

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA INVENTORY ON THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Name of the Element: Zhontr –The art of grinding grains in water powered mill.

Brief Description: An elevated water channel come running down the mountain and goes underneath the structure of a zhontr. With a speed flow of water, a wooden fan starts to rotate. Above are two circular stones, the bottom one of which is fixed and the top one is attached to the fan below, which rotates with it. The top stone has a hole in the middle in which grains fall. This mechanism grinds the grains.

Above the stones, hangs a wooden container called 'Dhor', where grains are collected. At the end of the container is a small bowl called 'Phonayk'. It is through this small bowl that the grains fall in between the grinding stones.

In order to regulate the flow of the grains, a switch called 'Khar' is used. The khar is connected to another secondary switch called 'Taktaku'. If the khar is tightened, it will pull the taktaku towards the phonayk and the flow of the grains will be less. If loosened, the flow will increase.

On festivals and during different rituals, the zhontr is purified.