The land of the Palula
Gateway to Chitral

Most people visiting Chitral in the North-West Frontier Province, have heard about the Kalasha people and they are probably also aware that the majority of Chitralis speak Khowar as their first language. Fewer people know that there are at least ten other languages spoken in the valley by various communities, each of them with its own distinct traditions.

The first community you come across entering Chitral by the Lowari pass are the Palula. They inhabit the valley of Ashret as well as Biori, the next valley to the north, and are by tradition considered the gatekeepers of Chitral at the Lowari pass. Their language, Palula (or Atshareta), is widely used and understood in most places between the Lowari and Drosh, and there are few mother tongue speakers of any other language in Ashret and Biori. Today, the language is the mother tongue of about 10,000 individuals.

Visitors to Ashret are unlikely to encounter any serious language difficulties since many local people speak excellent Pashto and Khowar, and educated people are able to speak Urdu as well as some English. However, a few moments spent practicing the contents of the short language section below will go a long way in demonstrating to your new Palula friends your interest in their place and their unique culture.

Pronunciation guide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Approx.</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Approx.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>č</td>
<td>Eng. chips</td>
<td>aa</td>
<td>Eng. father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ğ</td>
<td>Eng. joy</td>
<td>ee</td>
<td>Eng. cake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>š</td>
<td>Eng. ship</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Eng. seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uu</td>
<td>Eng. cool</td>
<td>oo</td>
<td>Eng. open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two vowels = long sound, one vowel = short.

/~/ means nasalization, like in Fr. sans.

/b/ after another symbol means aspiration.

/ç, d, t, r, n, ʃ, ʃ/ with tongue curled up and further back than for /č, d, t, r, n, ʃ, ʃ/.

Essentials

Greeting  assalaamu alaikum.
Reply      waalaikum assalaam.
How are you?  (asking a man/woman) tu sooröe?/tu seérie? I am well (reply by a man/woman) sooro/seeri.
How is your health?  thii tabiaat šuyee? Fine  šui.
What is your name?  thii noo gubaa? My name is ______ mii noo ______.
Thank you  mherabeeni.
Good bye  šoo ta de.
Yes/No   oo/ña.
We will meet again  gharee pašiia.

Language Difficulties

Do you speak English/Urdu?  tu angreezi/urdu bujaamuee?
Does anyone here speak English/Urdu?
da ața koo hine?

I only speak a little Palula
ma uču paaluluu la

I don’t understand
ma ga na budo.

I don’t know
ma mathē ma na pata.

Please, say that again
hari me mananē.

What do you call this in your language?
thī ćoolāa nisthe gubaa manaanu.

**Getting Around**

I want to go to Drosh
mii drhuu-ṣa the beendēeo.

I want to go to Chitral
mii čhatroola the beendēeo.

What is this place called?
ani zhayii gubaa noo?

This is Ashret
anu atshareet.

I’m looking for a general store
ma (jenerāl ištoor) buladāanau.

... a pharmacy
.. dawayii dukaan ..

... a petrol pump
.. pamp ..

I want/need ______
maathē ___ pakāar.

How much is this?
kuṭi?

How far is it?
dhuura/nhīaara.

far/hear
sida.

straight
khušēeti/deechīneeti.

**Food and drink**

I eat food
ma quuli khayaanu.

I drink water
ma wii pilaanu.

tea
čay

water
wii

meat
mhaas

bread
guuli

rice
ruji

tomatoes
beetingal

onions
piaaz

apples
baabai

apricots
aaʃari

walnuts
açoora

gold
čini, tari

salt
lhoon

I don’t eat _____
ma ___ na khayaanu.

I don’t drink _____
ma ___ na pilaanu.

**Numbers**

1 aak 14 čandiiš
2 duu 15 paŋjiš
3 troo 20 bhiš
4 čuur 25 bhiʃepanj
5 paanj 30 bhiʃedaaš
6 so 40 dubbihāša
7 saat 50 dubbihieedaaš
8 aaʃt 60 troobhiša
9 nuu 70 troobhiʃeetaaš
10 daaš 80 čuurbhiša
11 akooš 90 čuurbhiʃeetaaš
12 booš 100 paanjbhiša, soo
13 triś 1,000 zir

Anjuman-e-taraqqi-e-Palula (the Society for the promotion of Palula) was founded 2004 by people in the Palula community to promote the continued use of their language and to encourage research and documentation of their language, history and culture. After the establishment of a written form of the language, the society is now in the process of producing some literature and literacy-material in Palula. In early 2006 an Alphabet book and a booklet with Palula stories were jointly published by the Anjuman and the Frontier Language Institute in Peshawar.