



Program for Culture and Conflict Studies

AHMADZAI WAZIR TRIBE

The Program for Culture & Conflict Studies

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PRIMARY LOCATION

The Ahmadzai Wazir Tribe inhabits South Waziristan Agency. They control the border regions between South Waziristan and Afghanistan. Their ancestral home appears to have been in the Birmal Valley in Afghanistan. Two-thirds of the Ahmadzais live in the Bannu District, and the remaining one-third lives in South Waziristan Agency near Wana and the Shakai Valley. A large number migrate to and from these areas according to the season.

Lying at the southern side of the two Waziristans and named after the Wazir Tribe, South Waziristan Agency is the largest in size of all the FATA, bordering North West Frontier Province. It has two headquarters: Tank is the winter headquarters of the Agency, while Wana is the summer headquarters. It has functioned since 1895. South Waziristan is bounded on the north by North Waziristan Agency; on the northeast by Bannu and Lakki Marwat Districts; on the east by tribal areas adjoining Tank, Tank District, and Dera Ismail Khan District; on the south by Zhob District of Balochistan Province and the tribal areas adjoining Dera Ismail Khan District; and on the west by Afghanistan. The total area of the Agency is 6.619 square kilometers.

The Agency is mostly a mass of rugged and complex hills and ridges. There are no regular mountain alignments. The land rises gradually from south and east to north and west. The dominating range is the Preghal in the west along the border with Afghanistan. It is the highest peak which is 3515 meters high. Zarmelan, Wana, Shakki, Zalai, Spin and Tiarza are the main plains of the Agency.

South Waziristan is inhabited by seven tribes: the Ahmadzai Wazir, Dotari, Donutan Taji Khel, Khomia Khel, Taji Khel, and Barki Wazir. Mahsuds and Wazirs are the two main tribes of this agency. There are also some Powindah Ghilzai (kuchis) settlers in the southwest corner of the agency between Thati and Zarmelan. The Bhattanis inhabit a strip of country along the southeast border of the agency.

MAJOR TOWNS

Wana
Kajuri Kach
Shakin

KEY TERRAIN FEATURES

Valleys: Wana, Gomal

Plains: Dhana Raghzai, Spin

Rivers: Comal, Wana, Karkana Algad, Spin Tangi

WEATHER

The climate in the region is hot in summer, with high temperatures around 105 degrees Fahrenheit, and cool in winter, with low temperatures around 35 degrees

Fahrenheit. There is modest rainfall in July and August and in January and February, with some snow at higher elevations.

RELIGION/SECT

The Ahmadzai Wazir Tribe are of the Hanafi sect of Sunni Islam. They are not particularly strict in the performance of their religious duties. As of the early twentieth century, the mullahs had influence only as far as the observances of religious matters.¹ Followers of the Deobandi seminaries have been active in the area.² The extent to which the balance between tribal and religious leadership has evolved in the face of Taliban/Deobandi militancy remains to be seen.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Some western ethnologists consider the Wazirs a tribe of Rajput origin, probably an Indian race with a mixture of some foreign blood like that of Scythians or Tartars. According to their own traditions, the Wazirs call themselves the descendants of Wazir, who was the son of Suleiman, the son of Kaakai, the son of Karian and grandson of Ghurgust. So they are usually described as being a tribe of Karlanri or Gurgusht Pathans. From this common origin come the Wazirs, a title which properly includes both the Wazirs and Mahsuds but the word Wazir has now practically been appropriated by the former.

The majority of Wazirs are pastoral. The Wazirs earn their livelihoods from sheep rearing. The other articles of petty trade in this agency are charcoal, wool, potatoes, chilghozas (a kind of pine nut), and a few varieties of locally grown fruits.

ALLIANCES

Their villages are often mixed with Mehsud villages and many of the head men from each tribe are connected to each other by marriage.³

FEUDS

The Ahmadzai Wazirs have largely avoided destructive internal feuds, and they are known for their unity as a tribe with blood feuds that are normally not as indiscriminate as those of some of their neighboring tribes.⁴

RELATIONSHIP WITH TALIBAN/AL-QAEDA

The Admadzai Wazirs have tolerated the Taliban in the past but recent fighting has

¹ Wylly, H.C., *From the Black Mountain to Waziristan*, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore, Pakistan 1912.

² The Karachi News, October 22, 2004.

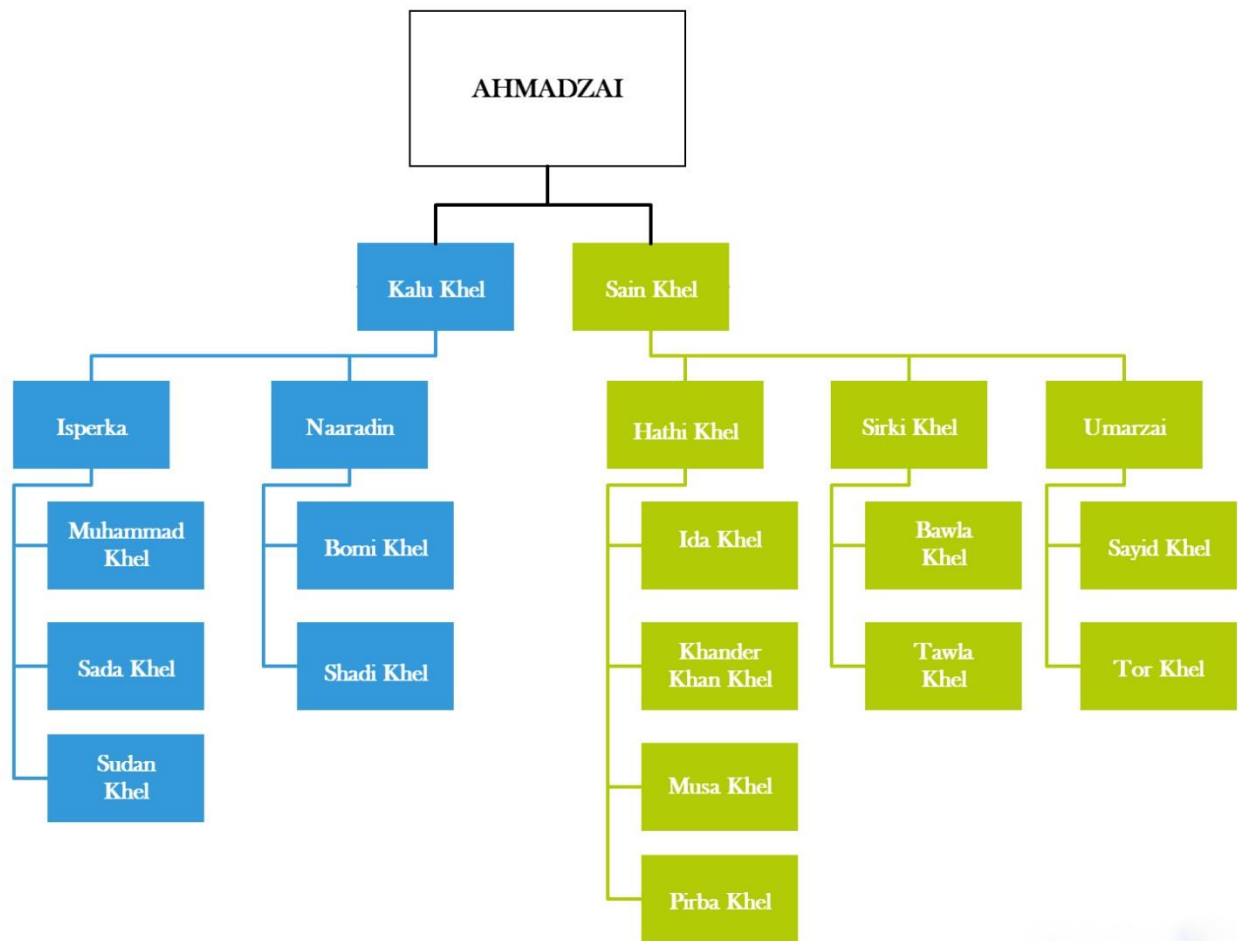
³ *Tribal Hierarchy & Dictionary of Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas*, First Edition, NGA Office of Counterterrorism, 2005.

⁴ Wylly, H.C., *From the Black Mountain to Waziristan*, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore, Pakistan 1912.

demonstrated cracks in the relationship.⁵

PERMANENT ARMY/FRONTEIR CORPS/SCOUT LOCATIONS

- HQS, South Waziristan Scouts in Wana
- 1st Wing, South Waziristan Scouts in Wana
- 2nd Wing, South Waziristan Scouts in Tanai
- 4th Wing, South Waziristan Scouts in Angorada Field Artillery Battery in Wana



⁵ The Dawn International, May 28, 2007.