by the structure. Massive rocks and stones were carefully used to build the walls. The path leading to the fort was believed carefully kept narrow and difficult in order to make invaders difficult. When her husband was away on a military expedition, a woman named Gul Khatoon, the wife of Ali Sher Khan Anchan (1595-1633), is supposed to have commissioned the construction of a path from the city below to the fort<sup>27</sup>."



**Figure 5**

Throughout its history, Kharpocho Fort has likely seen periods of renovation and restoration to maintain its structural integrity and relevance.

## **6. Conclusion**

The exploration and analysis of Kharpocho Fort have provided a comprehensive understanding of its rich history and distinctive architecture. This overview aimed to unravel the layers of significance embedded within the fortress walls, shedding light on its evolution through time and the architectural nuances that make it a unique cultural heritage site. The historical journey of Kharpocho Fort, from its mysterious origins to the various cultural influences it has weathered, serves as a testament to the dynamic nature of the region. The fort has withstood the tests of time, witnessing the ebb and flow of history, and standing as a silent witness to the tales of generations past.

The architectural analysis has unraveled the meticulous craftsmanship and strategic design principles that characterize Kharpocho Fort. From its imposing walls to the intricately designed structures within, every facet tells a story of both function and form. The fort's architecture such as fortified walls, watchtowers, arrowslits and defensive features contribute to its unique identity and make it a subject of fascination for scholars and enthusiasts alike. This fort has a significant historical value, therefore, excavation of this fort should be carried out in order to develop better understanding about this fort.

As we conclude this Idiosyncratic overview, it becomes evident that Kharpocho Fort is not merely a physical structure; it is a living chronicle that encapsulates the essence of the region's history and the craftsmanship of its builders. Preserving and understanding such cultural treasures is imperative for future generations, ensuring that the legacy of Kharpocho Fort endures as a source of pride and knowledge.

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid