

On its right bank the Oxus receives one very large river, the Suchán, formed by two large streams, the Shákh dara and the Ghund, which unite about half a mile before joining the Panjah. The two branches are of about equal size, and the united stream is about two-thirds of the size of the main river, which continues to be called the Ab-i-Panjah. The Suchán stream enters a few miles south of Bar Panjah. The valley opens opposite the junction to a width of about four miles, forming a beautiful well cultivated plain, with a good deal of pasture land, generally covered with horses and cattle from Bar Panjah, which place forms a most picturesque addition to the landscape, situated as it is on a white rock surrounded by trees and gardens, which extend uninterruptedly a distance of about two miles north of the fort.

Both the Shákh dara and the Ghund Rivers have numerous villages on their banks. On the former at two days' march from Bar Panjah is the large fort of Rách, the residence of the Governor (Hákim) of the Shakh dara district, which is said to contain about 500 houses. The Ghund valley, the chief place on which is Chársím, is said to contain about 700 houses. Roads lie up both these valleys to the Pámir steppes. The Pamír at the head of the Ghund valley goes by the name of Bugrúmál, and is possibly a continuation of, if not identical with, the Alichúr Pámír. The direct road to Kashghar up this valley is said to be a much easier road than that by Tashkúrghán.

At Sácharv, nine miles north of Bar Panjah, in the Shighnan valley, the river narrows and becomes turbulent and the road is very bad. Sixteen miles further on is the Darband Tower before described. Beyond it lies the territory of Roshán, a dependency of Shighnan, and ruled by the same King, Yusuf Ali Khan.

Two and a half miles beyond Darband is the junction of the Murgháb River with the Panjah. This is the river I have already traced from its source in the Lake of Little Pamir under the name of Ak-su. It is also said to carry away water from Lakes Karakul* and Rang-kul. The Panjah valley, which at Darband is very narrow, rapidly widens to five miles, and would be fit for cultivation, but that the ground is frequently flooded by the Murgháb River. The Múnshi crossed the river about two hundred paces above its junction with the Panjah; the stream was in three channels, and the torrent was so rapid that most of the horses lost their footing. The Panjah stream was very clear, but the Murgháb was red, thick, and muddy. The volume of the latter was considerably larger and its velocity greater than that of the Panjah.† From bank to bank the width of the river bed is about one and a half miles, and of this at least one mile was covered with water. The passage was effected with great difficulty. In the summer floods the water is said to extend from mountain to mountain, a distance of not less than five miles; it can then only be crossed by boats.

This river is generally called the Murgháb, but it is also known by the name of the Darya-i-Bartang, so called from the district of that name through which it flows. Three miles below the junction, on the right bank of the now united rivers, which still bear the name of *Panjah*, is Wámur, the chief town of Roshán.

Wámur is a flourishing place; a large Fort‡ about the same size as that of Bar-Panjah, is surrounded by several hundred houses and orchards. Fruits and grain grow in abundance, and the soil is very fertile.

The Múnshi remained several days at Kila Wámur, where the King of Shighnán was residing.§ He was enabled to visit thence the *Fatíla Sang*,|| which together with the ruby mines are described in the *Sir*¶ as the two sights of Badakhshán. It is situated about three and a half miles down the river, underlying the mountains. He extracted

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* I am myself by no means sure as to whether this river does really receive any water from Lake Karakul.

† This statement of the Múnshi is confirmed by other sources of information which I possess.

‡ With a garrison of about 200 men.

§ The King generally spends the winter months at Kila Wamur returning for the summer to Bar Panjah.

|| "The wick stone," probably *asbestos*.

¶ The "Sir" is a book written by Moulvi Imám Afzál, Khorassani.