

## KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA INVENTORY ON THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

**Name of the Element:** *Newes'en' thi Bashali Parik Dai*: Visiting and staying in the Bashali (menstruation house) when a woman has periods

**Brief Description:** The story goes back when Nagadehar from Batrik went to Rumbur and threw three arrows made of 'loin' tree and asked the forces of Rajawa (The king, s'aw) to collect them. The three spots where arrows fell marked the location of alter of Mahadev, alter of Sajigor and the Bashali. The three places are still located there. Since the beginning of Kalasha people, the women while having menses go to the Bashali as they cannot stay in their houses during that period. Therefore, Bashali is a residence of women who have periods. The building has mostly two or three rooms. For example the Bashali of Rumbur is a complex. The oldest one in the front, almost on the road, later another one was made behind it in which one room and three toilets and baths were added. Now the latest building has been added to the complex. It has four rooms, cabinets filled with cooking utensils and required ones for the kitchen and toilets and baths. When girls / women go to Bashali, they take food from house. But facility to cook in a Bashali is also present. When staying in Bashali, the girls and women spend time making sus'ut, patti, piran, they wash their clothes, enjoy storytelling, talk to each other and also read books, magazines or music.

At times, when a woman has to wash clothes of their children or male members, they go to the river, wash clothes and return to the Bashali. Similarly, these women go to work on fields directly from Bashali and then return.

When leaving the Bashali to return home, the woman has to take bath, wash hair, wash clothes and then return to their houses. In the Bashali, there is, 'Dezalik' which is known as either, 'Goddess of Bashali' and 'messenger of God.'

This has been adopted from the red kafirs. When a girl comes to Bashali for the first time, her mother makes a big roti (bread) and put cottage cheese (paneer) on it. A small proportion of it is offered at the altar of 'Dezalik.' A prayer is done that the girl does not come often to the Bashali.

Also if a woman is in labor, and child is not born easily, then offering is made at the altar