ABSTRACT

My study aims at investigating the major towns and ports by seeing it in the prism of administrative study based on European sources during Mughal Empire. There were some major towns and ports in Mughal India, which had a strategic location, with a vibrant inter-Asian trading network. There has been considerable craze for Research investigations on towns and ports in Mughal India where the interest of the conventional historiography being centered on central and provincial administration to a large extent, but local administration, especially town, has been largely ignored. I have traced the major towns and ports from trading point of view and enquired the comparative study of administrative machinery between port and town, mainly relying on the sources related to the period of our study especially European. This present work offers an evaluation of the performance of the chunk of major towns and ports in the Mughal Empire as well as an analysis of the administration of the towns and ports on their territory and an assessment of policies and governance in these fields. The period of this study is a long and the area of subject, the major towns and ports in Mughal Empire is a larger one, therefore I have selected those major towns and ports, which were important in the economic dynamism in the sphere of trade and commerce.

The Indian Ocean trading network extending from the Far East to the West Asia was expanded in variety, density and traffic, supported by the emergence of sprawling empires all over the Asian world in the 16th century. These Empires brought large areas under their control, and provided greater security for the movement of commodities across great distances. It was also the period, when we see European companies establishing their trading settlements in Asia.

My study looks at the economical developments in Mughal Empire through the role of major towns and ports. It attempts to correlates the economical development with the administrative history of towns and ports by examining its manufactures, fiscal system, trade and commerce and merchant communities and it also takes into consideration the cultural aspects of towns and the power and functions
of the local officials as well as various departments of towns and ports under the Mughal.

My study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter attempts to trace the major ports on eastern coast, with various information regarding to the ports and their commercial activities, as well as coastal and foreign trade. The chapter also studies the role of merchants in overseas trade in Bengal on the basis of information available regarding to the ports of Bengal on eastern coast.

Chapter second deals with the study of major ports on Western coast with its importance as in the earlier chapter. It describes major ports of Gujarat, which had a number of ports. I have relied on the information collected from a wide variety of source material, which includes the factory records, diaries, letters and travelers’ account. Besides the major ports on western coast namely Div, Gogha, Broach, Cambay, Surat and Chaul, this chapter also deals with other aspects such as trade under Mughal responsibility, interest of emperor’s family members and nobles in overseas trade.

The third chapter looks at the administrative apparatus and its function in the towns of Mughal Empire, which are considered major as per study, role of various ministers related to the town administration in detail and broad study over kotwal as it was known as the head of the town. It deals with the power and function of the various ministers, who were appointed by the ruler and mainly responsible for the town administration. This chapter also studies other officers and departments, related to the town administration, i.e. chabutra-i kotwali, faujdar, muhtasib, qazi, intelligence department, thana and thanedar, qila and qiladar, and one more aspect like modes of punishment by executive officers as well.

The fourth chapter describes the administrative history of port and its comparison in the perspective of town administration which is totally different from the ordinary towns in many ways. Here an attempt is made to deal with the various officials required to the run the administration of the port, their appointments and dismissals, revenue administration, different departments related to the ports and custom dues on trade and commerce as prevailed in Mughal Empire. And the most important thing which seems to be new in this work is the comparative study between the port and town administration. Besides the officials and various departments of the
town administration, the other important aspect which has also been dealt in this chapter is the role of mint, brokers and sarrafs in the port administration.

The fifth and last chapter sheds light on economic dynamism of major towns with their unique features in Mughal Empire. This chapter also deals with the variety of towns according to different categories. The list of major towns and various other important factors have been discussed in this chapter like features of urban settlement, factor responsible for developing towns, categories of towns, inhabitants and major towns viz. Dacca, Malda, Patna, Delhi or Shahjahanabad, Ahmadabad, Banaras, Ajmer, Lahore, Multan, Kabul, Thatta and Agra. Certain towns were emerging as a centre of specialised manufactures. These centres needed raw materials and prepared goods from far and near places. Besides the above mentioned aspects, it also examines the Merchants’ community and their role in trading activities, role of banjaras, modes of inland transport, major trade routes in Mughal Empire and theft and highway robbery in trade routes and means of safety (carvan, charan, sarais).

In a sense, the primary effort of my work is to study the complex administrative mechanism of towns and ports with its comparative apparatus. Thus my research on Major Towns and Ports in Mughal Empire intended to be a much wider study of the economic and administrative history of the period, primarily relied on European travelers’ account. It seeks to enrich our understanding regarding to trade and commerce and administrative development of towns and ports during Mughal period.
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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been employed in the footnotes and the bibliography:


*AMIERJ* Aarhat Multidisciplinary International Education Research Journal

_Bernier* _Travels in Mughal Empire_

*Early Travel in India* _Early Travels in India_, (ed.) W. foster (Account of Hawkins, William Finch, Ralf Fitch, Withington, Edward Terry)


_J.B.R.S* Journal of Bihar Research Society

_Manucci* _Storio Do Mogor_


_Ovington* _A voyage to Surat_


_Peter Mundy* Travels of Peter Mundy, *Travels in Asia*, (Vol.ii)

_Pietro Della Valle* _The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India_

_PIHC* Proceedings of Indian History Congress, Annual Session

_Tavernier* _Travels in India_

_Thevenot* _Indian Travels of Thevenot and_
INTRODUCTION

An attempt has been made in the present work to analyse Major Towns and Ports in the Mughal Empire and the Study of their Administration: As Reflected by European sources. This humble study aims at investigating the major towns and ports by seeing it in the prism of administrative study during Mughal Empire. Although, there has been considerable craze for Research investigations on towns and ports in Mughal India whereupon a lot of work has been done , but the interest of the conventional historiography being centered on central and provincial administration to a large extent, but local administration (especially town) has been largely ignored. Probably, for the first time the factors responsible for the importance acquired by the towns and ports have been analysed. The result of these investigations presents a connected account of the history of major towns and ports in Mughal Empire with their administration. The present study primarily based on the scrutiny of European travelers’ accounts categorized as diary, letters, factory records etc., along with the existing Persian and secondary sources.

In the concerned study, I have traced the major towns and ports from trading point of view and enquired the comparative study of administrative machinery between port and town, mainly relying on the sources related to the period of our study. The question as to which port and town considered major or what kind of role did the port and towns play during the period of our study, though interesting subject of study has so far not been studied in adequate detail. This present work offers an evaluation of the performance of the chunk of major towns and ports in the Mughal Empire as well as an analysis of the administration of the towns and ports on their territory and an assessment of policies and governance in these fields. The period of this study cover 1526-1707A.D. is a long and the area of subject, the major towns and ports in Mughal Empire is a larger one.

The source material used in the formulation of this thesis

The sources bearing on the subject are very fragmentary, and it has been necessary to search through a very large number of works to collect the source material for the study. The Indigenous sources are mainly in Persian, may be
classified as official and private work. These works starts with Baburnamah and Akbarnamah in the 16th century; to supplement these official works there are a wide variety of other Persian works. Some of them are well known for example Mirat-i Ahmadi of Ali Muhammad Khan, which provides information about the period of Gujarat Sultanate and especially valuable for the condition of port officials and the role of merchants in trade and commerce.

The contemporary India historians, who have given a detailed account of the political and military events of the reign of Mughal emperors, have very little to say about the economic condition of the people and their commercial activities. But the English and the Dutch records of the period give very valuable information, besides them, the other travelers who visited many parts of the country, preserved a detailed account of India during their travelling phase. In the middle age; Al Baruni, Ibn-i Batuta, Abdur Razzaq, Niketin and Barbosa visited India. During 16th century the influx of foreign travelers became greater than before and their number swelled.

The second major category is the European sources namely, Travelers’ accounts, the records of the European commercial companies operating in northern India and a series of European travelers from Ralf Fitch in 1583 to George Foster in the last decade of 18th century, visited North India and left accounts of what they observed. Travelers have given a good account of the socio-economic condition of the people and their commercial activities. Their political comments are not always reliable for they had no access to official documents, but their dissertations on Indian economic life have of great value. They were free from preconceptions, interested as newcomers in many aspects of Indian life with which Persian writer were too familiar to comment upon. They are not systematic in their writings, but the evidence they offered in totality having immense value. These travelers belonged to different nationalities and professions and some of them were very learned. They came by different routes on different missions. Among them John Jourdain, a British traveler (1608-17 A.D.), Terry (1615-18 A.D.), chaplains to the Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, Pietro Della Valle (1623-25 A.D.), a noble Italian, Mandelslo, a German traveler (1638-39 A.D.), Bernier, a French physician who lived in India from 1659 to 1666 A.D., his contemporary French Jeweler Tavernier who lived in India from 1641 to

1 O.P.Singh, Surat and its Trade, Delhi, 1977, p.iii
Introduction

1668 A.D., Thevenot was also a French traveler, Manucci, the Venetian physician (1653-1708 A.D.) known for his memoirs under the name of Storio Do Mogor and the Careri, an Italian traveler. Thomas Coryat, the first English man to travel in India and other parts of Asia (1612-17 A.D.) without having any intention of trade while Peter Mundy was in the service of East India Company in India during the reign of Jahangir (1605-27 A.D.). These travelers have recorded thing and written almost on every aspect of India’s socio-economic life, as they saw. They have described most of the aspect related to port and town and their economic condition. They traveled in various parts of the country, looked upon everything with dispassionate eyes and had recorded their experiences, which are very valuable. No authority can be more reliable than these travelers who have done great service to the cause of contemporary history of the period. De Laet’s account of India is a contemporary version of Indian events which is very useful for the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir. Monserrate’s commentary is partly a journal of his journey, where he accompanied Akbar on his expedition to Kabul. Pelsaert’s account of India has been translated into English by W.H Moreland and Geyl as Jahangir’s India, which contains plenty of useful and valuable material, related to the period of our study.

A number of research studies have been carried out on the subject so far, but they have usually focused on the conventional themes. The great value and utility of these works can hardly be underestimated, although there is still considerable ground that remains to be covered. H.K. Naqvi made a pioneering study of urban centers and published two works on it, which are very insightful. There is a brief, but well written chapter by Humbly on Mughal Towns and cities in the Cambridge Economic History of India, while Moreland also mention some of Mughal towns in his works. We also have a large number of articles about different towns and ports and aspects of urban life which are very important for understanding the value of the towns and ports in Mughal India and its role in Mughal Empire. This work tries to depict the European travelers’ opinion about the towns and ports from various point of views and also discusses themes of European writers about the condition, lay out of the town and its population, their standard of living, location of the ports and role of rulers and nobility in trade activities like export-import and financing, used in Mughal India.

O.P. Singh, Surat and its Trade, Delhi, 1977, p.v.
Considerable extensive research work has been done on the history of the Mughal Empire in India. Books even on Mughal administration are not scares but in terms of the histories of different subas under the Mughal, it seems that the whole field lied unexplored. In 1580 A.D. Akbar reorganized the territorial boundaries of his empire and divides it into 12 subas i.e. Allahabad, Bihar, Bengal, Agra, Ajmer, Awadh, Ahmadabad, Delhi, Kabul, Lahore, Multan and Malwa.\(^3\) Till the death of Aurangzeb the central authority remained strong and therefore from 1580 to 1707 A.D. most of the suba continued to retain their territorial firmness and administrative system. In present study a modest attempt has been made to write the history of various major towns during the Mughal Empire, with special reference to European travelers’ account. Akbar appointed various officers in the suba or town. There was no definite pattern of administration of the suba till 1594 A.D., when regular appointments to various officers seem to have been given due importance. By the time of Aurangzeb, the administrative picture became clearer.

The purpose of dealing with the administrative set up is not only discussing the general administrative machinery of a suba or town but also deals with the duties of different officers posted in the towns. The works of various historians such as, P.Saran, M.P. Srivastav, J.N Sarkar, and W.H. Moreland over central and provincial government provides great detail about the provincial and central government machinery, but town administration has not been dealt in proper detail. Unfortunately very little work has so far been done on the history of major towns and ports in Mughal Empire, notwithstanding the great importance which the study deserves. Although several works have been done and published on the ports and its administration, among them the works of M.P. Singh entitled *Town Market mints and Ports in Mughal India*, Asindas Gupta entitled *Indian and Indian Ocean*, Indu Banga entitled *Ports and their Hinterland*, Anirudh Ray entitled *Masulipatnam and Cambay* etc., are well appreciated.

Here it is tried to fill the vacuum with the comparative study between port and town administration. Since a systematic work on all the major towns and ports with its administrative structure, would have been too extensive for the scope of a thesis. It was advised to make a study with the particular emphasis on major towns and ports,

\(^3\) Ain-iAkbari, (trns.), Vol.ii, p.115.
Introduction

while at the same time given necessary treatment to other administrative aspect of both (towns and ports) alike. The present work does not attempt a foray into this uncovered ground; it simply presents a survey of major towns and ports in medieval India during the Mughal Period, a period which is of crucial significance as far as the history of urbanization in medieval India is concerned. I wish and hope, if the circumstances favor me, would devote my efforts to undertake fuller treatment of this work of major towns and port and its administrative history as well as comparative study between port and town administration.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

This thesis proposed to study the following aspects and questions.

- To know about the Nature and importance of the ports.
- Major import-export items from the eastern and western ports of India during the period of our study
- Feature of the port administration and the power and functions of the local officials as well as various departments of ports under the Mughal.
- To study the performance and efforts of various officers related with town administration.
- To study in detail the role of mints in port administration.
- One of the aims is also to find out the comparative study between towns and port administration.
- Major Trade routes and measures of security in towns during Mughal period.
- Role of European companies and local merchants in trade and commerce.

CHAPTERIZATION

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Here an attempt has been made to draw the picture of the major towns and ports with its administrative structure, on the basis of information available regarding the towns. It examines the ports coast wise (eastern and western coast) in the Mughal Empire and identifies the principal factors that have contributed to it. The effect of the ports on economic, social and
environmental aspects is studied and quantifies where possible. In the chapter plan, a sincere attempt has been made to outline the major towns and ports in Mughal Empire with its administrative status as well as the comparative study between port and town administration.

First chapter Major Ports on Eastern Coast during the Mughal Period attempts to trace the major ports on eastern coast, with various information regarding to the ports and their commercial activities, as well as coastal and foreign trade. Various aspects are dealt in this chapter, which shows the importance of the ports located on eastern coast in Bengal Subah such as:

- Historical background of port in India
- Role of the royal family members and the nobles in Bengal’s overseas trade
- Port of Satgaon
- Chittagong,
- Hugli,
- Balasore
- Role of merchants in overseas trade in Bengal

Second chapter Major Ports on Western Coast during the Mughal Period deals with the study of major ports on Western coast with its importance as in the earlier chapter. It describes major ports of Gujarat, which had a number of ports starting with Diu in Kathiawar. Gujarat used to supply the articles imported into India from abroad which were mostly precious metals and stones, velvets, Chinese goods, wines and African slaves. It also supplied articles manufactured in the suba, like cotton goods, inlaid work, silk and cotton products of Ahmadabad to different parts of India and abroad. India had a vibrant foreign trade and commercial relations with the outside world, which were especially conducted from the western coast. The Indians used to carry on trade with Arabia, Africa and Persia by sea routes. The Indian goods were carried by the Arabs to the Red sea and from there it went to Damascus and Alexandria, consequently distributed all over the Mediterranean countries and beyond. The ports, which are considered major at the western coast during the Mughal period and the matters which are dealt in this chapter in details are as follows:

- Trade under Mughal responsibility
Introduction

- Interest of emperor’s family members and nobles in overseas trade
- Div
- Gogha
- Broach
- Cambay
- Surat
- Chaul

Third chapter Administrative Apparatus and its Function in the Towns of Mughal Empire discuss with the administrative apparatus and its function in the towns, which are considered major as per study, role of various ministers related to the town administration in detail and broad study over kotwal as it was known as the head of the town. It deals with the power and function of the various ministers, who were appointed by the ruler and mainly responsible for the town administration. The fundamental principle of the Mughal system of administration was ‘centralized authority’ vested in the hands of the emperor, who appointed a team of officers directly and solely responsible to him. These were high ranking officers such as subedar, governor, Kotwal and Qazi. The officers and departments which are discussed in this chapter are following:

Kotwal, Chabutra-i Kotwali, Faujdar, Muhtasib, Qazi, Intelligence Department, Thana and Thanedar, Qila and Qiladar, Modes of Punishment by Executive Officers etc.

Chapter four, Administrative History of Port and its Comparison in the Perspective of Town Administration throw light on the administration of the port, which is totally different from the ordinary towns in many ways. The Mughal ruling class was primarily concerned with the expansion of the Empire and consolidation of the gains of conquest during the 16th and 17th century. Here an attempt is made to deal with the various officials required to the run the administration of the port, their appointments and dismissals, revenue administration, different departments related to the ports and custom dues on trade and commerce as prevailed in Mughal Empire. And the most important thing which seems to be new in this work is the comparative

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4 I.P. Gupta, Urban Glimpse of Mughal India, Discovery publication house, New Delhi, 1986, p.45
study between the port and town administration. Below the points are given, which have been discussed in detail.

*Mutasaddi, Diwan, Shahbandar, Mir Bahr, Custom House or Furza, Custom Chargess, Mode of Payment, Jihatgodi, Jahajat, Khushki, Role of Mint in Port Administration, Role of Brokers and Sarrafs, Port and town administration: A comparative overview*

Chapter fifth Major Towns in Mughal Empire with especial reference to economic dynamism is related to the major towns of the Mughal Empire. A notable feature of the Mughal period was the growth of towns in various parts of the country. This development was the result of political and economic policies followed by the Mughal Emperors. These towns grew into trade and industrial centres which in turn led to the general prosperity. This chapter also deals the variety of towns according to different categories. The list of major towns and various other important factors have been dealt in this chapter, are as follows:

Features of urban Settlement, Factor responsible for developing Towns, Categories of Towns, Inhabitants, Major towns [Dacca, Malda, Patna, Delhi or Shahjahanabad, Ahmedabad, Banaras, Ajmer, Lahore, Multan, Kashmir, Kabul, Thatta, Agra.], Merchants’ community and their role in trading activities, Role of Banjaras, Modes of Inland Transport, Major trade routes in Mughal Empire, and Theft and Highway robbery in trade routes and the means of safety (*Carvan, Charan, sarais*)

Despite the economic significance of these major towns and ports, it has not yet received the deserved attention by the historians, although there are several historians, who have studied the political, economic and administrative process of various towns and ports. Irfan Habib’s *Atlas of the Mughal Empire* is worth mentioned here, which provides geographical and economic information about the towns and ports in Mughal Empire. Some other important works are also available, though these works are important but most of these are to serve the frame of reference and study of major towns and ports with their administrative structure as a part of the history of Mughal India. Fortunately there are several extant sources for the study which provides us the evidence for the reconstruction of the history of major towns and ports.
CHAPTER-1

MAJOR PORTS ON EASTERN COAST DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD

Ports are the vehicles par excellence for transactions. Since time immemorial, ports have been gateways for the exchange of goods, people and ideas. From the primeval, the sea has been a link between states and ports have been connecting bridges between different peoples and cultures. Ports did not only bring communities closer, they also had particular functions inherent to their positions as links to the sea and as connections between different political powers and civilizations. The concept of the early modern port has its roots in the medieval urban tradition. The title of ‘port’ was generally given to towns whose main activity was trade, being located either on the shores of a major river or on the sea. When the role of trade and market activities became important enough to a certain port, those activities would be regulated by the urban authorities on the instruction of central government (king).

There were three characteristics that marked ports. In the first place, ports had anchorages that were the center of movement of people and products. Secondly, the urban morphology of ports always had particular buildings or spaces that dominated the city such as dockyards, warehouses, customhouses, open markets, inn and pubs. Finally ports could also be identified by the particular socio-economic groups that they sheltered. For example, ports commonly attracted a large number of merchants, bankers, bookkeepers, shopkeepers, shipbuilders and foreigners. Even though the ports were important as urban structures with a direct link to the sea or via river estuaries, early modern ports, like all other towns and cities at the time, were not able to survive without their hinterland. The primary concept of hinterland is that of a rural environment that immediately surrounds a port.¹

¹ Leiden, Catia Antunes, Early Modern Ports, 1500-1750 in European History online (EGO), Institute of
Port is a mingle point of ocean and inland transport. According to Mirat-i-Ahmadi, a port is a place where big ships anchor, while bara is meant for small boats. Origin and growth of port depends upon various aspects, like the site is important for the port-town to develop, which is associated with water. For the duration of the monsoon, when roads and routes were flooded or even washed away, the only convenient means of getting from place to place was boat by which traveling could be done easily along the river, where boats were always kept ready for these journeys. Shipbuilding centers were to be found in Bengal, Kashmir and Thatta in Sind and above all the large ships were built at Allahabad and Lahore, from where they were sailed by river to the coast. Trade through rivers by boats was easier and cheaper than by land, especially during the monsoon season, when the roads were flooded with water.

Though the trade by river was flourished before the coming of the Mughals, the admiralty was not thoroughly structured until Akbar’s reign. Boats were constructed on the orders of the government to transmit both passengers and goods: other boats, called Ghurabs, were especially built for sieges and river fighting. Harbors were improved and experienced administrators placed there as harbor-master. Selection of sea-men was based on their ability and experience, who were remunerated and encouraged to engage in trade. Finally to facilitate reverine transport and travel, river tolls were regularized and merchants were well treated, when in harbors.

The economy of Mughal Empire was depended on agriculture, trade and other industries. Since the time immemorial, agriculture has always been the backbone of economy of the country, thus in the Mughal era also agriculture was the biggest source of

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6 Ghurab. This vessel is also mentioned in Medieval Indian literature as a combat boat. It was named by the Muslim and there are many theories about the origin of the name. See, Hobson-Jobson, Col. Henry Yule and A.C. Burnell, H.J., A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, And of Kindered Term, Etymological, Historical Geographical and Discursive, New edition edited By William Crooks, London, 1903, p.392.
income, but Mughal treasury drew considerable revenue from custom duty levied on merchandise or exported by sea, and collected at the ports. Rapid development of trade and commerce was also supported by the improved transport and communication system. The Mughal rulers also encouraged the monetization of the economy. Another factor that helped in the tremendous growth of business in that period was the arrival of European traders and growth of massive European trade. As well as using India’s rivers, ships sailed regularly from its western and southern coast: Abd’ur Razzaq and Nicolo Conti both saw vessels carrying merchandise from various ports. Early in the 17th century, Terry observed that Mughal’s sea-going ships were huge, weighted at least fourteen to sixteen hundred tons and carried many guns, but were unable to defend themselves.

The Mughal had no personal navy at the beginning of their rule in India, nor do we find any marked naval activities, except the Haj pilgrimage to Mecca and the transportation of troops. Each year Muslims pilgrims sailed in special ships on their way to perform their Haj, the pilgrims to Mecca, Arafat, Mina and Madina (holy places of Saudi Arabia) the fifth of the five pillars of Islam. Their ships mainly the Indian made and, according to some observers, beautifully designed; but they were not very seaworthy. With the conquest of Gujarat, Bengal, Orissa, Sindh and Golkonda, large number of ports, lying in those provinces came in the control of the Mughals and then they came in to direct contact with seas. Since those were the biggest source of revenue.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PORTS IN INDIA

Maritime history is connected with the actions linked to the oceans and seas, right from the earliest times till date. Maritime history of India has been very important in the development of trade enriching the economy of the country. The world first tidal dock is believed to have been built at Lothal around 2300 B.C. during the Harappan civilization,
near the present day Mangrol harbor on the Gujarat coast. Sea gained a prominent position with time and maritime activities began to grow with the different conquest. Sea routes were certainly significant as they supplied the means of business with foreign countries and establishing contacts with the foreign states in ancient and medieval times. Indian maritime history traces the dawn of the Portuguese to the coast of India and the activities that resulted in this arrival of foreigners to India.

As trade relation between India and the Greco-Roman world amounted to larger degrees, spices became the main export from India to the western world, leaving behind silk and other commodities. Indian commercial connection with South East Asia testifies crucial to the merchants of Arabia and Persia during the 7th and 8th century. During the sultanate period, everyday usable articles as well as comfort articles were exported to Syria, Arabia and Persia from Bengal and Cambay. These included silks, exquisitely designed clay pots and pans, gold embroidered cloth caps, knives, guns and scissors. Other major things of export were indigo, sugar, oil, ivory, sandalwood, diamonds, spices, other precarious gems and coconuts. East Africa, Malaya, China and the Far East were the place where things were exported. Arab traders shipped Indian goods to European countries through the Red sea and Mediterranean ports. Indian textiles were in great demand in China.

In the late 17th century a notable revival of maritime activities with the alliance of Siddhis of Janjira and the Mughals, is witnessed. Indian shipbuilders continued to hold their own well into the 19th century in spite of the British domination. In this regard, the growth of Maritime power of Southern India was significant in Indian History. The Cholas exploited their maritime strength and nurtured overseas territorial ambitions. In this context of Indian maritime history, the geography of the North Indian Ocean played an important role in making the people of the riverside to seek the sea for trade and economic gain.

The Cholas were a Tamil dynasty that ruled in south India till the 13th century. Indian maritime history records extensive overseas venture in the south India under the Chola dynasty, which encouraged sea trade by developing harbors and providing
quarters, warehouses and workshops for Roman sailors and merchants. Trading relations in the south were improved and they had long trading correspondence with the west through transshipments (changing) at the Northern ports. The Chola dynasty, undoubtedly, helped to enhance the maritime activities which had contributed to the Indian maritime history. It was the failure of the Mughals to appreciate the magnitude of sea power that led to the subjugation of India by the British.

The East coast, especially Bengal, was the most envious place for the Europe, from the trade point of view as they carried a profitable trade there in the 17th century. During Mughal period, certain port in Bengal like Satgaon, Hugli, Chittagoan were very significant and rose to great fame, but were mostly controlled by the Portuguese. Another major port was Balasore in Orissa on the eastern coast. Time and again the English had attempted to open up trade in the province of Bengal. The condition of transport was unenthusiastic for the merchants of Bengal to send their goods by land because passage was usually affected by pack animals. The condition of roads did not permit heavy vehicles, besides highway robberies constituted a long-lasting threat to the life and security of the merchants. Naturally the merchants of Bengal favored foreign trade by sea route.

In the Mughal Empire, the Bengal ports were second in importance to Gujarat ports. Many contemporary writers have referred to Bengal’s location, the comparatively lower cost of water transport and the productivity of its agriculture. ‘The valuable commodities’ as remarked by Bernier, ‘of Bengal’ attracted the foreign merchants’ and ‘no country ‘except Bengal ‘where so great a variety’ of commodities were found. Bengal’s traditional trade connections were with south East Asia with the kingdoms of Burma, the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. Bengal was rich in agricultural wealth, where cotton and sugar were produced in abundance. Bengal sent out to Agra raw silk, saltpeter, lac and it was also exporting together places indigo and cotton goods, whereas it had

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14 *The Mughal Administration*, op.cit., p.52.
considerable trade in rice also. Satgaon and Chittagong had been Bengal’s two major ports in the sixteenth century of Mughal India. Later we see the rise of Hugli at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and this port along with Balasore is the major ports of oceanic trade.\textsuperscript{15} Akbar annexed Bengal in 1575 A.D., as he was very much interested in stimulating the commercial position of his empire, which is reflected in the commentary of Jesuit Father Monserrate (the contemporary of Akbar), who testifies that Akbar even directly engaged himself in trading activities.\textsuperscript{16} The conquest of Gujarat, just two years before the conquest of Bengal, though offered him an opportunity to carry on oceanic trade: the trade could be carried on only at the mercy of the Portuguese. The Portuguese had been in India much before the Mughals and they exercised control over the neighboring seas. From Goa they ruled the Arabian Sea. Akbar failed to protect the Mughal mercantile marine and pilgrim traffic from the Portuguese piracy.\textsuperscript{17} At this stage Akbar conquered Bengal, but during his own lifetime he failed to establish law and order in Bengal. In the absence of security, law and order peaceful economic activities were almost impossible. But under Jahangir and Shahjahan comparative peace was secured and commerce flourished in Bengal. During Mughal period there seems to have been four ports in Bengal, namely Satgaon, Hugli, Sirpur and Chittagong among them Satgaon was the oldest port but became blocked up with silt, therefore Hugli, about a mile distant became important. Sirpur on the Meghna river, close to Sonargaon (which was at that time the Eastern capital of Bengal), of which Ralph Fitch says ‘Great store of cotton cloth is made here’, had been washed away at this time.\textsuperscript{18} Chittagong, on the other hand at this time lay outside the limits of the Mughal Empire. On the East coast, a large number of small boats belonging to Bengal plied independently carrying a large volume of trade.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{17} Phanindra Nath Chakraborti, \textit{Pattern of Bengal’s Overseas Trade Under the Mughals}, in Proceeding of Indian History Congress 45\textsuperscript{th} Session, Annamalainagar, 1984, p.375.
\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Early Travels in India}, p.28.
\textsuperscript{19} Tapan Raychaudhary, \textit{Bengal Under Akbar and Jahangir}, An introductory Study in Social History, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, First Published 1953, Second Impression, 1969, p.62.
Bengal clearly possessed two separate branches of overseas trade, one to Malacca and the other to the coast of Coromandal, Malabar, Gujarat, and Ceylon.\textsuperscript{20} The principal items of export were textiles, rice and sugar. Fitch mentions in his narrative that ‘white cloth’ of Bengal was exported in ‘great quantity’ to Pegu.\textsuperscript{21} Reaching Ceylon, Fitch found provisions or victuals were imported from Bengal ‘every year’\textsuperscript{22}.

Maritime trading history of Bengal from Akbar to Aurangzeb may be divided into three phases. In the first phase, her coastal and overseas commerce was dominated by the Portuguese merchants since 1536 to 1632A.D. The next phase began from 1632A.D. and ended in 1651A.D., marking the rise and fall of local merchants of Bengal who carried on continuous maritime trade for some time. The last and third phase began from 1651 when the English East India Company, establishing their commercial grip in Bengal and ousted local merchants from foreign trade.

The Portuguese were the first European merchants who established their trading settlements and independent custom-house in Chittagong and Hugli in Bengal. They drove away the Arab merchants, the chief carriers of Bengal trade, and forbade them to trade in Bengal. Being armed with Akbar’s firman\textsuperscript{23}(a mandate or royal order) they laid the foundation of their settlement at Hugli in the years 1579-80A.D. and began to carry inter-Asiatic trade. Gradually they established themselves in the commercial emporiums of Hugli, Sripur, Dacca, Noakhali and Barisal, enjoyed more or less monopoly in Bengal’s overseas trade and became its principal carriers.

From the ancient time India had regular commercial contact with the far-flung countries of Europe and Asia. But the nature and character of the trade and commerce of India underwent change of far-reaching consequences with the advent of European powers. The English opened up their trade in Bengal very late. The alluvial plains of the Ganges delta had already attracted the Portuguese to establish their factories. The Dutch

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{21} \textit{Early Travels in India}, p.34.
  \item \textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.},p.43.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Elliot and Downton, (ed.)\textit{The History of India, As told by its own Historian}, The Mohammedan Period, Trubner And Co. Peternoster Row, London, 1869,Vol.vii, p.31ff.
\end{itemize}
and the Danes followed suit and undertook profitable voyages in the Bay of Bengal, while the first English factory in Bengal was founded at Hugli in 1651 A.D.

Bengal’s traditional trade connection was with south East Asia, especially with the kingdoms of Burma, the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. The largest volume of Bengal’s trade was directed towards Southeast Asia, to the Indonesian archipelago, Malay Peninsula and the Burmese and Thai coast. Bengal also supplied rice, butter, vegetables, oils and saltpeter. On their return merchants took back pepper, spices, tin, elephants and gold. The trade of elephant was most profitable. Bengal’s trade to Malacca declined after the Dutch conquest. Bengal’s trade to Arakan, Pegu, Tenasserim and thence to Ayuthis was also important. It was a short, safe voyage and several round trips were made per year. The export commodities were textiles, silk, sugar, saltpeter, opium and food stuffs, while in return tin, elephants, precious stones, and gold were brought. A new development of 17th century was the direct trade between Bengal and Surat, but this was largely in the hands of Surat merchants. Bengali silk, muslins, sugar and opium were transported for consumption in western India and from there transferred to west Asia, because there was little or no direct sailing from Bengal to the ports of west Asia. Bengal received certain types of cotton goods, tobacco, pepper and spices, coffee and a variety of goods of west Asian origin from Surat. As the westward trade from Surat grew in the seventeenth century, so did the Surat-Bengal trade.

There were numerous factors, assisted in the expansion of the overseas trade of Bengal during the 17th century; firstly, there was an extension and consolidation of Mughal Empire into the Bengal subah and eastwards up to the frontiers of Arakan. With the capture of the port of Chittagong, some order was brought into the waters and inlets of Delta. Arakan, Magh and Portuguese piracy was suppressed and trade was centralized in few ports, regulated by a system of traffic and port administration. Secondly the requirement of Bengal’s manufacture increased in other regions; which resulted new markets established, such as raw silk at Japan, sugar in west Asia and rice and other food stuffs in the growing European settlements and other food deficit areas. Thirdly these

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24 *India and Indian Ocean* 1500-1800, op. cit., p.105.
25 Ibid., p.122.
26 Ibid., p.123.
opportunities appear to have given a boost to merchant enterprise; therefore Bengal attracted migrant merchants from western India. Finally as in other part of India, Mughal nobility and members of the Bengal, Orissa and Oudh administrations participated actively in the trade from 1640s. They invested in ship building which saw a boom from about that time. They owed a number of ships that sailed the major oceanic routes. This participation in the trade went on till the 1680’s.  

Bengal had a long tradition of trade and commerce, “Bengal from the mildness of its climate, the fertility of its soil and the natural history of the Hindus was always remarkable for its commerce.” The greater part of manufacture and raw silk was exported and Europe received the largest share; and the rest went by land and sea to different part of the empire. Though remarkable quantity of cloths was manufactured in Bengal yet it could not keep pace with the ever increasing global demand in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

Barbosa having spoken about Bengal in the year 1514 A.D., wrote, “Many foreigners from various parts live in the city both Arabs and Persians, Abysinians and of the country being fertile and of a temperate climate. They are all great merchants and own large ships they navigate to Coromandal, Malabar, Cambay, Pegu, Tanasari Sumatra, Cylone and Malacca and they trade in all kinds of goods from one many places to others.” Master C. Fredrick (a Venetian traveler) as well as Ralph Fitch had drawn up fairly full lists of the articles in which Bengal did trade with the other parts of India and abroad. Edward Terry (1615-18 A.D.), [chaplains to the Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe] preserves for us precious information about the province of Bengal and its ports that Bengal a most spacious and fertile province.

27 India and Indian Ocean 1500-1800, op.cit., p.122.
30 Ralf Fitch was a British merchant, who came overland to India in 1583 and travelled through upper India in Bengal, Burma, Malaccan and Cylon, returning to England in 1591.
31 Early Travels in India, p.295.
ROLE OF ROYAL FAMILY MEMBERS AND NOBLES IN BENGAL’S OVERSEAS TRADE

An interesting feature in the composition of Bengal merchants engaged in overseas trade in the 17th century was the presence of nobles, governors and subedars of Bengal. There are several instances of it, in 1653 A.D. we find that the faujdar of Hugli sent 11 bales of goods to Gombroon, a port city and capital of Hormozgān Province the southern coast of Iran, on the Persian Gulf which also occupies a strategic position on the narrow Strait of Hormuz, in one of the English company’s ship. The later faujdar of Hugli, Malik Qasim, and his agent Haji Muhammad also made a trip to Gombroon with some sugar and other goods vendible there, in one of the English company’s ship, for procuring several things, which Malik Qasim wanted from Persia. It seems that until the end of the century the nobles and members of the ruling family considerably participated in the external trade of Bengal. Thomas Bowrey, who visited Bengal in 1670s, says that ‘trade of the moors of Bengal very much increased.’ Important state officials like the subedars of Bengal, Shah Shuja, Mir Jumla, Shaista Khan and Azim-us Shan carried on an extensive overseas trade, but around the close of the 17th century, we find the extreme reduction in the involvement of nobility in the foreign trade; this was perhaps owing to the general bankruptcy of the nobility followed by the breakdown of the Mughal Empire. As early as the 1740s we find the subedar of Bengal Shah Shuja had his own ships engaged in overseas trade. He took active part in trade and tried to monopolies some sectors of the province’s external trade, made himself the sole purchaser of elephants, one of the chief items of the Dutch Company’s import to Bengal; Now the Portuguese trade in Bengal had been replaced by the Dutch. The nobles and the members

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33 Thomas Bowrey is a British merchant sailor. In the 1670s and 1680s, he sailed around the East Indies, who wrote a book, A geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679.
35 The Rise and Decline of Hugli- a port in medieval Bengal, op.cit.,p.61.
36 Shah Shuja was the second son of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan and empress Mumtaz Mahal. Shuja was appointed by Shah Jahan as the Subahdar of Bengal and Bihar from 1641 and of Orissa from 25 July 1648 until 1661.
of the ruling family also delivered their goods in the ships of individual merchants or the companies.

Bengal’s richness in medieval period was legendary and the cheapness of wares was attested by most of the foreign travelers. It was quite natural that trade and commercial activities were brisk in Medieval Bengal and hence her ports played an important role in the economy of the Bengal.

**TABLE 1** Shows major ports on eastern coast with its economic condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJOR PORTS ON EASTERN COAST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NAME OF PORT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satgaon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittagong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balasore</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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38 A geographical account of countries round the bay of Bengal, 1664-79 A.D., pp.193-94.
SATGAON

The ports of Hugli and Satgaon, (Saptgram in Bengali), are at a distance of half a karoha\textsuperscript{39} from each other. The rise of Satgaon has remained obscure and controversial, even to this day. There are various legends, connected with the rise of Satgaon, which is considered an agglomeration of seven villages, namely, Basudevpura, Bansabera, Khamarpura, Devananadpura, Shivpura, Krishnapura and Trishbiga also known as Adi saptgram the nucleus of the city of Saptgram.\textsuperscript{40} Satgaon, positioned on the southern bank of the Saraswati River, a tributary of the Hugli, now dried up, took the place of Tamralipta. It became the Muslim capital of Bengal in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century. Portuguese, who settled at Saptgram carried on rapid trade from this port. Large vessels came up the river to Saptgram. It was important centre of maritime trade during and subsequent abandonment.\textsuperscript{41} Around 1570’s, it was the most important port which from ancient times was the chief emporium of trade in the western part of Bengal. It was the advantageous position of Satgaon on the River Saraswati in the loop formed by it before it in the great port of Bengal for ocean going ships in the middle ages\textsuperscript{42}. It was the royal port of Bengal till the emergence of Hugli in the last quarter of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century. As the chief mart of Bengal, Satgaon attracted merchants from different parts of India and diverse other countries. This statement also proved by poet Mukundaram, (Mukundaram was a Chandi poet, who belonged to sixteenth century) according to him, it used to attract so much foreign trade that the merchants of Satgaon never left their hometown.\textsuperscript{43} It was the chief

\textsuperscript{39} Karoha is defined in Hobson- Jobson, as measurement of length. P.540., Road distance was measured by Kuro (the Persian form of the Sanskrit Krosa, Hindi (kos) each of 5,000 gaz. Though Abul Fazl in Ain,says that , Kuroh was equal to 5000 gaz-I illahi. Cf. Irfan Habib, Atlas of the Mughal Empire, Political and Economic Maps with Detailed Notes, Bibliography and Index, Oxford University Press, New York, 1982, Reprint, 1986, p.xiii.

\textsuperscript{40} Anirudha Ray, The Rise and Decline of satgaon: Overseas Port of Medieval Bengal, in, The Indian Trade at the Asian Frontier (ed.) S.Jeyseela Stephen, Gyan publishing House, New Delhi, 2008, p.69.

\textsuperscript{41} Animesh Ray, Maritime India, Ports and Shipping in Maritime India, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi,1995, p.41.

\textsuperscript{42} The rise and decline of Hugli- a port in medieval Bengal, op.cit., p.34.

emporium of Portuguese trade since 1537, and popularly known to them as Porto Piquenes.\footnote{Manrique, Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique (1629-1643) trns. C.E. luard, assisted by Father H. Hosten, Vol.I, The Hakluyt Society; Second Series No.lxi, London, 1927, P.xxv; Early Travels in India, p.25.}

In earlier time, Satgaon was large city thickly populated and was the seat of governor. And the factories of the Portuguese and of other traders were also there. But the Portuguese could really establish themselves at Satgaon only from the middle of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century, although they got the permission to settle at Satgaon and Chittagong during 1530s from the last Hussain Shahi Sultan, Muhammad Shah III. From the account of Ceaser Fredrick\footnote{Ceaser Fredrick was a Merchant of Venice, travelled in India, Southeast Asia and the Middle East in the 1560s-1580s.}, a Venetian traveler who visited Bengal in 1567A.D., found the port of Satgoan and not of Hugli. According to him the port of Satgoan was very famous and every year thirty to thirty five ships laden with various goods like rice, cloth of different types, lac, sugar, myrobalan (the dried plum like fruit of various tropical tress, used in dyeing, ink, and medicine), pepper and other goods set sail to the other parts from there alone.\footnote{Samual, Purchas, Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his pilgrims, James MacLehose & Sons, Glasgow, 1907 Vol.x, p.107, 114.} This was almost the last mention of the ships and their trading activities in the port of Satgaon in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century. Later traveler Ralf Fitch\footnote{Ralph Fitch was a merchant of London and one of the earliest English travelers and traders to visit Mesopotamia, the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, India and Southeast Asia.}, who visited Bengal between 1582 and 1594A.D., assisted the above statement because he found the route from Satgaon to Hugli full of jungle in which wild animals and the dacoits predominated. He had to take a circuitous route to reach Hugli, which then had few shades did mention Satgaon but not mention any ship lying there.\footnote{Early Travels in India, p.25.}

Ralph Fitch went to Satgaon in Bengal from Agra with the hundred and forty boats laden with all kind of merchandise of vessels, with salt, opium, asafetida (\textit{hing}), lead, carpets, and diverse other commodities, down the river Jumna. The chief merchants are Moors and Gentiles. He completed the voyage in five months, but he thought it could be made in three.\footnote{Ibid., p.24.} He mentions a type of boat called \textit{pericose}; it had 24 and 26 oars and
went from place to place to buy rice and the commodities for resale.\textsuperscript{50} While, Petermundi\textsuperscript{51} saw great boats of three, four or five hundred tons each, plying between Agra, Etawah, Allahabad, Patna and Dacca, these beautifully made boats belonged to nobles and carried their goods and families.\textsuperscript{52} Another type of flat boat, called \textit{Patella} carried timber and stone. A boat with a heavy load could travel the considerable distance from Bengal to Agra in only three months.\textsuperscript{53}

In his account Ralf Fitch describes about the Brahman and their ceremonies, which appears weird and wonderful for him, that priests used string around their body and come to the water, and lade up water with both their hands, and turns the string first with both their hands within, and then one arm after the other out. These Gentiles will neither eat flesh nor kill any thing to eat. They survive with rice, butter, milk, and fruits. and for their self-punishment they lie flat upon the earth, and rise up and turn themselves about 30 or 40 times, the Brahmans mark themselves in the foreheads, cares, and throats with a kind of yellow stuff which they grind, and every morning they do it.\textsuperscript{54}

The historic port of Satgaon began to decline from the middle of the sixteenth century mainly due to natural factors. The Saraswati River began silting up and was navigable only by smaller vessels. The mouths of the feeders of the Ganges became blocked with sand and the supply of water diminished till at last only the tidal Ganga remained navigable, and the Saraswati dried up into narrow channels, thereby rendering navigation by merchants and large vessels very difficult; even the smallest craft could not ply except for a few weeks in the monsoon, this sound the death knell for Satgaon as an important port.\textsuperscript{55} Apart from the natural cause, the activities of traders, especially the Portuguese, also helped the decline of Satgaon and the rise of Hugli as the principal port of Bengal. The Portuguese were the dominant sea power in the Indian Ocean in the 16\textsuperscript{th}

\textsuperscript{50} Early Travels in India, p.26.
\textsuperscript{51} Peter Mundy was a seventeenth century British merchant trader, traveler and writer and he works as a cabin Boy on a merchant ship. Author of the Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, visited in India during the reign of Jahangir.
\textsuperscript{52} Early Travels in India, p.26.
\textsuperscript{54} Early Travel in India, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{55} Compos, The History of Portuguese in Bengal, Calcutta, 1919, p.22, 57.
century and the greater part of the seaborne trade of Bengal was concentrated in their hands. They began to frequent Bengal from the 1530’s and had important settlement at Satgaon. In the latter half of the 16th century they felt it necessary to build temporary quarters at a place downstream during the trading season as their big ships could not reach Satgaon and burnt those villages when they left Bengal every year after brisk trade activities. But they found making and unmaking of villages did not lead to either comfort or economy and so were naturally worried to shift their ‘porto piqueno’ to a convenient place ‘on a navigable river with more than enough anchorage.’ Thus, their choice fell on Hugli, which soon replaced Satgaon as the chief port of Bengal. From this it can be assumed that the migrants from Satgaon moved to Hugli.

The external trade of Bengal and through Bengal of upper India, thus deserted Satgaon and was diverted to Hugli where the Portuguese controlled the major portion of the overseas trade, notwithstanding the limited activities of a few Malaya, Arab and Indian traders. Even the inland trade was mostly diverted to Hugli, though Satgaon remained the royal port and the seat of the governor and the imperial custom house till 1632, when Hugli took its place officially as the glimmer port.

CHITTAGONG

Chittagong, situated 20 km up the sea in east Bengal, came in to eminence during Mughal period time. It was called Porto Grande by the Portuguese. Chittagong continued to be a port of importance with the Portuguese and Arakanese dominating the eastern part of the Bay of Bengal. With more emphasis given by the British, Dutch and the French, to the ports situated on the Hugli, the value of Chittagong declined, but it continued as a contributory port. It was an essential shipbuilding centre. Cittagong, named Fatehabad in the early Muslim period and Islamabad in the reign of Aurangzeb, is

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56 Ceaser fredici, , Extracts of…..his eighteen year Indian observation”1563-81, , Glasgow, 1905, pp.113-14.
57 Sushil Chaudhri, Trade and Commercial organization in Bengal (1650-1720),with special Reference to the English East India Company Calcutta, 1975, p.5-7
one of those places in Bengal which played a very important role in her past history. The sea-port of Chittagong attracted traders from all Asiatic countries and even from Europe, all of whom left a mark of their culture on Chittagong; history.  

Chittagong is one of the ancient ports of Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. It attracted fleet from Arabia, Chiana and other eastern countries. It attracted Arab traders from ninth century onwards. The Chinese travelers like Mahuan and others came to this port in the 15th century. European traveler like Barbosa, Conti, Ceaser Frederic visited this port in the 15th and 16th centuries. The Portuguese had begin to Bengal from 1517 and built fortress and factories from 1536-37 and it became the most important port of Bengal to them due to its situation, its navigation facilities close to the mouth of the mighty Meghna estuary and easy access to the riches of East Bengal. A considerable portion of the materials for export from the East Bengal also found its way in native crafts to Goa, Malacca and to other Portuguese ports in India. This shows that Cittagong had the trade relation not only within India but also abroad. The Portuguese used to come to here with their monsoon set in, and spent the rainy season in the east Bengal, buying and selling goods and transacting other business. When the rains were over they would repair with their ships laden with merchandise from the East Bengal.

The earliest commercial relation of the Portuguese in Bengal was with Chittagong (Porto Grande). De Barros wrote in 1532 A.D., “Chittagong is the most famous and wealthy city of the kingdom of Bengal, on account of its port, at which meets the traffic of all that eastern region”. After the foundation of the Portuguese settlement in Hugli, Chittagong had begun to lose its commercial importance. Even then Eastern Bengal and the kingdom of Arakan continued to be the seat of many industries and the Portuguese ships used to go to Chittagong with their goods, though Hugli was a more frequent port. In 1567 A.D. Ceasar de Frederick found more than 18 ships anchored in Chittagong and

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60 *Ibid.*, pp.117-18
62 Joao de Barros, called the Portuguese Livy, is one of the first great Portuguese historians, most famous for his *Decadas da Asia*, a history of the Portuguese India, Asia, and southeast Africa.
63 *History of Chittagong*, op. cit., p.56.
he writes that from this port the traders carried to the Indies, great store of rice, very great quantities of bombast cloth of every sort, sugar, corn, and money with other merchandise.\(^{64}\)

**HUGLI**

The origin of the port town of Hugli is shrouded in darkness. It has been established beyond any shade of doubt that the Portuguese were the founder of Hugli port.\(^{65}\) The precise date of the foundation of Hugli, however, is not very easy to determine. Scholars who fix the date of the foundation of Hugli in the 1530s probably confuse Hugli with Satgaon, which was the first Portuguese settlement in the western Bengal. Hugli could not have been founded in the thirties of the sixteenth century the most authoritative proof of this assertion can be found in the fact that, Ceasor Federici spoke only about Stagaon in 1567 A.D. and did not mention Hugli. Again neither any Persian chronicle nor any foreign traveler ever corroborates the contention that Hugli was founded before Akbar’s conquest of Bengal. Manrique who was in Bengal from 1628-29 A.D., does not unfortunately specify the date of the foundation of Hugli, but gives a detailed account of the circumstances leading to the Portuguese foundation of Hugli. He tells us that Akbar, having heard about the Portuguese and seen the valuable goods which they exported from the Eastern ports of Borneo, Moluccas (Malacca) etc, gave orders to the Nawab of Dacca to send two principal Portuguese from Satgaon and not from Hugli, to his court at Agra, which also strengthen the point that it was after the Akbar’s conquest of Bengal that the Portuguese founded Hugli port.\(^{66}\)

R.C Temple, an amateur anthropological writer, referred that Hugli was fairly large; it was built on the river bank of Ganga. The streets were wide but not paved. There were well constructed buildings after the fashion of the country, well stocked shops, depots for all kinds of merchandise, particularly silk fine lines and other material came

\(^{64}\) Purchas, his pilgrimes, C. Frederick, Vol.x, p.138. See also History of Chittagong, op.cit., p.118.

\(^{65}\) The History of Portuguese in Bengal, op.cit., p.44

\(^{66}\) The Rise and decline of Hugli- a port in Medieval Bengal, op.cit., pp38-39
from the other parts of the country. There were various moor merchants, engaged in a successful trade there.\textsuperscript{67} According to Thomas Bowrey “The town or the city of Hugli was a famous and splendid and what added to the beauty here of, it is well furnished with gardens, fine graves, a very large Bazaar or market place, one of the finest chowltieres (free lodgings houses for all travelers) that is contained in this kingdom and more especially, the two fine European factors, namely the English and Dutch.”\textsuperscript{68}

**Role of European Merchants at Hugli Port**

After the foundation of Hugli, Portuguese realized to their great satisfaction what a mine of wealth they had found at last, and they monopolized the major portion of Bengal trade. The Hugli port flourished with amazing rapidity under the Portuguese and soon rose as the richest, the most flourishing and the most populous of the various ‘bandels’ or trading ports in Bengal. Ralf Fitch, the English traveler, visited in 1588 A.D., stated that Hugli was the ‘chief keep’ of the Portuguese.\textsuperscript{69} According to *Ain-i Akbari*, (completed in 1596-97A.D.) Hugli was a more important port than Satgaon.\textsuperscript{70} Thus it appears that at the end of 16\textsuperscript{th} century Hugli became the premier port of Bengal and fully deserved to be called, not *portopiqueno* (port of Satgaon) but *portogrande* (the great heaven) the name by which Chittagong was known to the Portuguese.\textsuperscript{71}

There is not exact figure about the volume of trade carried out by Portuguese at Hugli; we can only have a rough idea of the extant of trading activities at Hugli, from the number of ships plied to and from that port. Ceasure Federici found that 30 to 35 ships were laden every year at Hugli by the Portuguese decisively established themselves and where they carried on trade much more dynamically than they did at Satgaon.\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{67} *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal*, 1669 -1679,op.cit., p.168n.

\textsuperscript{68} *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal*, 1669 -1679,op.cit., p.167.

\textsuperscript{69} *The History of Portuguese in Bengal*, op.cit., p.55.


\textsuperscript{71} *The Rise and decline of Hugli- a port in Medieval Bengal*,op.cit., p.41.

Manrique states that more than 100 ships yearly laden in the port of Bengal with rice, sugar, fat oil, wax, and other commodities, and probably most of them, were laden at Hugli since it was then the chief port in Bengal. Walter Clavell, an English factor, stated on account of trade of Hugli. In 1676 A.D., that “when in the possession of the Portuguese, who in their prosperity sailed to it yearly from India and Malay with 60: 80: to 100 vessels”.

The Portuguese imported to Bengal different goods from various places. The articles imported by them from ‘Southeast Asia’ India (i.e. Borneo, Moluccas, Sumatra etc.) were a large amount of ‘worked silks, such as brocades, cloth velvets, Satin, Damasks, Taffetas (silk piece good woven in Kasimbazar area), and Muslin, all from China. They also brought clove, nutmegs and mace from Mulaccas and Banda, and precious camphor from Borneo. From the Maldiv islands they imported sea-shells (cauri), which were in the circulation as coins in Bengal, ‘chanquo’ or bigger shells from Tuticurim, pepper from Malabar and cinnamon from Ceylon. They also brought from China great quantities of ‘porcelain’, pearls and jewels and many kinds of gift articles such as bedsteads, tables, boxes, writing desk etc.

The export from Bengal a wide variety of merchandise i.e. cotton goods, gingham made of grass, and silks of various shades, as well as sugar, ghee, rice, indigo, long pepper, saltpeter, wax, lac and other articles which were abundant in the Gangetic province. The Portuguese collected goods for freight at Hugli not only from Bengal, but also from the adjoining regions, where they took part in the inland trade of the country as well. Although we don’t have the clear figure of the value of Portuguese trade in Hugli but it can be imagined from the fact that they paid over 100,000 Rupees as custom duties to the Mughals, on the value of goods exported and imported.

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73 Manriaue Sebastien, Portuguese Missionary and Traveler. He travelled around various countries of the East for about sixteen years from 1628-48.
74 Manrique, op.cit., Vol.i, p.56.
77 Ibid.,pp.33-34.
78 The History of Portuguese in Bengal, op.cit., p.56.
Though the Mughals were the rulers of the country, the supremacy of Portuguese at Hugli was so well-built that it helped the Mughal authority happy with only collecting levy at port and market dues. Thus Portuguese had the absolute liberty; even the Mughal Governor of Bengal could enter the Portuguese town of Hugli only with their approval and the Mughal ships had to submit to different set of laws, which were compulsory in the port. The Portuguese principle was that, any ship with no Portuguese pass would be treated as rival ship and hence legally responsible to capture and confiscation, practicably they apply this rule to Bengal in order to demolish the Moorish trade.\textsuperscript{79} Such kind of supremacy of the Portuguese created an opportunity to opening trade with Bengal for the Dutch and English East India Company. Sir Thomas Roe wrote from Ahmadabad to the company on Feb 14, 1618 A.D., “Bengala hath neo ports tent such as the Portuguese possesse for small shipping.”\textsuperscript{80} The Dutch also found that any extensive trade with Bengal was impossible so long as the Portuguese were confidently well-established there.\textsuperscript{81}

The days of prosperity for the Portuguese in the Bengal came to an end in 1632 A.D., when Qasim Khan captured Hugli after inflicting a crushing defeat on them. There are different views of various authors behind expelling the Portuguese by Shahjahan from Hugli. But after the meticulous study over the interest of Shahjahan in trade and commerce, as a prince and as an Emperor, we come to the conspicuous ground that most probably Shahjahan had the desire to seize the supremacy from the Portuguese in the east, was the main cause for his assault on the Portuguese. When he was the viceroy of Gujarat his ships carried an extensive trade with Molla. His two Ships, the ‘Fethe’ and ‘Shahe’ were engaged in trading with Red sea ports and at least one of his ships went to Achin in 1636 A.D.\textsuperscript{82} This evidence shows his commercial interest in overseas trade activities. Another cause of this was, the merchants, nobles and governors might have also instigated Shahjahan, because they were also actively interested overseas trade and had their own ships making voyages to different ports in the red sea and in the east. Indeed, the Portuguese, by their monopoly of the overseas trade of Bengal and their

\textsuperscript{79} The History of Portuguese in Bengal, op.cit.,pp.62, 112.
\textsuperscript{80} EFI, (1618-21), p.14.
\textsuperscript{81} Jan Company in Coromandal, 1605-1690,op.cit.,, p.75-76
\textsuperscript{82} EFI, (1634-36), p.255.
supremacy in the Eastern seas, became the eyesore of the nobility and the ruling class. After the capture of Hugli in 1632 A.D., it was made the royal port of Bengal and all the offices and records were shifted to Hugli where the Mughal authority was firmly established. After the decline of Portuguese, Hugli became the chief seat of considerable maritime trade on the part of the country merchants, and the blow was too severe for the Portuguese to revive. Thus more than half a century the Portuguese dominated the overseas and coastal trade of Bengal from the Hugli, soon after they were followed by the Dutch and the English, who settled down there.

The Bengal trade attracted the Dutch because of two reasons: through it they hoped to solve partially ‘the problem of inadequate cash capital’ and secondly the waterways connecting Bengal with trade marts of Northern India, offered them a cheaper means of transport. After the expulsion of Portuguese, the Dutch got a firman from the Nawab of Bengal, which had granted freedom of trade and right to establish a factory at Hugli. In the same year they secured a firman from Shahjahan. But the Muslim trades of Hugli who hated foreign competition stood in the way of successful trade of Dutch and even a new firman from emperor could not improve their position. During the third quarter of the 17th century Dutch predominated in the overseas and coastal trade of Bengal. They operated their trade mainly from the Hugli, the chief factory in Bengal. They were not only engaged in European trade, but also in intra-Asian trade, especially trade with the East Indies. The supremacy of the Dutch in the external trade of Bengal during this period is evident from the reports of the English factors. Clavell’s report in 1676 A.D. on the trade of Hugli gives a detailed picture of Dutch trade. He states that the Dutch had a great stock and assumes the amount as 24 tons of gold in circa 1674 A.D. He suggested to the English East India Company to follow the Dutch method of trade, of brought their ships, even six or seven hundred tons, up to the river Hugli, thus saving the trouble and the extra expenses of taking the merchandise from Hugli to Balasore and lading the ships at the latter place. He also gave the list of the items of export from and

84 C.J. Hamilton, the Trade relation between England and India, 1600-1896, Calcutta, 1916, p.31.
85 Jan Company in Coromandal, 1605-1690,op.cit., p.76.
86 Ibid.,p.76
import to Bengal by the Dutch.\textsuperscript{87} The main imports to Bengal by the Dutch, gold and copper from Japan, Tin from Malay, Elephant’s teeth, cloves, mace Nutmegs, pepper, betel nuts.; they also imported Brimstone Quicksilver, Vermillion, and some cloth, which did not sell well in Bengal. Their exports consisted of rice, oil, butter, hemp, silk cloth, raw silk, saltpeter, opium, turmeric, Gingham, Tapit (hanging carpets), sugar, bee-wax, long pepper etc. Throughout the third quarter of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century the Dutch trade in Bengal, centering around Hugli, far out shadow the English trade.\textsuperscript{88} In the 1690s the Dutch trade in Hugli was considerable and competed well with the English.

Besides the Dutch, the English Company had also brisk trading activities at Hugli. As early as 1616A.D., the English East India Company tried to explore the possibilities of opening trade with Bengal.\textsuperscript{89} But it was only in 1633A.D. that the Company sent the ‘Swan’ to Bengal in an attempt to open trade with Bengal. The reason of this delay can be explained in several factors-

The goods sought by the English merchants on the coast were mainly calicoes of Golconda and the countries southward and due to this reason they were not interested in Bengal trade. The produce of Bengal were readily available at Masulipatnam and ‘there was no attraction to venture further field in quest of them, at the risk of being snapped up by the Portuguese war-vessels; moreover, the troubles at Masulipatam, culminating in the withdrawal of the English in 1628A.D., had effectually stopped for a time any schemes they may have entertained for the enlargement of their commerce. The change of policy which followed their return in 1630A.D. seems to have been partly due to the great famine. Another less obvious, but perhaps equally effective, inducement to venture in this direction was the prospect offered the lucrative private trade for the merchants employed, who at then in the state of affairs at Masulipatam and its neighborhood had little opportunity for investing their own capital. Further, we seem to discern that the capture of Hugli by the Mogul forces in September, 1632A.D., and the supposed intention of the Emperor to stamp out Portuguese trade in Bengal, had led the

\textsuperscript{87} Diary of Streynsham Master Diary, vol.ii, pp.79-84.
\textsuperscript{88} The Rise and Decline of Hugli- a port of Medieval Bengal, op.cit., p.49.
\textsuperscript{89} Foster, William, and F.C. Danvers, edited, Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, vol.v,London, Sampson, Low, Marston & Company, 1896-1902, p.119-20
Masulipatam factors to conclude that a particularly favourable opportunity had offered itself for planting English trade in those parts.\textsuperscript{90} In 1651 A.D. The English Company first established a factory at Hugli and inaugurated trade on greater degree in Bengal.\textsuperscript{91} The English were not busy only in European trade, but in inter-Asiatic trade as well. Thus Hugli port played a vital role in the trade complex of the company.

The profitable situation of Hugli made it the most important factory and the port of the company in Bengal. Mr. Walter Clavell, (servant of Streynsham Master) writes in his accounts in 1676 A.D., to draw attention of his Master towards the state of trade and commerce of Hugli and Balasore; and said that Hugli due to its location upon the Ganga river, had the great emporium of trade. \textsuperscript{92} Alexander Hamilton remarked that the Hugli was known for its prosperous trade. All the foreign goods were brought there for sale and the goods from Bengal largely exported. There was a custom house as about 50 to 60 ships annually anchored there.\textsuperscript{93}

Until the foundation of Fort William (Calcutta) in 1690 A.D., Hugli was the head quarter of the English in Bengal, had a profitable and a widespread trade. Unlike the Dutch the English did not take their ships up to Hugli and laden their sea bound ship there. They secured all the items of export from their various factories at Malda, Kasimbazar, Patna and Dacca and brought all those mostly through waterways to Hugli.

The trade of English East India Company in Bengal expanded in rapid strides. They wrote home, “Bengal is a rich province where Raw silk is abundant. The taffaties are various and fine. The saltpeter is cheap and of the best quality. The bullion and pagodas you have sent have had an immediate and most favourable effect on the trade; the goods have been sold at great advantage. Our operations are going so extensive that we shall be obliged to build new and large warehouse.”\textsuperscript{94} In the early period of Company’s trade in Bengal, saltpeter formed the most important of the commodities

\begin{footnotes}
\item[90] E.F.I., (1630-33), p.xxx.
\item[91] Ibid., (1651-54), p.xxvi.
\item[92] Diary of Streynsham Master Diary, vol.ii, p.79.
\item[94] C.R. Wilson, Early Annals Of the English in Bengal London, 1895, Bimla Publication House, New Delhi, 1895, reprint, 1983, vol.i, p.34.
\end{footnotes}
exported from Hugli. During the 17th century Hugli was the principal port of Bengal. After the fall of Portuguese in 1632 A.D., Hugli became the royal port and the seat of the local faujdar and the imperial custom house. The Mughal rulers, actively participated in overseas trade, fully realized the importance of the ‘Hugli port’ as an emporium of great external trade. Internal trade relation of Hugli was with Orissa, Bengal and Patna. The goods imported from places were mostly cotton goods including calicoes and some other provisions sold in the public market known as great hazard.  

Not only the European companies, but the Asian merchants also played a great role in the history of the Hugli trade. It was the port where merchants of dissimilar parts of Asia gathered for trade in various commodities According to John Cabral Hugli was a common emporium to which vessels from India, China, Malacca and Manila repaired in great numbers. He found in Hugli not only the country merchants but also the Hindustanis, the Mogols (Mughals) Persian and Armmenians. 

The decline of Hugli port began from about the mid of the 18th century. The seed of the decay and decline of the Hugli port can be traced back to the withdrawal of the English East India Company from the Hugli and the rise of Calcutta settlement in 1690 A.D. following a war with the Mughals in Bengal. The Calcutta had a strategic location; apart from this Hugli was considered as a center of English trade, had various limitations. It was separated from the sea by a long and risky river journey and another thing, stood on the west bank and was open to assault from the land. On the other hand Calcutta was much closer to the estuary and free from the operations of European rivals, as well as the Marathas and the Nawab of Bengal. Moreover the position of Calcutta at the lower reaches of the river made deep water channels and anchorages available which were lacking at Hugli. Thus Calcutta offered more attraction to the merchants and traders and ultimately overshadowed Hugli as the principal port of Bengal. After the emergence of Calcutta, numerous local merchants, Armenians, Hindus and Muslims- flocked to Calcutta to carry on trade under the protection of the company.

95 A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679, p.168.
97 The Rise and Decline of Hugli- a port of Medieval Bengal, op.cit., p.65-66.
BALASORE

In the Mughal period, Balasore, Pipli and Harishpur became important naval station and ports and these places also became centers of shipbuilding. These ports had brisk coastal trade and also conducted trade with foreign countries. Balasore was the most important port wherefrom there were regular voyages to Ceylon, Malacca, Pegu and other South-east Asian ports. The port was situated 25 km from the sea-coast on the bank of the Boori Balang River.\(^99\)

Before the advent of the English, the Portuguese and the Dutch had not only settled at Pipli, but at Balasore also. The Dutch landed at Balasore in 1625 A.D. The Danes followed in 1626 A.D. In 1647 A.D. they got the concession from the Mughals for duty free trade at Pipli and Balasore. The Danish business flourished particularly at Balasore. But it started declining towards the end of the century and the Danes soon gave up the trade in the Orissa coast. The British started their business in Orissa when their establishment was set up at Hariharpur and Balasore in 1633 A.D. However the British concentrated on Balasore as it had better commercial linkage and was also an important center of production of Muslin. According to John Marshall, Balasore was previously called Bahagur. Balasore, a district in Orissa, had on its northern periphery Midnapur district and the tributary state of Morbhang. On its East lay the Bay of Bengal and on its South the Cuttack district. Balasore derived its name from Bal-Ishwara which means the young Lord or the Lord of strength.\(^100\)

The seventeenth century has been rightly described as a most important period in the annals of Orissa. Internally it witnessed the expansion of the Mughal province of Orissa and the impression of administrative experiments and measures introduced by the

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\(^{99}\) *Ports and Shipping in Maritime India*: A Historical Overview, op.cit., p.51.

\(^{100}\) *Growth of English Trade under the Mughal*, op.cit., p. 92.
The European factory records and the accounts and diaries of European travelers, agents and factors yield valuable information regarding the economic condition of Orissa.

Balasore grew to eminence as a manufacturing and commercial centre as sea port in 1730s. The destruction of the Portuguese settlement of Hugli in 1632A.D. attracted the Dutch and the English to open trade northwards. At the same time the growing scarcity of cloth at Masulipatnam on account of the infamous and widespread Gujarat famine of 1630-31A.D. necessitated opening up new centre of trade and advanced the English from the East coast upto the Bay of Bengal.

The importance of Balasore grew as a result of the expulsion of the Portuguese from Hijily by the Mughals in 1636A.D. and the consequent decay of trade at Pipli and other neighboring places. The silting of the river Alanka and the Patna reduced the advantages of Harishpura harbor in comparison with the road of Balasore. It also increased the difficulties of transporting down to the sea cotton manufactures of Hariharpur, which could be brought to Balasore on land without much difficulty. The Dutch were permitted to trade in Hugli, Pipli and Balasore by the Firman of Aurangzeb (Oct. 1662A.D.).

Balasore and its adjacent regions were the centers for the production of different kinds of textile goods and for it the European companies particularly the English, who purchased a lot of textile goods for exportation, established factories at Balasore. Balasore was an emporium of cotton yarn and Tassar manufactures of the interior hinterland and surrounding places. Most well-known among the centers arranged in order of quality of goods manufactured were at Suro (Soro), situated 20 miles distance of

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101 Sarkar, J.N. *Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India*, Oriental Publishers and Distributers, pataudi House, Daryaganj, Delhi, 1975, p.310
102 Small port on the west side of Hugli River. It was for a long time a place of importance as cargoes were landed there for transport up to Hugli, but was gradually washed away, See. *Early Travels in India*, p.25.
104 *Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India*, op.cit., 1975, pp.311-12.
105 Ibid.,pp.311-12.
Balasore\textsuperscript{106} was a place for the production of \textit{sannoes}\textsuperscript{107}, Harrapore (Hariharpur) and Mohunpure (Mohanpur), all specializing in the manufacture of \textit{Sannoes}. Hariharpur was an important centre of manufacture of \textit{Sannoes} and Cassayes (\textit{khasa})\textsuperscript{108}.

Balasore was near the country of the \textit{Raja} of Tillbri-Chrumbung (Tribikarmbhanj i.e. Mayurbhanj) where the quantity of \textit{Tassar} or \textit{herba} was procurable. It was also famous for the production of \textit{“Ginghams} (a kind of cotton cloth commonly called gingham), \textit{Herba}, \textit{Lungees} (Silk or Cotton loin cloth) and other sort of \textit{Herba} goods.\textsuperscript{109} It was an important centre for the production and trade in cloth as the varieties of textiles found there included costly \textit{Sannoes}, dimities, \textit{mulmuls}\textsuperscript{110}, silken and cotton \textit{rumal}\textsuperscript{111} and silken bed sheets while cotton yarn was also exported from Balasore.\textsuperscript{112}

Thomas Bowrey has given an interesting account of the trade of Balasore that the English ships visited it every year for filling in a variety of cotton goods like \textit{sannoes}, \textit{gingham}, \textit{rumals} and cotton yarn from Balasore and Hugli. The loaded ships then left for Masulipatnam and Madras where many other goods added up and finally, left England by the end of January. The other important thing, about which he remarked, was the availability of Cod-Musk that was found in abundance in Balasore. It was exported to England and Holland.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{The Diaries of Streynsham Master} (1675-1680) Vol.ii, p.86.
\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Cassa}, \textit{Kassa}, North-east India. Arabic-persian Khass, ‘Choice’, ‘Select’ Plain Muslin, usually of good quality, woven mostly n Dacca District. They were exported extensively to the markets of South east Asia, the middle and near east and Europe. Those sent to Europe usually of medium quality, the finest being reserved for eastern markets., See, \textit{Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century}, op.cit., p.62.
\textsuperscript{109} \textit{The Diaries of Streynsham Master} (1675-1680), Vol.II. pp.84-85.
\textsuperscript{110} Usually a fine Muslin and staple commodity of Bengal often embroidered with floral motives for the English market, where it was in demand for peticotats., See, \textit{Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century}, op.cit, p.67.
\textsuperscript{111} Thin silk piece good with handkerchief pattern woven in many parts of Bengal; sometime simply of Cotton, or mixed silk and cotton, See, \textit{Trade and Commercial Organization in Bengal},1650-1720, op.cit.,p.262.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{EFI}, Vol.(1634-36),p.42, Sanah was a kind of fine cloth.
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal}, 1669 to 1679, pp.231-32.
Peter Mundi has furnished a list of the following cotton goods of Balasore available at Patna in the thirties of the 17th century- Khasas, Ambarties\textsuperscript{114}, Hamam\textsuperscript{115} other essential commodity which was obtainable at Balasore was saltpeter that was used as an ingredient for making gun powder. There was an intense competition among the various European merchant companies for its monopoly in India. The Dutch were having very profitable trade of saltpeter at Balasore, who annually dispatched about 2,000 tons of saltpeter from Pipli to Europe. The Dutch, according to the letter, were very well settled there and having good accommodation at Balasore.\textsuperscript{116} The English dispatched the ship to England with a rich load of saltpeter on February 21, 1651 A.D.\textsuperscript{117}

The English goods brought in to Balasore consisted mainly of scarlet blades, broad cloths of diverse sort, vermillion, brimstone, lead, copper and coral.\textsuperscript{118} In 1642 A.D., the English factors of Balasore sold or bartered their glasses, knives, lead, broadcloth for sugar, gurras\textsuperscript{119}, Sannoes, cassaes\textsuperscript{120} iron and gingham\textsuperscript{121}, all except last one was sent to Persia.\textsuperscript{122} About 1650 A.D., the goods which came from Hugli to Balasore consisted of raw silk, saltpeter, sugar, dry ginger, bees-wax, long pepper, rice, oil and wheat, cost half of what it would at other places.\textsuperscript{123}

The economy of Balasore in the 17th century was important one, not only due to its being a source of deliver of cotton manufactures which could be exported in to foreign

\textsuperscript{114} Ambertee was from Hindi word amrita, imarti, amiriti, imiriti, was a name of a cloth in northern India and was also used for derivations from Sanskrit in the sense of anything sweet. Ambarti cloth was stout close calico of narrow width, produced cheaply and in large quantities at Patna, which in 1619, seemed to be a far off place for the merchants of the East India Company stationed at Surat. See, Peter Mundi, Vol.ii, P.141n, 361.

\textsuperscript{115} Plain cotton cloth of varying quality, woven in many parts of Bengal. Exported in small quantity. Taylor, Writing in the 19th c. derives the word from Arabic Hamam, 'a Turkish bath,' Adds that is a cloth of thick stout texture, generally worn as a wrapper in the cold season., See, Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century, op.cit, p.66.

\textsuperscript{116} EFJ (1651-54), p.95.

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.,(1651-54) pp.100, 47, 92.

\textsuperscript{118} A Geographical Account of East Indies, 1669 to 1679, p.232.

\textsuperscript{119} It is plain cotton cloth generally of inferior quality, Hobson Jobson, JITH No. III, 1957-69, p.707.

\textsuperscript{120} This is perhaps derived from Arabic Khassa which means ‘special’, ‘choice’, ‘select’. J. Taylor described it as a Muslin of a close fine texture,See, Hobson Jobson 707 A.

\textsuperscript{121} It has been defined as a kind of stuff made of “cotton yarn dyed before woven.” It has been further stated there that the Indian gingham is a product of cotton mixed with other materials, See, Hobson Jobson, 375B-376A & B.

\textsuperscript{122} EFJ., (1642-45), pp.65, 77, 101.

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.,(1646-50), p. 6, 338.
countries, especially to Europe and Persia, as a market for sale of goods imported from Europe, but also to its being invaluable as a seaport. “Balasore is five leagues to the west of the river of Pipli. Most of the English ships come to anchor here, where there is a fine factory……. The harbor is an admirable one of the cape of Palmiris protecting it from the boisterous southern winds and consequent tempests. When the weather is clear, the English vessels at anchor in this harbor and ours in Pipili harbor can see each other”\textsuperscript{124}. So long as the English had no settlement in Bengal, their ships had of necessity to depend on Balasore as port. According to Alexander Hamilton (1727 A.D.); “The seashore of Balasore being very low, and the depths of water very gradual from the strand, make ships in Balasore road keep a good distance, from the shore; for in 4 or 5 Fathoms they ride 3 leagues off.”\textsuperscript{125}

In the 17th century Balasore was an important ship-building and repairing centre with suitable dockyards, which seemed to have developed further after the advent of the English. Not only that, it was also, a suitable halting place for the ships, and apart from this, it was also known for the construction of boats, which were used for coastal trade. In 1630s the English Factor, Bruton\textsuperscript{126} described Bollasore, as a sea town, where shipping was done by East India Company’s servants.\textsuperscript{127} In 1638 A.D. the Masulipatnam factors (Thomas Clerk and Richard Hudson) instructed Thomas Godfrey, Master of the Coaster to proceed to Balasore for re-fitting the ship.\textsuperscript{128}

Orissa had trade relation with Bihar, Bengal and Golconda. There was regular supply of Orissa cloth goods from Balasore to Patna in the 17th century. In 1630’s Peter Mundi noted that the following varieties of piece goods of Orissa were available at Patna (Bihar), like \textit{Khassa, Ambarees} (cotton piece-good provided mainly in Hugli) and \textit{Hamam}. According to J. Taylor it is derived from the Arabic \textit{hamnam} ‘a Turkish bath’,

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{124} Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, op.cit.,p.331.
\item \textsuperscript{125} A New Account of the East Indies, Vol.i, op.cit., p.327.
\item \textsuperscript{126} William Bruton, a seaman, accompanied with first English mission to attempt the establishment of official trading relation with the Mughals in Eastern India was sent to Orissa from Masulipatnam in 1633. He undertook as part of seven years voyage in the service of the East India Company. He committed to writing many of the observation made during his lengthy voyage. See Donald F. lach, Edwin J. , Asia in Making the Europe, Vol.iii, A Century of Advance, p.673.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Cf.J.N.Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, op.cit., p.333.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p.333.
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so named for its use in the bath.\textsuperscript{129} Balasore also sent to Patna articles imported by the English, like broad cloth and lead, which could not be disposed of there. The close connection between Balasore and Hugli necessitated constant coastal trade between the two places. Owing to difficulties of navigation on the Hugli, goods were usually brought down from Bengal in small ships and trans-shipped at Pipli and Balasore.

About 1650 A.D., the following articles came from the letter of James Bridgmen (Abroad the Lioness) to the company, raw silk, saltpeter, sugar, dry ginger.\textsuperscript{130} Hugli could also supply bee-wax, long pepper, civet (a substance with a strong smell, obtained from a civet and used in making perfume), rice, butter, oil and wheat, all at about half the price of other places. Balasore had trade relation with Dacca also.\textsuperscript{131}

**Balasore’s Trade with Foreign Countries**

The foreign trade of Orissa as conducted through Balasore, was noteworthy, which had trade relations with Europe and Persia and Maldiva island. The commodity brought by the English into Orissa, Bengal and Patna, through Balasore were; broadcloth of various colors, scarlet, copper, quicksilver, lead, vermillion, coral, glasses, knives and brimstone. All these articles were not, however, in demand in Orissa, therefore some of them were transported to Bengal and Patna. The articles of Bengal and Orissa exported from Balasore were; local products and cotton manufactures of Balasore and neighboring centers in Orissa and goods procured from Bengal (including Hugli and Patna). There was an active trade among Bengal, Orissa and Persia through Balasore. The East India Company’s ships coming from England during their enforced idleness on voyages to and from Persia carrying articles of Indian merchants in goods suitable for Persia. In 1642-43 A.D., the English factors of Balasore sold or bartered their knives, lead, broadcloth etc,

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\textsuperscript{130} Cf. J.N. Sarkar *Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India*, pp.318-19.

\textsuperscript{131} *Ibid.*, pp.318-19
for sugar, *gurras, sannoes, cassones*, iron and ginghams all except the last being intended for Persia.\(^{132}\) Balasore supplied to Maldive, rice, grain, and other accessories needed by them and in return, would get ‘cowries’ or conch shells (a currency) and coin used for ships.\(^{133}\)

The precedence of private trade by the factors of European companies was a characteristic feature of commercial life in those days. Its volume was great, involving considerable loss to the company concerned and immense profit to the private traders. Balasore was no exception to this practice. The Governors of Balasore carried on private trade of their own.\(^{134}\) There were some Englishmen residing at Balasore who were engaged in private contract and trade.

In the diary of Streynsham Master,\(^ {135}\) one of the 17th century pioneers of the English East India Company and served as the Agent of Madras from 27 January 1678 to 3 July 1681 A.D., there is an Attestation given by the customers and brokers of Balasore concerning the English privilege in the import and export of the goods disposing of them in that port.\(^ {136}\) From this it appears that the commercial privileges of the English at Balasore were questioned about 1670 A.D. and the Mughal custom officer wanted to open and search the bales of goods of the English either out of motives of illegal gain or because they suspected some underhand dealing on the port of the English.

The nature of East India Company’s trade at Balasore was largely determined by the prevailing currency. Orissa being a poor country, money was scarce and as Abul Fazl informs us, ‘money transactions are in *Cawries* which is a small white shell generally divided down the middle it is found in the sea shore.’\(^ {137}\) In the first half of the 17th century also *Cawries* formed the usual means of exchange, the common pay as Clavell

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\(^{133}\) *A New Account of the East Indies*, 1688–1723, op.cit., Vol.i, p.394.

\(^{134}\) *EFI* (1642-45), p.72.

\(^{135}\) Streynsham Master, was an agent of the east India Company, was sent from England and entrusted with the task of enquiring and reforming the affairs of the English Company on the coast and Bay. He visited Balasore in 1676-79, with a view to improving the working of Balasore factory. The chief points which Master was ordered to inquire into at the factory of Balasore and others, were the methods of keeping accounts. See, *Diary of Streynsham Master*, Vol.i, p.3.


wrote, under the circumstances trade was at first carried on by the English factors by barter i.e. exchange of goods: subsequently in the interloping period i.e. from 1630 A.D. onwards owing to keen competition among the factors of different interloping companies trade was carried on partly by barter and partly by money.\textsuperscript{138} By the middle of 17\textsuperscript{th} century, the trade of Balasore came to be carried on in money. The establishment of a mint by the English at Balasore (1658 A.D.) resulted in raising the price of silver. John Marshall (1670 A.D.) formed that the currency at Balasore consisted of silver, \textit{Ana}, (the sixteenth part of rupee) being to a rupee but it was rare and \textit{Cowries} forming small money.\textsuperscript{139} Thus the economic importance of Balasore lay in its being a source of supply of manufactured cotton for export purposes and secondly, it was a market for the sale of goods imported from Europe. It also acted as a spring-board for the supply of goods to Bengal and Patna. Thirdly it was an important ship building and repairing center due to the availability of accessories like timber, iron, etc, which could be procured without much difficulty. However, Balasore as a port started declining at the end of the seventeenth century because of silting that engulfed the port and also as center of maritime activity of all European powers started shifting to Bengal.

\textbf{ROLE OF MERCHANTS IN OVERSEAS TRADE IN BENGAL}

The records of the English Company show that, the merchants of Bengal were active even in overseas and coastal trade. Bengali Muslim merchants were a major force in the trade of the Indian Ocean in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. They seem to have been constituted from powerful emigrant merchants of west Asia and possibly Surat and Golconda who settled there. There must also have been old domiciled Islamic groups, converts from Hindu ocean-going castes, who were entrenched in trade. There is very little evidence of Bengali Hindu seafaring until later in the seventeenth century and it is held that these were largely migrants from western India. One of the causes that strike us convincingly is the strength in numbers and the wide distribution of merchants operating from various

\textsuperscript{138} \textit{The Diaries of Streynsham Master} (1675-1680) Vol.ii., p.85.
\textsuperscript{139} Cf. \textit{Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India}, p.330.
regions of India. These are of diverse ethnic and linguistic origins and drawn from both the main religions (Islam and Hinduism). It is generally assumed that Muslims dominated overseas trade but this should not overwhelm us to the continuing substantial presence of Hindu merchants. In terms of volume, Muslims probably had the edge on Hindus but both groups were very plural within themselves. Muslims consisted of thoroughly Indianized and domiciled settler groups noted in particular areas and emigrant. Hindus were from many language-cultures and many castes. There were those among Gujarati Hindu Bantias and Coromandal Chetties who could compete with the wealthiest of the Muslims in the scale and breadth of their operations. There were a number of others - Jains, Konkanis, Canarese, Nairs, Parvas - who continued seaborne traffic.\(^{140}\)

With the weakening of Portuguese naval power in the first decades of the 17th century, it may be assumed that the indigenous merchants of Bengal grew out of the Portuguese protective umbrella and began trading independently to the major Asian ports. At this time Bengal trade grew to Acheh, Kedah, Johor and ports in Southeast Asia other than Malacca. With the destruction of Portuguese power in Hugli and its passing under Mughal administration, Bengal trade was completely liberated from the Portuguese dominance. From thence Hugli, Pipili and Balasore developed as the major ports of Bengal’s oceanic trade.\(^{141}\)

During the 17th century there were influential merchants on their own account and exceptionally rich, who were naturally played a very important, sometimes dominant part in the commercial life of the country as a whole, besides assisting the foreign companies in their commercial pursuits. Sometimes it is these Indian merchants-Muslim, Bania or Chettis- rather than the Dutch and the English factors who controlled the entire wholesale trade in their respective jurisdiction. Balasore at that time occupied a position of pre-eminence in the Bay of Bengal, being the seat of the chief of an English factory and its council. Khemchand was a Hindu broker and merchant of Balasore in the second half of

\(^{140}\) India and Indian Ocean 1500-1800, op.cit., pp.105-106.
\(^{141}\) Ibid., p.121.
the 17th century, who was referred as Chimcham in English factory records either separately or sometimes along with Chintamund (Chintaman or Chintamani) or some other merchants. Khemchand and Chintamani acted as brokers for the English at Balasore for many years, but Khemchand was more important of the two. In 1669 A.D. Khemchand enter into a contract with the English to supply goods to them at Balasore.142

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142 Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, op.cit., pp.334-35.
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MAJOR PORTS ON WESTERN COAST DURING THE MUGAL PERIOD

Trading activity was on its zenith during the Mughal period in India. The role of port was exceptionally crucial in the economy of Mughal Empire. Cambay, Broach, and Surat were not only the major ports but also known as port-towns due to its geographical location. Geographical factors, like water body and rich hinterland helped in the growth and development of trading port in the period of our study. With the establishment of the Mughal Empire in India, there was a qualitative expansion in overseas trade and commerce. The Indian Ocean trading network extending from the Far East to the West Asia was expanded in variety, density and traffic, supported by the emergence of sprawling empires all over the Asian world in the 16th century. These Empires brought large areas under their control, and provided greater security for the movement of commodities across great distances. It was also the period, when we see European companies establishing their trading settlements in Asia.1 Indeed, in all the activities the port played a crucial role. The expansion of the overseas trade and commerce in the Mughal period led to the large number of urban centers. According to one estimate, about 15 % of the population resided in towns during the Mughal period.2

The annexation of Gujarat by Akbar in 1572 A.D. had given him right of entry to the seas and also provided an opportunity of getting to important ports of Cambay and Surat, which were prominent for their trading activities. According to Ain, there were 13 big ports and numerous smaller ones in Gujarat.3 There were extensive inter coastal trade activities in the 17th century. Gujarat had a number of ports like Div in Kathiawar and Cambay in the Gulf of Cambay, was the most important port in the sixteenth century, while Broach was the next port southward which had been a port of

eminence from the ancient period and further south was Surat, which became the major port for a number of decades and had the superlative position as trans-shipment port for trade with Europe. At the turn of the 17th century, Mughal administration was deriving a large income from Gujarat in comparison to other subas from taxation on trade and commerce. In the context of revenue assessment, Shireen Moosvi has furnished an estimation that 18.65% of the overall assessed revenue (jama) in Gujarat came from trade and commerce, while 29.75% share of revenue came from Surat Sarkar itself. In consequence of overseas trade, the suba of Gujarat became the most developed area of the Mughal Empire.

Cambay, Broach, Surat and Chaul were the major ports in Gujarat and played an important role in the overseas trade due to its geographical situation in the western coast of India. The sea ports of Gujarat continued to be centre of trade and commerce, in the 16th and 17th century A.D., out of which Cambay and Surat emerged as the most important oceanic ports of Gujarat. The ports of Gujarat became the “sea gate” of north India, besides the major emporia for import and export, it was also a manufacturing place for many sorts of goods. Gujarat used to supply the articles, which were mostly precious metals and stones, velvets, china goods, wines and African slaves, imported into India from abroad. It also supplied articles manufactured in the suba (province) like cotton goods, inlaid work and silk and cotton manufactures of Ahmadabad. India had a vibrant foreign trade and commercial relations with the outside world, which were especially conducted from the western coast. The Indians used to carry on trade with Arabia, Africa and Persia by sea routes. The Indian goods were carried by the Arabs to the Red sea and from there it went to Damascus and Alexandria, consequently distributed all over the Mediterranean countries and beyond. Imports from Arabia were horses, coffees, drugs and export from India was mostly cotton cloth. Mocha was the center of trade between India and Arab. Africa exported to India ebony, ivory, slaves and gold and imported from India textiles goods and spices. Mozambique and Mombasa were the center of Indo-Africa trade. The foreign travelers account points out that imports from Persia were coined silver, pearls, wines, perfumes, silk, carpets and fruits, especially dry fruits while exports to Persia were cotton goods, spices and

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5 *The Economy of the Mughal Empire, C.1595, A Statistical Study*, op.cit. p.315.
inlaid works whereasOrmuz was the center of trade between India and Persia.\textsuperscript{6} These Indian goods reached the East African coast, the Malay Islands and China along with the Far East and other countries in the Pacific Ocean, through the agencies of the Moorish merchants.\textsuperscript{7}

Ashin Das Gupta has pointed out that “coastal Gujarat has always been the home of one major oceanic port, supported by a series of others, important but not renowned. The most primitive was Broach followed by Cambay, replaced by Surat.”\textsuperscript{8} Besides the overseas trade, there was much intra coastal trade within Cambay, Broach, Surat, Daman and Div.\textsuperscript{9}

It has been accepted by historians that despite having a continental power the Mughal Empire had a little interest in sea-borne commerce. According to Moreland, Indian state appreciated that benefits of foreign commerce and revenue which it brought to their seaports, but they did nothing for its protection.\textsuperscript{10} He admits especially of Akbar, that he sent ships from Gujarat to Red sea but was content to let them sail under license from the Portuguese.\textsuperscript{11} Akbar’s empire touched the sea after conquering Gujarat in 1572. On 12 December he reached at Cambay and went out on a vessel to enjoy the sea. He had substantial opportunity to achieve much information of both the ports and the overseas trade.

\textbf{ROLE OF MUGHAL ACCOUNTABILITY TOWARDS TRADE AND COMMERCE}

It is noteworthy that large external trade was impossible under the direct control of Mughal emperors. In the reign of Akbar the Portuguese controlled the water routes. As such Akbar first encouraged the expansion of Portuguese activities because he was anxious to endorse external trade and to get in return precious metals and stones, horses and other articles of luxury. In Akbar’s reign, the most important ports were Broach, Satgaon, Lahiribandar and Surat, about which Manucci writes that it is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{6} M. P. Srivastava \textit{The Mughal Administration}, Chugh publication, Ahmedabad, 1995 p.50-51.
\item \textsuperscript{7} \textit{Ibid.}, p.53
\item \textsuperscript{8} Ashin Das Gupta, \textit{Indian Merchants And The Decline Of Surat, 1700-40}, Wiesbaden, 1949, p-1
\item \textsuperscript{9} W. Foster. (ed), \textit{The English Factories In India}, Vol. (1612-14), Oxford, 1984, pp-133, 140, 154.
\item \textsuperscript{10} W.H Moreland, \textit{India at the Death of Akbar, An Economic Study}, London, 1920, p.199.
\item \textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, p.202.
\end{itemize}
the largest port in India.\textsuperscript{12} English did many efforts to establish trade with India prior to Sir Thomas Roe’s embassy to Jahangir but did not succeed on account of the Portuguese’s influence at Agra. It was only in the reign of Jahangir that they got firm footing in Surat. The contemporary record evinces that during Shahjahan’s reign official interference in trade had reached its peak.\textsuperscript{13} However in the reign of Aurangzeb trade declined as he was engaged in the \textit{jihad} (religious war) and made no effort to revive trade.\textsuperscript{14}

**INTEREST OF EMPEROR’S FAMILY MEMBERS AND NOBLES IN OVERSEAS TRADE**

There is a considerable interest in Indian shipping during the 16\textsuperscript{th} -17\textsuperscript{th} century. The Mughal emperor himself, princes and princesses, and the nobles felt no hesitation in participating in oversea trade. The Mughal emperor seems to have kept him well informed about the affairs of their ships received not only through the dispatches and reports sent by the officials responsible for the ship but also from the regular official news reports sent from various places.\textsuperscript{15} Within three years of the taking of Cambay and Surat, Akbar had either built or acquired two ships, the \textit{Salimi}, and \textit{Ilahi}, a favorite word with Akbar to recall God’s particular benevolence to him.\textsuperscript{16}

Almost every important noble in Gujarat had one ship or more built for himself to engage in traffic. The governor of Gujarat, Mirza Aziz Koka, Akbar’s foster brother, built a ship, known as \textit{Ilahi}, of his own. Another officer, who had the ship at Surat, was Abdur Rahim Khan-Khanan (1584-85 and 1586-88). He had three ships built, the \textit{Rahimi, Karimi, Salari}, with “captains, navigator and staff” employed and paid by him, mainly to cater the Hajj traffic.\textsuperscript{17} During the seventeenth century, the interest of the Mughal Emperors and nobles towards commercial activities, specially foreign trade were largely confined to the procurement of rare and costly articles and to the ensuring of a regular supply of Arab and Iraqi horses for their armed forces and

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\textsuperscript{13} \textit{The Mughal Administration},op.cit.,p.48
\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}, p.55.
\textsuperscript{15} Shireen Moosvi, Mughal Shipping at Surat in the First half of Seventeenth Century, in \textit{Proceeding Indian History Congress,}, 51\textsuperscript{st} session, Culcutta-1990, p.308-9
\textsuperscript{16} Shireen Moosvi, Shipping and Navigation under Akbar, in \textit{Proceeding Indian History Congress,60\textsuperscript{th} session}, Calcutta,1999,p.251
\textsuperscript{17} Shipping and Navigation under Akbar, op.cit., p.255.
\end{flushright}
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for purpose of display. The commercial profit formed a supplementary source of income for the ruling sections in the Mughal Empire in the 17th century. English factory records referred that at the beginning of the 17th century, Jahangir, Nurjahan, Prince Khurram and even the queen mother owned ship which plied between Surat and the Red sea port.\textsuperscript{18} During the same period, Jahangir’s junks plied between Mocha and Gogha. In 1622, to make pressure on the Mughal Emperor to open the Red sea trade to English, they seized a number of Indian ships returning from Mocha, including one of the shipper and goods belonged to the king, the Nurmahal, Asaf Khan, Safi Khan and the great men.\textsuperscript{19} Jahangir also invested his money in the Cambay trade.\textsuperscript{20}

Prince Khurram, during his viceroyalty of Gujarat, carried on intensive trade with Mocha, caring mostly broad cloth and textiles. His ships also went to Masulipatam, the major port of south India in this period and carried textiles and gum-lac to the Persian ports.\textsuperscript{21} Another commodities in which the Prince traded during this period was indigo.\textsuperscript{22} After ascending the throne, Shahjahan continued to take interest in overseas trade. His ships namely the “Fettee” (fateh) and the “Shahe” (shahi) trade to the Red sea ports while another went to Achin (Sumatra) in 1636.\textsuperscript{23} Aurangzeb owned a fleet of ships which plied mainly to the Red sea ports. As for the size of the royal ships, Moreland concluded that a large ships or junks for sea-borne trade averaged less than 200 tons.\textsuperscript{24} Prince Dara as the governor of Thatta, carried on an extensive trade with the Red sea ports. Though too many royal ladies of the Mughal harem did not actively participate in the economic field, yet there were distinguished ladies of that period like Jahangir’s mother, Maryam-uz-Zamani, his wife, Nur Jahan Begam and Shahjahan’s daughter, princess Jahanara, known to have taken an active participation in the trade and commerce of the time.\textsuperscript{25} Jahanara held

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} \textit{India at the Death of Akbar, An Economic Study}, op.cit., pp.204, 264, 271,272.
\item \textsuperscript{20} In 1622, Jahangir sent to two lack rupees to be invested in the goods for the Red sea, the proceeds of which Were to be given to the poor at Mecca. See, \textit{E.F.I.} (1622-23) pp.144, 171.
\item \textsuperscript{21} W. Foster,(ed.) \textit{Letters Received by the East India Company From its Servants in the East}, vol.iii, (1615), Sampson, Low and Marston, London, 1899, p.270.
\item \textsuperscript{22} When Prince Khurram rebelled against his father, all goods were seized, including his junks and his indigo Which was sold by armfuls. See, \textit{E.F.I.} (1622-23), pp.218,233.
\item \textsuperscript{23} \textit{E.F.I.} (1634-36), p. 255.
\item \textsuperscript{24} \textit{India and the Death of Akbar An Economic Study}, op.cit., pp.231-32.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Soma Mukharjee, \textit{Royal Mughal Ladies and their contributions}, Gyan publication House, New Delhi, 2001, p.236.
\end{itemize}
several jagirs, i.e. Panipat, Achchol, Bachchol, Safipur, and Dohraha; the revenues of which came to her; she also owned the jagir of Surat port. The revenue of the sarkar of Dohraha was given to her for the maintenance of her gardens and that of the flourishing port city of Surat for her expenditure on betel.\textsuperscript{26} Jahanara extracted annual revenue of 30 million dams, equal to Rs. 750,000, from the Surat region, together with 10 million dams, equal to Rs. 250,000, from port dues.\textsuperscript{27} Manucci informs us that Jahanara had an annual income of about Rs.3 million, in addition to the revenues she received from the port of Surat.\textsuperscript{28} She was able to trade voluminously on her own account,\textsuperscript{29} running a large number of ships herself and entering into enormously successful trading relations with the Dutch and the English.\textsuperscript{30} Their co-operation helped her to carry on extensive trade and make huge profits.\textsuperscript{31} Jahanara also carried on trading ventures through her ship Sahebi named after Begam Saheb, the popular title of Jahanara Begam. Usually the captain, crew and other officials of the ship were appointed by the owners, but in the earlier phase princess Jahanara left the ship to the care of her agents and wakils, while in the later years she made the appointment of Muhammad Rafi as the darogha of her ship, in place of Mir Ghiyas who was the previous incumbent.\textsuperscript{32} This ship Sahebi was used by the princess for profits as well as to assist Haj pilgrims.\textsuperscript{33} In 1643, one of her ships carried pilgrims and goods worth Rs.5,000 to 10,000, to be sold at Jeddah. Jahanara Begam also gave orders that, every year, rice was to be sent by the ship for distributing among the destitute and needy people of Mecca. No fare was charged from the Pilgrims, but they were warned against carrying the goods of other merchants in their names.\textsuperscript{34} Merchants with cargo were also allowed to travel in it. The cargo of the princess carried on this vessel was worth 10 to 15 thousands of rupees. The treasurer of the ship was in charge of keeping in his custody the amount received from freight and also the money got from the sale of the princess’s cargo. The caption of the ship was under instructions to bring as many horses as he was able to procure at Jeddah. The Sahebi is known to have

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{27} \textit{Storio do Mogor} Vol.i, p.216.
\bibitem{28} \textit{Ibid.}, p.216.
\bibitem{29} D, Pant. \textit{Commercial Policy of the Mughals,} Adabiyat Delhi, 1978, p.211.
\bibitem{30} \textit{EFI} (1642-43), p.148.
\bibitem{31} \textit{Ibid.} (1646-1650), pp.219-20.
\bibitem{32} \textit{Mughal Shipping at Surat in the First Half of Seventeenth} op.cit, p.311.
\bibitem{33} \textit{Ibid.}, p.312.
\bibitem{34} \textit{Mughal Shipping at Surat in the First Half of Seventeenth} op.cit., p.312.
\end{thebibliography}
operated till 1663 A.D. Another ship *Gunjawar*, which originally belonged to Shahjahan, was given to princess Jahanara in December 1629 A.D, along with the instruments, valuables drugs and material. It also operated from Surat. Jahanara Begum’s management of her overseas trade with Jeddah and at the same time her concern and regard for the needs of the *Haj* pilgrims and poor of Mecca establishes her ethical standards. As they invested significant wealth in trade and commerce so were rewarded with rich profits.

The above study shows that the Mughal Emperor and members of the royal family continuously participated in commercial activities, particularly in the sea-borne trade to the Red sea ports and also to some extent with ports to the south of Surat up to Achin as well as ports on the East coast of Africa. The Mughal nobles, whether they were *jagirdars* or high ranking officials, received their income generally in cash or *naqdis*. Nobles were found of accumulating enormous treasure in species, cash and jewels as they had a large amount of cash in hand, desired to increase it still further the invested it in trade, either by engaging in trade directly or by making advances to merchants. An enormous source for capital needed for sea-borne trade came from the Mughal aristocrats, as Tavernier says that “on arrival for embarkation at Surat, there was plenty of money. For it is the principal trade of the nobles of India to place their money on vessels on speculation for Harmuz, Bassora and Mocha and even for Bantan, Achin and Philippenes”.

The Mughal nobles invested huge sum of capital in sea-borne trade. Apart from the capital advances provided by the nobles, the Mughal landed gentry were also engaged in business investments. It is well known that private trade or *Sauda-i Khas* of the governor was a characteristic feature of India’s economic life in the 17th and 18th centuries. Many influential people like Mir Jumla, Prince Shah Shuja, Sha’ista khan were involved in this device. In Bengal, during the governorships of Mir Jumla (1658-63) and Sha’ista Khan (1663-93), the navy received a new impetus. Mir Jumla organized new *navarara* (flotilla) but after his death the flotilla was smashed and

35 *Mughal Shipping at Surat in the First Half of Seventeenth* op.cit., p. 313.
36 Ibid.,p.311.
Bengal once again was exposed to pirates. Mir Jumla had frequent business deals with the English and sometimes he advanced money to the English factors also, he was in a real sense a merchant prince. His activities in the commercial sphere are the most striking example of such business investments. His ship carried on trade between Arakan, Southern India, Bengal, Persia and Arabia. Mir Jumla offered the example of a Mughal noble taking part in sea-borne trade.

Sha’ista khan was the best example of a noble engaged in the internal trade. He was the viceroy of Gujarat and apart from his administrative liabilities; he kept himself busy in economic enterprises and was fond of buying the rarities of Europe especially the pearls and jewels. When he was the subedar of Gujarat, he purchased such articles from Tavernier at least three time, with the worth Rs.96, 000 in 1652. Second time, in 1660, from Tavernier, at Sholapur during his vicerealty of Deccan and third time, in 1666, he bought from the same merchant, at Dacca, during his governorship of Bengal. Sha’ista was a skilled appraiser of precious stones. He was the man of firm judgment, opulent and powerful and of good reputation. Manucci calls him great amateur of precious stones. Sha’ista Khan always paid much regard to the European travelers and merchants with whom he had business transactions, and entertained them with great hospitality and generosity, but was cunning and harsh in business matters. Sha’ista Khan created a new flotilla having three hundred strong ships built and equipped, and through which he carefully conducted a tireless campaign to suppress the pirates and soon conquered Chittagong. Tavernier hesitatingly criticized that, with reference to these nobles in 1633 in Gujarat, this prince, who was otherwise magnificent and generous, showed himself a stern economist in the matters of purchase.

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41 EFI (1651-54), p.12.
42 Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, op.cit., pp.155-56.
43 EFI (1651-54), p.xxxix.
45 Tavernier, vol.i, p.308.
TABLE: 2 This table shows the ports on western coast and their major product as well as overseas trade relation with various countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJOR PORTS ON WESTERN COAST</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>CHIEF MANUFACTURING</th>
<th>EXPORTS</th>
<th>IMPORTS</th>
<th>FOREIGN TRADE RELATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Div</td>
<td>Saurashtra Coast</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broach</td>
<td>Narmada River</td>
<td>Shipbuilding, Fine Baftas, Calico, Chintz, Silk Stuffs.</td>
<td>Agate, Bafta, Linen, Indigo</td>
<td>Timber for shipbuilding</td>
<td>Persian Gulf, Arabia, Egypt, Java and Sumatra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gogha</td>
<td>Gulf of Cambay</td>
<td>Shipbuilding</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>Africa and Persian Gulf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambay</td>
<td>Gulf of Cambay</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>Cotton, Silk, Coral, Opium, Food Stuffs</td>
<td>Copper, Alum, Gold, Mercury</td>
<td>Malacca, Java and Sumatra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat</td>
<td>Tapti River</td>
<td>Shipbuilding, Cotton Stuffs, Silk, Laquerware.</td>
<td>Cotton Textiles, Silk Cloth, Wheat, Sugar, Wax</td>
<td>Quicksilver, Sea-shells, Porcelain, Cowries, Copper, and Lead.</td>
<td>Europe, China, South East Asia and Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaul</td>
<td>South of Bombay</td>
<td>Silk Stuffs, Quilts, Embroidered,</td>
<td>Silk, Satin, Taftas</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>Arab, Persia, Red Sea.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some well known historians have studied over major ports of the medieval period and European travelers also devoted their attention to big and major ports like Div, Broach, Cambay, Surat and Chaul, which had controlled and shaped the history of its manufacturing condition, production, export-import and its trade relations.

DIV

Div, also called Diu was a natural port at the southernmost point of the curve of the Saurashtra coast. It was suited for the anchoring of large ships, and an island protected its harbor. But it had no hinterland, since Ahmadabad was quite some
distance away, and the route passed through chieftain’s territories. The entire ocean going ships usually put in at either Div or Gogha, and their goods were off-loaded in to smaller coastal vessel which took them to Gandhar. The inconvenience of this process was apparently such that in 1500 A.D. Div was increasing greatly in importance, as more and more commodity exchange, not just trans-shipment took place rather than in Cambay. According to Pearson, despite these disadvantages, the port flourished under the efficient administration of Malik Ayaz, (1500-22 A.D.) during the opening decade of the 16th century, and seems to have exceeded Gogha despite the recurrent trouble created by the Portuguese.

Div, due to its suitable anchorage, received goods from overseas by ships, while Cambay had to depend upon trans-shipment of Gandhar or Gogha. Thus Div developed as an important entrepot in the same manner as Harmuz or Ormoz, Aden, Malacca and other ports with limited immediate hinterlands. Div was an important port in Kathiawar peninsula when the European power came to the Arabian Sea. In 1509 Portuguese governor General Almeida attacked and burnt down Div. The Sultan of Gujarat offered Div to the Portuguese for building a fortress. After taking over the place, Albuquerque visited Div in 1513 A.D.. But at the instance of Sultan of Egypt, the offer to the Portuguese was declined by the Gujarat Sultan. Instead he offered any of the three other places, viz., Broach, Surat and Mahin to the Portuguese, but they did not find the offer acceptable. The Portuguese ships at Div were attacked, some were destroyed and others fled. In January 1531 A.D., Nuno da Cunha attacked Div with a fleet of 400 vessels and thousands of troops. On the way Portuguese attacked Daman and killed many of its residents. Div garrison was destroyed by the Portuguese, but a Turkish fleet appeared at the scene and the Portuguese fled from Div.

A source of 1545 A.D., throws light on the period of Sultan Bahadur (1526-37 A.D.), as all the ships going to Cambay went first directly to Div and from there afterwards to where they wished. Div rose to be a great center for Gujarat because of its location. In 1535 the Gujarat Sultan Bahadur Shah was under threat of invasion by the Mughal Emperor Humayun. Bahadur Shah invited Nuno da Cunha to help him with 500 Portuguese soldiers at promise of a Portuguese footing at Div. After

46 Shireen Moosvi, Gujarat Port and Their Hinterland, in Ports and Their Hinterland in India (1700-1950), (ed), Indu Banga New Delhi, 1992, p.123.
48 Cf. Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat, Berkely, 1976 p.16.
Humayun’s forces withdrew in 1537 A.D., Cunha invited Bahadur Shah on the board of his ship, instead of offering Bahadur Shah anything he caused him drowned in the sea, consequently the Portuguese controlled Div thereafter. Portuguese had a treaty with Sultan Muhammad III of Gujarat in March 1539 A.D., through which they were allowed to retain Div and also permitted to realize custom duty at Div port which grew to be an important port and became convenient shelter to vessels in its harbor. The custom duty in Div were 3 ½ percent until the 1580s, when another ½ percent was added with the consent of the inhabitants to pay for the ‘armada’ (A large group of armed ship sailing together) which protected the trade between Div and Cambay. Again the duties rose in the 17th century to meet the costs of defense. 49

GOGHA

Gogha is a fair weather port-town situated on the coast of Saurasthtra in the Gulf of Cambay, with its location 21°41’N. latitude and 92°16’E. longitude. 50 The Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908:301) mentions that “the native of this town are reckoned the best a sailor or lascars 51 (An East Indian sailor) in India. The ships touching here may procure water and supplies or repair damages”. 52 During the British period ships up to 1500 tons were laden here. The port of Gogha had been active since the 5th century A.D and famous as a major trading port between the 10th to 16th centuries A.D., before Bhavnagar had out shadowed it as a trading center. It was the important port town during medieval period and played as transit port between the ports of the upper part of the Gulf of Cambay and rest of the ports along the Indian Ocean countries. The discovery of various types of anchors suggests that

49 Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat, op.cit., p.44.
51 A native sailor, but especially applied also to tent-pitchers, inferior artillerymen, and others. See H.H. Wilson, A Glossary of Judicial and revenue term and of useful words occurring in the official documents, relating to the Administration of the government of British India, compiled and published under the authority of The Honorable the court of Directors of the East India Company, London 1855.
boats of different origin visited Gogha port. The most important find is an anchor with wide groove on the all four section is probably of the Chinese origin.\(^{53}\)

According to *Ain-i Akbari*, “The port of Gogha and Khambayat are included in this *Sarkar*. The latter is a large city where merchants of divers’ kinds reside and wherein are fine building and much merchandise. Vessels sail from and trade to Gogha. The cargoes are put into small ships called *Tawari* which transport them to Kambhayat.”\(^{54}\)

It was a busy port on the western coast of India from which sailing goods far and wide across the Indian Ocean to Africa and the Persian Gulf. During the medieval period Gogha had been an important port on the east coast of Kathiawar on the Gulf of Cambay in Gujarat\(^{55}\). Duarte Barbosa who visited Div in 1515 A.D. says that the place gives such a large sum of revenues to the king of Gujarat and that ‘it is a subject and amazement’. With the rise of Portuguese power on the western coast of India, all the port-towns were put under threat and Portuguese plundered them frequently. Same was the case of Gogha. It was a flourishing and populous town and port at this time (after Surat and Cambay).\(^{56}\)

Merchants of English East India Company were desperately looking for a foothold on the coast of Gujarat which could facilitate their trade to vent out goods and provide space for warehouses cum residential place. Since Surat was the most popular destination on the west coast of India, well populated, connected with centers of productions, able brokers around and rich bankers to support the trade, Englishmen were not in a mood to let the Portuguese enjoy the monopoly over the seaborne trade of Asia alone. On the one side they initiated the series of direct attacks on Portuguese ships; simultaneously they employed their energies to get a grant from the Mughal court to establish them, preferably in Surat. In this context, Thomas Roe also visited the Mughal court as the ambassador of the king of England on behalf of the company and remained with the emperor for a considerable period. Here he realized the degree of influence their rivals, (including the Dutch, who had just joined the race),


exercising on the person of the emperor and his confidants. He blamed them all for the difficulties being faced by the merchants of the English East India Company. In the meantime, he remained in touch with his own people directing them on important matters and trade prospects. However, his attempts failed and his embassy to the Mughal court missed to achieve desired results. Somehow, he managed to get assurance from the court for the grant of a suitable place for anchorage and factory on the west coast. One of the options was Gogha.57

By 1611 situation became critical and the English were seriously deliberating upon shifting their base elsewhere. A long series of correspondence discussing the prospects of trade at two important towns Gogha and Broach began. Thomas Roe left the matter to his factors at Surat to decide in favor of the former were stronger. Although they had picked a fight with Prince Khurram, who in the light of ‘false’ reports about them from the Portuguese had adopted stern attitude towards the English, but they had given an appropriate answer to the Portuguese by defeating them in the sea and capturing their ships in 1611 which pleased Mughal officers in Gujarat.

In 1615, relation between the Portuguese and the Mughals turned sour as the former committed the crime of plundering a royal ship in September 1614. Also the Portuguese took to menacing and violent means. They ran amok upon the coast of Gujarat, burning and destroying all they could get hold of. They also threatened the merchants- banyans’ who had lost their goods on the said ship, including burning the town of Broach and Gogha. Portuguese also invited further forces on ships from Goa which were anchoring at Gogha in the same year.58 Somehow the English were not worried as they had defeated the enemy in the recent past. Situation had become so serious that the Mughal subedar Muqarrab Khan had to take position in Gogha “making a great show of their elephant and preparations and persons than of their valours”.59 Hence a feeling of insecurity and uneasiness prevailed. For the English merchants it became difficult to decide in favor of Gogha as their base of commercial activities as they were fearful of Shahjahan.

57 Letter Received by East India Company From its Servants in the East., Vol.iv, pp.449-50.
58 Letter Received by East India Company Vol.ii (1613-15), pp.155,229,261.
Thomas Roe, (1615-1619) who was chosen as an ambassador to the court of the Mughals by the directors of the East India Company, had visualized the limitations and declining of Portuguese power, and wrote to merchants and factors in Surat, that since they (Portuguese) have many enemies, they would not be able to pose threats for long, or oppose others. He also tried to convince his men that he would make his best efforts to gain permission from the ‘governor’ to build their own fortifications or security of protection from the Mughal authorities. As far as the safety of goods was concerned, Roe, suggested that instead of storing the goods at Gogha, they would immediately take it to Cambay, Ahmadabad and Agra. Expressing his view about the port of Gogha that it was not fit to vent three basic goods imported by the English, i.e., coral (to be sold in Deccan), lead and teeth (ivory), Roe answered that “the odds between that port and Surat to go or fetch goods by water, which the Deccan and strangers do, is nothing, and if they shall find that their usage is better at the port of Gogha than at Surat (where they are subject to as many injuries as we) their own case and profit will soon teach them the way.”

Roe further tried to supplement his opinion that lead was in modest demand in the Malabar, and its merchants could procure it in Gogha itself by coming thither. For coral and ‘teeth’, he was of view that it was in great demand all over and was usually transported northward from Surat. To him Indian merchants will be able to buy it at Cambay, where it could directly be vended, therefore graining more profit. Whereas Deccani merchants could come easily unto Surat and thence to Gogha by boats to fetch English commodities as they did in case of other.

Nevertheless, trading from the port of Gogha had it own advantages, it was close to the port town of Cambay, which itself was a great center of trade. Route was safer for conveying treasures to different parts, especially Ahmadabad, as compared to Surat route which was infested with robbers. One more advantage lay in the fact that money/bullion unloaded at the port of Surat was chargeable, while at Gogha it was not. Conveyance charges (like carts) were also cheaper than elsewhere. The question, however, was of safety as the port was prone to piracy and attack from the side of the Malabaris and the Portuguese respectively. It could be sorted out by

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60 Letter Received by East India Company From its Servants in the East, Vol.iv. (1616), p.151.
61 Ibid., pp.152-53.
keeping a ‘small vessel of good defense to ride within the great shippes’,\textsuperscript{62} advised Captain Pringle. Shahjahan had also declined the plea of Thomas Roe for the grant of the port of Gogha. It was a suitable port anchoring heavy junks, as well as ones like ‘tari’\textsuperscript{63} (a boat). Another impression is that perhaps the Portuguese also had a foothold in Gogha as passes were procured from them too, at this port.\textsuperscript{64} ‘Great junks’ were yearly sent from Gogha to Red sea\textsuperscript{65} and Thomas Roe calls it as ‘the Great Moguls port of Gogha’ where royal and other merchants’ ships were all through the year fitted out from. It was a centre of shipbuilding also. Huge size ships (junks) were built here,\textsuperscript{66} and repaired at this port as well. All the Indian ships including those of princesses or princes, however, required protection from the English or the Portuguese in the form of passes.\textsuperscript{67} Even Prince Khurram’s ships were detained by the English in the sea.

In the following many decades Gogha remained an important part of the gulf of Cambay, but enjoying comparatively a secondary status as compared to Surat. Somehow most of the Indian ships traded from Gogha.\textsuperscript{68} English Company’s merchants too, loaded parts of their merchandise at Gogha which was first accumulated at Cambay and then brought down to Gogha in boats which saved good amount of money- six or seven per cent.\textsuperscript{69} Late starter, like the French, also had their eyes on Gogha since it was the only port other than Surat to anchor successfully. Although they were anxious to have a foothold in Surat, but second half of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century was not the right time to fulfill this wish. They faced firm resistance from the merchants of the English company. By that time Mughal rulers and nobles had also grown discontented of the aggressive behavior of the English. They were looking for opportunities to dislodge them from Indian soil, or at least curb their growing demands and hostility towards the state. Hence, when the French asked for a suitable place as a base to support trading activities in Gujarat, Mughal Emperor or his officers had nothing to offer them but Gogha. In October 1682, they received an order in this

\begin{footnotes}{\footnotesize
\item[63] Ibid., pp.106, 278.
\item[64] Letter received by the East India Company From its Servants in the East, Vol.iii (1615) p.270.
\item[66] Irfan Habib, Atlas of the Mughal Empire, Political and Economic Maps with Detailed Notes, Bibliography and Index, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1982, Reprint, 1986, Sheet 7b.
\item[67] EFI (1618-21) p.2.
\item[68] EFI (1646-50) p.63.
\item[69] Ibid., p.106.
\end{footnotes}
respect from Aurangzeb and they continued their attempts to foot out their fleet from Gogha.

In some way, Gogha was not a safe asylum for the ships trading in near and far-off places. It was quite prone to sea-piracy. Malabar pirates would often attack the ships of Gogha indiscriminately, Indian and others alike. Occasionally local pirates also harassed them. European pirates also targeted ships of Gogha, especially those of Indian merchants. This often led to discontentment between the merchants of the concerned nation and the Mughal officers.

Abul Fazl says that small boats called ‘tawari’ regularly carry the goods from Cambay to Gogha. He calls it as one of the significant ports of Kathiawar Coast. However, unlike other ports in the province, he fails to provide us the exact figure of revenues obtained from the port of Gogha. Fortunately, for the last decade of the 17th century, a high ranking Mughal officer appointed in Gujarat, Ali Muhammad Khan, was able to record the approximate amount of revenues collected from these ports. For Cambay and Gogha combined income being collected annually was Rs. 66,31,578.9. Annual revenues from Gogha, amounted Rs. 40,000, half of what collected at Cambay where revenues accrued from there amounted to Rs. 80,000 between 1715-1719 A.D. Undoubtedly it is a clear indication of declining importance of these ports in the early 18th century. Income from other Mughal ports of Gujarat had also declined with the decline of Mughal power in the region.

**BROACH**

Broach had been a significant port recounted in legends, epics and history. It had been a centre of maritime activities for the centuries. It was known as Barygaza to the Greeks, located on the river Narbada, was the chief port in the first century of the Christian era, with Ozene (Ujjain) an important emporium of its hinterland. In

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70 *EFI*, (1634-36) p.234.
Ain-i Akbari, Broach is referred as Bharoj, which has a fine fort. The Narbadah flows past it in its course to the ocean. It is accounted a maritime town of first rate importance, and the ports of Kawi, Ghandhar, Bhabhut and Bhankora are its dependencies.\(^\text{75}\) It located about 30 miles from its river mouth in the Gulf of Cambay,\(^\text{76}\) and 21°42’ N latitude and 73°02’ longitude E.\(^\text{77}\) Archaeological excavations have shown permanent habitation in the area from the Harappan days. Pelsaert refers that Broach, 20 kos landward from Surat is a small town, surrounded by a wall of white stone and looks more like a fort than a city. According to him, the climate of Broach is much better than other port towns.\(^\text{78}\) Thevenot, a French traveler in the East, describes in the ‘Indian Travels of Thevenot’ the fortress of Broach large and square standing on a hill which enabled it to be seen from a great distance.\(^\text{79}\) Nicholas Withington (1612-16 A.D.), a Factor accompanied Thomas Best and his observation are published in Purchas his pilgrims, gives an account about Broach [Broacho] 10c a pretty city on a high hill, compassed with a great river, running by as Thames, divers ships of 200 tones and odds riding. Best calicoes in the kingdom and the stones of cotton.\(^\text{80}\)

Travelers defines Broach as the best market for its commodities as at Surat.\(^\text{81}\) Philippus Baldaues (Clergyman, Author of Description of the East Indian Countries of Malabar, Coromandel, Ceylon, etc) described the port city of Broach, as it is both very convenient and pleasant upon a hill surrounded by a strong stone wall. The place was famous for the cotton goods production especially linen. Malabar merchants used to visit Broach every year with a fleet of nine to ten ships in order to buy the goods from here. The majority of inhabitants were of bania community, they were experts in linen manufacturing. The English and Portuguese both had established their factories there.\(^\text{82}\) The business

\(^{75}\) Ain, Vol.ii, p.243.
\(^{76}\) Imperial Gazetteer Of India, op.cit.,Vol ix, P.28.
\(^{77}\) Ports of Gujarat (West Coast of India), op.cit., p.129.
\(^{79}\) Jean de Thevenot and John Francis Careri, Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, ed. Surendranath Sen,New Delhi, 1949, p.9
\(^{81}\) Thevenot ,P.164.
\(^{82}\) Phillip Baladaus, A True and Exact Description, P-507, As sited in Sangar, Promod, Growth Of The English under Mughal, ABS Publication, Jalandar, 1993, p.44.
transaction at Broach by English started from 1614 A.D. onwards. It was well known for the different kinds of cotton goods of fine quality like \textit{baftas}\textsuperscript{83} at Broach were 20.5 \textit{covid}, (An ancient unit of length, also known as \textit{cubit} or \textit{ell}) while at various places it was 17.5 \textit{covid}.	extsuperscript{84}

According to William Finch\textsuperscript{85} (1608 A.D.), Broach is a great mine of Agate,\textsuperscript{86} which was used in manufacturing beautiful drinking cups, seals, handle for knives and daggers and other rarities for which \textit{khambat} was the main centre.\textsuperscript{87} Large quantity of Agate were brought by the Dutch at Broach as the calicoes purchased in Ahmadabad were brought at home to be dear.\textsuperscript{88} The town was supported by weaving industries and fine \textit{bafta} was the chief product of Broach and all other kinds of cloth for Mocha, Mozambique and the south [Java, etc] were also woven there.\textsuperscript{89} The English also brought goods from Broach and exported them to Bantam and Sumatra.\textsuperscript{90} In 1628 A.D., 500 pieces of broad \textit{baftas} were brought by the English in Broach.\textsuperscript{91} Although Broach was renowned for its finest quality of \textit{baftas} and were such as could not be had somewhere else, but with the passage of time its quality became monotonous. White color \textit{baftas} was come under the best quality which was sent to Europe, red blue and black dyed \textit{baftas} was supplied for Asian markets. The English exported it to Achin, Batavia, java, Sumatra and Mocha.\textsuperscript{92}

Tavernier mention that calicos were brought from long distance to be bleached at Broach as the water of the river was posses special quality for that

\textsuperscript{83} Bafta is deribed from the Persian meaning woven and it is especially applied to a kind of calico, see Thevenot, pp.9, 282.
\textsuperscript{85} Merchant, Agent to an expedition which obtained trading privileges for the East India Company, his letters also published in \textit{purchas his pilgrimes}.
\textsuperscript{86} Early Travels in India P.174.
\textsuperscript{87} M.S. Commissariat, \textit{Mandelslo`s Travels in Western India} (A.D.1638-1639), Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1995, pp.14-15; Thevenot, p.9.
\textsuperscript{88} \textit{EFI} Vol. v, pp.196.
\textsuperscript{89} Pelsaert, \textit{Jahangir`s India}, p.42.
\textsuperscript{90} \textit{EFI} (1622-23), P.110; \textit{EFI} (1630-33), P.62.
\textsuperscript{91} Derived from the Persian word “\textit{Baftas}” meaning “woven” and applied especially a kind of calico Manufactured in Broach, Thevenot, p.287.
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{EFI} (1618-23), pp.21, 38,131,127,203.
purpose. He also praised the *baftas* made there.\(^9^3\) Calicoes partly bleached at Lucknow and for the final bleaching it came to Broach. The calico piece was five yards long and three quarter (27 inches) broad at Broach, whereas in Surat it was seven yards long and twenty four inches broad.\(^9^4\) Bleaching at Broach, seems better done than those which were so treated at Broda.\(^9^5\)

The prices of narrow variety of calico was 2 or 2.5 *mahmudis* a piece, occasionally rising to between 4 *mahmudis* in 1630 A.D. According to Tavernier its price raised from Rs 4 upto 100.\(^9^6\) Though, the calicoes from Broach in price were good and well conditioned.\(^9^7\) After establishing factories at Surat, English realized that piece goods could be procured cheaper at Broach than Surat. So they took permission from the Mughal court to build a factory at Broach, consequently a factory was constructed at Broach in 1616.\(^9^8\) The also founded a factory there in 1617.\(^9^9\)

Broach was also a convenient stage for the passage of goods between Ahmadabad and Surat. Mandelslo (German adventures, who wrote about his travel through Persia and India) refers to a great quality of timber imported to the town via Narbada river.\(^1^0^0\) The imported timber was probably used in shipbuilding. It was an important trading centre and it got its importance from many causes. It was an exit and entrance point for commodities in Gujarat. The traders gathered here from Dabul and Malabar Coast.\(^1^0^1\) It was easier to obtain cloves, cardamom\(^1^0^2\) and other important items to Gujarat. The textiles, yarn and cotton were the main attraction for the outsiders. Broach was the chief mart for the sale of textile in Gujarat, and another exportable goods, indigo, was also available.

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\(^{94}\) *Manelslo’s Travels in West India* (1638-39),op.cit., p.14; *EFI* (1634-36) p.182, 256.

\(^{95}\) *EFI*. Vol.v. p.112.

\(^{96}\) *Ebid.*, (1630-33), p.62

\(^{97}\) *EFI*. (1634-36) p.57.

\(^{98}\) Pramod Sangar, *Growth of the English Trade under the Mughals*, ABS publication, Jalandhar, 1993, P.44.

\(^{99}\) Thevenot, p.283.

\(^{100}\) *Manelslo’s Travels in West India* (1638-39), pp.14-15.


The English carried cash for their purchases but once in a while sold lead and tin to have some money for investment. The famine of 1630-32 A.D. was the major setback for the trade of Broach. About the famine of Gujarat, Petermundy, gives a vivid description and says about each and every condition after the occurred famine. On his arrival at ‘Kirka’ (a place in Gujarat) Mundy and his party found the town “half burnt up and almost void of inhabitants, the most part flooded, the rest dead lying in the street and on the tombs” Further he says that men and women, in search of food, sold their children, and to give them to anyone that would take them with many thanks, so that they might preserve them alive, although they were sure never to see them again. Peter Mundy talks about the adverse effect of famine at Broach and gives the example of weavers. He says, when he returned to the country, he found hardly one person out of ten survived, and the number of cargoes diminished from 30-50 to 20-30. Gujarat was desolated on account of famine. Now there was only one English member left out of 10 at Broach. Earlier the English factor had brought 30, 40, or 50 cargoes in a day and they could only get 20 or 30 cargos at Broach, this disastrous famine spreaded a terrible disease which resulted not a single family escaped from this. This famine effected the trade and commerce of Broach long time to recover it. Barbosa described Broach as a good port with much sipping, where dealing take place in many kind of goods, which were further carried on in many parts of country. Purchas presents an account of 200 tons at Broach port.

During the early days Broach was mostly having trade relation with the port of the Persian Gulf, Arabia and Egypt. From the seventeenth century ships started sailing from Broach towards the East, Java and Sumatra. To the West voyages from Broach extended to the ports of the Red sea. Broach had extensive coastal trade with other ports, particularly with ports in the Malabar Coast. With the steady decline of
Surat and emergence of Bombay as the most important commercial centre, trade and commerce of Broach also came down.

CAMBAY

It is situated on the Gulf of Cambay in Saurashtra, a few kilometers away from the sea, and located on 22°19’ N latitude and 72°37’ E longitude. Cambay has warm and humid climate. Cambay was the principal port of Gujarat at the time of final conquest of Gujarat by Akbar in 1572. This brought not only administrative and political integration of Gujarat but had considerable economic consequence in terms of the enlargement of the hinterland of the Gujarat ports. Cambay was the oldest, biggest and the most famous seaports of western India. All the travelers from Ptolemy onwards visited the Cambay port and impressed of its great wealth, magnificence and flourishing trade. It retained its fame and glory as most famous commercial centre of Gujarat from ancient time. Ralf Fitch was the first Englishman to travel this country and write an account of its people their dresses and their customs. He calls Cambay as Cambaietta and considered it as the chief city of the province of Gujarat, which is great and very populous, and fairly builded for a town of the Gentiles. The land on which Khambat sites right now is the silt deposited by Mahi river, which resulted Cambay got very fertile and wet soil. Soil over here is coastal alluvial. But its geographical condition also imposed a certain disadvantage on Cambay. It lies on an alluvial plains at the north and of the gulf of Cambay, which is noted for the extreme rise and fall of its tides.

In the 16th century, Cambay achieved its importance due to its nearness to Ahmadabad, which became an important commercial centre in the preceding century, and one of the best city in India for its glory and trade. Its every streets were like a fort for one could not see anything until unless the porter opened the gate. Barbosa (Jesuit missionary, 1560) called it “a great and

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109 Ports of Gujarat (west Coast of India), op.cit., p.154.
111 Early Travels in India, p.12.
112 Ibid.,p.12.
113 Ibid.,p.31.
fair city” where there were very fine houses with window and roofed with tiles, well laid out with best palaces and great building of stone and mortar.\footnote{Duarte Barbosa, \textit{A Description of the Coast of East Africa and Malabar}, (trns.) Henry E. J. Stanley, Asian Education Service, New Delhi, 1995, p.64} He referred that substantial merchants and men of great fortune, both moors (use for Mohammadan) and Hindus. He found cotton manufacturing silk and ivory work such as bracelet, dice, beads of various kind. There were lofty houses made of bricks while the shops were full of aromatic perfumes, spices, silk and ivory work made in the town.\footnote{Thevenot, pp.12-18.} Most part of the Inhabitants are Banions and Raspoutes\footnote{Ibid., p.18.} Mandelslo, visited Cambay in 1638A.D., gave information that majority of the population of Cambay were Hindus. This major port town was settled by Merchants from dissimilar countries of the world. Baldaeus remarked that most of the inhabitants were rich merchants banias or master craftsmen. He witnessed the Gujarat or bania merchants there much to traffic and very fast in their dealings.\footnote{Phillip Baldaues, \textit{A Description of the East India coasts of Malabar and Coromandel} and Also o the isle of Ceylon with their Adjacent Kingdoms and Provinces, Asian educational Service, New Delhi, 2000, reprint, 1996, p.505.}

It was an important commercial centre for Gujarat, which had famous industries of weaving and dyeing as well as of ivory, wood, silver and gold. It has all the silks and the different kinds of cotton material, of which there must be twenty, all of great value. It has carnelian, indigo and a little lac which the land produce, a great deal of good opium, wormwood, soap in large quantities, leather, honey, wax, various food stuffs such as wheat, barley, millet, sesame oil, rice, butter, meat, coarse pottery of different kinds and all natural product of Cambay, or brought thither from the countries of the neighboring kings. Since Cambay was a hub of weaving and artisan work and its artisans were skilled in pearls and stone works, hence it became the largest manufacturing centre in Gujarat rivaling Ahmadabad. The major riches of Cambay remarked the traveler, consisted mainly of silk and cotton stuffs, where with everyone from the cape of good hope to China, man and woman is clothed from head to foot. All types of silken stuffs were also manufactured at Cambay. Pyrad, remarked another commodity was indigo which attracted the
attention of the English and the Dutch to Cambay. It was the prize commodity for the European buyers.\textsuperscript{118}

William Finch (related with East India Company, traveled in various parts of India during 1608-11 A.D.) visited Cambay, mention 200 frigates of Portuguese at Cambay. This port was greatly frequented by the Portuguese.  \textsuperscript{119} The Portuguese started their trade in Cambay by 1509 A.D. and used to send commodities to Goa then exported to Europe. Till then the Mughal considered Cambay as the biggest port in India.\textsuperscript{120} Pietra Della Vella, an Italian traveler, reached Cambay in 1629 A.D., remarked, “Indifferently large”.\textsuperscript{121} He said although the city has no farmed port, but this called port due to the great concourse of vessels, thither from several ports. These were small ships, frigates etc, because great once cannot come near 10 or 15 frigates sailing from Cambay to Goa.\textsuperscript{122} Thevenot found Cambay as big as Surat but not so populous.\textsuperscript{123} Cambay was the main port of Gujarat at the time of the final conquest of Gujarat by Akbar, the access to the sea and also given an opportunity of getting to important ports of Cambay and Surat, which were famous for their trade activities. Pyrad de Laval, a French traveler, visited India in the middle of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, has provided an excellent account of Cambay and its flourishing trade. This port was the greatest and richest port of all the coasts of India, where merchants resort from all quarter of the world.\textsuperscript{124}

The port is so crowded that not in frequently 200 vessels may be seen here at one and the same time.\textsuperscript{125} The prosperity of Cambay rested mainly on its outer ports, Gandhar and Gogha among them former was the most serving port of Cambay. In the first half of 17\textsuperscript{th} century, Emperor Jahangir noticed it as the largest port of India and also found that the ships could not directly came here,

\textsuperscript{118} Francois Pyrard of Laval, The voyage of Francois Pyrad of Layal to East Indies, The Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil, (trns.) Albert Gray and assisted by H.C.P. Bell, New Delhi, 2000, pp-247-51.  
\textsuperscript{119} Early Travels in India, p.174.  
\textsuperscript{120} EFI, vol.iv, pp.64-65.  
\textsuperscript{122} Travels of Della Valle in India op.cit., p.66.  
\textsuperscript{123} Thevenot, p.17.  
\textsuperscript{125} A Translation of De Laet’s Description of India and Fragment of Indian History, Bombay 1928 p.19.
but anchored at Gogha which brings the cargoes to Cambay by *ghurabs* (A kind of vessel, a sloop with long projecting bows, used on the Malabar coast). Thus Gogha served as an outer port of Cambay. It was not much expensive to bring the goods from Cambay to Swally via Gogha, rather than land route.

Developing Gandhar and Gogha as outer ports, where the large ships could anchor, receive and deliver cargoes from and to Cambay by flat-bottomed light boats (*tawaris*). By the 17th century Gandhar was the replaced by Gogha. Abul fazl also records about it in *Ain-i Akbari* that large ships were anchored at Gogha, goods being trans-shipped to and from Cambay on smaller boats known as *tawaris*.

Cambay had trade relation with Ormuz, Java, and Malacca etc. The people of Ormuz bring horse to Cambay and silver, gold, silk, alum, copper and seed pearls. They bring back the products of the country and those brought there from Malacca, because they came to Cambay for all the Malacca merchandise. They bring bales of soft dates from Ormuz and also some in jars and dried dates of three or four kinds. The people of Ormuz take back rice and food stuffs for the most part and spice. In the 17th century, Cambay was well known centre of trade and commerce and most of the European had their factories or business dealing at Cambay. De Laet, remarked that 200 carts with all sort of merchandise left for Cambay. Ralf Fitch observed the arrival of many ships from all ports of India, Hormuz and Mecca. Malacca was the chief trading center for the Cambay merchants. There used to be a thousand Gujarat merchants in Malacca, besides four or five thousand Gujarat seamen, who came and went. In trade relation of Cambay with Malacca there is a famous proverb “Malacca cannot live without Cambay, nor Cambay without Malacca”, although both are to be very rich and very prosperous.

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126 H.H. Wilson, *A Glossary of Judicial and revenue term* and of useful words occurring in the official documents, relating to the Administration of the government of British India, compiled and published under the authority of The Honorable the court of Directors of the East India Company, London 1855, p.178.
128 *Imperial Gazette of India*, Vol.ix, p.293
130 John Thevenot, pp.44-45.
132 *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, vol. x,op.cit.,169.
and both had the equal value to each other. If Cambay were cut off from trading with Malacca, it could not live, for it would have no outlet for its merchandise. Before the channel of Malacca was discovered they used to trade with Java round to South of the island of Sumatra.\textsuperscript{134}

From the middle of 17\textsuperscript{th} century Cambay was becoming mainly the supplying port of Surat and the commodities of export were textile and indigo.\textsuperscript{135} Cambay exported cotton, silk, perfumes, coral, agate and precious stone like carnelian, whereas its other export at different times, including indigo, opium, oil, sugar, paper, wax, woolen carpets, ornamental, furniture including bedstead and tortoise shell works, while Cambay imported mercury, copper, alum, rosewater, saffron and gold. Akbar and Jahangir both reduced the custom charges as mentioned in the sources. Abul Fazl referred in \textit{Ain} that Akbar cut taxes on export and import of goods, passing through sea-ports to 2.5\% of their value.\textsuperscript{136} Jahangir reduced the custom dues to 1/40, which was the lowest and mentioned the arrival of small boats from some European ports.\textsuperscript{137}

Almost all the trade of Cambay was in the hands of Hindus. Their general designation was Gujaratees and then they were divided in to various races: Banias, Brahmans and Pattars. There is no doubt that these people have constituted the cream of the trade. They were men who understand merchandise; they were so properly steeped in the sound and harmony of it, the Gujaratees says that any offence connected with merchandise is pardonable. There were Gujaratees settled everywhere, who were men of diligence and quick in trade. There were also some Cairo merchants settled in Cambay and many Khorasans and Guilans from Aden and Ormuj, all of whom did a great trade in the seaport towns of Cambay, but none of these count in comparison with the heathens, especially in knowledge.\textsuperscript{138} According to Mandelslo, Hindus were so engaged in trade and who carried on as extensive business with Achin, Div, Goa, Mecca and Persia. They exported to these place all

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{134} Thevenot, p.45.
\item \textsuperscript{135} S. Arasadhca And Ray Anirudha, \textit{Masulipatnam And Cambay} (1500-1800) p.174
\item \textsuperscript{136} Abul fazl, \textit{Ain-i-Akbari}, tr. H. Blochmann, Vo.l.i, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Baptist Mission press, Calcutta, 1873, p.233.
\item \textsuperscript{138} Tom Pires \textit{The Suma Oriental of Tom Pires} and The Book of Francisco Rodrigues, \textit{An Account Of The East From The Red Sea to Japan and The Book of Francisco Rodrigues}, (ed.). Armado Cortasao Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1990, vol.i p.41.
\end{itemize}
kind of silk and cotton stuffs and brought back in exchange, gold and silver in the form of ducats, sequins and rials.\textsuperscript{139}

Carreri, an Italian traveler, linked the prosperity of Cambay with the Portuguese power and therefore ascribed the decline of the Portuguese as the reason of the decline of Cambay. He also made responsible the retreating sea of Cambay for its decline.\textsuperscript{140} Under the encouraging policy of Akbar, there was a close connection between Portuguese and the Cambay authorities for a long time, later remained the most important Mughal port in Gujarat. Cambay was depended upon its hinterland for cotton supply, including Dholka, Jambusar and Petled. Akbar ordered the repair of the city walls and lowered transit duties during his first visit to sea. Tavernier coming in the second half of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, mentioned both silting of the river and the decline of Portuguese power as causes for the decline of Cambay.\textsuperscript{141} Tom Pires explicitly mentions that “Cambay mainly stretches out two arms; with her right arms she reaches towards Aden and with the other towards Malacca, as the most important place to sail, and other places are held to be less importance”.\textsuperscript{142}

There are certain causes to the decline of Cambay port at the one hand and the other hand the rise of Surat port in 17\textsuperscript{th} century. The development of Agra-Surat route via Burhanpur further added importance to the port of Surat. Though the general view is that Cambay declined due to the silting of the Camay gulf and the river Mahi, this was the condition of over five hundred years. The eclipse of Portuguese power, and the rise of Surat took place in the same time. The decline of Cambay`s overseas trade was clear by the beginning of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century since when Surat had begun to rise as the premier Mughal port of Gujarat.\textsuperscript{143} Due to silting of harbor of Gogha, trade and commerce shifted from Cambay to Surat.\textsuperscript{144} In 1627 A.D. when Abbe Carre visited Gujarat, the harbor of Gogha became a little creek. Only small craft could

\textsuperscript{139} Manelslo`s Travels in West India (1638-39), op.cit., pp.41-42
\textsuperscript{140} Thavenot, p.164.
\textsuperscript{141} Jawed Akhtar, European Influence in Gujarat, in Proceeding Of Indian History Congress In 68\textsuperscript{th} Session Delhi 2007, p.246.
\textsuperscript{142} The Suma Oriental Of Tom Pires, op.cit., p.42.
\textsuperscript{143} Ports And Their Hinterland In India (1700-1950), op.cit., p.130.
\textsuperscript{144} Imperial Gazetteer, vol.ix p.293.
carry out due to sandbanks at the entrance of the bar.\textsuperscript{145} The pertaining situation facilitated the rise of Surat in the 17th century. Although there are so many concept over the decline of this port given by so many travelers but Ralf Fitch is totally silent on the view of silting of river.

**SURAT**

Surat is an ancient city and port by all evidences and had been through centuries a centre of maritime trade. The city situated about six miles from the Tapti River or about four Holland (miles) up to the river.\textsuperscript{146} Pietro Della Valle refers Surat, in latitude 21°13’ N.\textsuperscript{147}, Finch makes remark about the location of Surat that the city has many fair merchants houses therein standing twenty miles within the land up a fair river is the Barred, where the ship trade and unload, where on at a spring tide is three fathom water. Over this channel is fair to the city side able to bear vessels of the fifties tuner laden.\textsuperscript{148}

There were so many European travelers, visited Surat and other parts of the country had given a good account of the socio-economic condition of the people and their commercial activities. Besides the travelers the persons who served under East India Company at Surat, the most famous are Dr John Fryer, surgeon of English Factory at Surat, (1674-1681 A.D.) and Ovington (1689-92 A.D.) have given an excellent account of Surat in 1689 A.D. But the English and Dutch records of the period give very valuable information. The letters of the East India Company’s servant from Surat to their employers in England and from them to their Surat factors being chiefly devoted to their own commercial activities are of great value in tracing the trade of the city of Surat. Some Persian sources also throw some light on this subject like Abul Fazl’s *Ain-i Akbari*, and *Mirat-i Ahmadi* of Ali Muhammad Khan gives additional information about the history of the Mughal period. The Persian sources supply us with extra information regarding the Mughal ruler’s attitude towards European companies at Surat, the administration of city and its port, the piracy in Indian waters, the weakness of Mughals at sea and attempts of the Mughals

\textsuperscript{146} F. Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate*, tr. J. S. Hoyland and annotated by S. N. Banerjee, Cuttack, 1922, P-10.
\textsuperscript{148} *Early Travels in India*, P.133.
to hold responsibility of the European companies for the security of the Mecca ship etc.

The city of Surat is fairly well built and about two miles (Holland) in circumference.\textsuperscript{149} Ovington says, “The circumference of it, with the suburb, is between two and three English miles, tending somewhat in its position to the form of a semicircle or half moon, because of the winding of the river to which half of it adjoins”.\textsuperscript{150} In the 17\textsuperscript{th} century Surat was a fairly big city of considerable size and the entrance in to the city was through several gates\textsuperscript{151} among them there were two main gates, one leading to Cambay and Ahmadabad, another to Burhanpur and Navsari. Sentries were posted at each gate, who kept on eye on all incoming and outgoing persons. \textsuperscript{152} The city has ordinary and splendid buildings. Ovington mentioned in work ‘A voyage to Surat’ about the buildings, that the houses of the inhabitants of Surat were un proportional to their wealth as they were always concerned to hide their riches, and therefore never exceed in any luxurious furniture lest it should prove too powerful a temptation to the avarice of the Mughal.\textsuperscript{153} The port town of Surat had many noble lofty house of the moor merchants, flat at top and terassed with plaster, not stately buildings, living in humble cells or sheds.\textsuperscript{154} In the middle of the city there was a spacious open place, known as castle green because it was nearer to the castle.\textsuperscript{155} The castle was built on the river’s bank at the south end of the city, to prevent the entry of anyone who might wish to attack it by the Tapti. It was protected by the river Tapti on one side and on the other side by ditches filled with sea water.\textsuperscript{156} It has a garrison under the command of the Governor of castle. The revenue of this rich port and city of Surat were deposited in the castle and were forwarded to the court on receiving a special order to that effect.\textsuperscript{157} Pietro Della Valle says that

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{149} W.H Moreland, \textit{From Akbar to Aurangzeb}, a study in Indian Economic History, Oriental Books Reprint Corp. New Delhi, 1972, P.39.
\bibitem{152} O.P. Sing, Surat and its Trade, in the second half of the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century, Delhi University Press, Delhi, 1977.
\bibitem{153} Ovington, p.130.
\bibitem{154} John Fryer,Vol.I, p.231.
\bibitem{155} Ovington, p.130.
\bibitem{156} Thevenot, p.22; Ovington, p.129.
\bibitem{157} Thevenot, p.22.
\end{thebibliography}
Muhammadan called it ‘The gate of Mecca’ as they went on their pilgrimage mostly from that port.\textsuperscript{158}

Surat was ruled by the Muslim family of Mirzas. When in 1573 A.D. Emperor Akbar led a grasp on Surat to conquer it, the Mirzas offered the place to the Portuguese in lieu of their help in the war. On reaching Surat the Portuguese force gave up the idea of fighting the strong imperial force and took the stance of an ambassador before the Emperor,\textsuperscript{159} thus the Mughal forces gained control over Surat. During Akbar’s time Surat was an important port and its revenue from custom and other dues (19,035,180 $Dams$) was approximately Rs.4 lakhs annually.\textsuperscript{160} Because of its importance as a port the Emperor appointed a Mutassaddi or revenue collector for Surat. The sarkar of Surat comprising 31 mahals\textsuperscript{161} including the Bandar (Port and surrounding territories) was placed under the governor (Hakim).\textsuperscript{162}

The city had a very considerable number of foreign settlers. Apart from the Europeans, there were Turks, Jews, Arabians, Persians and Armenians. There is not an exact figure about the population available, but the Hindus were in majority at Surat and engaged in trade and other profession and also associated with administration where they were appreciated in revenue departments to the port which required mathematical and commercial knowledge i.e. as accountant and in the mint, to examine the purity of gold and silver, some of them were busy as Shroff and other brokers. Among the Hindus, the Baniyas were the most noted inhabitants of Surat, who were merchants all by profession.\textsuperscript{163} There were many big merchants in Surat among them, Virji Vohra was the richest Hindu merchant at Surat\textsuperscript{164} whose property was plundered by Shivaji during the attack in 1664 A.D.\textsuperscript{165}

The population increased considerably at the time when the ships came and went i.e. in the month from January to April and in this duration the town was full of people. The population consists of administrative merchants, artisans, weavers and

\textsuperscript{158} The Travels of Pietro Della Valle, Vol.i, P.18.
\textsuperscript{159} Anjmesh Ray, Ports And Shipping in Maritime India: A Historical Overview, Munshiram Manohar Publication, Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 1993, New Delhi, 1993, p.63
\textsuperscript{160} Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.ii, p.256.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{162} Atlas of the Mughal Empire, op.cit., P.23.
\textsuperscript{163} Ovington, p.163.
\textsuperscript{164} EFI (1637-41), p p. Introduction, xvi.
\textsuperscript{165} Ovington, p.114.
agriculturist, which may be mainly divided in to three broad catogories, Muslims, Hindus and the Parsis, besides them the foreigners were there as well. Muslims were generally engaged in the administrative, military and civil services. The upper classes were appointed to the key posts of honor and trust. Some Muslims were engaged in trade at Surat for example, Haji Zahid beg and Haji Kasim were rich merchants and their property was plundered by Shivaji during his attack on Surat in January 1664.\textsuperscript{166} The Parsis were in minority, rich and industrious people. They were busy in trade, craft and manual labor at Surat. Most of the Parsis worked as weavers. They were principal men at loom and most of the silks and stuffs at Surat were made by their hands.\textsuperscript{167} They used to supply cloth to the English factory at Surat.\textsuperscript{168} Among the foreigners, mention may be made particularly of the English, the Dutch and the French, who had their factories at Surat, established under the farmans of the Mughal Emperors.\textsuperscript{169} The first foreign attack on Surat was by the Portuguese. In 1512 A.D. they tried to occupy Surat and burnt down a part of the town, but they were repelled. There was a second attack by the Portuguese in 1530A.D. and again they burnt and plundered the town.

From 16\textsuperscript{th} century onwards, Surat was emerging as an important sea-port outgoing Cambay, Gogha and other ports in the Gulf of Cambay in terms of volume of trade and commercial activities. Surat became the headquarter of the English and Dutch companies in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. The Tapti river was very convenient for the trade of the city and the goods could be send by boats to save the charges and portable charges of land.\textsuperscript{170} Surat was a prominent port of the empire in the Mughal period and it came in to prominence in the starting of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, after the discovery of Swally hole.\textsuperscript{171} And at the same time Surat became the centre of pilgrims and commercial traffic. John Fryer visited Surat in 1674 A.D., found Surat as an entrepot for foreign as well as Indian trade. Surat rose as the premier port of Gujarat in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century.

\textsuperscript{166} Balkrishn Govinda Gokhale, \textit{Surat in the Seventeenth Century}, Popular Prakashan, Bombay,1978, p.25
\textsuperscript{167} Ovington, p.219.
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{EFI} (1668-69), p.92.
\textsuperscript{169} \textit{Early Travels in India}, p.192.
\textsuperscript{170} \textit{E.F.I.} (1618-23),P.29.
\textsuperscript{171} The hole situated just at the mouth of the Tapti river , was said to have been discovered by Henry Middleton, See, \textit{Early Travels in India} P.96.
Portuguese had establishing their monopoly in the region by capturing the island of Div and started threatening Indian merchants having overseas interest. For the safe conduct of the ships of the other nations they started issuing *cartazes*\(^{172}\) in turn of money to ships trading in the Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Malaya Archipelago and Chona Sea, etc. In the 17\(^{\text{th}}\) century Surat was held to be the key to the Indian trade by the English: “…… through the whole Indies their cannot be any place more beneficial for our country than this, being the only key to open all the rich and best trade of the Indies, and for sale of our commodities, especially our cloth, it exceeds all others……”\(^{173}\) Throughout the second half of the 17\(^{\text{th}}\) century, it served as the emporium of the trade, both inland and sea-born and was the chief port of the Mughal Empire. Surat was a great port and commercial centre and most of the population was full of merchant community. Goods were brought up by the river in boats, which were moored at flight of steps. The ocean going vessels could not come up to Surat so these were anchored at Swalli road. The goods were carried by bullock carts or small boats to or from Surat.

The 17\(^{\text{th}}\) century was an era of the prosperity for the city of Surat. The two great sources that contributed to the wealth and prosperity of the city were foreign commerce and domestic manufactures. Surat was a commercial emporium, besides such commodities as indigo, spices and cloths, it imported many important goods from Europe and were sold in its markets. It was famous for its commerce throughout Europe and its commercial importance was greatly increased with the arrival of the English and Dutch merchants in the first quarter of the 17\(^{\text{th}}\) century.

Surat was a convenient place for exchange of goods from Central India and the Deccan while the merchandise from Kashmir, Lahore, Agra and south India passed through it. Commodities from Europe and China came to Surat. And most of it passed through Surat. Surat started to increase its importance due to the establishment of trading factories by the Portuguese, while later on the factories of English, Dutch and French also established there in 1613, 1616 and 1668 respectively. To the

\(^{172}\) Every Indian ship sailing to a destination not reserved by the Portuguese for their own trade had to buy one of these passes from the Viceroy of Goa, if it was to avoid the seizure and confiscation of its merchandise. A later Portuguese legal authority, The Mughal emperor licenced their ships sailing from Surat to Mokha., See, *Cambridge Economic History of India*,(ed) Tapan Raychaudhry and Irfan Habib,c.1200-c. 1750, Vol.i, Cambridge University Press, 1982, Pp.384-85

Chapter-2

English, Surat was an integral part of the commercial infrastructure. Surat as a future trade market was chosen due to great entrepot of the Mughal Empire on the coast of India. According to a contemporary traveler, a city of great trade in all the classes of merchandise.\(^{174}\) A very important sea port and frequented by many ship from Malabar and other ports.

The port of Surat became a conduit for cotton textile export since its hinterland and cotton manufacturing centers of Gujarat and also Deccan, thus the Mughal port of Surat turned out to be one of the biggest outlets for the cloth produced in the hinterland of Gujarat, Deccan and northern India.\(^{175}\) With Akbar’s introduction of new technologies in the manufacturing of cotton and silken cloths aimed at quality innovation, skill up gradation and making Indian pieces excel the Persian and European ones,\(^ {176}\) there was an eventual acceleration in the process of textile production catering to the taste of the consumer classes of the Ottomans, the Saffavids and the Europeans. The foreign experts were used to teach the Indian weavers about the method of quality innovation in cloth-making, at times mixing the Iranian, European and Chinese patterns with Indian.\(^ {177}\) But manufacturing was not done here except coarse Baftas, all goods were brought here from other places. The trade was mainly in the hands of Bohras merchants, who transported it to Surat for sale.\(^ {178}\) European merchant’s business enterprises had to create a market for European commodities at Surat. In this hope they brought here copper, broad cloth, coral, lead, quicksilver etc to India.

The articles of trade in Surat were manifold. Iron, copper, alum, diamonds, rubies, rock crystal, agate and carnelian were traded. The main exports from Surat were cotton and silk clothes, and wheat which was considered the best in the world found a prominent place. Agricultural and manufacturing produce included peas, lentils and beans, soap, sugar, wax and opium were the commodities of export from Surat. There were also exports of cotton and woolen carpets, wood work and furniture

\(^{174}\) Early Travels in India, p.167.

\(^{175}\) Pius Malekandathil, *Indian Ocean in the Shaping of Late Medieval India, Studies in History*, in PIHC, 74th Session, Cuttack, 2013, p.183.

\(^{176}\) Irfan Habib, (ed.) Akbar and Technology, in *Akbar and His India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1997, p. 132.

\(^{177}\) Indian Ocean in the Shaping of Late Medieval India, studies in history, op.cit., p.183.

including bedsteads and writing desks exquisitely inlaid with pearl, ivory, gold and silver and ‘all wonderfully cheap’. The chief article of exports from Surat was cotton textiles (calicos as they were styled in Europe), ordinary cotton fabrics being known in the country as Baftas besides this, cotton yarn was also exported. Spun cotton was exported to Europe in large quantities by the English and the Dutch companies. But there, only the inferior quality was in demand, for making candle wicks, stockings and for inter mixture with the web of silken stuff, while the finest quality was of no use in Europe.\footnote{179 Tavernier, Vol.ii, p.8}

The main imports of Surat from the European countries were quicksilver, porcelain and cowries or seashells.\footnote{180 The growth of English trade under Mughals, op.cit., P.38} Copper was an important articles of import at Surat which was brought here by the Dutch and English merchants from Japan in Asia and Sweden in Europe.\footnote{181 EFI, (1661-64), p.110.} The use of copper was manifold like in making weapons, domestic utensils and primarily used as a coinage metal\footnote{182 Ibid., p.113.} for example, Dam (1/40\textsuperscript{th} rupee) pice (1/2 Dam) and Damri (1/8\textsuperscript{th} Dam) were made of copper. The price of Copper at Surat ranged between Rs. 18 to 22 per mound.\footnote{183 Ibid., (1661-64) p.210.} The English company sold their copper to the individual merchants at Surat on contract basis, therefore in the year 1669 A.D. a contract was made with Virjee Vohra and Mirza Mosum (the rich local merchants of Surat) to sell the whole quantity of copper at Rs. 22 per mound.\footnote{184 EFI, (1661-64), p.113.}

Broadcloth was manufactured in England and the company was required to export large quantity of broadcloth, but there was no ready and profitable market for it at Surat, which itself was a great centre for the trade in Indian cloth and the factors saw the difficulty of putting up broadcloth for sale in such a centre. They found no proper demand for English broadcloth at Surat which reflected in a letter by the English president at Surat, dated 2\textsuperscript{nd} April 1656 A.D., reported to the company. “Broad-cloth was in no demand at Surat owing to the great quality remaining of the stock lately imported and so they intended to send some to Agra for sale”.\footnote{185 Ibid., (1655-60), p.57.}
Another commodity imported to Surat was quick silver. It was supplied from China as well as from Europe. There were sharp fluctuations in the price of the metal in the second half of the 17th century. The price of quick silver in the year 1650 A.D. was Rs.125\(^{1/4}\) per mound,\(^{186}\) which was high and the reason for the price hike was the failure of supplies from China. Lead was imported to Surat by and large from Europe, but the market for it was not free. The local Governor purchased all that was imported in Surat and no other merchant was permitted to purchase it.\(^{187}\)

Other articles of imports at Surat were tin, iron, alum, coral, etc, and a few luxury commodities noted for their novelty. The English merchants describe these novelties as toys, which were not very profitable trade commodities. The demand for these goods at Surat was very limited but merchants had to import it in order to save bullion. These items came mostly from Europe, while coral came from Mediterranean and ivory from the coast of Africa. These goods were often sold to individual merchants at Surat on contract basis.

The English East India Company soon realized the economic importance of the city of Surat, who felt a need to set up a factory there because of various reasons. Among them, the navigation of Surat from England was very expensive, while the problem of protecting the ships during voyage was there, besides each of the several part of India produced special commodities, which were brought up and made ready by the company’s servant for export on the arrival of ships. And if the company’s servant were not constantly engaged in this task, the other European nations would capture the market. Moreover, quality products and the right kind of cloth could not be procured unless permanent agents were posted in strategic place. Thus establishment of factory was considered essential so that it was established at Surat in 1612-13 A.D. by obtaining a firman from Mughal Emperor.\(^{188}\)

The Portuguese created many obstacles in the way of English as they did not welcome a new competitor. As in 1573 A.D. the Portuguese concluded a treaty with the Mughal Emperor and became the virtual master of the sea in this area. In August 1608 A.D. the British appeared in the scene, when Captain Hawkins arrived at Surat but he was not allowed to establish a factory there. He was, however, advised by the

\(^{187}\) EFi., (1651-54), p.140.
\(^{188}\) Early Travels in India, pp.188-89.
viceroy of Gujarat, to apply for permission to the Emperor in person. When he landed his goods at Surat, he faced fierce opposition of the Indians who were instigated by the Portuguese just because of they were considered invincible. Hawkins proceeded to Agra to see the Emperor but the Jesuits had frustrated Hawkins plans. When in 1611 A.D. Henry Middleton (came with an English fleet) had no other alternative but to meet force by force and the battle that ensued between English and Portuguese, former became victorious. The victory greatly enhanced the English prestige in the eyes of local authorities.

In 1613 A.D. the Emperor confirmed the charter of trade given to the British by the local governor. But the Portuguese did not allow the British to Trade. They also captured and took away some Indian ships, therefore, The Muslim governor of Surat declared war on the Portuguese. Fight and skirmishes between the three forces continued. In 1615 A.D. Sir Thomas Roe landed at Surat as the British king’s ambassador to Emperor Jahangir’s court. In spite of Portuguese opposition he got a charter from the Emperor giving many concessions to the British. In 1623 A.D. English got the permission of free trade at the ports of Surat, Cambay, Gogha, Sindh and Bengal with the privilege of the any commodity “excepting coral for one year” and also received the license of buying and building ships in Surat, Broach and Gandevi.

Like the English East India Company, the merchants of Netherlands formed a Dutch East India Company to trade with the East. Surat was a great place for producing indigo and textile industries in the 17th century. The first recorded attempt to enter the Indian cloth market was made by the Dutch at the end of the year 1601 A.D. Their earliest relation with Gujarat started via Achin. Two factors Messerswolff and Lafer, started from Achin for Akbar’s Empire with articles of trade and a letter of recommendation to the Mughal Emperor, which was given to them by Sultan Alauddin of Achin. After a trip of three months and six days, they arrived at Surat, rented a house and the trade started. In 1616 A.D. the first Dutch vessels arrived at

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189 Early Travels in India., p.68.
190 Ibid.,pp.230,237.
191 EFI (1622-23), p.309.
192 Ibid.,p.310.
193 O.P.Sing, Surat and its Trade in the Second half of 17th Century, University of Delhi, 1977, p.59
Surat and 1618 A.D. the Dutch was given charter by the Emperor to start factory there.195

The French were the last Europeans who appear at Surat. The French factory at Surat was established in the year 1668 A.D. The English and Dutch had already established their Factories at Surat in the year 1612 and 1618 A.D. respectively. But the French took interest in India long before the foundation of ‘Compagnie des Indes Orientale’s in 1664 A.D. The contact between India and French was established by three classes of people, first by Missionaries, second travelers and third traders who had a field already prepared by for them by the first two classes of people. Travelers like Jean de Thevenot, Francois Bernier, Jean Baptist Tavernier and other who wrote detailed accounts of the condition of India. The missionaries established contact with the local population and the native authorities, and the traveler gave their countrymen the benefit of their knowledge about the social, political and economic condition of India and about the immense possibilities of developing trade and commerce with this country. Thus it heightened the eager desire in France to share with the Dutch and English to trade in the precious goods of India. Beber and La Boullaye started from Surat to the Mughal court at Delhi to seek trade privileges. They were welcomed at the Mughal court and presented the personal letter of Louis xiv to the Emperor Aurangzeb. The Mughal emperor granted them a firman dated 11 August 1666 A.D. and the French were allowed to establish a factory at Surat.196 Caron, who had a vast knowledge of Eastern trade and served the Dutch East India Company for twenty two years, now joined the service of the French East India Company and started from France in 1667 A.D. passing through Madagascar and touching at Cochin, he reached Surat in the beginning of 1668 A.D. and established there the first French factory.197

In course of its rise as an entrepot of the area, Surat developed trade relation with almost every major and minor regional trading center. This aspect of trade has been underestimated in our historical literature and its decline has been antedated. The voyages were longer therefore less frequent than those to west Asia and were only undertaken by the larger operators. But it was an important part of the trade of Gujarat. Surat had internal trade relation with Masulipatnam and Bengal on the

195 Surat and its Trade in the Second half of 17th Century, op.cit, p.61.
Eastern coast of India. The goods from Bengal consisted of lac and Sugar which yielded a good margin of profit.\textsuperscript{198} Goods were brought to Surat from capital cities known for particular commodities. They were sold in quantities to European, Turks, Arabians, Persian and Armenians who travelled the farthest.\textsuperscript{199}

The foreign trade of a country is a very good mirror of the economic activities of the people. The character of our imports in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century was different from what is today. The imports chiefly consisted of gold and silver, a few articles of luxury and fancy goods meant for the rich. The English had to export mainly bullion from England in order to purchase goods at Surat, on the other side Dutch supplied Surat with spices and pepper and purchased calicoes and other commodities at Surat and hence they had not to export bullion to Surat in the same way as the English did. Indian goods were in great demand in foreign market and the demand for foreign commodities was limited to the wealthy upper class. Indian was self sufficient as far as the necessaries of life were concerned. The result was that the exports much exceeded the imports in value and the foreign merchants who traded with India had to pay largely in bullion for Indian commodities. Surat was famous for traffic throughout Asia for silken cloth and for zarbaft or the cloth of gold from Persia. Large quantities of pearls were brought here from Persian Gulf. Diamonds, rubies, Topazes and other splendid stones from other countries were also brought to Surat, carnelians, niganess, desks could be purchased at Surat at a reasonable price.\textsuperscript{200} As a result of overseas trade, the suba of Gujarat became the most urbanized area of the Mughal Empire.\textsuperscript{201}

About the condition of English traders at Surat, John Fryer says that Mughal treat with as in a more favorable style giving us the preference before other and looked on us with the same manner as they do with great Ombrachs (the Amir).\textsuperscript{202} He points out that this was because of the special firman\textsuperscript{\textregistered} granted to them from time to time by successive emperor and due to the naval supremacy of the English.\textsuperscript{203}

During the later part of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century Surat was described as very prosperous and one of the principal cities of India. The Tapti was crowded with

\begin{footnotes}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{198}EFI (1634-36) P.178.
\item \textsuperscript{199}Ibid., pp.97-98.
\item \textsuperscript{200}Ovington, p.96
\item \textsuperscript{201}The Economy of the Mughal Empire, C.1595, op.cit., P.315.
\item \textsuperscript{202}John Fryer, Vol.i, P.289.
\item \textsuperscript{203}The growth of English trade under Mughals, op.cit., P.120.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotes}
merchant ships from all commercial nations of Europe and Asia. Surat became one of the emporiums of the world because of the merchandise it received by land and sea. The banks of river were busy with shipbuilding, which was an important industry. The British repaired their old ships here and in course of time started building new ones. Surat had a long tradition of shipbuilding and even the Mughal Emperors got their ships built there. The ships built for China trade were of 500 to 1,000 tons, quite big compared to the contemporary size of the ships. Once the British shifted from Surat to Bombay, shipbuilding activity was also transferred. With the growth of Bombay the importance of Surat declined.

CHaul

Chaul was a former port-city of Portuguese in India, now in ruins, located 60km south of Mumbai, in Raigarh District of Maharastra state in western India. Immediately after the Portuguese occupation of Chaul from the sultan of Ahmednagar in 1521, attempts were made to connect the textile production in the Deccan with the trade of East Africa through this port. In 1530s, it was decided that the customs duty on the various categories of cloth taken to Mozambique and Sofala should be paid at Chaul, where the African ivory was also to be sold in return. This was to give economic stimulus to the emerging Portuguese settlement of Chaul, which was intrinsically connected with the various weaving villages of Deccan. The connectivity with the weaving centers in the Deccan helped the Portuguese to dispatch annually two fleets from Chaul to the ports of East Africa with textiles in the second half of the sixteenth century, and later the number of vessels carrying textiles from Chaul to Mozambique varied between one and three.

Durate Barbosa, visited Chaul in the early 16th Century, described that it was entirely under the Muslims and its houses had thatched roof. He makes elaboration the dresses of inhabitants that “The natives of the country use much of the calico and are clad therein, wearing it unbleached. After it has been worn they bleach it making it very white and starching it, and in this state they sell it in many regions, and on this

205 J. Gerson da Cunha, Notes on the History and antiquities of Chaul and Bassein, Asian Education Services, Bombay 1876, pp.60-65.
206 Pius Malekandathil, Indian Ocean in the Shaping of Late Medieval India, studies in history, published in Sage publication, 2014, 133.
207 Ibid., p.133
account it is often found torn, also, after it has been worn, then make cloaks of it joining two pieces together and dyeing them with good dyes, and thus they wear them, thrown over their shoulders like capes, as their fashion, with a piece of muslin on their heads”.

Traffic from the west coast to the Red sea was mainly in the hands of the Arabs, who had their settlements on the west coast including Chaul. These Arab merchants also supplied capital to the weavers of Chaul to manufacture textiles which would meet their requirements of trade that became a prosperous trading center in the medieval period as a result of the transport facilities provided by the sea, the natural harbor, the skilled labor available in the region and the capital provided perhaps by the Arabs, which they must have raised in India itself by selling horses to the rulers of the Deccan. Barbosa therefore says, ‘the moors of Chaul take away every a great number of piece of fine muslin for turban, in which they traffic with Arabia and Persia, where it is held in great esteem. They also have many fine calicos and Roman turbans. These three kinds of cloth are woven in this kingdom”.

Verthema, another Portuguese traveler of the early 16th century, testifies that cotton stuffs were manufactured here in great abundance. Linschoten, who also visited Chaul in the 16th century, says, ‘there is a place by Chaul, which is the old town of the naturally borne countrymen, where divers kinds of silks are woven, all sorts and colors as groceran, Satin, Taffata, and such like stuffs, in so great abundance, that India and all other places bordering the same, are served therewith: whereby the inhabitants of Chaul have great commodities, by bringing the raw silk out of China spinning and weaving it there; and again being woven, to carry and distribute it throughout all India.”

The French traveler Pyrard, visiting Chaul in the early 17th century, also mentions that sufficient silk was made there to supply to Goa and all India and that it was better than China silk and much prized at Goa. He also mentions that the people of Chaul made very fine boxes and other small carved articles.

209 Ibid., p.161.
212 Alexander Kyd Nairne, The History of Kokan (ed.) James M. Campbell, Asian Educational Services,
and the local Muslims, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English also had commercial contacts with Chaul. A Dutch document of 1620 A.D. mentions, the Portuguese carried on a large amount of trade in textiles and other goods with Mocha in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Ships used to leave Chaul for the Red sea at the end of September and the beginning of October. Malik Ambar, the Wazir of Ahmednagar, sent two ships from Chaul to Mocha in 1621 A.D., all these references suggest the importance of Chaul as a trading center in the 16th and 17th centuries. The volume of trade, the interest of foreigners involved and the growth of manufactures indicate that Chaul had been a populous port-town in the 16th and 17th centuries. Through the port of Chaul, textiles along with steel from Deccan, was also taken to Persia and Yemen by the mid-seventeenth century. By 1610, the annual income from the customs collection of Chaul was 31,200 xerfins, which meant that the total value of its trade was about 692,650 xerfins.

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213 Om Prakash (ed.), The Dutch Factories in India (1617-23), Delhi 1984, pp.124, 140, 162.
214 Xeraphin or Zerain, as it was usually spelt is a corruption of the Arabic ashrafi, See, Charles Fawcett, English Factories in India, Vol.i, New Series, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1936, p.2n.
215 Indian Ocean in the Shaping of Late Medieval India, studies in history, op.cit., p.133.
Chapter- 1

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CHAPTER-3

ADMINISTRATIVE APPARATUS AND ITS FUNCTIONS IN THE TOWNS OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

Looking at the administrative apparatus and its function in towns and cities we have to divide them by their functions, population and size with other categories as well. The Mughals tried to set up a centralized administration in place beyond the cities. The Mughal administration took a firm shape during the reign of Akbar. Neither Babur nor Humayun had got sufficient opportunity to give a proper shape or structure to any administrative framework. Between Babur’s death and Humayun’s re-entry into India, the Surs ruled from Delhi between 1540 to 1555 A.D. Sher Shah (1540-45 A.D.), the founder of this dynasty and a distinctively far-sighted ruler, who run the country’s entire administrative system very efficiently. Sher Shah’s empire did not extend to the west of the Indus, but he regarded the security of the frontier routes, particularly through the Peshawar valley and the Punjab, as most important. Sher Shah built the fort at Rohtas at Mount Balanath on the Kabul road. He also planned to build forts in every district of North West to block the anticipated Mughal invasion, while to make travel safer he planned to build brick rest-houses instead of earthen ones. Sher Shah constructed the Grant Trunk Road from Attock to Delhi, later extending it to Sonargaon which became its eastern terminus. This major road also connected different parts of Bengal, but these have since been obliterated. Sher Shah’s strict enforcement of law and order and his action in holding village headmen responsible for highway robbery and murder reduced the dangers involved in travel and thereby stimulated trade.¹

In Mughal India the idea of a corporation or municipality had not taken root and municipal functions were performed by such persons and bodies as the circumstances, resources and the requirements of a city demanded. Mughal cities and towns had made considerable progress in the direction of a fairly good and efficient

¹ Muhammad Abdul Khair Farooque, *Road and communication in Mughal India*, Idarah-i Adabiyat-i-Delhi, New Delhi, 1977, pp.10, 12.
administration and this characteristic was given special attention to all major towns and cities. The fundamental principle of the Mughal system of administration was ‘centralized authority’ vested in the hands of the emperor, who appointed a team of officers directly and solely responsible to him. These were high ranking officers such as Subedar, governor, Kotwal and Qazi.2

The development of Mughal administration was primarily the work of Akbar. The ideas and principles on which it evolved were different from those of the Delhi Sultanate. From the beginning of Akbar’s reign his main concern was to establish a strong central government,3 who appointed various officers in the Subah, Sarkars and Paragnas to run the administration effectively and efficiently. But no definite pattern of administration of the Subah emerged till 1594 A.D. when regular appointments to various offices seem to have been given due importance. By the time of Aurangzeb, the administrative picture became more comprehensible. Here an attempt has been made to draw the picture of the town administration on the basis of extant sources.

There are three aspects of Mughal Administration-

• First, the Mughal tried to establish some kind of a homogeneous system of administration.
• Second, there is a contradictory tendency along with the system in view of the local circumstances, local crises and local demands.
• Third, the most important one is that they always separated the executive and the financial functions of the Mughal administration.

According to Jadunath Sarkar, "The Administrative agency in the Provinces of the Mughal Empire was an exact miniature of that of the Central Government."4 Humbly, the writer of Cambridge history of India, points out that a city in the Mughal Empire lacked any kind of corporate or municipal institution. From the point of view of Government, cities and towns were no more than conglomerations of adjacent villages. They possessed no rights exemptions or characters and had no distinct legal personality, thus standing in marked contrast to the cities of late medieval or early modern Europe.5 Town administration was a part of the administrative machinery of

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2 I.P. Gupta, Urban Glimps of Mughal India, Discovery publication house, New Delhi, 1986, p.45
3 Road and communication in Mughal India, op.cit., p.14.
the sarkar and the pargana. The only officer who may rightly be regarded as being responsible for the administration of the towns was Kotwal.

**KOTWAL**

The most important responsibility of the administrative authorities was the maintenance of law and order in the city and the security of life and property of its residents irrespective of their caste, creed, race, religion and status in the social or administrative hierarchy. Besides this, other responsibilities of this department were to provide all the civic facilities, look after supervision and control of economic activities and foster harmony amongst its residents.

In ancient India the fort officer was called ‘kotpal’ and from this word the origin of kotwal could be traced. Later on the chief officer of provincial capitals and cities was called kotwal. The post of kotwal was prevalent in north and south India. According to Thevenot the kotwal was chief administrative officer and the chief justice, and in Turkey he is called Sousbassa, and in Persia Deroga. The kotwal had very wide functions. Manucci tells us that kotwal was the chief punishment officer of the whole city. The kotwal’s authority was so extensive and touched so many aspects of urban life that if he and his subordinates carried out their tasks effectively, the town and cities of Mughal India must have been very strictly controlled on behalf of the Central government. He was the chief officer in the city administration. In fact he was the pivot around which all the miscellaneous activities connected with the administration of the city turn around. It was in the reign of Akbar that the duties and functions of the kotwal in the administration of the cities and town were defined. The duties assigned to a kotwal included watch and ward, maintenance of law and order, civic amenities, code of behavior, inspecting troublemaking actions, controlling markets and other economic organizations of the city, enforcing the rules and regulations of the state and also care of the needs of foreigners.

Different categories of employees were inducted to run the administration of the Mughal urban centers, one of them was the Kotwal, who was at the top of the

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6 Jean de Thevenot and John Francis Careri, Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, (ed.) Surendranath Sen, New Delhi, 1949, p.27.
8 Town and Cities in Mughal India, op.cit., Vol.i. p.451.
urban administration, and appointed by Imperial government at the recommendation of Mir-i Atish, (master of ordnance-military supplies or weapons) through a sanad (a charter, a seal of ruling authority) bearing his seal.\footnote{Ali Muhammad Khan, \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi} (supplement), tr. Syed Nawab Ali, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1930, p.178.} His main responsibility was to maintain law and order. The appointment of Kotwal was at the judgment of the imperial government which could post any person whom it favored, the opinion of the important inhabitants of the town concerned could also have had a role in influencing its decision. During the reign of Aurangzeb the Kotwals were generally appointed by the Emperor but sometime by the Nazim.\footnote{K.M. Karim, \textit{The provinces of Bihar and Bengal under Shahjahan}, Dacca, 1983, P.142n.} Manrique calls him ‘Cutuual’ appointed by the central government in the capitals and other important cities, used to perform a number of executive and police duties. According to Manrique, He was a ‘reformer of the evil habits and custom of the people.’\footnote{Fray Sebastian Manrique, \textit{Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique} (1629–43), Eng. tr. C. E. Luard and assisted by H. Hosten, London, 1927, Vol.ii, pp.270-71.}

According to Abul Fazl, the appropriate person for the post of kotwal should be vigorous, experienced, active, deliberate, patient, astute and humane.\footnote{Abul Fazl, \textit{Ain-i Akbari}, tr. H.S. Jarrett, Vol.ii, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1891, p.43.} The kotwal occupied a crucial place in Mughal town-administration. The information existing in the records and interpretation of the European visitors leads us to consider that the functions of the Kotwal were very wide-ranging, sometimes appearing to be wider in scope than those of the modern municipal institution\footnote{Francisco Pelsaert, \textit{Jahangir’s India: The Remonstratie of Francisco Pelsaert}, Eng. tr. W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, W. Cambridge, 1925, p.57; Foster, William, (ed.), \textit{The English Factories in India, EFI} (1622-23), Oxford Clarendon Press 1906-1927, pp.124-25; J. Ovington, \textit{A Voyage to Surat} in the year 1689, (ed.) H.G. Rawlinson, London, 1929, pp.137-8.}. He combined himself the executive, police and judicial powers within the limits of the town. The kotwal of the larger towns, being vested with various responsibilities, used to be counted among the high officials of government. His mansab was different in accordance to the degree of work, the size of the population and the administrative status of the city or town.
Liabilities and Obligations of Kotwal

There were numbers of Liabilities and obligations of Kotwal, which are given below:

- On the subject of care of the people’s conduct and prevention of the crime, he was responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the city. He kept watch at night and patrolled the city. When the night is little advanced he should prohibit people from entering or leaving the city. He had to patrol streets of town at night to prevent disorders, and to arrest undesirable loiterers. He had also to answer for all robberies committed in the town, being forced by the Governor to pay back whatever had been lost. Whenever a robbery was committed, the Kotwal detained all the people in the house of a suspect and had them severally beaten. The guilty party then usually confessed his crime. After recognition, the punishments were imitable, sometimes culprits were roasted alive or their heads were cut off and pillars erected for this purpose. The kotwal was to establish night-ach in every mahalla(a quarter of a city or town or ward). He himself was to ride out patrolling the streets thrice a night at 9 p.m., 12 p.m., and 3a.m. at which hour’s drums used to be beaten and a large copper trumpet sounded, the men of his patrolling party loudly pronouncing the word khabardar (“alert”). Ovington confirms the above statement. The Kotwal was always attended with several peons and soldiers armed with swords, lances, bows and arrows”. Whenever he got information of a theft or dacoity, the kotwal had to go there with his force to the spot. There are reports of severe encounters with the dacoits. The kotwal under all circumstances was required to take into custody the guilty and recovered stolen property. If he failed, he had to compensate the victims for all the thefts, crimes and murders committed within his jurisdiction. He was instructed particularly to discover the real criminal and so deal with him as to prevent recurrence of the crime. In order to check theft and crime, he had

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14 Ain, Vol.ii, p.44.
15 Thevenot, pp.27-28.
18 Ovington, p.137; Thevenot, pp.27-28.
19 Ovington, p.137.
20 Thevenot, p.28.
orders not to allow people to enter or leave the town after sunset, without his *dastak*\(^{21}\) (passport or permit). After sunset all the gates of the town were shut and heavily guarded.

- He was answerable to remove previous grievances and prevent anyone from forcibly entering the house of another. Akbar’s *farman* enjoins that the *kotwal* of every city and town and village ought to records its houses and buildings and prepare a note of the residents of every street from house to house as to know what sort of men they are, how many are cultivators, how many soldiers and *Dervishes*. He was responsible to minutely observe the income and expenditure of the different classes of men, and by a refined address make his vigilance reflect honor on his administration. The *Kotwal* appointed the city guards (mace-bearer) in the city, allotting to everyone a certain part which he was to watch day and night. Streets were fixed and *Mir-i mahalla* (head of the ward) was appointed to see the happening of good and bad events of that street. On arrival of a guest, either a relative or stranger, the host should inform the *Mir-i mahalla* about him. The informer was to write daily reports of all events and the arrival and departure of any person in the street. It was to be shown for a stranger; he was to stay at a separate and secure place fixed by the *Mir-i mahalla* and the informer, under the directions of the *kotwal*. It was so settled that whenever a thief comes or there was fire or some unpleasant event takes place, the neighbor should immediately run to his help.

- He was required to so direct the people that the old coins should be deposited in the mint or paid to the treasury at the current rate of bullion.\(^{22}\) He was so careful so that no alteration of value in the gold and silver coins of the realm and its diminution by wear in circulation, otherwise he would be responsible to replenish the amount of the deficiency.\(^{23}\)

- The city Kotwal was among the officers appointed to attend to the management of markets and other economic activities. An important measure to control the markets was the provision that the purchase and sale of the commodities were to be made within the city. This was to avoid malpractices

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\(^{23}\) *Ain*, Vol.ii, p.44.
such as duty evasion, hoarding and regretting. His effort was to ensure low prices, preventing men going out of the city to buy supplies, with a view of concerning the stocks, and to see that the rich did not purchase beyond what was necessary for their consumption so as to eliminate the danger of hoarding, he was further directed to suppress the cornering the stocks. In this connection the comment of Emperor Akbar is worthy to mention which states that, “.........honesty and conscientiousness are rare, especially among traders.”

His majesty therefore was careful in enquiring into the traders’ profits and fixed the prices of articles in such a manner, that both parties were satisfied. He was to prohibit the realization of certain forbidden cesses. Enforcing the standard weights and measures and preventing fraud within his responsibility.

In the markets, he kept watchmen to sight pick picketers and thieves and bring them to him for punishment. Finally, he was enjoined to appoint heads and brokers in the markets for various commodities. These persons were expected to be informed of all transactions, and the kotwal was to take from them a daily-diary (roznamcha) thereof. During the reign of Aurangzeb some of the duties of the kotwal with regard to market control, were transferred to the Muhtasib, e.g. the enforcement of the standard weights and measures; checking of the forged coins or coins deficient in weight; testing articles of food and prevention of the sale of adulterated vendible’s; and removal of obstruction from streets like dirt and sweeping and ensuring that nobody in the market had a portion of the bazaar for opening his shops in the area meant for public traffic. Various officers were appointed to see to the proper functioning, supervision and control of the markets, including the fixing of the prices of essential commodities, so as to ensure smooth business transactions in the city.

One of the most important function of kotwal for the public welfare, as it could be seen in the administration of Agra city where he was to provide local amenities, such as water supply and sanitation, ensure proper functioning of

24 I.P. Gupta, Urban Glimpses of Mughal India, Agra the Imperial Capital (16th and 17th Century), Discovery Publication House, Delhi, 1986, p.51.
26 Ibid.
civic institutions and promote the wellbeing of the society. Although these function were not only limited to Agra city, but were provided in all the cities and towns of the domain.\textsuperscript{28} An adequate water supply was one of the basic necessities. The channels were dug from the river to different parts of the city for this purpose. Maintenance of sanitation in the city was under the strict supervision of the city kotwal included general cleanliness of public streets, lanes, markets and other important public places and the sprinkling of water on roads specially when the king passed through.\textsuperscript{29} Tanks, wells and reservoirs were also constructed for the benefit of the public in different parts of the city by the government officials or willingly by private individuals who considered it a very pious act. Besides this, management of ferries (boats) was also looked after by the Kotwal who made separate arrangements for men and women. Lighting arrangements were provided by the management for all buildings inside the fort, and government officers such as chief police station or kotwali and other check posts or chowkis scattered in different parts of the city. In addition to these places like the maidan (open space) opposite the fort and important markets were also lighted. Private arrangements were made, for lighting on important occasions, such as Nauroz and other festivals were made by the local authorities of the city, who also looked after provision of facilities and amenities for their celebrations.\textsuperscript{30}

- An important function of the Kotwal was to examine the weight and make ser not more or less than 30 dam (coin, originally a copper coin). In the gaz (measurement of length) he had to permit neither decrease nor increase in it and control the people from the production, the providing, the buying or selling of wine but abstain from invading the privacy of domestic life. According to Manucci, "it is his business to stop the distillation of arrack (spirits, ‘arq), the eau-de-vie used in the Indies. He has to see that there were no public women in the town or anything else forbidden by the king. He obtains information about all that goes on so as to be able to send in his report. For this purpose, there are throughout the Mughal Empire certain persons known as ‘alarcor’ (halalkhor), a word which means ‘men who live on what is

\textsuperscript{28} Mughal Administration, op.cit., p.12
\textsuperscript{29} Bernier, p.280.
\textsuperscript{30} Urban Glimpses of Mughal India, Agra the Imperial Capital (16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} Century), op.cit, pp.52-53
well earned. These men are under obligation to go twice a day to clean out
every house and they tell the kotwal all that goes on.”

- Regarding sarai’s administration, the kotwal had the power to visit sarai for
  investigation and making arrests the matters. The sarai administration was
  also expected to provide information to kotwal regarding arrival of stranger
  there. During Akbar’s reign the kotwal was empowered to establish a separate
  sarai in the town for accommodating the newly arriving traveler tell such time
  as was required to check the information about them.

- In the matter of social abuses, the Ain instructs the kotwal, such as sati “not to
  allow a woman to be burnt against her wishes, neither a man to commit
  suicide, nor anyone to be circumcised below the age of twelve.” Kotwal’s
duty was to prevent forcible sati and also prevent it by dissuading those who
willingly desired to become sati. The kotwal was also to prevent the
kidnapping of girls and forced marriages. Prostitutes and dancing-girls were
always at his mercy. Numerous instances on record show that in hours of
danger and emergency the kotwal was entrusted with the defense of the town
and its forts.

- In disturbed political conditions, such as Prince Khusro’s rebellion against his
  father Jahangir, the Kotwal was assigned the duty of sending urgent messages
to chief nobles and officials on the frontiers and in other towns to come
immediately under the imperial standard to meet the danger.

- In the matter of cemeteries, burial and slaughter house, he allotted separate
quarters to butchers, hunters, washer of the dead, and sweepers and contained
men from associating with such stony-hearted ominous dispositional creatures.
He was responsible not to killing any animal on certain days and part of the
year, and also located the cemetery and the slaughter houses outside the town

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31 Manucci, Vol.ii, 421.
32 Ravindra Kumar, Administration of Sarai, in Proceeding of Indian history Congress, Hyderabad,
33 Ain, Vol.i, p.284.
34 Pelsaert, says that the governors were instructed to dissuade intending satis but not to refuse
permission if they insisted on it. He mentions the case of a widow to whom the governor offered a
yearly pension of 500 rupees but to no avail, and the governor had to give his consent which was
necessary for every intending sati to obtain before the ceremony could be performed, See Jahangir’s
India, p.79.
36 Urban Glimpses of Mughal India, Agra the Imperial Capital (16th and 17th Century), op.cit., p.50.
in the neighborhood of rivers and tanks, but in course of time with the expansion of the city they got included within the city. However orders for their seclusion were issued thereafter.

- Appointing persons of respectable character to supply the water courses and forbade the restrictions of personal liberty and selling of slaves and many other duties were under his command.

- In the affair of care and legitimate disposal of heirless property, it is said that if anyone died in the estate of a town or its suburbs, no matter whether resident of the same town or a stranger, the kotwal on being informed, was to take possession of the entire property and after strict search and inventory, it was to be sealed and of the property of a deceased or missing person who may have no heir, he was responsible to take charge of invention and kept it in his care. It was his duty to keep an inventory of all such effects and report the matter to court so that they may be handed over when a legitimate heir might appear.

As regards to the local administration of the town, the Mirat-i Ahmadi of Ali Muhammad Khan furnishes a detailed account of the police and municipal organization of Ahmedabad. From administrative point of view, Ahmadabad was most ‘carefully kept city’. The kotwal of the city occupied a pivotal position in the local administration. After Aurangzeb, the Kotwal was sometime appointed by the Nazim of the suba. The study of Akhbarat of Prince Azam’s headquarters shows the presence of two kotwals for the administration of the city, viz. the kotwal-i balda (or shahr) and other was kotwal-i lashkar, the former administering the city the later took care of Military encampment. In 1702-03 A.D., when prince Azam was the Nazim of Gujrat, Syed Abdul Qadir held the post of Kotwal-i balda. Besides, utilizing 100 infantry attached to the Nazim of the suba for that purpose, kotwal-i balda was assigned a personal contingent of 50 horsemen. In 1702-03 A.D., kotwal Syed Abdul Qadir, requested 50 infantrymen for his help which were usually provided to the kotwal by the Nazim, his request was accepted and order was passed for its

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38 Ain, Vol.ii, p.45.
40 Thevenot, pp.11-12.
41 Arshia Shafqat, Administration of Ahmadabad City under the Mughals, in Proceeding of Indian History Congress, 68th session, 2007 Aligarh, p.460.
42 Mirat (suppl.) p.192.
enforcement.\textsuperscript{43} 

A deputy (naib) of the kotwal often worked on behalf of the kotwal. There is no reference in the records to the naib kotwal being directly appointed by the imperial government. It appears that the kotwal himself could appoint a man as his deputy to work in his absence. It is not known what exactly his powers and duties were. It is most probable that he could exercise only such duties which were to be given by the kotwal, and never acted at his own discretion. A naib kotwal was needed only when the kotwal was absent, on sick-bed, on long leave or out of station for official business.\textsuperscript{44}

The contemporary European travelers who visited Agra and other cities of India during that period took of his responsibilities in the maintenance of law and order, apprehending criminals, executing the decisions of the lower courts and performing many of the functions which in modern times are performed by a number of municipal officers in different spheres. They compared him with various officers of the cities operating in European countries, such as “perfect of Police”, “Police officer magistrate”, \textsuperscript{45} “Lieutenant of Police”\textsuperscript{46} “Justice of the peace”\textsuperscript{47} and the “sheriff of the city”\textsuperscript{48} The French traveler Thevenot calls him, “in charge of criminal affairs”\textsuperscript{49} In this way it can be said that there were miscellaneous terminologies were used for the kotwal and contemporary authorities, both Indian and European have entrusted the kotwal mainly with the police duties.\textsuperscript{50}

### CHABUTRA-I-KOTWALI

The building possessed by the kotwal for his office and residence was also known as ‘Imarat-i kotwali. The chabutra-i kotwali used to serve various purposes. According to Manrique, the Katchery was also known as Chabutra (a platform of

\textsuperscript{44} M.P. Sing, Town, Market and Mint in the Mughal Empire, Adam Publication, New Delhi, 1985, p.54.
\textsuperscript{45} Petermundy, Vol.ii, p.233.
\textsuperscript{46} Manucci Vol.ii, p.420.
\textsuperscript{47} Ovington, p.137.
\textsuperscript{48} John Fryer, A new Account of East India and Persia Being Nine years travels,1672-1681(ed.) W. Crooke, Vo.i, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1992, p.245
\textsuperscript{49} Thevenot, p.27.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., p.28; Manucci, Vol.ii, p.421.
Chapter-3

It was usually situated in the middle of the town or bordering the main road near the chauk (cross-road).\(^{52}\) It was generally a government building, but was sometimes also rented from private persons. It continued the Chabutra a raised platform in front;\(^{53}\) the bandikhana (prison) and a few store rooms used for keeping temporally the mahsul (excise duty, toll, custom duty, tax) collected at the Chabutra, the stolen and smuggled goods brought to the market for sale and intestate property and unclaimed articles found on the road but seized by the men of kotwal.\(^{54}\)

His service was not free as a safeguard to the inhabitants of the town, he had his officials from among the local service gentry to assess and realize a ‘protection cess from the dwellers and shop-keepers. These cesses were known as rasum-i Kotwali. In Ahmadabad, taxes or mahsul collected from the betel leaf market was attached to the chabutara (kotwal’s office).\(^{55}\) In addition to the legal taxes and jurmana (fines) collected at the chabutara-i kotwali, a large number of cesses used to be exacted in the town by the city kotwal, when carts loaded with grain or other articles were due to leave this city, his officials used to take Rs. 2% load (sari-i araba) at chabutara-i kotwali under the name of chhati.\(^{56}\) In addition, he took money from offenders and criminals in the form of jurmana (penalty). The other important taxes that he realized including road toll (rahdari), tarazukashi (a tax on stamping weight and measures). The cesses collected in the Kotwali constituted a separate fiscal unit in Surat and Cambay, which was called Mahal-i Chabutrai-i Kotwali.

The realization from these cesses was by no means insignificant. In one fiscal year alone, in the early 18\(^{th}\) century, the income from mahal-i Kotwali in Cambay was more than 7,000 rupees. The kotwal organized a group of large number of local experts for the evaluation and realization of cesses. For this work he had his own


\(^{52}\) Thevenot, p.12.

\(^{53}\) Ibid.

\(^{54}\) Town ,Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire, op.cit.,P.54.

\(^{55}\) Mirat (suppl.) p.183.

\(^{56}\) M.S. Commissariat, *Mandelslo`s Travels in Western India* (A.D.1638-1639), London, 1931, pp.1415.

\(^{57}\) The transit duties were levied on all merchandise that passed through the country and also levied on all goods sold in the markets. This was to be paid to the officer who was authorized by the emperor to collect it for moving on the imperial highways. In the reign of Aurangzeb, in 1679, the duty of realizing rahdari from Allahabad to Benares was assigned by Syid Yaqub in place of Saiyid Razi. See, Surendra Nath Sinha, *Subah of Allahabad under the Great Mughals*(1550-1707)- A Political Administrative and Economic Study, Gitanjali Publishing House, New Delhi, First Published 1974, Second Impression 1983,p.165.
Mushrifs (treasurers, revenue secretary) Amins, Karroris (revenue collectors) and Tahwildars (cashiers and account keepers). These petty officers were recruited from the local service gentry, were the safeguard of the kotwal's authority.

After attending the court of justice, the kotwal mostly used to sit during the day at the chabutra; and it was from here that he discharged his principal duties and was attended by a large number of peons (piyadas) and horsemen, armed with swords, lances, bows and arrows, fetters and lashes, iron rods and whips. When a man was brought under arrest to the chabutra by his men or revenue collectors or on allegation by a petitioner, the kotwal personally inquired into his case. If he was innocent, the kotwal could not to keep him in his custody for a long duration, and would release him without delay. If someone had a legal outfit against him, the kotwal was to advise him to opt for a court of justice. If there was any complaint of the khalisa (imperial revenue department) against him, the instructions to the kotwal were to report the fact to the subahdar, and to take a sanad (an undersigned seal of ruling authority) from him and then to act accordingly. Till then, the accused was kept in the custody. If anybody was sent by the Qazi for detention, the man was kept in custody on obtaining a signed order of the Qazi. If the qazi fixed a date for his trial, the kotwal was to send the man, after the expiry of that period, to the qazi’s court; and if the trail in his case was not over or was postponed, it was the kotwal’s responsibility to send and bring back the under-trial detune every day until his case was decided. The kotwal was bound to obey the written and sealed orders of the Qazi and attended his court regularly. The kotwal was not permitted to interfere in matters relating to the Shariat (The law of God; the supplementary laws given by Muhammad).

At the chabutra, the kotwal had to spend a very busy day. There were no fix hours of duty, so he had to be on duty round the clock. In the morning, and also in the evening he was regularly visited by the Mir-i mahalla, the spy, the watchmen and the sweepers from every mahalla and market places to communicate to him news of all

58 A confidential agent, a trustee, employed either in the revenue department to take charge of an estate and collect the revenue an account of government., H.H.Wilson, A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms and of useful words occurring in official documents relating to the Administration of the Government of British India, Compiled and Published under the authority of Honoroble the court of Director of East India Company, London, 1855, p.23.
60 Mirat (suppl.), p.178; Ovington, p.137.
61 Town ,Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire, op.cit., pp.55-56.
that had happened the previous night and the day just passed, this shows he used to remain up to date through all these channels. After receiving the reports from the above mentioned and giving those necessary instructions the kotwal used to inspect the bandikhana (imprisonment), where those found innocent by him were to be released immediately and the guilty heavily guarded.

Several kinds of punishments used to be inflicted upon the guilty at the chabutra-i kotwali in the presence of the kotwal. The nature of punishment inflicted on the evil-doers was very harsh. Evil-doers, particularly thieves and judges who had been unmindful of their position by allowing themselves to be corrupted, were punished with extreme rigidity and severity. Memorials of such evil deeds and their punishment were put up on bronze plates. Tavernier in Dacca has mentioned the skull pillars made of those who perpetrated robbery on high roads. The common forms of punishment were imprisonment, fine, hanging, beheading, spitting, impaling and throwing the convicted to elephants or other ferocious beasts. There were public places called Bandikhana in big towns. Shihabuddin Talish says that the plaintiff and the defended were kept in prison until the decision of their case. The accused persons were sometimes released on bail, it could be seen in the case of Manrique and his party who were released on bail offered by a Muslim merchant of Midnapur.

The kotwal should check the number of persons in the prison and ascertain answers of the charges against them. Then he should report to his official superior the cases of those prisoners whom he considers innocent and secure their liberation. In the case of the guilty persons who could pay, he could take orders for reacting suitable fines from them and then release them. In the case of penniless prisoners the kotwal should report and take action as commanded. A statement of all the cases of those deserving to be kept in prison should be sent to the officers of Canon Law, and the orders passed by the latter over their signatures should be carried out by the kotwal. In the case of those deserving death, the kotwal should, through proper officers, freely state their cases to the judge on the day of trial, receive the Qazi’s signed sentence of death and execute the sentence.

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62 Shaista Khan in Bengal, J.N. Sarkar, JASB, 1906, p.266.
64 Mughal Administration,op.cit., p.93-94.
In the big cities the *chabutra-i kotwali* constituted a separate *mahal*, and the taxes or *mahsul* collected there together with that of a number of *mahals* (collectively known as *mahalat-i sa’ir*) formed part of the entire *jama dami* of the city. In the small towns, on the other hand, the taxes (*sa’ir jihat*) levied were collected only at *chabutra-i kotwali*. In large towns such as Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Burhanpapur and others, a duty called *pandari* was levied on all articles of food and drink brought in from outside for sale.

The ground of such evidence, at which dismissal, transfer, reduction in *mansab* and post of the *kotwal* might occur when he would fail to discharge his duties properly, complaint by the residents of the town against the officials, oppressiveness, abuse of authority, taking bribes and extracting money through unauthorized levies, and finally disobedience or negligence shown to government orders. The *kotwal* may, in one important aspect of his office, be called the head of police. His main responsibility was that of the watch and ward of the town and its peripheries.

**TABLE: 3 List of kotwal of various towns in the Mughal Emperors’ reigns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KOTWAL</th>
<th>MANSAB (RANK)</th>
<th>TOWN</th>
<th>REIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ihtiman Khan</td>
<td>600/200</td>
<td>Agra</td>
<td>Aurangzeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayyid Bahuwa</td>
<td>1,000/600</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Jahangir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarandaz Khan</td>
<td>1,000/600</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Shahjahan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baqi Khan</td>
<td>600/450</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Aurangzeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pahalwan Kalgaz*</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>Akbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadiq Khan</td>
<td>400/400</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jahangir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aqil Khan</td>
<td>100/100</td>
<td>Multan</td>
<td>Aurangzeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niaz Muhammad(1692)†</td>
<td>200 zat</td>
<td>Benares</td>
<td>Aurangzeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatehullah Khan(1696) †</td>
<td>1,500 Zat</td>
<td>Benares</td>
<td>Aurangzeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogi Beg(1702) †</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>Benares</td>
<td>Aurangzeb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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65 Mirat (suppl.), p.180-84.
66 *Town, Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire*, op.cit., P.64.
The duties of the kotwal were as varied as his vast power. He was the governor’s “eye and ears” and designated protector of the city. For a successful performance of his duty the kotwal is firstly advised in the firman to make himself easily accessible to all without the intervention of a mediator, so that miscreant may be soon punished and grievances redressed without delay. Then he is advised to keep a detailed register of all the people in the town, ward by ward, to keep spies to report him about every person coming in or going out, and about all occurrences, to keep full control over the serais, noting down the names and details of the merchants and travelers. For this purpose he was asked to divide the whole town into wards and appointed a headman for each ward who would be answerable.

For the upholding of law and order and other duties, the kotwal was assisted by a large staff of his own, consisting of a deputy, a number of horsemen, infantry and sentries. The other officials who had administrative responsibility to maintain law and order around the town or had some role to play in the internal administration of the town were the Qazi, faujdar, thanadar, qiladar, mubatsib, waqa-i navis, khufia navis and harkara.(the last three comes under the spy department).

**QAZI**

The judicial and the religious unit were often mutual. All through the Mughal rule the civil and the criminal laws were not codified. The mufti used to give his opinion about the merit of the cases. The civil cases were decided by the qazi, and he was expected to settle to civil disputes, claims of inherited and disputed properties.

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† S.N.Sinha, *Subah of Allahabad under the Mughals* (1580-1707) New Delhi, 1974, p.103
† † Ibid.
† † Ibid.

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67 Thevenot, p.27; Manucci, Vol.ii, p.421
He was expected to write to decrees, to conduct prayers and religious meetings and made efforts to divert the attention of the people to make them religious. Thus he was acting like a civil judge, a registrar and the priest of his area. The qazi held an important and influential position in society. Akbar had appointed Hindu judges in place of the qazis to decide the civil cases of the Hindus. Sadr (A chief commissioner)“dealt with the gifts, endowments, annuities granted to the religious men, poets, scholars, astronomers, widow, poor men, orphans, judicial officers and the like”69 He was appointed on the basis of his learning and attainments in the field of theology. He enjoyed the respect and confidence of the Muslim masses.

The qazis were not only limited to cities but they also appointed in smaller units, paragnah’s (subdivision of a district) villages.70 The qazi for the province and the towns were appointed by the sadr-us sudur(controller of religious endowments and charitable grants) and received their sanad from the office of the sadr. The city qazi, besides enjoying a personal mansab (rank, dignity) and emoluments, kept 20 horses. The town qazi received daily allowances in cash and also held land for service.71

Some time the city qazi held more than one post. In 1672 A.D., Mohammad Sharif was both qazi and mutahsib of the city. The qazi of Ahmadabad had many wide judicial powers in his jurisdiction. All the serious criminal cases like, theft, murder robbery and rebellion etc were decided by him. In civil cases his jurisdiction was extended to inheritance disposal of stolen property, marriage with non Muslims etc. He was also the custodian of unclaimed property and had the responsibility for the return of such property to the genuine owner if any. Qazi was also given responsibility of settle mercantile cases also like that of merchants and weavers.72

He was to see whether taxes on various commodities were collected according to rules or not, besides dealing cases related to forged coins and their circulation.73 When jiziya, a capitation tax, was reimposed in 1679 A.D. by Aurangzeb its collection was also assigned to the qazi. In religious sphere, monetary help was

71 Ram Prasad Khosla, Mughal Kingship and Nobility, Idarah-i Adabiyyat-i Delhi, reprint,1976, pp.143-144.
72 EFI (1622-23), p.40.
provided to new converts with his consent. He was also to look after the proper collection of *zakat* (alms given according to Muhammadan law, by way of purifying or securing a blessing to the rest of one’s possessions) from Muslims. The *Qazi* was involved in different kinds of charity work taken by the state. On his certificate, funeral rites of travelers, unclaimed corpses of poor man and other who die intestate were made, expenses of which were met with from the *baitulmal* “The House of Property”. The public treasury of a Muslim state, which the ruler is not allowed using for his personal expenses, but only for the public welfare. In consequences of this custody of *baitulmal* of Ahmadabad was entrusted to Abul Farah Khan, *qazi* of the place. From *baitulmal*, clothes and blankets were provided to poor prisoners and people of the city. The *qazi’s* staff at Ahmadabad included petty officials like *mufti*, *mushrif* (account keeper of paragna level), *wakil-i sharai*, *manusakhanavis*. The *qazi* was superior to the *kotwal* in the hierarchy as well as in judicial authority.

**FAUJDA**

*Faujdars* were appointed with the help the *Subahdar* (governor of province). They were put in charge of important sub divisions of the province known as *Sarkar* (a district comprising several *paragna*), where he look after the administration. Their appointment and dismissal was in the hands of the *Subahdar*. They were commanders of the provincial troops. They helped the *Subahdar* to maintain law and order in the country and punish the rebellious *zamindars*. They were also to help the *Amils* (revenue collector) in their work of revenue collection. According to Jadunath Sarkar, “The *Faujdar* was only the commander of a military force stationed in the country to put down smaller rebellions, disperse or arrest robber-gangs, take cognizance of all violent crimes, and make demonstrations of force to over-awe opposition to the revenue authorities or the criminal judge or the censor.”

The *faujdar* was reckoned among the important officials in the administrative apparatus. Although he was usually subordinate to the provincial governors but he could have direct communication with the Imperial court. He was appointed by the

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74 The officer who expounds the law, he assists the Qazi or judge and supplies him with *fatwas*, or decisions. He must be learned Quran and Hadis and in the Muslim works of law., Dictionary of Islam, p.380.  
75 *Mirat* (suppl.), p.74.  
77 *Mughal Administration*, op.cit.,p. 47
Emperor through the firman-i sabati. According to the Ain, he was assigned pertaining to three branches of administration, viz. revenue, police and military. On the revenue side he was only indirectly involved, i.e. he was to assist the amalguzar (revenue collector) in the realization of revenue from disobedient revenue payers. His police duty was to guard the area under his jurisdiction and to inspect the local militia in order to keep it well equipped.

As faujdar his main function was to ensure law and order and to prevent thefts and other crimes within his jurisdiction. He was appointed by Nazim of suba. For the performance of his duties he was mostly dependent on Sahbandis (auxiliary forces). He had control over police or watch station called and chaukis (a station of police, of custom of toll, a guard’s post) within his jurisdiction. He was also responsible for the collection of peshkash (a present or offering to the ruling power on assignment of revenue or on renewal of grant or the like) from zamindar and revenue from desais (attributed to Hindus who were feudal lords and revenue collectors) of the area within his charge.

According to the Bahar-i Azam, the faujdar was “the hakim, outside the city, like the kotwal inside the city.” Another duty of the faujdar was to patrol the highways leading to and from the cities. They were repeatedly instructed to see that the banjaras (unstable merchants) and merchants were neither robbed, nor illegal exactions charged from them, while they were on their way to supply grain and other commodities to the city. Failure in this field led to transfers, and even dismissals of faujdars. We come across many occasions when the faujdars were transferred or dismissed and their mansab reduced or post downgraded if they failed to check thefts and dacoities or remained inactive or did not take proper preventive action. The faujdar also had the obligation to defend the town in case of an assault or night attack by rebellious elements. Aurangzeb never protected from punishment such officers who became either disobedient or oppressive. In 1682 A.D. Amir Khan, the ex-faujdar of Benares, became domineering and collected seventeen thousand rupees

78 Mirat (suppl.), p.169.
79 Ibid., p.169.
80 Ibid., pp.169-70.
81 Subah of Allahabad under the great Mughals, op.cit.,p.166.
82 Cf., M.P.Singh, Towns, Markets, Mints, And Ports In Mughal Empire,(1556-1707), p.74
83 Ovington, p.139; Early Travels in India, p.157.
illegitimately from the merchants of Benares, therefore, Aurangzeb took a stern action and dismissed him from service.\textsuperscript{84}

The court held by the faujdar was known as \textit{kacheri-i faujdari, kachehri-i adalat} and \textit{kachehri-i faujdari-o amin}, where the complaints of the city people used to be sent. In towns where subahdars did not hold their courts, the \textit{kachehri-i faujdar} used to be held. The \textit{faujdar} heard both kinds of cases, criminal (\textit{faujdari}) and revenue (\textit{diwani})\textsuperscript{85}. But in deciding cases he was not supposed to go against the rules of the \textit{shariat}; and he had to be in constant consultation with the \textit{qazi, mufti} and \textit{mir-i adl} (superintend of courts of justice). There are also instances of the \textit{faujdar} and \textit{qazi} jointly holding court.

It was also the duty of the \textit{faujdar} to see that his subordinates and other officials did not molest or oppress the people. Besides keeping an eye on the work of the Amin, Mutasaddi, Amil, karori, Zamindar, Qanungo and Chaudhri on the revenue side, he was also to supervise the work of the Kotwal, Thanadar, Rahdar and local \textit{Waqa-i navis, Sawanih-nigar} and Harkara. The \textit{faujdars} never hesitated in misusing their power or extracting money through illegal ways whenever they got an opportunity. In 1632 A.D. Peter Mundy had to bribe the \textit{faujdar} of Banares when all his carts were confiscated by him.\textsuperscript{86} To sum up, the \textit{faujdar} was an important local officer and it was through him that law and order was maintained effectively. One of the important duties of the \textit{faujdar} was to see that imperial treasury should pass through his territories safely. Regarding his tenure of office nothing can be said definitely. Local conditions and efficiency of the \textit{faujdar} concerned played a great part in determining his stay at a particular place. Sometime he was transferred after a few months and sometimes he continued at one place for a couple of years.\textsuperscript{87}

**Thana and Thanedar**

\textit{Thana} means an enclosed quarter or a fort where cavalry, infantry, musketeers and cross-bow men were posted for the preservation of order, so that the travelers and the residents might live peacefully and undisturbed by evildoers and robbers.\textsuperscript{88} The

\begin{footnotes}
\item[84] \textit{Subah of Allahabad under the great Mughals}, op.cit., p.100.
\item[85] \textit{EFI} (1678-84), p.355.
\item[86] PeterMundy, Vol.ii, p.122.
\item[87] \textit{Subah of Allahabad under the great Mughals}, op.cit., p.102.
\item[88] \textit{Mirit} (suppl.), p.170
\end{footnotes}
head of the thana was called thanedar, who was appointed by the emperor at the recommendation of the nazim and diwan (related to revenue administration of the province),\textsuperscript{89} but in the jagirs, the jagirdars had their own agents appointed as thanedars. A particular faujdari area had numeral thanas for the purpose of maintain peace and order. Akbar possibly for the first time stressed the need for a proper network of thanas which were under the power of a thanedar who maintained a number of sawars and soldiers.\textsuperscript{90} The thanedar was an immediate subordinate of the faujdar and carried out his orders. His mansab varied in accordance with the strategic situation of the place of appointment, personality and the amount of work. The establishment of thanas around the city had great significance for the defense of the city and for the security of roads leading to and from the city. Normally a thanedar was not much concerned with the internal administration of the town, but at times he could act as an important local official if called upon to interfere in the affairs of the town in certain situation.

**QILA AND QILADAR**

We have seen that every large town tended to have a qila (fort). The main purpose of the forts throughout the empire was to be places of refuge in hours of suffering, and served store-house for corn, treasures and escheated property;\textsuperscript{91} as watch-station against hostile elements of the area, to serve as headquarters for supervising official postal station and thanas to be high security prison\textsuperscript{92} and above all for use in defense of the town against an enemy. The commandant of the fort was known as qiladar who was appointed directly from the Imperial court.\textsuperscript{93} He was independent of the governor, the faujdar or the mutasaddi (in case of Surat)\textsuperscript{94}. The qiladar usually had under his command a sizeable garrison consisting of cavalry, infantry, musketeers, racketeers, cannonries, laborers and porters. He ranked among the high officials and his mansab varied in accordance with the importance of the fort.

\textsuperscript{89} Mirat (suppl.), p.189.
\textsuperscript{90} Subah of Allahabad under the great Mughals, op.cit., p.100.
\textsuperscript{91} Early travels in India, p.100.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.,pp.144-45, 239.
\textsuperscript{93} Ovington, p.130-31.
\textsuperscript{94} Thomas Best, The Voyage of the Thomas Best to the east Indies 1612-14,(ed.) William Foster, Munshiram Manoharlal, Publichers, Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1997. p.28. & 28n.
Some fortresses were closest to towns to some extent in their own right, but the duties of the qiladar did not normally extend beyond the fortress wall. The post of qiladar was sometimes combined with that of the subedar. In 1684 A.D., the qiledari of the subah of Allahabad was assigned to the subedar Mohtashim Khan. In the same way the duty of collecting rahdari (collected at inland station upon grain and other articles, levied formally by the government) could also be entrusted to a subedar; in 1685 A.D., Mohtashim Khan, the then subedar, was given the duties of collecting rahdari at Allahabad. It is interesting to note that he was the subedar of Allahabad, qiledar of the fort of Allahabad and also collector of rahdari at Allahabad, thus it can be said that more than one post could be commanded by one person at once.

In the administration of the town the qiladar did not directly come into the picture. However, when the faujdar or the mutasaddi or whosoever held authority over the city was not in the city or was under orders of transfer, the qiladar was asked to officiate in his stead and to look after the entire general administration of the town. Officially, the main duties assigned to the qiladar were, to keep his garrison in a state of readiness and well equipped, strengthen the fort and hold provisions in store sufficient for a long period, guard the public treasures kept close watch over the lawless elements, look after the prisoners, guard the public treasures kept therein and finally to communicate the available local news directly to the imperial headquarters.

**MUHTASIB**

The officer appointed to guard public morals was known as muhtasib. As a senior official, muhtasib, looked after the weight and measures and ensured that the things were available in the market at reasonable prices. Muhatasib combined both secular as well as religious duties and was also responsible to see the proper regulation of the market and cleanliness of the city. As regards to his religious duties,

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95 *Town and Cities in Mughal India*, Vol.1, p.449.
96 *Subah of Allahabad under the Great Mughals*, op.cit., p.90.
98 *Early Travels in India*, p.100.
he had to ensure that the interests of Islam were protected and all the tenets of faith sincerely carried out by the believers. The moral principles were advocated to the public through this office alone. He tried to prevent the use of wine, hemp and other intoxicants. He also tried to prevent the gambling and other types of evils. He also ensured that the Muslim carried out prayers five times a day in accordance with the religious laws, and those who failed to abide of these principles were punished by the *muhtasib*. The *muhtasib* with all his duty of police and religious censorship existed both at the capital and in the provinces.

There are stray references to the office of *muhtasib* before Aurangzeb’s time, but his actual duties are not specified. The censorship of public morals and supervision of markets were then exercised by the *qazi* and the *kotwals*. In 1659 A.D., however, the office of *muhtasib* was created on a systematic basis with the object of enforcing conformity with the *shariat*. The *muhtasibs* were not appointed in cities and towns through royal *sanads* but on the recommendation of the *sadr*. According to the *Mirat*, the *zat* (personal standing) rank of the *muhtasib* of Ahmadabad was 250 and he also had 10 *sawars* at his disposal. The *nazims* of the provinces through a royal order were given strict instructions to provide further military assistance to the *muhtasibs*, whenever they needed it. The *muhtasibs* were paid both in cash and land grants varying from place to place.

From the records of the period, it appears that the *muhtasib* had to perform two kinds of duties, religious and secular. The order of appointment of a *muhtasib* contained the following injections, “to those Muslims, who do not know the rules of worship according to the true faith and Islamic conduct or ceremonies, he was responsible to give them (Muslims) instruction in these matters. If they plead incapability, warning or punish them…… give good counsel and warning to those who violate the *Quranic* precepts.” He was also expected to prohibit the use, sale and purchase of intoxicating drinks, and forbid prostitutes from residing in cities.

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100 *The Mughal Administration*, op.cit., p.125.
101 Ibid., p.129.
102 *Town, Market and Mint in the Mughal Empire*, op.cit., p.84-85.
103 *Mirat* (suppl.), p.174.
104 Ibid.
105 Ibid., pp.249-50.
106 Ibid., p.174.
107 *Mirat* (suppl.),pp.80-81.
He also had to exercise the functions of mutawalli\textsuperscript{109} (caretaker, Superintendent of trustee of a religious or charitable foundation) of mosques in the town and answerable to the emperor about the condition and necessities of mosques.

The secular duties of muhtasib were to make obligatory the standard weights and measures in the market, prohibit the circulation of forged coins and under-weight coins replaced by pure ones, collect information about the rate and weights in use in the shops of butchers, grain-dealers and other shop-keepers and get the schedule of rates settled at the chabutra-i kotwali, and finally issue orders to traders to show him the commodities brought from outside to city for sale and to report to him the actual quantity of commodities which had bought and sold. Under the sovereignty of Aurangzeb, the muhtasib became a very important official in town administration but his authority was limited by that of the kotwal because he could not imprison, detain or coerce anyone without the permission of the faujdar.

\textbf{INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT}

The channels through which the central government obtained news of the whole empire were the waqa-i navis, the sawanih-nigar, the khufia-navis and the harkaras.\textsuperscript{110} The first three used to send written reports while, the last one, who was considered the most truth worthy among all the reporters, was basically a courier, who brought oral reports, and at times written information.\textsuperscript{111} The delivery time of news by above functionaries was also set by the government i.e. the waqa’i was sent once a week,\textsuperscript{112} he was the source of king’s public intelligence, and was employed for giving a weekly account from Surat to the court at Delhi, “of all occurrences here of truth and moment.”\textsuperscript{113} This is confirmed by Captain Hawkins’ case. Hawkins, the English merchant, had been ill treated at Surat. When he made a complaint, he was surprised to know that the emperor had already received a full report of the matter and already taken action against the guilty officer.\textsuperscript{114} Sawanih was responsible to sending report,


\textsuperscript{110} Waqa’i-navis, sawanih-nigar or suwanih-navis and harkara collectively called akhbar-navis , Mirat (suppl.) p.177.

\textsuperscript{111} Mirat, (suppl.), p.175.

\textsuperscript{112} Mughal Administration,op. cit., p.61.

\textsuperscript{113} Ovington, p.137.

\textsuperscript{114} Hawkins’ voyages during the reign of Henry Viii, Queen Elizabeth, and James(ed.) Clements E.
twice a month and the news of the harkara once a month. However, urgent matters or burning news was required to be reported without delay. The waqai’ navis was appointed by the order of the emperor, through a royal sanad sometimes bearing the seal of the wazir. The sawa’ih- nigar was appointed through the instrumentally of the imperial darogha-i dak. The harkars were appointed by the chief superintendent of harkaras (darogha-i harkaraha-i kull). These intelligence officers and their agents were posted throughout the Empire, at the Imperial capital, headquarters of the Subah, sarkars and paragnas, ports, forts, army camps, courts of princes, mansions of nobles, various courts of justice, the chabutra-i kotwali and market places. The news writers were expected to send only genuine report based on trustworthy sources. The reports based on rumor were dejected while the news writers were rewarded with various titles for authentic reporting.

Mode of Punishment by Executive Officers

In Mughal India provincial governor and other executive officers were not allowed to inflict capital punishment in an arbitrary manner. A firman of Akbar in 1582 A.D. forbade the provincial government to award death punishment without his permission. Thevenot observed that no civil or criminal judge was authorized to put any offender to death, that power was reserved by the king to himself. The case of a criminal deserving death was referred to the king through a special messenger and the punishment was executed only on receipt of his confirmation. Death penalty could be inflicted by hanging, beheading and impaling and execution could also take place by throwing a man down from the roof. Other forms of punishment were mutilation, flogging banishment, imprisonment, fines and confiscations, forfeiture of rank and title, forbidding the court and dismissals. The kotwal was to award suitable punishment on those who were found guilty of brewing, drinking and selling wine. If

Markham, Hakluyt Society, London, 1878, pp.400-401.
Mirat, (suppl.),175.
Ibid, p.177.
The Mughal Administration op.cit., p.126.
Thevenot, p.27.
Thevenot, p.27.
Early Travels in India, p.305-06.
any person earned money in an illegal manner the kotwal was to report the matter to the emperor.\textsuperscript{124}

We should not hesitate to term the Mughal period as the golden age of the urban culture. Evolution of the cities across the country can be attributed to the political stability as well as the establishment of a homogenous administrative pattern in that era. In Mughal hierarchical order, the kotwal was junior to both the faujdar and qiladar and his responsibilities also were quite distinct. Nevertheless, in Mughal administrative setup all the three were required to work in close cooperation and with mutual help whenever there was danger to the peace and security of the city and qila. The officials related to town administration played a remarkable role to run the administration. Although the kotwal was the head of the town administration, but with the whole analysis we can conclude that without being assisted by other officers the administration of towns and cities could not run in a proper way.

\textsuperscript{124} Crime and Punishment in Mughal India, op.cit., p.40.
CHAPTER -4

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF PORT AND ITS COMPARISON IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF TOWN ADMINISTRATION

The port has its administrative structure totally different from the ordinary towns in various perspectives. For the administrative workability ports were regarded as separate unit and were in the proto independent of the provincial unit. There were so many officers related with the port administration, like mutasaddi, shahbandar, qazi, darogha (headman) of mint and the treasure officers were all appointed by the Emperor himself. Often the mutasaddi was the darogha of the mint apart from these officers, there were reporters, peons, superintendent of different market, for example the superintendent of Arab and Iraq horses, salt market, mint, custom etc. The entire higher staff of the port was appointed directly from headquarters, under the orders and seals of the chief diwan (financial representative of government), the commander of artillery (mir –i atish), the chief sadr, the chief steward and the postmaster general of the empire.\(^1\) Judicial department of the port was subjected directly to the provincial court.\(^2\)

The study of port administration is totally based on the Persian work Mirat-i Ahmadi of Ali Muhammad khan, and European travelers’ account. The port of Surat could be considered as the tremendous example of the government of a first class port. Description of all the port officers and various departments related to port administration is given below:

**MUTASADDI**

The port administration was independent of the provincial administration. The governor of the port was called mutasaddi, who was directly appointed by the Emperor. The mutasaddi collected taxes on merchandise and maintained a custom house who also supervised the mint house at the port. Under administrative structure

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that was evolved under Mughals, mutasaddi (governor) was the chief executive officer at port city of Surat.³ In Persian sources, incharge of Surat port was termed as hakim, nazim and mutasaddi.⁴ But, the term mutasaddi for the governor of Surat became more popular with the time. In the English records, this important officer was designated as Governor.⁵ He used to be the high official appointed directly from the imperial court through a sanad of the diwan-i Ala.⁶ The independent chief port administrator, known as mutasaddi, was appointed to take care of all the commercial activities there. For the appointment of mutasaddi, it was desired that the man to be selected should have the perfect knowledge of judging the qualities of horses and jewels, for example Ali Akbar was a merchant from Isfahan (Iran’s third largest city after Tehran and Mashhad), who came to India and appointed as a mutasaddi of Surat and Cambay, he had good knowledge of judging horses and jewels.⁷ This shows that preference was given to only those people for this post who had the best knowledge, there was no matter whether the person related to any country. Their selection was generally from among the umrahs (nobles, plural of Amirs) who held to be titular lords of the Mughal Empire.⁸ The direct appointment of mutasaddi from the imperial headquarters implied that in theory he was to be independent of Subedar and other provincial officers, but he was a functionary under a system of checks and balances. First of all the Subedar enjoyed certain power over him, for example in 1672 A.D., the merchant of Surat headed by Mirza Muazzam took their petition to subedar, Muhammad Amin Khan, complaining against the oppression of the mutasaddi (Ghiyasuddin Khan) who was subsequently removed from office.⁹

Mutasaddi held very high position with great tasks. Some time for better administration, the smaller ports were combined with single unit and they were supervised by single authority. When Thomas Roe, the first ambassador of England

⁵ The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-19 (ed.) W. Foster, Oxford University Press, London, 1926, pp.27,42,52,60
⁷ Mirat., Vol.i, p.222
accredited to India in Jahangir’s reign, reached at Surat in 1615A.D. found that Muqarrab Khan was the mutasaddi (governor) of both Surat and Cambay,\(^\text{10}\) this indicates that the mutasaddi could take possession of two or more ports at a time, i.e. the port of Gogha and Kandhar were entrusted to one person.\(^\text{11}\) Administratively Gogha was usually controlled from Cambay. Like all other port-cities, independent chief port administrators, known as mutasaddis, were appointed to take care of all the commercial activities there. Abul Fazl’s statement in the Ain-i Akbari in regard to Gogha and its being the dependency on Cambay (Khambayat/Kambhayat) is doubtful. Sometimes, mutasaddis administered their place of posting through deputies (na’ibs). When Inayat Khan was selected governor of Surat and Cambay in 1663A.D. he governed both places through his deputies,\(^\text{12}\) but deputy had no authority to permit any person to do business in a port without the prior approval of the mutasaddi.\(^\text{13}\) When we see that more than one ports under the responsibility of mutasaddi, in that case most probably, he did so with the help of deputy.

In the port administration several offices were entrusted with a single person but all of them were under the control of mutasaddi of a port.\(^\text{14}\) His status was same as that of a provincial governor and he was directly responsible to the court for his activities. He had complete control over the fiscal administration of the port. His major role in the administration was collection of custom from the Mahal Furza-o Khushki and the charges of harbor, anchorage markets, mint, ship repairing and ship building and finally the responsibility to defend the port from land and sea.\(^\text{15}\) Mutasaddi of Surat had additional duty to look after the collection of customs at Broach.\(^\text{16}\) The mutasaddi of Surat was also responsible for the collection of land revenue of the parganas around port which were used to be under his jurisdiction. Moreover he was all in all in the custom house of a port and no one could enter in the custom house without his prior permission. None of the ship could enter or leave the


\(^{11}\) Mirat (supplement), p.201.


\(^{13}\) Port Towns In Medieval India (1605-1707), op.cit., p.196

\(^{14}\) Mirat (suppl.), p.233

\(^{15}\) Town, Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire,1556-1707,op.cit; p.195

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harbor, load and unload cargo without his permission.\textsuperscript{17} He was also entrusted with all the registers and accounts of what had been imported at Surat and he sent those copies to the court from time to time.\textsuperscript{18} Goods imported by the sea could not be carried into the country unless the king’s seal was affixed on it and was duly passed as well as the custom paid in the custom house.\textsuperscript{19}

According to Mirat, the mutasaddi at Surat and Cambay, besides the other related offices, he held the office of the faujdar and thanedar around the ports,\textsuperscript{20} and the Diwani (the office of Diwan) of the Sarkar of Surat was also under the Mutasaddi.\textsuperscript{21} This shows that he acted both as an Amil and faujdar at the same time, although he had to perform other administrative duties, like a civil judge and superintendent of the mint.

For the safety purpose of the port and town he maintained strong military contingents, strengthened fortification and sometime went out to defend the other ports lying within his jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{22} He was expected to patrolling the coastal areas and kept attentive eyes on the sea up to two leagues beyond the harbor, which lay within his jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{23} From the protection prospective, we find that, Mughal did not take any effective measure for the safety of the port from any foreign attack either by land or sea. It could be seen that from the mid seventeenth century several Maratha attack on the port of Surat took place, first in 1664 A.D. and again in 1672 A.D. The Mughal instead of posting a regular army at the port only replaced the mud wall by a brick one. According to Hamilton, throughout Aurangzeb’s reign the country was hardly ever free from a state of war and although the boundaries of his Empire were extended to a great extent hitherto his territory was continually invaded and Surat was more than once plundered.\textsuperscript{24} Mughal had not their own navy and because of that they

\textsuperscript{17}EFI (1630-33), Introduction, pp.xxv,157.
\textsuperscript{19}Jean de Thevenot and John Francis Careri, Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, ed. Surendranath Sen., New Delhi, 1949.p.38.
\textsuperscript{21}Mirat (suppl.), p.30.
\textsuperscript{23}EFI (1678-84), p.343.
were helpless against any attack from sea side. In order to check piracy in the seas, they were bounded to take help from one European nation against the other.

The government mercantile policy was executed through the mutasaddi, who was responsible for important decision and announcement, to make it public by sounding drum and putting posters at walls.\textsuperscript{25} In the matter of other provincial officers it was expected of mutasaddi to work in consultation with the provincial authorities. Shahjahan issued a firman in 1636 A.D. to Hakim Musih-uz-Zaman, governor of Surat after he refused to deliver the rebellious desais, who were under arrest to the agent of Mir Sabir, diwan of Gujarat. The farman ordered Musih-uz-zaman to deliver the prisoners to the diwan, it ordered that Mutasaddi should before settling the revenue (jama) on the villages of the arrested desais consult the diwan of Gujarat.\textsuperscript{26}

The practice of farming out the office of Mutasaddi was important feature of port administration. It is still not clear from evidences that when this practice began. In 1619 A.D., Mirza Ishaq Beg obtained the office of the mutasaddi of Surat on farm, on expiry of the tenure in 1621 A.D. got himself reappointed as he promised to increase the revenue from the port by 2,00,000 mahmudis.\textsuperscript{27} In 1639 A.D, Muiz-ul Mulk (Mir Musa) got charge of Surat on farm (ijara) upon giving two lakhs of rupees more than his predecessor.\textsuperscript{28} Achieving the post by the method of bribery is an indication of corruption. The system of farming out to the highest bidder continued up to 1641 A.D.\textsuperscript{29} which was abolished by Shahjahan, who appointed that official directly from the imperial court\textsuperscript{30}. Hawkins in 1608 A.D. found both Surat and Cambay held under farm.\textsuperscript{31} But in the year 1641 A.D., there was an important change in the administration of Surat port. The farming system was abolished and instead of it salaried officials were appointed to the post of mutasaddi of Surat port. From now a mutasaddi was assisted by a diwan, appointed by the central authority and his special duty was to look after the custom house affairs.

\textsuperscript{25} EFI (1655-60), p.209.
\textsuperscript{27} EFI (1618-21), pp.147, 150,281,320.
\textsuperscript{28} EFI (1637-41),pp.109-10; \textit{Mir’t},Vol.i,p.212.
\textsuperscript{29} EFI (1637-41), pp.xvi,110.
\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Mirat}, Vol.i, p.Introduction xxvii.
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Port Towns In Medieval India} (1605-1707), op.cit., p.201.
The mutasaddi of port was paid either in cash or through jagir (a tract of land, or estate). Hakim Musih-uz-Zaman, who was the mutasaddi of Surat port, had the jagir worth five lakhs of Mahmudis (Rs, 2,00,000). The other mutasaddi, Hafiz Muhammad Nasir of Surat port, was received his cash salary of Rs.80,000. The office of mutasaddi was a great source of authority, where he could get illegal money by misusing his power. It provided sufficient opportunities for private trade. At one place mutasaddi went to the extent of bribing the imperial court and high officials once to get his term extended and then for seeking reappointment. By bribing Mir Musa succeeded twice, once he got his term extended. It seems mutasaddi played his duties honestly but corruption was not untouched with him, whenever he got chance, took full profit from it.

The tenure of mutasaddis was not permanent. They could be dismissed or transferred, reduced in mansab or downgraded on the complaint of merchants of the port against misuse of authority, covetousness and tyranny, and finally failure to discharge his duties properly. The tenure of the port holder was rather short and was not hereditary. The post of mutasaddi of Surat is not hereditary and seldom continued for above four or five years to the same person. Usually mutasaddi held the port for three years though there some exceptions.

The post of mutasaddi was based on the gratification of the emperor. In 1656 A.D., when it was felt that Hafiz Muhammad Nasir had failed to perform his duties properly as mutasaddi both of Surat and Cambay, he was recalled. The influence of merchants in the dismissal of the mutasaddi was quite remarkable. There are numerous examples i.e. in 1638 A.D., the imperial court had to remove Hakim Masih-uz Zaman from the governorship (mutasaddi) of Surat and Cambay on the representation of the bania merchants, after he had committed the blunder of imprisoning Virji Vora, an extremely rich and influential merchant of Surat. In 1648 A.D., Ali Akbar lost the charge of Surat and Cambay owing to representation by

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32 EFI (1634-36), Introduction, p.xv.
33 Mirat, Vol. i, p.229.
34 EFI (1630-33), p.193.
37 EFI (1637-41), p. Introduction XVI.
a group of merchants, led by Manohar Das, a jewel merchant, charging with ‘ruining’ \((tabahkari)\) the port \(^{38}\). In 1663 A.D., Mustafa Khan was removed from the governorship of Surat when a delegation of merchants lodged a complaint against his son who the shahbandar, in charge of the customhouse. \(^{39}\) It seems that the post of mutasaddi could be confiscated, not only at the complaints of merchants against his mistakes but also for his kinsmen’s wrong doings while sometimes, corruption and inefficient working led to the dismissal of the mutasaddis. In 1664 A.D., the mutasaddi of Surat saw his mansab reduced as he did not exercise himself in collecting customs at the Surat port and as a result of which loss was incurred by the government in realizing the revenues. \(^{40}\)

**DIWAN**

In port administration, immediately next to the mutasaddi of port, stood the supreme revenue official, the diwan who worked with his own officials, the Desais. \(^{41}\) Like the diwan of suba, besides cooperating and helping mutasaddi, he was to keep a watch on his administration. He was also the head of the revenue department of suba, appointed by the emperor and was an independent officer. He was responsible to supervise the revenue collection in the suba and maintain accounts of all expenditures. The contemporary sources do not furnish much information about the role of Diwan in port administration.

**SHAHBANDAR**

The shahbandar was perhaps the most controversial figure among the Mughal officers, who was a harbor master and custom official at the port. He was also probably appointed by revenue assignee of the port, city and district and had an allowance paid to him out of the total revenue. He too had retinue and some marks of

\(^{38}\) Administration of Gujarat Under the Mughals (A.D.1572-1737), op.cit., p.71.
\(^{39}\) EFI, (1661-64), pp.203-05.
\(^{40}\) Yusuf Husain Khan, Selected Documents of Aurangzeb’s Reign, (1659-1706 A.D.)The central Record Office, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hydaband-Deccan, 1958, p.44.
\(^{41}\) Ashin Das Gupta, Indian Merchants and Decline of Surat, c.1700-50, Wiesbadan,1979, p.25.
honor according to his post. In the bureaucratic hierarchy, he was just after the governor or mutasaddi. There are many terms used by the European travelers for him, such as darogha (of the customhouse), shahbandar and customer. As far as his duty is concerned, he had full control over all the matters related to the custom, in the absence of mutasaddi. The chief customs officer or shahbandar usually functioned under the mutasaddi of the port. Haji Muhammad Zahid Beg was the holder of the post of shahbandar between 1629 and 1669 A.D. It was the prudence of the shahbandar to value the goods, which were presented before him for export or import at the customs house. He was responsible for checking goods and searching passengers, estimation of the value of commodities at the market rate and collecting the custom excise. The goods already checked could not be discharge without stamped with the king’s seal. It was his duty to arrange a daily record of the custom house, in which the information were written in the detail about goods, passengers, income and expenditure which had to be submit to the mutasaddi. All merchants, traders or travelers had their first encounter with the staff of the shahbandar on landing in India. His duties were not pleasant but necessary because he was an officer answerable for the care and safeguarding of the port. Although he had been delegated power but could not act freely, for example without the consent of the mutasaddi, he could not allow any foreign ship to enter the harbor, to load and unload cargo or any stranger. Shahbandar was not a visible figure in the city and port. He appears to have been in charge of shipping or the roads and the loading and unloading of goods and the custom duties levied on them on behalf of the state.

Shahbandar was generally a close relative of the mutasaddi. In 1663 A.D., Mustafa Khan was the mutasaddi of Surat and his son was the shahbandar of that port. Mustafa was replaced by Inayat Khan when a delegation of merchants complained against his son and after appointed as new mutasaddi, Inayat Khan

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42 Early Travels in India 1583–1619, p.72.
43 Early Travels in India 1583–1619, p.72; Thevenot, p.38.
44 Thevenot, p. 38.
46 Jean de Thevenot and John Francis Careri, Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, ed. Surendranath Sen., New Delhi, 1949, p.163.
48 Muhammad Abdul Khair Farooque, Road and communication in Maghal India, Idarah-i Adabiyat-i-Delhi, New Delhi, 1977, p.172.
49 Indian Merchants and Decline of Surat, c.1700-50, op.cit., p.25.
50 EFI (1661-64), pp.203-5.
dismissed the whole old staff of the custom house and appointed new men from amongst his relative and favorites.\textsuperscript{51} Sometime the office of custom house was also held by the merchants, for example, Haji Muhammad Zahid Beg, the \textit{shahbandar} of custom house was a renowned merchant of Surat in 1620’s and 1630’s.\textsuperscript{52} Another example of Khwaja Jalaluddin a local merchant of Surat, appointed as \textit{shahbandar} by the English factor in 1627-28A.D.\textsuperscript{53}

\textit{Shahbandar} was also not free from corruption, who misused his power wherever he got any opportunity but also embezzled government money. Itimad Khan was the \textit{naib mutasaddi} of Amanat Khan, who was \textit{mutasaddi} of both Surat and Cambay, was reported to have accomplished many abuses and embezzled Rs.1345, from the revenue of the Goga port and because of that he was removed from the service.\textsuperscript{54} In short, \textit{shahbandar} commanded respect and awe and considered as the “king of the port”. As soon as merchandise arrived at a port, it was taken to the custom house where it was examined, assessed the appropriate duties levied and then released. The goods and personal belongings of ordinary travelers were cleared sooner the commercial merchandise reached at the port. The strictness of the custom officers and \textit{shahbandar}, particularly in Suart was proverbial.

\textbf{MIR BAHRI}

Another officer who played a noteworthy role in the administration of the port was \textit{Mir-i Bahr} (Custom or harbor master). There are records which show that, the Mughals did not attach importance to develop themselves as a sea power, therefore the Mughals had no navy of their own. \textit{Mir Bahr} had the double duty of maintaining a flotilla for combating purposes and for policing the main inland water ways.\textsuperscript{55} With regards to \textit{Mir-bahr}, the \textit{Ain-i Akbari} has a chapter entitled \textit{Ain-i mir bahri}, which is concerned with maritime affairs and custom duties. The term \textit{Mir bahri} must have

\textsuperscript{51} EFI (1661-64), p.205.  
\textsuperscript{52} EFI (1624-29), p.330.  
\textsuperscript{53} EFI (1624-29), pp.211-12.  
\textsuperscript{54} Mirat, Vol.i, p.382.  
been derived from *Mir-i bahr*. The main objects of the department mentioned in the *Ain-i Akbari* are as follows.

1) The building of boats of all kinds for river transport, from more cargo-boats to large pleasure boats, carrying floating markets and flower gardens.
2) The supply of men acquainted with coast, tides channels from the nakhoda or master of vessels down to the common seaman.
3) The watching of the rivers, and the regulation of the fords (shallow place in river), ferries and docks.

According to I.H. Qureshi, the care and the regulation of the sea-port as well as river ports was in Mir Bahr’s charge. The levy of tolls from the merchants using the rivers and the ports for the convenience of their merchandise also came under his jurisdiction. He was an imperial officer who was in charge of boat and ferry taxes etc. He was also assisted mutasaddi in realizing the duties of articles brought of land and looked after the mart of oil, cotton and salt.

Besides these other officers related to port administration worked under the command of mutasaddi, were mushrif (accountant an officer of the treasury who authenticates accounts and documents) for furza (custom House) and khushki (by land in opposition to by water), tahwilder, darogha-i khizana (head of treasure) and muqim appointed directly from the headquarters. They worked at the custom house as clerks, who helped the customer to deal with the custom house business. These officials could also be engaged in searching and checking commodities and at times their help could be required for valuation of goods and estimation of customs. The other worker such as waiter, porter and peons mentioned by the European were called piyadas. According to Thevenot, they (piyadas) were moors (Muslims). There were various kinds of works, performed by them such as watchmen inside the custom

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59 Indian Merchants and Decline of Surat, c.1700-50, op.cit.,p.27
60 *Mirat* (suppl.), p.222. 
61 *Mirat* (suppl.), pp.193,223.
62 Thevenot, pp.3,38.
63 Ibid.,p.3.
64 Ibid., p.38.
house, at the gates and in the harbor, while many others were employed to bring the men and goods on their backs from the dock to the custom house.\(^{65}\)

The port officials were in general corrupt as well as oppressive to the merchants and local people. One of the English factors at Surat remarked that government was dishonest and many managed slaves.\(^{66}\)

So far as offices (mahals), related with these officers were concerned, these had an important place to run the port administration. There were some major departments in port administration as follows:

**CUSTOM HOUSE OR FURZA**

The custom house played a crucial role in the carrying out the function of the port administration. Its common business and dealings involved the passengers and goods coming inward or going outward. The custom house at Surat was to be found at a strategic location on the left bank of the Tapti River.\(^{67}\) Each port had one custom house, also known as furza. It constituted a fiscal division under the mutasaddi.\(^{68}\) Custom house usually had two gates, one great gate opened towards the sea and had a broad and large courtyard in front, while the second opened in to the bazaar.\(^{69}\) Whenever a boat approached the custom house the custom officials stopped it in knee deep water and the passengers and goods were carried ashore with the help of porters, when they close to the custom house.\(^{70}\) The passengers were led to the large court of the custom house and thence to the hall of it for the checking, where the shahbandar\(^{71}\) or chief customer used to ‘sit in his diwan or the court and his clerks underneath’.\(^{72}\) The passengers had to be taken to the hall one by one and the clerks used to prepare detailed particulars of goods carried by them. After that the passengers and their goods were strictly searched in the big hall of the custom house, that was a rigorous

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\(^{65}\) Ibid., pp.1-2.


\(^{67}\) Thevenot, p. 3; Early Travels in India 1583–1619, p. 63.

\(^{68}\) Mirat (suppl.), p.194.

\(^{69}\) Early Travels in India 1583–1619,p.63; Thevenot, p.3

\(^{70}\) Thevenot.,pp.1-3.

\(^{71}\) Reffered as king of the port or chief customer. See John Fryer, Vol.i, p.247.

\(^{72}\) Thevenot,p. 3.
exercise and the passenger was required to take off his clothing, shoes, cap and turban. Thomas Roe refers to the custom checking, ‘‘the king’s officers to search everie thing that come ashore, even the pockett of mens clothes on their back for custom.’’ The process of searching passengers and their commodities was started from morning and continued till noon. The stern search generally took time more than a quarter of an hour per head. After the passengers’ check was over in the custom house they could not carry their belongings with them but they had to come next day to the gate of custom house to collect their belongings.

Custom house was the place where goods and passengers were searched, their dastaks (permit/passport) checked and custom charges on merchandise levied by the customer (shahbandar). European records variously called it “Alfandica”, “Dogana” and “Choqidar”. The English factory records simply call it “custom house”. The clerks of custom house at the instance of mutasaddi or shahbandar, prepared the records of the passengers and their goods and then were systematically searched. The accounts of the custom house proceedings were written in Persian as well as in Gujarati. “…the real customhouse books were kept in Persian, whereas those produced were ‘written in Banian.’” The clerks were usually drawn from the bania (merchants) class. All newly arrived passengers waited in the court, until unless their name was called out. The waiters were to keep caution and looked after everything in the custom house. When the custom house opened a large number of peons were seen there, towards the river side in front of great gate to be readily employed in any kind of service but this was so only during day time. The lower staff was consisted of a large number of waiters (guards) and porter collectively known as peon or piyadas (footmen).

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73 The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, pp. 28–29.
74 Thevenot, p.4.
76 Early Travels in India 1583–1619, pp.134-35.
77 Mirat (suppl.), p.194.
78 Early Travels in India 1583–1619, pp.134-35.
79 EFI (1618-69),13 Vols.
80 EFI (1618-69), (1618-21), p.3.
83 Thevenot, pp.2-3.
There was a ‘kichok’ (covered pavilion) where guards were posted to see the incoming and outgoing of all those that had come out of the Bar. Then the peons were sent to carry the men and goods ashore on their backs. These peons had long canes in the hand and with the help of these canes they formed a narrow lane so that no outsider might enter in to this lane and the person inside might go without command to the custom house without having any contact with the outsider. The person searched was allowed to go and was led through a gate facing the street. There was another guard who did not allow him to go to the open street unless, he satisfied the guard showing him an order from the chief customer for going out while his goods were left in the custom house. According to Ashin Das Gupta, the large number of officials at the custom house of Surat by scanning the list of annual present, which the Dutch factor entered every year in the books. On the basis of this the minor officials at the custom house usually numbered about fifteen.  

The European travelers visiting in the 17th century have given a detailed description of the extreme care and caution with which the custom officers searched the luggage as well as the people. From the Swally marine one had to go to the custom house to get his goods examined and then only he was allowed to pass. Thevenot spent the night in the river as darkness had fallen and he was to be examined at the custom house next morning because of the fixing time for business was only from ten in the morning till noon. Next morning Thevenot and his fellow passengers were taken to the shore on the backs of porters who came up in the west to the custom house and were examined there. He has given the account of the search at custom house in minute detail and his description is fuller and more accurate than that given by any other traveler, as he says “but is no severe and vexatious manner, that though I did except it, and had prepared myself for it beforehand, yet I had hardly patience enough to suffer the searchers to do whatsoever they had a mind to, though I had nothing about me but my clothes.”  

He further informs us that each passenger was admitted singly in to the hall of the custom house where the superintendent (shahbander) sat with his clerks. The passenger had to go to the clerk who wrote his name in a register and then he was thoroughly searched. “It was compulsory to take off his cap or turban, his girdle, shoes, stockings and the rest of his clothes, if the

84 Indian Merchants and Decline of Surat, op.cit.,p.28 n.4.
85 Thevenot, p.1.
searchers think fit. They feel his body all over. That search is long and takes up about
a quarter of an hour for every person." Upon any suspicion of default, the custom
officer, has a black guard, that by a *chawbuck*, a great whip, extort confession.

Mandeslo who visited Surat in 1638, has also described the stern search at the
custom house when he entered in the hall to get his baggage searched by the officials.
The search was done with ‘such exactness in this place that they think it not enough to
open chests and protmantles, but examine peoples’ clothes and pockets.’ But in spite
of the strict search, a large amount of precious stones and jewels were smuggled by
the merchants. Tavernier and Thevenot both informs us that the precious goods of
small bulk were often smuggled by the foreign merchants without the knowledge of
the custom officials. The penalties for smuggling were not very severe. If the
smugglers were caught red handed by the officials of the custom house, they were
charged only the custom duty and goods were handed back to the owner.

**CUSTOM CHARGES OR DUTIES**

Usually custom duties were imposed at the ports and it had to pay on both
imported and exported goods. Peter Mundy himself saw his friend John Yard pay
custom to get the carts across the river Narbada. They were levied at custom house
where duties were composed under the seal of *mutasaddi* and passes issued allowing
merchandise to be detached. It would be important to take account of the functioning
of the customhouse and how the goods were valued. The everyday functioning of the
custom house involved a huge amount of goods passing through inward and outward.
The evaluation of goods was a most crucial function of the custom authorities. It has
been held that the *mutasaddi* along with the prominent merchants of Surat formed a
‘jury’ and helped the customer to set out his business. Under Akbar custom duties
did not go beyond two and half (2½) per-cent, but it was possible that in some

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88 M.S. Commissariat, *Mandelslo’s travels in western India* (1638-39), Asian Educational Services,
New Delhi, 1995, p.2.
90 M. P. Singh, ‘The Custom and Custom House at Surat in the Seventeenth Century’ Quarterly
instances merchants had to pay more than the proper tax. There were various means of overcharging the custom such as the officer on spot could charge more than the scheduled duties under different pretext. Some time they demanded 1% on all goods for the fortification of the port, the other way of overcharging the customs by over valuation of goods. There might be number of reasons behind the practice of excess charges demanded by officers, for example deficiency in honesty, possibly due to keep hidden something very precious and in lieu of it bribery worked. About the matter of Broach port, Mandelslo points out that there was a Mughal guard and garrison to collect the custom duties of 2% upon commodities at this port, whereas Francisco Pelsaert recorded that custom duties in Broach were 3.5% on imports and exports of goods and 2% on both gold and silver. A Dutch account at Surat refers to a firman, that English may be exempted from the custom duty at Broach which was 1¼ % in 1620A.D, but this was perhaps exceptional. In 1650A.D. Shahjahan issued a firman that after paying the custom at Broach, the English were not to be troubled and were to be guaranteed safety from robbers by the jagirdar of that area. It was stated by a consultation at Surat on 21th June 1660A.D. that if the English wanted to become free from the payment of custom at Broach in future, they had to pay Rs. 4000 for the elimination.

It has been shown that the Mughals were quite specific about the percentage to be taken ad valorem on the inward and outward cargoes. But the system of valuation was quite vague and the custom officials used it to maximize illegal exactions from the merchants by overvaluing the price of commodities. This was a natural outcome of the ijara (farming system) system and mutasaddis, to meet the initial contractual obligation, reimbursed themselves by overvaluing goods. Akbar is stated to have remitted a large number of miscellaneous duties by way of encouraging trade, but one-half or one third, as the case might be, was paid to the state. And the balance was retained by ferrymen or the boatman and also the duty of 2.5% on exports and imports of the ports and the harbors. The custom duty at Surat on English and Dutch goods

91 Town, Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire, 1556-1707, op.cit, p.148.
94 EFI (1618-21), p.22.
96 The Mughal Rule in India, op.cit.,p.181.
in the reign of Jahangir was 3.5%. The English East Company was exempted by the firman granted by Jahangir to Sir Thomas Roe in 1615A.D. from the payment of all inland transit tolls on payment of this import duty of 3.5% on goods and 2% on treasure.\textsuperscript{97} According to Mandelslo, the custom duty was 3.5% ad valorem on all commodities and 2% on gold and silver.\textsuperscript{98} Custom duty during the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb did the same with little change and never exceeds 5%. When Shah Shuja was the governor of Bengal (1634-60A.D.), he issued a firman in favor of Dutch, permitting them to trade unrestricted in Bengal and imposing a duty of only 4% on imports and exports.\textsuperscript{99} William Finch at his visit in 1608-11A.D., reports that the custom being 2.5% for goods, 3% for victuals and 2% for money.\textsuperscript{100} Custom duty at Surat port was ad valorem levied either on the prime cost of goods, as in the original proof of purchase, or on the value realized on sale of those goods i.e. market price at port. It depended very much on the good judgment of custom officers.

In Aurangzeb’s time the levy on foreign companies did not exceed 4%. Gold and silver paid 2%. Reduction in custom dues was granted to the Dutch and the English after the plundering of Surat by Shivaji in 1664A.D. In the same year, Aurangzeb issued an order of remission in the custom at the request of Surat merchants, which was 2% instead of 2.5%.\textsuperscript{101} According to a firman issued on 25 Jun 1667A.D, Aurangzeb reduced the customs payable by the English at Surat to 2%.\textsuperscript{102} But a little later the English factors report that the reduction continued only to imports, the duty paid on exports by the English continuing to be 3% until 1667A.D.\textsuperscript{103} In the eighth regnal year, Aurangzeb issued an order to fixing custom charges on all commodities at 2.5% ad valorem in the case of Muslims and 5% in the case of Hindus.\textsuperscript{104} The impact of Aurangzeb’s policy to reduce the custom duty on Muslim traders not only concealed the trade of the Banias but also caused the deficit in the imperial revenue as the Hindu merchants and other non-Muslims began to carry their goods in the name of Muslim traders. According to J.N Sarkar, “apart from the political immorality of favoring one creed above all others, the direct sacrifice of

\textsuperscript{98} Mandelslo’s travels in Western India (1638-1639), p.9.
\textsuperscript{99} Embassy of Thomas Roe, p.155.
\textsuperscript{100} Early Travels in India 1583–1619, p.134.
\textsuperscript{102} Bruce. \textit{J. Annals of the Honorable, east India Company}, London, 1810, p.488
\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{104} Mirat-i Ahmadi, Vol.i, pp.258-59.
public revenue was very like to be still greater as the Hindu traders had now a strong temptation to pass their goods off as the property of Muslim in collection with latter.‖

The practice of avoiding custom by the fraud was very frequent at the ports. Thevenot says, “if the merchants have a mind to conceal anything and defraud the custom house, order their affairs more truly: they stay not till they come to Surat (Surat), there to beg the assistance of their friends. I have known some bring in a great many precious stones and other rich jewels, which the officers of custom-house never saw, not got one farthing by.” But if they were caught were punished strictly and the punishment for officer was different from the merchants and death was the common punishment for the officers, whereas for the merchants, as Fryer says, punishment being physical, not confiscation of goods. However the malpractices and evasion could not be finished.

MODE OF PAYMENT

So long as the matter of mode of payment of custom is concerned, there was no fix rule for that, as it appears, from the English factory records that English did not pay their duties in prepared cash. In 1657A.D., Ovington an official of English company sold a lot of guns to the mutasaddi of Surat under a contract that part of purchase money should be subtract yearly out of the sum to be paid as custom. The Dutch also did not pay custom in cash, they used to pay tax on their imports in goods. On payment of the custom duty, a receipt (dakhila-i rawai mahsul), which had the seal of the mutasaddi, mushrif, tawildar and signature of muqim, was issued to merchants that verified the payment of custom dues and was held valid throughout the Empire to avoid a double charge.

105 J.N. Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, Vol.iii, Calcutta, 1912, p.313,343
106 EFI (1624-29), pp.236, 321.
107 Thevenot, p.3.
108 EFI (1624-29), p.163.
111 EFI (1661-64), p.13.
The custom (mahsul) on imports and exports was predetermined by the government but the privilege of collecting it might either be retained in the khalisa or assigned in jagir or given out on ijara. Of these three forms farming need a few comments. Farming prevailed both in the khalisa and jagir. The port of Surat was two times farmed out, once in 1636-38A.D., to Hakim Masih-uz zaman and second in 1639-41A.D., to Mir Musa, whereas Cambay was held in jagir by Nurjahan but the right of custom collection was farmed out to Safi khan.

**JIHATGODI**

The jihatgodi (goda) or marammat-i jajahat has been referred to as one of the mahal of the mahalat-i sair at ports. This mahal seems to have dealt with ship repairing and ship building and had under its supervision collection of income from ship repairing and ship building workshops (karkhanas). The further details regarding its officials working and other related matters unfortunately, it appears, are not available in the sources. In one account of the port of Cambay, which refers to the dasturs (unit for determining the prices, Custom, usage, regulation, a customary fee) existing during the terms of office of Syed Aqil Khan and Haider Quli Khan as mutasaddi (1715-19A.D.), jihatgodi has been included in sair mahal and its annual income amount to Rs. 70,000.

**JAHAJAT**

The mahal dealt with coming and going of ships (amad-u raft-i jahajat), anchor (langar), collection of anchor fee (haq-i langar) and insurance (bima) of goods of passengers. The notable officers of this mahal were the darogh-i jahajat, mushrif and amin etc. The Bakshi, Waqai navis kept records of ships. The rates of anchor fee are not mentioned. However in a letter of English factors from Bombay it is stated to be ½%. According to one account, the rates of insurance, through which

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112 Ibid (1634-36), pp.xv, 189.
115 Town, Market, Mint and Port in Mughal Empire, op.cit., p.215
116 Ibid.,p.216-17.
117 EFI (1670-70), p.159
an extensive income used to come to imperial treasury were, from passengers they charged one rupee per head, on boats carrying merchandise from Cambay to Ghogha or vice versa they took a lump sum 25% to 30% per boat. These rates are particularly mentioned for the trade between one port and another between one bara on the western coast.\footnote{118}

**KHUSHKI**

*Khushki* was a further important fiscal division of the port town, above and beyond *furza*, which was also identified as *khushki mandi* and *mandi-i rasad*.\footnote{119} It served as custom station cum sale and resale mart. Here custom duty on goods brought and carried through land routes levied and collected.\footnote{120} For supervision and custom collection the *khushki mandi*, at Cambay, according to Mirat, it held control over *janwar burji* (tower to overseas and conduct trade in cattle), *kapasmandi* (cotton and cloth market), *rogan mandi* (ghee and oil mart), *mandi-i chub* (wood market), *mandi namaksar* (salt and saltpeter mart), *ghalla mandi* (grain market) etc.\footnote{121} The *khushki mandi* along with the *furza* was under *mutasaddi*. Under him there used to be two *naibs* (deputies) one each for *khushki* and *furza*. The officials attached to the *khushki* were the *mushrif*, *tahwildar*, *darogha*, *muqim* (an evaluator) etc.

The main complaints against official of the *khushki* were as follows:\footnote{122}:

- The officials charged sometime over and above the actual custom due on each article sold.
- The valuation of goods for custom collection was not done in accordance with the price current in the market.

\footnote{118} Cf., *Town, Market, Mint and Port in Mughal Empire*, op.cit.,pp.216-17.
\footnote{119} Mirat (suppl.), p.194.
\footnote{120} Mirat (suppl.), p.194.
\footnote{121} Ibid.
\footnote{122} *Town, Market, Mint and Port in Mughal Empire* op.cit, pp.211-12.
• The official used to open bundles of merchandise and take out chosen goods under pretext of purchase for government, to their houses without fixing prices and paying anything on spot and later on they paid less than the actual cost.
• The custom dues were levied in rupees but charged in kind (jins).

ROLE OF MINT, BROKERS AND SARRAFS IN THE PORT ADMINISTRATION

Mints in the Mughal Empire were a source of considerable income to the state, so their proper organization was an administrative necessity under Mughal, it used to have quite large establishment involving a large number of officers and workers. John Fryer who visited India in 1675A.D. says about the mint at Surat that “over against the custom house is a stately entrance in to the mint, which is a large town of offices within itself.”123 The mint which stood on or near the coast, or which was to be found on the termini (last stop of overland) caravan routes, would in a huge measure be coining bullion brought by foreign merchants or importers. English factory reports that the bullion imported was first entered in the custom house records, where the duty was paid then it was handed over the imperial mint for minting in the currency of country after these preliminaries were fulfilled, it could be exported.124 In Mughal Empire, mint had the twin function of minting bullion (gold and silver) or copper and re minting the old coin that had lost value either by age or by loss of weight or both.125

In the 16th and 17th centuries, Gujarat ports were the main entry point for coin of silver imports in the form of bullion, to be converted in to Mughal coins it was first at Cambay then Surat through which bullion came to India. Bullion imported in to Mughal India at the close of the 16th century probably amounted to roughly Rs. 2, 04, 71,768.126 As a result of overseas trade, Ahmadabad and Surat were successively the

125 Irfan Habib, Currency System Of Mughal Empire, Medieval India Quarterly, 1961, Aligarh, Vol.iv, pp.1- 21
126 The Economy Of Mughal India,op.cit., p.381.
largest mints of the Empire forms in the last quarter of 16th century and latter in the 17th century.\textsuperscript{127}

The share of Gujarat mints in the total coinage of northern India is very large and this of course due to the silver entering into this province through oversea channel most of all from Europe directly. The key role that Surat and other ports of Gujarat played in the European commerce make it only natural.\textsuperscript{128} Gujarat is only suba but has been regarded as a separate region due to its important role in India’s overseas trade, especially in its commercial relation with Europe during the 19th century.\textsuperscript{129}

At the beginning of the 17th century there were two mints in the province of Gujarat, one located at Ahmadabad and the other at Surat, established by Akbar after his conquest of the country. All the silver imported, whether foreign coins or bullion, was taken directly to a mint and reissued in the form of rupees or mahmudi (Silver coin current at Surat was mahmudi). It was originally a Persian coin, but was later on minted by the kings of Gujarat when it became an independent kingdom. Even after the conquest of Gujarat by Akbar, the use of mahmudi continued at Surat, though it was not a Mughal coin properly speaking. The rate of exchange was, however, subject to fluctuations, the normal rate was 5 mahmudis for 2 rupees. The coins in regular use at Surat in the 17th century were of silver and copper. Gold coins were also struck, but were rarely found in circulation. The chief silver coin was the rupee and the chief copper coins were the dam and pice (paisa), Copper coin was important because of their considerable circulation. Dam was a large copper coin of about 324 grains, which was exchangeable at the rate of 400 to the rupee. According to Thevenot gold coins were not commonly used in trade. They were coined only for making presents and few in number. A gold mohur was equal to 14 or 14.5 silver rupees in value.\textsuperscript{130} The chief silver coin, most common in use at Surat, was rupee. It was pure silver and its weight was one tola (A certain weight, especially of silver). All the strange coins imported at Surat, were taken to the mint, melted down and converted in to rupees. Ovington referring to the Surat Mint says, whatever strange coin comes in to the

\textsuperscript{128} Hasan Aziza, Mint in The Mughal Empire, Proceeding of Indian History Congress, 29th Session,Patiala,1967, pp.328-29.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., pp.323.
\textsuperscript{130} Thevenot, p.25., Ovington, A voyage to Surat, p.132.
hands of the Mughal officers, it is melted down, and converted in to rupees, which are stamped with the particular characters of the emperor then reigning.\textsuperscript{131} With the establishment of the English and the Dutch factories at Surat, the importance of the Surat mint increased.

During the reign of Shahjahan, another active mint was at Cambay.\textsuperscript{132} Minting at the Surat was not speedy enough to satisfy the needs of the merchants of that city. Sometimes especially during the reign of Aurangzeb the mint remained closed for some time. A better choice would have been Cambay, which was a good port, near Surat and bullion could have been sent there without landing at Surat. This may explain apparently at the expenses of Suart.\textsuperscript{133} In Surat, the dues from mint were also a part of *sair mahal, furza, ghalla mandi, namaksar, marramat-i jahajat* and *furza-i Broach*.

It was most probably the case when the revenue of mint along with the post of governor was farmed to the merchant and officials.\textsuperscript{134} According to *Mirat*, the *mutasaddi* of Cambay was also quite after the *darogha* of the mint.\textsuperscript{135} In the 17\textsuperscript{th} century in Surat, the revenue of mint was farmed to the merchants and officials along with the post of *Mutassadi* of Surat. In 1629A.D, it was held by Muih-uz zaman, and in 1639A.D., Muiz-ul mulk (mir musa) got governorship of port of Surat on farm upon giving two lakhs of rupees more than his predecessor.\textsuperscript{136} In 1641A.D., English factors further inform us that the amount for which Mir Musa had farmed Surat with its mints and custom house was 72 lakhs of *mahmudi* par annum. But he had overestimated the produce of the port, for by 1641, he was short in paying the contracted money by 31 lakhs. He was therefore was dismissed from the post.\textsuperscript{137}

The superintendent of the mint was known as *darogha-i darul-zarb*. The English factors used to call him the mint master.\textsuperscript{138} He was appointed by a *sanad* bearing the seal of finance minister (*diwan-i ala*) and at the recommendation of the

\textsuperscript{131} Ovington, *A voyage to Surat*, p.132.
\textsuperscript{132} *Currency System Of Mughal Empire* op.cit., Vol.iv, pp.1-21.
\textsuperscript{133} Moosvi, Shireen, ‘*The Gujarat Port And Their Hinterland*: *a Economic Relationship*, in Indu Banga,(ed.)*Ports And Their Hinterland In India (1700-1950)*, 1992, p.331.
\textsuperscript{134} *EFI* (1637-41), p.207.
\textsuperscript{135} *Mirat* (suppl.), p.193.
\textsuperscript{136} *EFI* (1637-41), pp.109-110.
\textsuperscript{137} *EFI*, (1637-41), pp.xxvi, xxvii, 207.
\textsuperscript{138} *EFI* (1618-21), p.8.
provincial diwan. According to Ashin das, in Surat administration the appointment of darogha of Surat mint was within the patronage of the governor of the place, which was usually kept within the family of the governor.\footnote{Indian Merchants And The Decline Of Surat, 1700-40, op.cit., P.25.} As far as the duty of darogha-i darul zarb is concerned, he had to supervise the working of the mint and according to Abul fazl, he was required to be attentive and intelligent, who keeps everyone to his work and shows zeal and honesty.\footnote{Abul Fazl, Ain-i Akbari, tr. H. Blochmann, Vol.i, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta,1873, p.13.} The opening and closing of mint was at his pleasure.\footnote{EFI (1618-21), p.8.}

Besides regular staff, there were a number of skilled workmen employed at mint, who were mushrif, tawildar gudazgar kham (smelter of ore), waraqkash (platemaker), gudazgar pakhta (smelter), qar-kab, chashnigar and niyariya.\footnote{Ain, Vol.i, pp.16-20.} The mushrif appointed by sanad,\footnote{Mirat (suppl.), p.183.} acted in the capacity of an account keeper who recorded the daily expenses in the mint.\footnote{Ain, Vol.i, p.15.} The tawildar kept the daily account of the profit of the mint and received the money collected on account of the mint charges.\footnote{Ibid.,p.16.} The Wazn-i kush (weight men) weighed the bullion, the old coins brought to the mint and the new ones paid out after being minted, for this work he got some commission.\footnote{Ain, Vol.i, p.16.} The sarraf came close not only to the merchants but also to the mint. They were after appointed in the latter as assayers.\footnote{Ibid.} The Ain stresses, that the success of the mint depended on the experience of the sarraf as he checked the degrees of purity of the coins.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 13-14.} The Mirat shows him, as a paid employee who received a fixed salary of Rs. 3 monthly.\footnote{Mirat (suppl.), p.183.} The darban (watchmen) kept a vigil on whatever was brought in or taken out and guarded the mint gates.

The brokers, acting as middleman between the buyer and seller, formed a highly specialized commercial group in medieval India. With the advent of Muslim in India, the brokers were generally termed as dallal, which was derived from an Arabic word. A dallal is he who directs the purchasers to the merchandise and the seller to
He shows the purchaser where to find the goods he requires and the seller how to exact his price. The broker acted as a link between the producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. Foreign merchants in particular had to depend on them to a great extent. Evidence on the functions of the brokers in our Persian sources for the period from the 13th to 16th century in India is very sketchy as compared to these available in the 17th century. No transaction was to take place without the knowledge of brokers. The coming of European companies to India imparted a tremendous impetus to trade and commerce in the country, thus providing a wider field for the brokers. The foreign merchants were unaccustomed with the country’s pattern of marketing and language had to depend on the native for their business. Prior to 1634 A.D., English factor referred to the custom of the country that it was most usual to effect business which was at distance by a truthful broker. With the brisk commercial activities at the ports especially during the 17th century, it was natural that the inland centers of production and commerce too would get involved with country’s international commerce.

The brokers were expected to keep and maintain the detailed records of business deals for occasionally checkup by their employers. In 1630 A.D., the factors at Surat refers to a variety of such business records namely the daily ‘cash books’, ‘journal’ and ledger which were called ‘nanamal danio’ avaso and khate respectively. In one example the journal has been called ‘rozanama’. The foreign merchant’s dependency on the broker was due to language difficulty, which obliged them to engage a linguist (dobhashi). Many brokers seem to have acquired a working knowledge of one or two European languages. In 1639 A.D., Mandelslo visited Surat in 1638 who speaks about a broker of Cambay, in the service of the English and Dutch companies who knew Portuguese.

Most of the brokers were Hindus of the vaisya castes, foreigners generally called them ‘banias’. Tavernier advised his countrymen to select a broker who should be a native of the country, an idolater and not a Muslim, because all the workmen

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151 Ibid., p.3.
152 Ibid.
154 EFI (1634-36), p.79
155 EFI (1651-54), p.113.
156 Mandeslo’s Travels in Western India, p.41.
with whom he will have to do were idolaters.\textsuperscript{157} Even the Muslims preferred the Hindu brokers.\textsuperscript{158} A large number of Indian broker, mostly the Hindus were employed by the merchants at foreign port, and commercial centers, namely Crombroon\textsuperscript{159} (Bandar Abbas), Basra, Bandar Rig in Persia etc. Category wise, the brokers could be divided broadly into different classes. In the first category the brokers who were the regular employees of the merchants, company or others, and in second category those who worked for more than one client simultaneously.\textsuperscript{160} The third class constituted of those who were actually free loaners, that was took on business deals sternly on an ad hoc basis.\textsuperscript{161}

The brokers were also allied with payment of customs at port and tolls on roads. They advised their client on exchange ratio of different currencies, regional variations of weight and such other items. It is true that the merchants employed a *sarraf* (a money changer, a banker, an officer employed to ascertain the value of different currencies) also for matters related with currency, credit bills etc, but sometimes, the offices of broker and *sarrafi* (a business of money changing), overlapped, that was the same person acted in both capacities, or worked as a broker and *sarraf* alternately.\textsuperscript{162} In the gold and silver market of Surat the *sarrafs* exercised a great influence, their main function was to test the money. They were appointed to examine the purity of gold and silver in the mint at Surat. All the imported gold and silver was taken to the mint and was converted in to the currency of the country. The value of the coins was equal to their weight in metal and as such the coins were held to depreciate in value with age. The *sarraf* had a special knowledge to determine the weight and age of every coin. Another function of his was money changing. The *sarrafs* used to change rupees and also gold ‘muhars’ in to rupees and rupees in to ‘mahmudis’ or ‘dams’.

The client often gave the brokers a huge sum of money for investment, which they usually put out to weaver or made direct purchase of readymade goods. In

\textsuperscript{157}Travernier, Vol.ii, p.144.
\textsuperscript{159}Tulsidas as the English broker at Crombroon, *EFI*, (1637-41), p.310.
\textsuperscript{160}In 1635, Kalyan Parak acted as the broker of the English company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood, an Indian merchant , *EFI* (1634-36), pp.292-93.
\textsuperscript{161}EFI (1661-64), pp.188-89.
\textsuperscript{162}Tulsidas acted as the English broker at Cambroon in 1641, See, *EFI* (1637-41), p.310, and as Sarraf at Surat in 1646.
1622 A.D., a Dutch broker, Tarikam Das, went to Agra with bills of 5000, *mahmudis* At Broach, in 1623 A.D., the English brokers were given 4,800 *mahmudis* for ‘necasnees’ (cloth) and 7,200 *mahmudis* for *broadsheets*. However the practice of giving large advances to the brokers was disapproved by the English company since it led to certain abuses on the post of the broker.

As regards to their earnings, that was wages, remuneration and commission of the brokers, we hardly get any evidence before the 17\(^{th}\) century, except an indication of the practice that they took something from both the parties, namely buyers and sellers. It seems that ordinarily the total commission of a broker amounted to 2% of the value of each transaction one percent being taken from each party. But if one single broker negotiated the deal for both parties, he took what he pleases, which normally amounted to 2%. In the 1670s, Fryer, with reference to Surat says that the brokers, for the company and private persons are allowed 2% on all bargains.

**PORT AND TOWN ADMINISTRATION: A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW**

So far as comparative study between town and port administration is concerned, it seems that *mutasaddi* played dual role from the administrative point of view, first in town and second in port administration. We find that *mutasaddi* and Governor both were not two different personalities, even from the administrative point of view; governor was known as *mutasaddi* especially for port of Surat, which is considered as major port on western coast. In town he was a significant official in revenue department, he also played a very crucial role in port town (like Surat) as, nothing could be sold and purchased in the market without his knowledge. On the coming of the stock of the commodity in the market, he used to have the right of first purchased. Several times following a quarrel with the English, the *mutasaddi* at Surat, forbade everybody in the market to sell anything to them. Another important disparity between port and town administration was the existence of various *mahals*

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163 EFI (1622-23), pp.163, 184.
165 EFI (1634-36), pp.264-65.
167 EFI (1618-21), pp.121, 151.
like furza, khuski, langar jahajat and jihatgodi or marramat jahajat in port administration which did not exist in other simple towns.

According to Mirat-i Ahmadi, the mutasaddi at Surat and Cambay besides the other related officers’ also held the office of faujdar and thanadar around the port,\(^{170}\) but the latter two were the administrative officers in towns. Other information provided by was that, the diwani of the sarkar of Surat was under the mutasaddi.\(^{171}\) This shows that he acted both as an amil and as a faujdar at the same time, although he had also performed other administrative duties.

The other town officials such a Kotwal, Qazi, Muhtasib, Waqai-i Navis, were not directly under his authority they had yet to obey him in some cases. On many occasion, the kotwal of Surat at the instance of mutasaddi had to arrest such merchant as dared refuse his orders. Following the quarrel with the English over certain gun purchased by the mutasaddi, the former were put to house arrest for 15 days by the order of the later.\(^{172}\) He could ask the kotwal to shut the city gates so that none could go out of the city. By the order of the mutasaddi, of Surat, all the European was confined within the city wall when it was reported that certain hats men had taken the ship of Abdul Gafur.\(^{173}\)

About the role of qazi, in case of robbery, the qazi sided with mutasaddi.\(^{174}\) He was usually afraid of news reporter for he could send reports to headquarter but the waqa-i navis before submitting his dispatch had to show it to the mutasaddi. Generally the mutasaddi used to consult the above official on all important matters relating to the port administration.\(^{175}\)

Regarding kotwal’s role in port administration, who was another most powerful official also paid a salary for his service and his attendants and allowed certain harbors for the dignity of his office. He was the chief of police and the security officer of the port and city. His men guarded the custom sheds, ware houses, road in and out of the city, the main entry and exit point over the two bridges, as well as

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\(^{170}\) Mirat, Vol.i,pp.229,234,312; For Cambay, Mirat (suppl.), p.193.

\(^{171}\) Mirat (suppl.), p.30.

\(^{172}\) EFI (1661-64), pp.13-14.

\(^{173}\) Ovington, p.239.

\(^{174}\) EFI (1618-21), p.21.

\(^{175}\) Ovington,pp.136-37.
maintained law and order in the city. He was probably independent of mutasaddi and directly responsible to the sultan’s revenue minister. He was put in Masulipatnam to manage the Sultan’s ships and his shipping ventures. Although In simple town (weather small or big) he had the highest position.

The duties of the officers of the port-town were parallel to the officers’ of the town administration,\(^\text{176}\) who were common to both administrations like qazi, waqa-i navis, harkara, etc. The officials of the port administration and town administration served interchangeably. Similarly the service of certain departments such as mint and custom house and persons (sarrafs/brokers) were availed by both the administration.

\(^{176}\) Mirat (suppl.), pp.222-23.
A distinguished phenomenon of medieval period was the growth of towns in various parts of the country. This development was the result of political and economic policies followed by the Muslim rulers in India. These towns grew into trade and industrial centres which in turn led to the general prosperity. During the first two hundred years of Mughal rule, i.e. from the 16th to the 18th century, the urbanisation of India received a further impetus. Fortunately, for the urban development in India under the Mughals, an abundant data is available not only because of indigenous sources but also rendered by the European visitors. Trade and commerce became a driving force in the development of urban centers, which got further momentum with the coming of European companies, who had played a significant role in the growth of these centers during Mughal times. It is noteworthy to mention that, urban centers were known for industrial activities.\(^1\) The present effort focuses on the towns, which were considered major due to their role in trade and commercial activities. These towns came to global importance during Mughal period, as controlling international trade. Their wealth and prosperity impressed foreign travelers. The study of major towns played a significant role in different aspect of life. Major town grows and developed in India during Medieval period and played an important role in modifying its economy and culture. With the advent of Turkish, India got many changes; among them Town planning is prominent aspect. Cities grew both in size and prosperity and became important centers of industrial and commercial activity.\(^2\) Urban centers flourished in different parts of the Mughal Empire. The period of sixteenth, seventeenth and part of the eighteenth century of the Mughal Empire appears to be a golden age of urbanization in India which needs to be explored. At least for much of the northern and central India, there was both a spreading out of the size of pre-

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1. http/www.youarticle.com; Puja Mandol, *Urban Development in India the during Mughal Times*.
existing cities and towns and a proliferation of the new foundation. The Arabic and Persian literature as well as other indigenous and secondary sources mention a variety of nomenclatures for the settlements which are based on their size, location, function and nature of inhabitants.\(^3\) The most common nomenclatures used for these settlements were *mauza* (rural settlement/village), *qasba* (township/small town)\(^4\), *balda/baldah* (extended part of an urban settlement/environs of urban settlement), *shahar* (city/large town), *bandar* and *bara*\(^5\) (large and small port town), etc. *Qasbas* were the larger units than the rural settlements but smaller than the medium size urban settlements, *shahars*. *Qasbas* included both the rural and urban characteristics. For example, some cultivation was carried out on their outer fringes and these also had some administrative, production and commercial activities within its boundaries. Their size and significance could be increased and decreased according to the changes in economic and political structure. If there were growth of developed villages due to the developing economy, the addition in number of *qasbas* was a natural happening and if the trend in the economy remained retarded, the reduction in the size of township became prominent. The factors that contributed to the rise of *qasbas* in north India were agricultural and topographical suitability, strategic location, access to external and internal trade, pilgrimage and sufi-centres, and craft-production centre etc.

**FEATURES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT**

Before the categorization for urban settlements of an inland region, the meaning of these settlements should properly be taken in account. An urban settlement is understood as a socio-economic structure, distinct from its rural surroundings, variant from self-sufficient food producing economy to an economy which bases itself on specialized manufactures and trade activities. Some features

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\(^3\) H.K. Naqvi, *Agricultural, Industrial and Urban Dynamism Under the Sultans of Delhi*, Delhi, 1986, pp.77-133.

\(^4\) H.H. Wilson, *A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Term and of useful words occurring in the official documents*, relating to the Administration of the government of British India, compiled and published under the authority of The Honorable the court of Directors of the East India Company, Munshiram Manoharlal Publication, Delhi, 1968, p. 266.

were common to all towns. There was a permanent market (*bazaar*) and the inhabitants were largely non-agriculturists. The towns were centers of commerce and crafts. The geographical factors like topography and easy availability of water from a river or artificial reservoir was another requirement. Usually too, a town of a respectable size had fortification comprising a citadel within and an outer enclosing wall weather of mud or bricks, surrounded by a deep trench. Finally, it contained administrative headquarters.

**Cultural Features of Town**

Indian towns had usually a number of mosques and temples. Mosques were ordinarily built within the locality inside the town wall, where as temples could be built in or outside the town wall and were sometime laid out in a garden close to habitation. There are references to madarasas and maktabs and tols and pathshalas, attached to mosques and temples, where the theologians of the communities acted as teachers and the main stress being laid on the study of religion, philosophy and scriptures. The Mughal did not have any permanent department to look after education. They however used to aid lavishly by way of stipends, gifts and land grants to learning centers and learned scholars who attracted a large number of students to come and pursue higher studies., besides this, a number of schools were run by private person or from donation. Mughal cities were often surrounded by magnificent gardens. According to Pelseart, they served two purposes, during the

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7 Ibid.
9 Peter Mundy, Vol.ii, p.31.
15 Pelsaert, p.5.
life time of nobles they served for their pleasure and enjoyment and after death for their tombs. Noble also laid out large orchards. Since the city or the town comprised a massive amount of men and cattle therefore wells and tanks could hardly provide water throughout the year. In Mughal India, too, at the location of forts or imperial residences, houses of nobles, *bazaars*, quarter of artisan, professional men and laborers, merchant’s colonies, mosques, temple and *sarais* (temporary home for travelers) appears to have been followed some sort of planning. The towns were usually protected by the thick walls, made of bricks or mud, which had battlements and string- courses and towers mounted with heavy canon at all corners and strategic points or on the top of the city gates.

**FACTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING TOWN**

There are various factors which were responsible for the development of towns in Mughal India; for the transformation of agriculture commodities in to urban, for the transition from *qarria* and *qasba* to the *shahar*, from the village and township in which land was predominant to the town in which trade was the prominent factor. The long distance trade also helped to develop urban commodity production. The process though slow, was natural stimulated by a number of concomitant factors. But during the 16th and 17th centuries a large number of towns grew up in Mughal Empire and the Deccan, some by rise, other by growth older units. In the example of the rise of new town, we find that a fort was built at Patna by Sher Shah in 1541 A.D. During the reign of Akbar, Agra and Lahore forts were built almost the same time (C.1565-80 A.D.), while Fatehpur-Sikri, which became the virtual capital of Akbar (1569-86 A.D.) grew out of a mere village. In the reign of Shahjahan, the Red Fort at Delhi was established in 1639-48 A.D. On the other hand Surat and Ahmadabad etc. were examples of expansion of older towns. The role of geography was remarkably crucial in the foundation of the trading town. Presence of rich fertile soil and having rich

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16 Pelsaert, p.5.
19 *Town, Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire* (1556-1707), op.cit., pp.34-35.
agricultural environs was considered apt for becoming a trading center. It was easier for a town to grow into a city if it had a central location with having a rich hinterland. The presence of river or rivers ensured easy flow of commercial traffic. Goods and people both could be conveniently transported from one place to another with the aid of the river. The rich productivity of the area made sure only to the area enjoyed continuous exchange of goods. Not only there was inland trade but also international trade. The international trade was possible because of the geographical setting which provided access to the sea.20

CATEGORIES OF TOWNS

A socio-economic survey of towns may be made according to the following tentative categorization, which can be divided in Imperial capital, Provincial capital, Commercial centers and Religious centers. But these classifications might overlap each other, e.g. Agra was both a capital and an inland trade center. Though there were different types of towns which emerged in the medieval Mughal India, performed various functions. The four distinct types of towns which can be identified are: first, those cities whose primary function was administrative and where other roles manufacturing or sacral were of insignificant value too and were somewhat dependent on the primary role, of such category Agra and Delhi; second, those cities enjoying a primarily commercial and manufacturing character, to which might have been attached administrative function which on the other hand, but that remained subsidiary to their economic functions, Ahmadabad fell under this category; third, there was the case of pilgrimage centers where trade and craft activities were drawn to where there was already an assemblage of both undeviating settled and momentary population as in the case of Banaras, conveniently located in relation to the major river system of north India, where the proximity to river assisted commercial intercourse and unvarying crowding of pilgrimage fascinated crafts and service recruits from the neighboring districts or even further off region; fourth and last were port towns like Cambay and Surat.

20 Isha Kaushik, *Role of Geography in Shaping the Structure of Trade in Mughal India* (IJSER) Volume 1 Issue 3, November 2013, p.117.
21 *Urban Centres in Medieval India*: A Brief Surveyop.cit., p.221.
TABLE: 4- Shows functional basis towns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>NAME OF TOWNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative town</td>
<td>Agra, Patna, Lahore, Delhi, Fatehpur Sikri, Dacca, Multan, Shahjahanabad, Lahore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial and Industrial town</td>
<td>Malda, Ahmadabad, Ajmer, Banaras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing town</td>
<td>Surat, Dacca, Chaul, Patna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious town</td>
<td>Ajmer, Banaras, Lahore, Multan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INHABITANTS

Extant sources furnish information that during the concerned period there was a considerable concentration of population in the towns. Akbar’s Empire in 1592 A.D. was said to contain as many as 120 cities and 3200 townships. It is difficult to estimate the size of the population of towns. According to Irfan Habib, up to 15 per cent of the total population living in towns, giving an absolute urban population of say, about twenty million for the whole subcontinent, may not be unreasonable. Among those Agra and Delhi were the largest in terms of population. Different European travelers have estimated the population of Agra between 50,000 and 660,000 during its heyday. This seems a very impressive figure since in medieval Europe a town with a population of 20,000 was considered sufficiently big. Bernier says that the population of Delhi was not marked less than that of Paris. Incidentally, even after the capital shifted to Delhi, Agra continued to have constituted a larger population than London and Paris, a point confirmed by Terry and Monserrate.

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23 Bernier, Travels in the Mughal Empire, p.281-82.
Manrique estimated the population of Patna\textsuperscript{24} around 200,000. The largest group among the inhabitants of towns was naturally comprised of artisans and laborers. The needs for luxuries and comforts of the aristocracy and the demand for ordinary articles such as cloth by the ordinary employees of the officials and their court establishments furnished sufficient reason to attract them to cities.\textsuperscript{25} Various categories of handicraft producers residing in towns were (famous for their specialty), firstly, weavers of cotton, silk and woollen cloth and those who plied allied industries such as carder, spinners, and processors of thread, painter, dyers, bleach men, jewelers, ironmen, stonecutter, ivory workers, and lime maker. Out of them quits a large number were employed by the state or engaged by nobles and rich men while majority of them were self employed, receiving cash payment for their produced work.\textsuperscript{26}

Table: 5- Shows the population according to particular time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of towns</th>
<th>Year of estimate</th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agra</td>
<td>I. 1629-43 A.D.</td>
<td>6,60,000</td>
<td>Manrique\textsuperscript{27}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II. 1666 A.D.</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>Thevenot\textsuperscript{28}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>1659-66 A.D.</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>Bernier\textsuperscript{29}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahjahanabad</td>
<td>1666 A.D.</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>Thevenot\textsuperscript{30}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>1581 and 1615 A.D.</td>
<td>400,000-700,000</td>
<td>Irfan Habib\textsuperscript{31}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thatta</td>
<td>1631-35 A.D.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmadabad</td>
<td>1613 A.D.</td>
<td>100,000-200,000</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat</td>
<td>1700 A.D.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patna</td>
<td>1631 A.D.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>Manrique\textsuperscript{32}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dacca</td>
<td>1630 A.D.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>Manrique\textsuperscript{33}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{25} Tavernier, Vol.i, pp.56-57.
\textsuperscript{26} Peter Mundy, Vol.ii, p.86-87.
\textsuperscript{27} Manrique, Vol.ii, p.152.
\textsuperscript{28} Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, p.49
\textsuperscript{29} Francois Bernier, PP.281-82.
\textsuperscript{30} Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, p.61.
\textsuperscript{31} The Economic History of Medieval India, p.33.
\textsuperscript{32} Manrique, Vol.ii,140.
\textsuperscript{33} Manrique, Vol.ii, 44-45.
Commenting on the economic role of these towns, Humbly writes, “the largest were thriving centers of manufacturing and marketing, banking and entrepreneurial activities, intersections in a network of communications by land and water which crossed and re-crossed the subcontinents and extended far beyond, to south-east Asia, to the Middle East, to western Europe and elsewhere of regional or sub-regional markets, smaller urban centers performed a more modest role in relation to local commerce, local resources and consumer needs. Almost everywhere they went; keen-eyed European travelers noted the activity and prosperity engaged in weaving and those ancillary crafts inseparable from the manufacturing of textiles.”\(^{34}\) The following are the descriptions of the major towns with their own special commercial activities:

**DACCA**

Now a days the name Dacca applies to the capital of Bangladesh. The district of Dacca, in both its name and present form, is a British creation. The origin of the name of Dacca has been the subject of great discussion or speculation among scholars, and there are several views over its name. According to one tradition, it derived its name due to the dhak tree (butea frondosa) which was supposed to be plentifully available here. According to another tradition, the name was derived from the fact of the Hindu goddess Durga being concealed (dhak in Bengali meaning concealed) therein.\(^{35}\) Even after the change of name to Jahangir Nagar, the name ‘Dacca’ remained popular. Persian records that have so far been available prefer the name Jahangir Nagar, but outside the Mughal official circle the people generally used the name Dacca. All foreign travelers as well as the East India Company’s servants in their official dispatches used this name.\(^ {36}\)

It is situated on the northern bank of the river Buriganga. Dacca is connected by water with the great rivers, the Ganga (*Padma*), the Brahmaputra and the Megna.

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\(^{36}\) William Hedges, *The Diary of William Hedges*, Esq., during his Agency in Bengal as well as on his voyages out and Return Overland (1681-87) Vol.1 transcribed by R. Barlow and (ed.) By Henry Yule,Hakluyt society, London, 1887, pp.37, 42.
and thus with all neighboring districts. Dacca became the capital of the Mughal subah of Bengal early in the 17th century when Islam Khan Chisti, his real name was Shaikh Allauddin Chisti, was a Mughal general and the subadar of Bengal, who was awarded the titular name of Islam khan Chisti by Mughal emperor Jahangir, transferred the capital here from Rajmahal and renamed it Jahangir Nagar, after the name of the reigning Mughal emperor Jahangir (1605-27 A.D.). The status of Dacca as a capital continued for about a century, with a subtle change during the subadari of Shah Shuja (1639-58 A.D.).

With the establishment of the capital at Dacca and its continuance as such for about a century, it was intended to grow. The administrative requirements and the expansion of governmental activities must have led to an expansion of the town and an increase in the number of buildings. From the time of Shaista Khan (first appointed in 1663 A.D.), golden period of Dacca started in terms of both expansion and building activities. But Shaista Khan’s most important contribution was the chhota katra, enclosed quadrangle, built in 1663 and chauk bazaar mosque built in 1676. From this time to the end of the 17th century, we have quite a few foreign travelers who have left eye witness accounts about Dacca. Manrique, a Portuguese monk who visited Dacca in 1640, states that many peculiar nations thronged to this city due to its massive trade and commerce in great variety of commodities. Of these people, he especially mentioned the khatri and wage earners who were attracted by the high wages obtained in Dacca. He also states that the Dacca muslin was exported to such remotes place as Khurasan. Manucci, who came to Dacca in 1663, states that, although the city of Dacca was neither strong nor large it had many inhabitants most of the houses were made of straw. An important feature of this (Mughal) period was the intensive building activities in Dacca. Apart from the governmental establishments, two other factors contributed to the growth of the city, the landed and the commercial interests. Tavernier, (1666 A.D.) who came three years later to Manucci, says that Dacca was a great town but extended only in length, because everyone desired to have a house by the side of the river. The length of the town was

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38 Ibid., p.190 p.200.
above two leagues. According to Thomas Bowrey, the city was very large but stood on a low marshy ground. The city was no less than forty English miles in circuit. All, Tavernier, Bowrey and Manucci, testify to the fact that Dacca was a big city. Influx of coming of foreign traders started almost with the shifting of capital. Prior to this Sonargaon was the most important trading center, the former eastern capital of Bengal Sultans. The foreign travelers until the end of the 16th century, e.g. Ibn Batutah, Moraccan traveler, early Portuguese writer Barbosa, Italian writer Verthema and the English traveler Ralph Fitch, the last named travelers to come to Bengal, are full of praise about the commercial prosperity of Sonargaon and do not refer to Dacca at all. But with the transfer of capital, Dacca began to attract traders and merchants. The prosperity of Dacca and its importance as a commercial center began, so that not only individual traders and bankers came to Dacca but organized European companies also settled their factories here and continued a good and profitable trade with the eastern capital of the Mughals.

The Portuguese were the first who came to Bengal in their trading pursuits towards the beginning of the 16th century. Sometime later in the 17th century the Portuguese also established a factory at Dacca, but the date is not known. Manucci and Tavernier both refer to the Dutch and English traders at Dacca. Although, the Dutch settled a factory at Dacca by 1663 A.D., their trade was not very flourishing, as Thomas Bowrey indicates, the investment of both the Dutch and English at Dacca was insignificant. The French came to Dacca towards the last quarter of the 17th century. Their boats first came to Dacca in 1682 and 1690 A.D. Mr. Gregory was the chief of the French factory. The French trade did not prosper in Bengal before 1730.

The cotton goods of Dacca occupied a prominent place in Bengal’s trade with the outside world in the whole Mughal period and its goods formed a major portion of the exports from Bengal by the European companies. The weaving industry of Dacca may be traced back to the early centuries of the Christian era but in the Mughal period, particularly in the 18th century, the industry expanded by people and bounds mainly owing to the increased export through the European companies. The weaving

41 Tavernier, Travellers in India, p.100.
42 Thomas Bowrey, A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679, (ed.) R. C. Temple, Asian Educational Service, New Delhi, 1993, pp.149-51.
43 A Geographical Account of the Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, p.150.
44 Dacca the Mughal Capital, op.cit.,p.73.
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was carried on in the district and her neighboring area to a greater or lesser extent in every village, but the weavers of several places attained greater skill so that these places became the chief manufacturing stations of the finest *muslin* for which op. achieved a worldwide fame. Dacca produced both coarse and their fabrics. The coarse fabrics were meant for the use of the local people and for use by poorer of the neighboring districts, in fact of the whole of Bengal, while the finer ones generally called *muslin* were meant for the higher class of people and exports. The fine *muslins* were of several kinds and known by several denominations- *malmal*, *tanzeb* (adornment of the body), *nayansukh* (pleasing of eyes), *chicken* (thin or Fine), *charkana* (square shape), *shabnam* (morning dew), *junglekhasa* (speciality of junglebari manufacturing station) *doorea* (stripped) *jamdamy* (flowered) and *booti* (designed with knotted forms) of these the finest fabrics were reserved for the Emperor and Nawab of Bengal. It was an admirably great city for its magnificent buildings\(^{45}\), and multitude of inhabitants. By the beginning of the 18\(^{th}\) century Dacca lost its status as a capital town, though the importance of the city continued undiminished until the close of the Mughal rule, owing to extension of trade, there may not have been any need of further extension after the capital was transferred from Dacca.

MALDA

From earliest times Malda has had a fairly continuous history as a center of civilization and economic importance. W.W. Hunter (scholar, educationalist, Editor of Imperial gazetteer of India) called Maldah, metropolis of Bengal, with its long line of kings, its gigantic walls and arches, its once stately places now the kennels of jackals, and the vast untenanted city which has been left standing as a spectacle of desolation and warning to those who now are to India what its builders once were…….”\(^{46}\) Malda was the instrument for the control of the whole of the north-eastern Indian trade. It commanded the routes that ran in different directions across Ghoraghat to Kamrup and Tibet, over Kajangal and Bagdi to Cuttack and down the Ganges to Dacca, while on the west it opened the doors to the cities of the northern India. But the shifting of

\(^{45}\) *Dacca the Mughal Capital*, op.cit, pp.83-85.

the capital to Dacca in 1612 A.D. naturally left Malda in comparative political obscurity. However, the commercial importance of Malda was not affected by this transfer of capital unlike Murshidabad in the colonial rule. This shifting of the capital only checked the growth and development of Malda and Dacca. During the reign of Aurangzeb and the viceroyalty of Shaista Khan, Malda formed a part of the jagir of Shaista Khan. Akbarnamah mentioned the name of Malda as an important center of trade and commerce. Tavernier mentioned the name of Malda when he travelled Bengal in 1666 A.D. Alexander Hamilton described Malda as a large town, well inhabited and frequented by merchants of the different nations.

There were so many historical and commercial factors had their significance in conjunction with other geographical factors in the economic life of Malda town. The river system of Mahananda determined the morphology and growth of the Malda town. There were several other rivers which also determined the development of the Malda town. According to James Fergusson, an architect and distinguished art historian, the Kosi which now falls in the Ganges near Bhagalpur used to flow through north Bengal. The Kosi, therefore, might have contributed to the building up of the southern portion of north Bengal.

The town of Malda stood midway between the productive centers of north western and north eastern Bengal. Practically, Malda was the pivot of entire north Bengal for trade and commerce like Dacca in the eastern Bengal. Malda’s comparative proximity to the cotton areas and manufacturing centers of north western and the north eastern Bengal, invested it with special significance. We get also some idea of the environs of Malda from the accounts of the contemporary foreign travelers and merchants of the period. According to the letter of Richard Edwards, (a servant of Streynsham Master) about the Malda situation and trade, he says, The town is small, but conveniently seated on a branch of the Ganges and a small river from Morung which joyne a little above the towne, which is of great resort, being the staple of cloth etc.for that part of country, and comes in from all partwithin thirty or fourty myles.

51 Malda (West Bengal) As a Trading Centre in the Seventeenth Century, op.cit.,p.278.
The chief trade driven there is by Factors of Agra, Guzzaratt [Gujarat], and Bannaress Merchants, Who yearly send them from fifteen to twenty five Patellaes [patella], whose ladeing consists of cossaes and mullmulls from ½ rupees to 5 rupees per piece, and mundeels [mandils] and Elatches of all sorts, valued at about one lack each Pattella, and about that half of that amount by landing said goods and raw silk (in goodness inferior to that procured about Cassambazar).\textsuperscript{52} Besides, these interprovincial trade Malda goods were also exported to Dacca, Murshidabad and Rajmahal.

One noticeable feature is that, there was no professionally skilled local mercantile community at Malda like Surat in the same period. Though there were some small local merchants who acted as broker either to the indigenous or to foreign merchants. Such was the trading pattern of Malda before the coming of the Europeans in the picture. The English connection with Malda began with the establishment of a factory there in 1680 A.D. by the English, although the Dutch were the first among the Europeans who settled at Malda for trade.\textsuperscript{53} But the exact date of their establishment is not known. The French were the third and the last European power to enter in to the race for commercial transactions with Malda. With entrance of the European in the market, the demands for the goods were tremendously increased. Naturally, there arose a triangular competition among the English, Dutch and indigenous merchants. The most important was the competition of the indigenous merchants. The most vehement opposition came from Haranarayan Kanungo (custom officer) of Bengal who had taken Malda on lease from Shaista Khan.\textsuperscript{54} One of the most effective way in which indigenous merchants put a check on the European company was through their money lending. The problem was that the company could not supply sufficient money for the investment in proper time. Naturally the factors who resided at the factory depended upon the local merchants for advantage of the company’s need and were charged interest at the rate of 1% per month.\textsuperscript{55}

The problem of balance of trade was another factor which arrested the growth of European trade at Malda as elsewhere. Because there was very little hope of

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Ibid}, Vol.i, p.401.
\textsuperscript{54} \textit{The Malda Diary and Consultations,} (1680-82),op.cit., pp.4-5.
\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Ibid}, p.54.
trading any barter at Malda. The European companies procured goods for export mainly through merchant-middleman as they could not deal directly with the producers in most cases. They had to give dadni or advance to middlemen who in their turn paid advances to weavers and artisans in the proper time of the year. The principal merchants were Ganesh Das and Shambhu das, besides these merchants, the factors also contracted directly with the weavers through the dellals (middlemen), for example Crepol (possible Sripal) Dellol and Moniram Dellol to the weavers. The chief advantage of this system was that the goods could be purchased at least eight or ten percent cheaper than the ready money purchase. The Indian merchants also made advances to the weavers at a specified time every year. But the considerable part of their trade was carried on by the ready money purchase system. This was in short the trading pattern and organization of the Malda regions in the second half of the 17th century.

**PATNA**

Patna was one of the largest towns of Mughal India, which was in the 17th century not only a centre of inter-provincial trade, but also of global trade with Asiatic, African and European countries. It was linked with Agra on the west by river and land routes and so with the general system of overland traffic to central Asia, Western Asia and Africa, including Egypt. It lay on the route from Agra to Chatgaon (Chittagong) and was joined with the other parts of Bengal, like Hooghly, Kasimbazar, etc. It also traded with Orissa, including Puri and Balasore. Bowrey did not overstated on the commercial importance of Patna when he observed that, “this is a country of very great traffic and commerce, and is really the great gate that open into Bangala and Orixa, and so consequently in to most parts of India, viz., from the Northerene kingdome or Empires (by land), namely Persia, Carmania (Kirman), Georgia, Tartaria, etc. The commodities of those countries are transported hither by

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56 The Malda Diary and Consultations, (1680-82),op.cit., p.37.
58 Ibid, pp.2-3.
Caffila, who also export the commodities brought hither by the English and Dutch as also of this kingdom.”

According to Ralf Fitch, it was a great town where houses were simple, made of earth and covered with straw, streets were large. There was market for cotton, Bengal sugar, and opium. He also states that near Patna gold was extracted from earth they dug deep pits, washed the earth in great “bolles” and therein they found the gold. They made the pits round, walled them with bricks so that the earth may not fall in.

According to De Laet, “this is a very fertile province watered by the four rivers, of which the Ganges and the Persely from the western and eastern boundaries of the province, respectively. The other two rivers are the Jemini and the Kandah.”

It was a center of trade in saltpeter, which was used in making gunpowder. Tavernier found a Dutch factory here and mentions Chapra (in Saran District of Bihar) a large village which was 10 kos from Patna and where Dutch refined the saltpeter.

John Marshall, who visited Patna in 1676 A.D., has given a good account of the manner of the purchase of saltpeter. According to him, the English contacted the saltpeter men whose number varied from 30 to 40. The English deputed its peons to keep a close watch over “petermen as they may not sell its saltpeter to Dutch when ready. The Nawab had also large stores of saltpeter at Patna and, occasionally, he would force the saltpeter men (English) to sell the saltpeter directly to him and would even conduct raids, at times, on the English storehouse at Naunagar, if it was nowhere available. The Nawab not only tried to monopolies the saltpeter but also lead and lately was getting large quantities of it from the English.

Patna was the place where the English and the Dutch had erected their factories for the procurement of saltpeter. For the purchase of saltpeter, money was given in advance, much before the season started. Thomas Bowrey remarked about the availability of saltpeter in Patna by saying that “the only commodities of this kingdom that are yearly sent for England are saltpeter, of which great quantities are

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60 Early travels in India, p.23.
64 Diary of Streynsham Master, Vol.ii, p.331-332.
sent to England and Holland with a considerable investment of each Nation in Codde Muske, which is here found to be very good”. 65 James Bridgmen at Balasore informed the company on December 15, 1650 A.D., that saltpeter at Patna was in plenty and did not cost more than one rupee a mound, though the total cost including customs and freight at Hugli did not exceed 1 3/4 rupee. The English had purchased a large quantity of saltpeter which was to be sent to England in Lioness. They (the English) were keen on getting the entire stock then available at Patna, and were ready to “pay any amount desired by the sellers”. 66

Patna yielded annually about 1,000 to 2,000 mounds of silk which was sent to Gujarat and Agra. 67 Patna was an important meeting place of merchants of different nationalities, for whose convenience there was a cosmopolitan sarai (Saif Kahn’s sarai), 68 here a traveler or merchant could rent a room according to circumstances of stay and luggage compartment was also available. This type of sarai was usually found in big cities, and was ideal for foreign travelers, whereas sarais in some big towns usually accommodated travelers for the night only.

DELHI / SHAHAJAHANABAD

Delhi was the capital of Hindustan as well as the intellectual and political centre of all India, during the Mughal Empire. From Babur sprang the long line of Mughal Emperors, under whom Delhi reached the zenith of her glory. Babur died in 1530, at Agra, which likes his predecessors, the Lodis, he seems to have made his principal residence. Humayun, determined to make Delhi his residence, he found it necessary to build or restore the fort of Purana Qila or Indraprasth, on the site of the ancient Indraprasth. Humayun called his new fort Din-i panah. Fathar Monserrate, who visited Delhi after leaving Mathura, called Delhi as Delinum and gives a vivid description about it in such manner “Delinum is inhabited by substantial and wealthy Brachmanae, and of course by a Mongol garrison. Hence its many fine private

65 A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal 1669-1679, p.229.
mansions add considerably to the magnificence of the city. For the neighbourhood is rich in stone and lime, and the rich men construct for themselves well-built, lofty and handsomely decorated residences. Thanks to Emaumus (Humayun) who was devoted to architecture and loved fine buildings and broad roads, the streets of the city are more imposing and impressive than in other Musalman towns. They are planted down the middle with beautiful green trees which cast a grateful shade. Time fails me to describe the lovely parks.” 69 In 1540 A.D. Humayun was expelled by Sher Shah, and this monarch entirely rebuilt the city, enclosing and fortifying it with a new wall. In1555 A.D. Humayun regained the throne, but died within six months after his success. He was succeeded by his son, the illustrious Akbar, who ascended the throne early in 1556 A.D. During his reign and that of Jahangir, nothing of local interest is recorded; the emperor principally resided at Agra or Lahore, while Delhi seems once more to have fallen into decay. Prior to British rule, the city of Delhi, which has been, at different epochs from the time of its foundation, the seat of ruling dynasties of Rajputs, Pathans, Moghals and Mahrattas. 70

It has not only been the capital seat of the Indian Empire and the seat of supreme government in India, but also a center of learning and culture, of refinement and civilization, of art and manufacture, of trade and commerce. Delhi was the epitome of India just as Rome was the epitome of the Roman Empire. Delhi is famous for its works of art. Its jewelery, ivory carving, miniature painting, gold and silver pottery, silver, brass and copper were having world-wide reputation. Delhi also continued to remain the intellectual centre of India. It is one of the two principal seats of Hindustani or Urdu language which took its rise in Delhi. The most famous poets of India were, Mir, Ghalib and Zauq. 71

Various commodities were found in Delhi during that time, the popular ones were sugar, indigo, pepper, turmeric and coarse muslin etc. A collection of coarse muslin was found here, these were calico, chintz etc. If one looks in to the principal industries of Delhi, cotton industries but more so chintz were well colored, next in quality to those of Masulipatnam only these were also produced in large quantities.

71 Anonymous, Delhi The capital of India, revised and enlarged edition of “ALL ABOUT DELHI” Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1997, p.5.
and several qualities with a wide range of prices to suit the pocket of high and low. This very fact shows that, Delhi had material available for both the classes i.e. for the privileged as well as for the common man.72

It looks so strange that the greatest of the Mughal Emperors should be so little connected with the history of the great imperial city till the reign of Shahjahan. Abul Fazl’s account is confirmed by an interesting sketch given by William Finch who visited the city in 1611 A.D. He travelled from Agra, then the capital, towards Lahore, and on the way halted at Delhi, “On the left hand,” he says in describing it, “is seen the carkasse of old Dely called the Nine Castles, and 52 gates, now inhabited only by Googers. A little short is a stone bridge of eleven arches, over a branch of Gimini (Jamuna): from hence a broad way shaded with great trees, leading to the sepeculcher of Hamaron (Humayun) this king’s grandfather, tomb itself covered with rich carpets, the rich semaine over head, and a front, certain books on small tressels by which stand his sword, Tucke, and shoe; at the entrance are other tomb of shaded way you come to the king’s house and Moholl (mahal), now ruinous. The city is 2c. Between Gate as are many goodly houses: within and about this city are the tombs of twenty Pathan Kings, all very fair and stately. The kings of India are here to be crowned, or else they are held Usurpers. It is seated in a goodly plain, environed with goodly pleasant gardens and monuments.” 73

But between the years 1638 and 1658 A.D. Emperor Shahjahan once more rebuilt it almost in its present form, and his city, still known as Shahjahanabad, is with a few trifling exceptions, the city of Modern days. It is to Shahjahan also that Delhi is indebted for the great mosque, called the Jama Masjid, and for the restoration of the present western Jamuna canal. Delhi, thus restored, was the capital of the renowned Aurangzeb, the great emperor among the Mughal Kings, and during his reign, from 1658 to 1707 A.D., was uniformly prosperous.74

It is difficult to estimate the population of Shahjahanabad in 1650 A.D. because there are no such data for Shahjahanabad. Francois Bernier, who lived in the city from 1659-1663 A.D. and gives a detailed description of the new town erected

72 Role of Geography in Shaping the Structure of Trade in Mughal India (IJSER) op.cit.,p.119.
73 Early Travels in India, p.155-56.
74 A Gazetteer of Delhi, 1912, pp.28-29.
by Shahjahan, which for brevity, he called it Shahjahanabad, and judged it to be about size of Paris which, during the late 17th century, had the population of about 500,000 persons. Tavernier’s account is considerably shorter, and incidentally we learn from it that Shahjahan preferred Delhi to Agra, “because the climate is more temperate,” and that while the king and the merchants lived at Jahanabad, the poor and the majority of the nobles lived in the old city-Caledon those days as Delhi.

Shahjahanabad, the capital city of the Mughal Empire, occupied a prominent spot in the Delhi triangle. It was an area steeped in the glorious traditions of the past and Shahjahanabad was the last in a long line of pre modern capital cities. The Mughal capital was the culmination of a period of urban development that began to the north in the Indus valley around 2500 B.C. and continued until about 1750 A.D., from thence both Shahjahanabad and the Mughal Empire was treading into decline. In the almost unbroken succession of urban settlement in the Delhi area, Shahjahanabad was the crown jewel, the climax of the pre modern urban process in the Indian subcontinent.

The plan of Shahjahanabad reflects both Hindu and Islamic influences. The street plan seems to have followed a design from the ancient Hindu texts on architecture, the Vastu Sastras (rules for architecture). The influence of Islamic ideas can also be seen in the plan of Shahjahanabad. In painting, poetry, music and dance as well as in architecture and city planning the Persian influence was predominant. It is difficult to estimate the population of Shahjahanabad in 1650 A.D. because there are no such data for it. In the 1800 acres of the nearby suburbs were found the homes of lower-ranking mansabdars and of the soldiers, merchants, servants, laborers, and others who were not part of the households of the great men, a population of about 100,000-150,000 persons. This estimate is supported by Francois Bernier who lived in the city from 1659 to 1663 A.D. and judged it to be about size of Paris which, during the late 17th century, had a population of about 500,000 persons. In addition, Jean de Thevenot, a Frenchman who travelled in Western India during 1666 A.D., stated that

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75 Bernier, p.241.  
76 Ibid., p.282.  
77 Tavernier, Vol.i, p.96.  
78 A Gazetteer of Delhi, 1912, pp.24-26.  
79 Bernier, p.282.
Shahjahanabad had a population of about 400,000. The people of Shahjahanabad inhabited a variety of dwellings according to their status. The large walled mansions of princes and great amirs contained gardens, watercourses, and beautiful apartments. Lower ranking amirs and rich merchants had smaller houses constructed of burnt tile and lime, stone, or brick. They were not elaborately carved and decorated and did not boast large gardens. Ordinary merchants often lived in quarters behind their shops. Soldiers, servants, craftsmen, small traders and others lived inside the palace-fortress or the great mansions or in straw-thatched mud huts scattered about.

The two major thoroughfares in Shahjahanabad were called bazaars, streets lined on both sides with shops of merchants, artisans, and others. The largest and richest stretched from the Lahori gate of the fort to the Fatehpuri mosque, built in 1650 A.D. by Jahanara Begum, this street was 40 yards wide and 1520 yards long and held 1560 shops and porticos. The other major bazaar in Shahjahanabad stretched from the Akbarabadi gate of the fort to Akbarabadi gate of the city. It was 1050 yard long, 30 yards wide, and had 888 shops, built in 1650 by Nawab Akbarabadi Begum. The markets of Shahjahanabad had threefold hierarchy; neighborhood markets, regional markets, and central markets. In neighborhood markets grain, cloth, salt, fruit, and vegetables were sold. These markets served the smallest area, had the fewest customers, and offered a limited selection of goods. Regional market sold grain, fruit, vegetables and cloth but they differed in serving more people spreaded over a larger area and in providing a wider selection of goods. The merchants who staffed these markets, many of whom were khattris, should be seen as clients, members of elite households and not as independent businessmen. The great central market of Chandni Chawk, Faiz Bazaar, and Chawk Sadullah Khan catered to the entire city. In these bazaars customers could buy the grain, vegetables, fruit, and rough cloth of the neighborhood markets, the fine cloth, leather goods, weapon, ironwork and services of a rarity, quality, and richness unavailable elsewhere. Shahjahanabad was also at the apex of the hierarchy of towns and cities in north India. Merchants from other provinces of the empire and from other countries brought their goods to the central bazaars of Shahjahanabad.

80 Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, p.61.
81 Bernier, pp.245-47.
82 Ibid, pp.228-30.
“A city may be defined as a place where artisans (pishevar) of various kinds dwell.”83 This statement by Abul Fazl sums up the state of manufacturing in the cities of Mughal India. Nonagricultural production was, for the most part, handicraft and the artisans, craftsmen, and workmen of Shahjahanbad turned out a wide variety of goods. Urban artisans and craftsmen divided in to two groups. The first group consisted of those persons who maintained control over their product until it was sold in the market and included relatively well to do artisan who owned their equipment and produced luxury goods for a limited market as well as poorer artisans who produced ordinary goods for the larger market. The second group included those artisans who had no control over their goods. For these persons, the materials, in some cases the tools, and the final product remained the property of someone else.84 Artisans who worked under the putting out system, for example, were not independent. The textile industry, the largest in the subcontinent, seems to have been organized largely on this basis. Merchants and brokers advanced order for cloth to weavers, specifying quality, quantity, and design. The finished product was collected, paid for, and shipped to the consumer and, in many cases, never reached the Indian marketplace.

AHMADABAD

The foundation of the city of Ahmadabad was laid by Sultan Ahmadshah with the benedicitions of his spiritual preceptor, Shaikh Ahmad Khattu Ganj Baksh of Sarkhej, in 1411 A.D. on a site close to the much older trading center of Asaval (or Asapalli or Karnavati). He was ambitious to be the founder of a great line of Kings and he wanted to replace the old Hindu capital of Anhilvad Patan, 70 miles to the north with a capital of his own making. He encouraged merchants, weavers and skilled craftsmen to come to Ahmadabad and make it a flourishing commercial and industrial city as well. For a hundred years it grew in wealth and splendor, then for sixty years declined with the decay of Gujarat dynasty and Portuguese interference with its trade. In 1572 it became part of the Mughal Empire, the seat of the Mughal

viceroy of Gujarat, and its prosperity recovered, but in the disintegration of the empire.  

Though it started as an administrative and military headquarter of the province, this city is almost as large as London, having a circumference of 6 Dutch miles. Ahmadabad, LAT.23°00; LONG 72°35’ reputed as the ‘Manchester’ of western India. It is situated on a plain near the bank of a small river, and surrounded by a strong wall with many gates and turrets. It has a large and excellently fortified citadel. The houses of the townspeople are equal in magnificence to any in Asia or Africa. The streets are broad and well paved. Travelers have left descriptions of some of these cities: the splendor of the palaces, temples, and mosques, the cosmopolitan bazaars, the squalor in which the common people lived, and most importantly the dependence of all on the court. The city of Ahmadabad did not owe its importance just to its being a seat of government; it survived several changes of rulers, and it had more than ephemeral reasons for its existence. Ahmadabad was a crossroads, commanding the caravan routes to Rajasthan and Delhi to the north, Malawa to the east, Sind with its port of Thatta, and Broach to the south. Ahmadabad’s climate is dry and the camels of the desert still trudge through its streets.

Under the Sultans of Gujarat and Mughal viceroy, Ahmadabad was a splendid city by the standard of the time. Before the rise of the Mughal Agra and Delhi it was probably the finest in India. Ahmadabad has always been a wealthy city by Indian standard and its people have a reputation for industry and thrift. It has always been a textile center and was once famed for the cloths which were exported through Cambay the main port of the Persian Gulf and Arabian ports, Southeast Asia, and other parts of India. Fine velvet, silk, and gold and silver brocades reached the Middle East and Europe. Coarse and brightly dyed Ahmadabad cottons were worn in Africa and Southeast Asia. Ships from many countries came to Cambay and the Dutch and English East India companies had factors in Ahmadabad to buy indigo, saltpeter and textiles. A stream of donkeys and camels carried luxury imports from the west.

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86 The Empire of the Great Mogol, op.cit, pp.19.
88 The Empire of the Great Mogol, op.cit, pp.19-21.
89 Ahmedabad, A Study in Indian Urban History, op.cit, p.15
through the warehouses of Ahmadabad to the courts of Delhi, Agra, Rajasthan and Malwa. Among the products they brought back were drugs for export and coarse cloth to be dyed in the city. Ahmadabad’s Muslim weavers and Hindu and Jain financiers and merchants cooperated to bring great wealth to the city. It had a trade in silken stuff, gold and silver tapestries and Kim khwabs, saltpeter, sugar, ginger, were other important commercial products. In this district of Ahmedabad indigo was produced though of a quality far inferior of that of Bayana. The city is a great trading centre, every ten or twenty day’s 200 carts leave for Cambay laden with every description of merchandise. Many of the inhabitants are merchants (mostly rich Banians) or master craftsmen, so that a force of six thousand horsemen can without difficulty be maintained here. The people called it Cickel (J.N Sarkar points out the name is derived from chikli, a well known place near Surat.).

It is said that Ahmadabad used to hang on three threads, gold, silk, and cotton. It was for her silk manufacturing that she was mainly famed, especially for the bright colors of the plain silks and the durability and non-fading qualities of the brocades with patterns woven of gold and silver thread. Raw silk was imported from the Bengal, China and Central Asia. The raw silk was imported by merchants called taigas, while other merchants would pay the workmen and export the finished product. Cotton spinning and the weaving, dyeing and printing of cotton cloth were also important industries. Ahmadabad’s cotton cloth was not noted for its fineness but for its strength and fast bright colors. Other important manufactures were high-quality paper and wood-work.

There were about forty guilds in Ahmadabad among them the guilds of Hindu or Jain bodies were predominant. The Muslim guilds were in ‘weak imitation of Hindu models’ and not comparable with the guilds which were so important in Islamic cities in the Middle East. The guilds of merchants and financiers’ were known as mahajans and their hereditary heads as seths. Among them the most important were Saraf mahajan, the cloth dealers mahajan and the raw silk dealers’ mahajan, the artisan guilds known as panch and their heads as patels. A guild could embrace

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90 Ahmedabad, A Study in Indian Urban History, op.cit.,p.16.
91 The Mughal Administration, op.cit.,P.54.
93 Ahmedabad, A Study in India Urban History, op.cit.,p.27.
members of several castes, and a caste member of several guilds; in some cases they were coterminous.94

By the end of the 16th century it had become a great manufacturing and commercial centre. Its cotton, silken and woolen goods of various varieties as well as its gold and silver brocades were in great demand in India as well as abroad, and its gold and silver jewelries were considered as the best specimens of craftsmanship and manual dexterity. Other flourishing industries included dyeing and bleaching, embroidery and needle work, and inlaying market was indigo which was produced in plenty in its vicinity, and the neighboring town of Sarkhej had emerged as a principal mart.95 During this period Ahmadabad was rich in produce of every part of globe, its painters, carvers, inlayers, and workers in silver gold and iron, were famous its Imperial workshops came masterpieces in cotton, silk, velvet and brocade with astonishing figures and patterns, knots and fashions.96

Mandelslo, in 1638, described its craftsmen as famous for their work in steel, gold, ivory, paper, lac, bone, silk, honey, and cotton and its merchants as dealing in sugarcandy, cumin, opium, borax, dry and preserved ginger and other sweets, myrobalans, saltpeter and sal ammoniac, diamonds from Bijapur, ambergris, and musk.97

Another factor which invested Ahmadabad with great commercial importance was the fact that it was situated at major trade routes connecting it with other commercial centers like Multan in the north, and Agra in the east and principal port towns like Cambay in the west and Surat in the south. In fact trade routes connected the city directly or indirectly with every part of the country. As a consequence the capital city of Gujarat gradually emerged as an emporium of goods from various parts of India and the world. Therefore, at the end of the 16th century the city had become one of the largest and the most populous in the country with a heterogeneous population and a rich and variegated mercantile class. It had become a veritable confluence of most nations in the world. The merchants immigrating into the city

94 Ahmedabad, A Study in India Urban History, op.cit.,p.23.
97 Commissariat M.S., Mandelslo`s Travels in Western India (A.D.1638-1639), Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1995,p.80.
from other cities of Gujarat and other parts of the country brought with them the tradition of *mahajans* and this institution took firm in Ahmadabad at a very early stage.\footnote{The Nagarseth of Ahmedabad: The History of an urban institution in a Gujarat City, op.cit.,p.482.}

From the second quarter of the seventeenth century, Ahmadabad fell into the decline from which it was rescued by British rule and modern industry. Aurangzeb’s prolonged stay in the Deccan, the decline of the Mughal Empire and the resulting shift of India’s political center of gravity towards the south and east weakened Ahmadabad’s importance as a center of trade. But there were other reasons for the decline of the city. Ahmadabad’s seaborne exports though Cambay were falling off. Contemporaries blamed the piracy of the European intruders in Asia water, the Gulf of Cambay could be easily blockaded and the Portuguese controlled its entrance from Diu and Daman. India’s own shipping was being supplanted by that of foreigners. Another important reason was the silting of the mouth of the river Mahi, which has, over the years, turned Cambay into an insignificant and unsuitable port.\footnote{Ahmedabad, A Study in India Urban History, op.cit.,p.27.} Surat, which first came into prominence in the 17th century as a port for the pilgrimage traffic to Mecca, was a new rival to Ahmadabad and Cambay as a center of trade, and was given even greater importance when the European companies established their factories there. Ahmadabad’s supremacy in textile exports was because of its factories, which was challenged by other manufactures in Sind, Panjab, and the Gangetic plain. The terrible famine depopulated Gujarat in 1630-32 A.D. was followed by a decline in the price of its textiles and helped to turn European eyes to these other areas. From this time onwards, Ahmadabad tended to specialized in luxury fabrics rather than in the cheaper varieties.\footnote{Ibid., pp.29-30.}

**BANARAS**

The district of Varanasi, formally known as Banaras, is named after the headquarters city which lies on the left bank of the river Ganga and has been held sacred by the Hindus since very early times. According to Atharva Veda, Varanasi...
(the chief city of the Kashi) was connected with the river Varanavati, but the name Varanasi is probably derived from a combination of the names of the Varuna and Assi, the name of the two small streams which confines the modern city having been described in the Puranas. It is also known as Kashi. Varanasi is mentioned in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as being the capital of the kings of the realm of Kashi. It has also been mentioned in Jain, Buddhist and classical Sanskrit literature. The appellation Varanasi seems to have been corrupted into Banaras, a name which continued in official use till May 24, 1956, when the state government changed it back to Varanasi.

It is one of the easternmost district of the state and lies between the parallels of 24°43’ and 25° 35’ N. Latitude and 82° 11’ and 83° 24’ E. Longitude, with the greatest length (of 82 miles) running from east to west and the greatest breadth (of 58 miles) from north to south. Towards the west the northern boundary of the district marches with the southern boundary of the Jaunpur district for about 65 miles and the remaining part of the northern boundary of the district of Ghazipur, the river Ganga flowing between the two districts for the greater part of the distance. On the south lies the district of Mirzapur, on the west the district touches the eastern boundary of the Allahabad district and on the east lie the district of Ghazipur.

It has been a treasury of learning, an assembly-hall of learned men, and the school of those that desire the lore of the Hindus. Brahmans, who have acquired learning and perfection and readers of the Vedas who are masters of their condition and speech, have their residence here. And Brahmans and sons of Brahmans, from countries far and near, assemble in this city. During the rule of the sultans of Delhi, Varanasi became the centre of reformist activities in the religious and social spheres becoming closely associated with such outstanding personalities as Ramanand, a pioneer of the Bhakti movement in Northern India, his disciple, Kabir (probably born in 1398 A.D.), who struck at the root of caste distinctions, idolatry and all the external paraphernalia of religious life. The Vaishnava saint, Vallabhacharya, who was an exponent of the Krishna cult, was born near Varanasi in 1479 A.D. in a Brahman

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102 Ibid., p. 60 fn.
103 J.N. Sarkar, *India of Aurangzeb*, (topography, Statistic and Roads Compared with the India of Akbar) with extract from Khulasatu-t Tawarikh and the Chahar Gulshan, 1901, p. 28.
104 *India of Aurangzeb*, op.cit., p. 28.
family, his parents having come from southern India on pilgrimage. He is said to have studied in Varanasi and also died here.\(^{105}\) The cultural life of the city also became enriched and vigorous by the contribution of the famous poet, Tulsidas (1532-1623 A.D.), who lived there for years and also died there. His celebrated epic, *Ramcharit Manasa*, seems to have been completed in this place.

From the time immemorial, being the chief seat of learning in Hindustan it has also commanded a prominent place in commercial activities. Crowds of people flock to it from the most distant parts for the purpose of instruction to which they apply themselves with the most manufacturing of cloth particularly of the varieties called *Jholi* and *Mihirkul* (two kind of cotton cloth)\(^ {106}\) Ralph Fitch, an English traveler who visited Varanasi in 1583 A.D., also speaks of the cloth industry of this place that, Bannaras [Benaras] which is a great town and great store of cloth is made of cotton and shashes [turban cloth for the moors.]\(^ {107}\) During the reign of Jahangir a mosque was built in Varanasi in 1618 A.D. In Jahangir’s time Varanasi continued to be famous for the manufacture of *cummerbunds*, turbans, cloth and garments (particularly for women), copper pots, dishes, basins and other articles of common use.\(^ {108}\) It was also famous for the cultivation of the betel leaf and according to Abul Fazl, the Kapurkanth leaf is yellowish green and pungent like pepper, it smells like camphor.\(^ {109}\)

Tevernier, the French traveler, visited Varanasi on December 12 and 13, 1665 A.D., who writes, “Beneres is a large and well built town, the majority of the houses being of brick and cut stone and loftier than those of other towns of India, but it is very inconvenient that the streets are so narrow. It has several caravanserais, and among other, one very large and well built. In the middle of the court there are two galleries where they sell cottons, silken stuffs and other kinds of merchandise. The majority of those who vend the goods are the workers who have made the pieces and in this manner foreigners obtain them at first hand. These workers, before exposing anything for sale, have to go to him who holds the contract, so as to get the imperial


\(^{106}\) India of Aurangzeb, op.cit., p.xlvii.

\(^{107}\) Early Travels in India, pp.20-21.


\(^{109}\) Ain, Vol.i, p.72.
stamp impressed on the pieces of calico or silk, otherwise they are fined and flogged”\(^{110}\).

Another French traveler who visited Varanasi during the reign of Aurangzeb was Bernier who has also left an interesting account of the city and its institutions. He says, “The town of Banares, seated on the Ganges in a beautiful situation, and in the midst of an extreme, fine and rich country, many be considered the general school of the Gentiles,”\(^{111}\) and goes on to describes the educational system obtaining here.

The region included in the present district had always known some sort of governmental authority in the past and in the time of Akbar it roughly corresponded with the sarkar of Banaras. When the British took possession of this, they formed it into a district and placed it under the control of the British Resident of Varanasi though nominally it remained under the Raja of Banaras. In 1794A.D. Raja Mahip Narain Singh had to surrender the revenue and judicial administration of this area to the English. The city of Banaras, a great Hindu centre attracting a large number of pilgrims and visitors from various parts of India, had developed into a regional administrative headquarters and an important centre of trade and commerce during the 18\(^{th}\) century.\(^{112}\)

**AJMER**

It is an ancient, beautiful city, full of interest, both historical and architectural, its bazaars and its old houses with carved fronts, some of which are amongst the finest in India, giving added attraction to its superb situation. A well built stone wall with five gateways surrounded the city.\(^{113}\) Ajmer enjoys the distinction of having been the capital of India during the 12\(^{th}\) century, when its Chauhan kings were Emperors of India and ruled the whole of upper India. The climate of Ajmer is one of the healthiest in India, the seasons are all moderate, and the air is dry and hot in summer and cold and bracing in winter. The town of Ajmer is of moderate size, situated at the

\(^{110}\) Tavernier, Vol.i, p.118.
\(^{111}\) Bernier, pp.333-35.
foot of mountain and surrounded with a stone wall and a broad moat. Its houses were yellow in color. The town is famous for the shrine of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti, a saint held in the greatest veneration by the Mughals as Jahangir calls him "the fountain-head of most of the saints of India."  

Sir Thomas Roe came to Ajmer on 23rd December 1615 A.D. as ambassador from King James I of England to the court of the great Mughal, and stayed at Ajmer for nearly a year to negotiate a treaty granting freedom of trade to the English East India Company. His first interview with Jahangir took place on 19th January, 1616. It is well known that though he was received with his usual courtesy by the emperor, his mission proved a failure. Roe says that Ajmer in a beautiful and very fertile plain lays the town of Kota which was well fortified and finely built but already ruinous. He also observes that Ajmer is situated 25° 30’ north of the equator, 200 English miles or ten days journey south of Agra and 450 miles north of Barampore. Ajmer, 230 miles south west of Delhi and 48 miles from Jaipur in the same direction, had been a favourite abode of Akbar, who found it both a charming residence and a convenient center for his operations in Rajputana. Jahangir had made it his headquarters during the war with Rana of Udaipur, and had been there over two years at the date of Roe’s arrival. Its situation is described as strikingly beautiful, surrounded as it is by well-wooded hills embowering a number of large lakes.

In the old days, Ajmer was not only the entrepot for the trade between Bombay and Upper India, but for many years the chief market for the exchange of European goods and the produce and manufactures of Rajputana and upper India. Dyeing and lace-making were the principal manufactures of Ajmer. English muslin and silks were in different colors and beautiful designs and were used principally by ladies of high classes for aurahnas and kanchlees (kind of bodice). These are not only used in Rajputana but exported to Malwa, Berars, Khandesh, Gujarat, and to all places where Marwaris are to be found. Lace-making-gota, kinari, lappa gokhru, etc.-was another industry of rising importance, and though the trade in both was in the hands of mahajans, the manufactures are almost all Muhammadan, and in the case of lace-
making, generally those of Delhi, Ajmer laces differ in color, quality and shape from those manufactured at Delhi. The gold embroidery work- \textit{salma sitara} and \textit{kalabatoo} on silks, velvets, and other cloth was also largely done in Ajmer. An important industry of Ajmer was the making of various kinds of brass, copper and bell-metal utensils, such as dishes, \textit{katordan}, \textit{lotas} and cooking pots of different shapes and sizes. Gold and silver ornaments for men and women were largely manufactured in Ajmer and some of them were good specimens of the goldsmith’s art.

The town of Ajmer, in its days of prosperity, was famous for four\textsuperscript{119} things i.e. Shrine of Khwaja Shahib,\textsuperscript{120} marble mines of Makrana, the sacred lake of Pushkar\textsuperscript{121} and Shambhar salt mines.\textsuperscript{122} About 1558 A.D., Ajmer passed into the possession of Akbar; and in 1571 A.D., to improve the conditions of the place; he ordered a strong wall to be built round it and a palace to be erected for his own residence. He made it a \textit{suba}, making Jaipur, Bikaner, and Sirohi subordinate to it. According to \textit{Ain-i Akbari}, the length of Ajmer Suba was 336 miles and breadth 300 miles; and it was bounded by Agra, Delhi, Multan and Gujarat.\textsuperscript{123} Akbar added the Akbari Masjid to the Dargah in 1570 A.D. In 1569 A.D., Ismail Kuli Khan, Akbar’s \textit{subedar} at Ajmer, built the Darwaza (high gateway) on the shrine of Miran Sayad Hussain.\textsuperscript{124}

Jahangir, after he came to the throne in 1605 A.D., built the Daulat Bagh, and erected palaces in it, which have been disappeared. He also built a residence for himself on the Pushkar Lake which still stands, though in ruins, behind the Jodhpur \textit{ghat}. He added the small Mosque to the shrine, and presented the second deg (cauldron) the first one having been presented by Akbar. After becoming emperor, Shahjahan built the beautiful \textit{baradaries} (pavilions) standing on the Ana Sagar Lake and a Turkish bath in 1637 A.D. He also built the present mausoleum over the tomb

\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Ajmer, Historical and Descriptive}, op.cit p.16-17.
\textsuperscript{120} The town is famous for the shrine, which held in the greatest veneration by the Mogols., De Laet, \textit{The Empire of the Great Mogol}, op.cit., p.65.
\textsuperscript{121} Three kos from Ajmir is a very large lake named Puskar. It is an old place of worship. In the books of the Hindus it is regarded as the guide [chief] of holy places ; it is held that if a man bathes in and walks round all other holy places on the face of the earth, but does not come to bathe in this lake, he gains no merit, \textit{India of Aurangzeb}, p.58.
\textsuperscript{122} In SAMBHAR, excellent salt is manufactured. Near the city there is a large lake four kos in length and one kos in breadth. Its water is extremely briny. , \textit{India of Aurangzeb}, op.cit.,p.59.
\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Ajmer, Historical and Descriptive},op.cit., p.33.
of the Khwaja and the Juma Masjid, known as Shahjahani Masjid, in the shrine both in white marble. He also repaired and extended the city wall. He laid out a garden to the west of Ana Sagar which, though in ruins is still called the Shah Jahani Bagh.\textsuperscript{125} The Visla Lake was destroyed during the battle in course of war of succession between Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb and the fortress of Ajmer, Taragarh, also suffered great damage. Sayad Muhammad’s mosque situated on the top of some shops in the Dargah Bazar was built by Sayad Muhammad in Aurangzeb’s time in 1693 A.D.

Though, with the fall of Mughal Empire the prosperity of this historical city suffered an eclipse, but with the advent of the British, and particularly since the coming of the railway, bright days dawned on Ajmer that has been making steady progress.

**LAHORE**

According to Pelsaert, it was situated on the Ravi, in 32 degrees latitude, 300 Kos northwest of Agra\textsuperscript{126}. Lahore is a city of tradition and also known as the cultural hub and heart of Pakistan. It is as old as the recorded history of this region and its origin is obscure. Perhaps, it was founded somewhere between 1\textsuperscript{st} and 7\textsuperscript{th} A.D., and is undoubtedly ancient. It waxed and waned in importance during the sultanate with the coronation of Qutub-ud-din Aibak as the first sultan of subcontinent here in 1206 A.D. Since the foundation of the Muslim rule in Punjab with Lahore as its headquarters the cultural interaction started taking its course and it reached at its zenith during the Mughal period. The reigns of Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, the successor of Babur, may be considered as the golden period of the history of Lahore. The city again became the place of royal residence, garden, tombs, mosques and pavilions sprang up in every direction.\textsuperscript{127} The city enjoyed envious position during the reign of Akbar.\textsuperscript{128} Lahore having been the seat of many imperial dynasties possesses interesting historical reminiscences. It was the Lahore where

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{125}] Ajmer, Historical and Descriptive, op.cit., p.205.
\item[\textsuperscript{126}] Pelsaert, p.30.
\item[\textsuperscript{128}] Ibid., pp.15-16
\end{itemize}
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Chapter-5

Ranjit singh deprived Shah Shuja-ul mulk, his guest from Kabul, of the famous Koh-i noor (diamond).

Lahore was the historic capital of Panjab and one of the most important cities in the Mughal Empire, founded in 1526. In the late 16th century, the great Mughal emperor Akbar had built a great fort there which was enlarged by his successors. The Mughal laid out gardens whose trees provided relief from the searing heat of summer, built palaces covered with polychrome tiles, and tombs decorated with marble inlaid with semi-precious stone. Finch regards it as one of the greatest cities of the east possibly for the circumference of its ditch and wall (built under Salim) is 24 cos.129 The streets of the city were fine and paved with stone. The buildings are well built and lofty, constructed in bricks with curious windows. They were built in such a manner that no passerby could see within and constricted of bricks for the safety point of view. The inhabitants of the city were chiefly Baniyans and artisans. The citadel is situated on the bank of the beautiful river rave, which lower down joins the Indus and is navigable for boats of 60 tons burden and more. Many of these boats ply between Lahore and the trading center of Thatta in Sind after the rainy season was over.130 The castle of the town was enclosed with a strong brick wall having twelve gates, nine on the land side and three on the river, thus the hub of Lahore is the walled city, which grew up during the Mughal times.

Lahore was a place of great importance in Akbar’s time. Abul Fazl, speaking about it in the second year of Akbar’s reign, writes, it is a very populous city, the resort for the people of all nations and a centre of extensive commerce. In the shortest time great armies can be collected there, and ammunitions of war in any quantity can be procured for the use of troops.131 Lahore was one of the places of imperial workshop 132, which turned out to be a place of many masterpiece of workmanship like fine carpet manufacturing.133 A royal mint and other establishment were founded there. Further a carpet manufactory at Lahore was established by Shah Jahan, is the subject of praise in the account of his sixth regnal year. “So soft and delicate are these carpets,” says Abdul Hamid “that, compared with them, the carpets made in the

129 Early Travels in India.p.160.
131 Cf. S.M. Latif, Lahore: It’s History, Agriculture remains and Antiquities. New Imperial Press, Lahore, 1892, p.32
133 Ibid,p.55.
manufactory of the king of Persia look like coarse canvas.” These were made of *pashm* and shawl. A similar manufactory existed in Kashmir. All the rooms in the palace were furnished with these beautiful carpets.

Monserrate described it as the city is second to none either in Asia or in Europe with regards to size, population and wealth. In all these respects it excels other cities, as also in the huge quantity of every kind of merchandise which is imported. Merchants from all parts of the world crowded the city that men always jostle each other in the streets. There was a *bazaar* in the citadel which was “protected against sun and rain by a high pitched wooden roof”. Most of the buildings were made of brick and citizens were wealthy Brahmins and Hindus of every caste especially Kashmiris, perfumes were sold in abundance there. “Moreover there is no art and craft” useful to the human life writes the author, “Which was not practiced there”. Lahore was important trading center for the overland trade with Kabul, Kandhar, Persia and other countries. As far as production is concerned, it appears that Lahore produced a quality of fine white cloth, many pieces of silk of all colors, also much work in embroidery, carpets plain and flowers, goods bows and arrows, tents, swords coarse, woolen stuff, boots and shoes. But the real flowering of Lahore was started during the Mughal period. It was Akbar’s capital from 1584 to 1598 A.D. Jahangir loved the town and he and his wife Nur Jahan was buried at Shahadra, a locality in Lahore. Shahjahan was born in Lahore and added buildings, near Lahor Shah Jahan laid out the famous garden of Shalimar which was one of the wonders of India, and even Aurangzeb, not known for fine building, gave the town the Badshahi Masjid and the Alamgiri gateway to the fort. During the 18th century as Mughal power dwindle, there were constant invasion. Lahore was a *suba* of the empire. In the brief history of the city a mention has been made of the gates in the citadel of Lahore. Emperor Akbar, the great, built the original city wall with 12-13 gateways. The city itself considered to be one of the most beautiful in the Indian sub-

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136 *The commentary of Father Monserrate*, p.159.
138 *The commentary of Father Monserrate*, p.160.
139 *The Mughal Administration*, op.cit., P.57.
141 *India of Aurangzeb*, op.cit., p.lxxiv.
142 *The commentary of Father Monserrate*, p.160.

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continent, also did not escape the pillage and plunder. During the reign of Shahjahan, according to a Spanish monk, the city was large and capacious. The city streets and bazaars were well ordered, decorated pavilions’ of various colors a large gateways.\textsuperscript{143} 

There were well known saints because of whom, the city is known in the world of spiritualism. The first great Muslim scholar-saint, who came to Lahore and who moved about among the people of this city and helped them to the path of righteousness, was Shaik Ismail. The historians in their chronicles usually assign him the title of “Muhaddith”, the traditionalist.\textsuperscript{144} It is said that 100 of people of Lahore were converted to Islam due to his humanistic approach and his charismatic personality. The other most luminous figure in our history is Hazarat Data Ganj Baksh. The other famous saints in Lahore were, Hazarat Miyan Mir, Hazrat Madholal Hussain, Shah Abu Ishaq Qadri and Mian Wudda (Shaikh Muhamma Ismail Lahori)\textsuperscript{145} 

In those days, Mughal period, the chief market for indigo was Lahore rather than Agra.\textsuperscript{146} Formerly it was a great centre of trade, but at the time of Pelsaert’s working, in fact its trade was dead. “For some years” he further wrote, “the present king has spent five or six of the cool months of each year in Lahore, and the city was now recovered, but more in splendor, royal buildings, places and gardens, than in point of wealth”.\textsuperscript{147} It imported spices from Agra, all kinds of white cotton goods from Bengal and Golconda, ivory from Multan, quick silver. Coral, turbans, vermilions and silk goods from Ahmadabad, silk from Patna, and lac, pepper and drugs from other places\textsuperscript{148} The city had many markets such as katras, gudris, ganjs and mandis, where thronged lakhs of people. They belonged to different castes, occupational groups and professions, trading in a variety of merchandise and practicing their varied skills and craft. They included among them oilmen (teli) sellers of scented oils and scents, \textit{halwais} (confectioners), \textit{lohars} (ironsmiths), \textit{tambolis} (beetle leaf sellers), goldsmiths, \textit{kumhars}, \textit{jauharis} and rich \textit{sarafs}.\textsuperscript{149} Mughal power declined in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century and 

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{143} Cf. \textit{The Mughal Administration}, p.68.
\bibitem{144} \textit{Lahore : A Glimpse of Glorious Heritage}, op.cit.,p.88.
\bibitem{145} \textit{Lahore: A Glimpse of Glorious Heritage}, op.cit.,p. 15-16
\bibitem{146} Pelsaert, p.30
\bibitem{147} \textit{Ibid.},p.30
\bibitem{148} Pelsaert, p.31
\bibitem{149} Ramesh Chandra Sharma And Amit Mukerji, A contemporary Account of Lahore in the early 17\textsuperscript{th} century, \textit{PIHC},53\textsuperscript{rd} session, Warangal,1992-93, p.206.
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the Sikhs eventually came to rule the Punjab, uniting behind Ranjit Singh who was proclaimed Maharaja in Lahore in 1801 A.D.

MULTAN

According to *Ain-i Akbari*, Multan is one of the oldest city of India; Long 107°35'; Lat 29°52'. It has a brick fort and a lofty minaret adds to its beauty. It is situated at a distance of four miles from the bank of the river Chenab. Originally the town and the citadel were situated on two islands at the Ravi River, at an elevation of some 50 feet above the surface of the surrounding country, but centuries ago the Ravi River deserted its old channel and turning to the west, it flowed 32 miles away from the town. It flowed past Multan as late as the time of Timur.

Multan during the great Mughals was one of the most important and largest provinces of the Empire. It consisted of three *sarkar* (Multan, Dipalpur and Bhakkar) and these *sarkar* were further divided in to eighty *paragnas*. Multan was the largest agricultural unit of the Mughal kingdom, hence they paid special to its internal and external security and made the highway safe. Multan was a center of educational, cultural and literary activities. Muslim culture in Multan influenced the Hindu culture. It was also a Sufi center, as Abul Fazl says that Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya and many other saints here repose. The Mughal erected several grand buildings and monuments and thus they brought about changes in the local architectural designs.

During the reign of Babur, Mirza Askari, Babur’s son, at the age of twelve was appointed Governor of Multan in 1528 A.D. But the prince never visited Multan and Lashkar Khan remained the ruler of Multan on behalf of the Mughals. In February 1529 A.D. Babur placed Multan under the administrative control of Mirza Kamran, second son of Babur. Lashkar Khan acted as his *naib* (deputy) in Multan. After the death of Babur, his son Humayun ascended to the throne at Agra in December 1530 A.D. He faced great difficulty from the side of his brother Kamran, who revolted against him. When prince Kamran annexed the Punjab and its adjacent

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area, Humayun instead of punishing him, bestowed upon him the governorship of Hisar Firoza and the province of Multan.\textsuperscript{154} Lashkar Khan was running the administration of Multan very successfully since 1526 A.D. Multan became the part of Suri Kingdom in 1541 A.D. and Sher Shah appointed Khwas Khan as the governor of Punjab and Multan.\textsuperscript{155} According to \textit{Ain-i Akbari}, Multan contains 47 mahals\textsuperscript{156}, and perhaps a largest province of the Mughal Empire. It included Dipalpur, Ajudhan, Shorkot, Dhankot, Chinkot, kot Kahor, Rangpur Bhkar and Sindh. Multan also had a silver and copper mint.\textsuperscript{157} It was the seat of Qadi-al-Qaddat (chief Qadi).\textsuperscript{158}

The province of Multan was very large, and remarkably fertile, it was well situated for the purpose of trade on account of the three rivers which pass through it and which join not far from the capital. The economy of Multan was based on the fertile margins of Major Rivers and the easy transportation which the rivers afforded. It was known for its agricultural products which enabled the inhabitants to barter with desirable commodities, such as metals from other countries. The city of Multan was 140 cos distant from the royal city of Lahore.\textsuperscript{159} It was on the trade route from Persia through Kandahar to the province of India. The three rivers were the rave (Ravi), the Behat(Jhelum) and the Indus. Many camels were also reared here; the best camel in India came from it and the skill of the inhabitants in building arches was famous.\textsuperscript{160} It commanded the route to Persia which went by way of Kandhar. It’s most important product of trade was sugar, opium, cotton goods and sulphur. Much printed cloth was made in this province, bows and arrows were also manufactured.\textsuperscript{161} Edward terry speaking about Multan, he writes that excellent bows and arrows were manufactured there. Bows were made out of horn excellently “glued and put together”\textsuperscript{162}. Arrows were constructed out of small reeds and canes. Both were painted and varnished. They appeared very neat and good. Nowhere in India were such beautiful bows and arrows made.\textsuperscript{163} It produced much sugar, which was carried in large quantities by boats to Thatta. Multan manufactures “the finest and the most famous bow” large quantity of

\textsuperscript{155} \textit{History of Multan}, op.cit.,p.49.
\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Ain}, Vol.ii, p.328.
\textsuperscript{157} \textit{Town, Market, Mint and Port in the Mughal Empire(1556-1707),op.cit.}, p.237n.1
\textsuperscript{158} \textit{History of Multan}, op.cit., p.51.
\textsuperscript{159} Pelsaert, p.31.
\textsuperscript{160} Pelsaert, p.31 p.31; \textit{The Empire of the Great Mogol},op.cit., p.78.
\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Ibid.},p.31
\textsuperscript{162} \textit{Early Travels in India}, p.312.
white cotton goods and napkins. It imported large stocks of raw cotton and coarse yarn from Lahore and Agra, cotton goods from Bengal, turban, and very little quantity of spices from elsewhere.\textsuperscript{164} In this way it had the trade relation with Lahore, Agra and Bengal Province etc. This province was bounded on the west by Persia or Kandhar and on the south by Buckar. It lied on the bank of the Indus.\textsuperscript{165}

Multan never lost its political importance during the Muslim rule. Important personalities were appointed as its governors for example, Prince Murad Bakhsh, Prince Aurangzeb, Prince Dara Shikoh, and Asif Khan Etc. It was the center of learning as well as center of trade, and famous for fruits agricultural products. It attracted the people of Ghaur and Sulaiman range. Although the province of Multan was the one of the largest province of the Mughal Empire, gradually lost a larger part of its territory after the death of Aurangzeb, it never lost its political importance.\textsuperscript{166}

\textbf{THATTA}

The town of Thatta situated on the western bank of Indus\textsuperscript{167}, was developed evidently in order to act as the emporium of the \textit{bunder}. It was also known as Debal.\textsuperscript{168} Soon after it foundation in 1565 A.D., the town was sacked by the \textit{firangi} raiders who laid waste all along the way they passed.\textsuperscript{169} It forms many beautiful and fertile islands in its course. According to \textit{Ain-i Akbari}, the town of Thatta is situated in second climate, and lies in Long 102°30´; Lat 24°10´,\textsuperscript{170} and now in Karachi district. It was a \textit{sarkar} of the province of Sind. In Akbar’s time and throughout the 17\textsuperscript{th} century it was a busy entrepot. It decayed during the latter half of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{171} Thutta was by and far the largest trading center in India, its chief port was Lahribander.\textsuperscript{172} The Portuguese were acting as carriers of Sindhi cargo so that the trade of Lahribander

\textsuperscript{164} Pelsaert,p.31.
\textsuperscript{165} The Empire of the Great Mogol,op.cit., P.5; Palseart, p.31.
\textsuperscript{166} History of Multan, op.cit., p.85.
\textsuperscript{167} Manrique, Vol.ii, 240.
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Ain}, Vol.ii, p.337.
\textsuperscript{170} \textit{Ain}, Vol.ii, p.336.
\textsuperscript{171} The Empire of the Great Mogol,op.cit.,p.6.
\textsuperscript{172} \textit{Ibid.},p.68.
flourished providing spurt to the business activities of Thatta. It was a rich town well stocked with all kinds of provisions received from the adjacent districts, had ample supply of nonbrackish water, construction work was complete with fortification and mosques, residential house for high and low, saints learned Alim, and prosperous merchants, all flourished in the town.

It produced large quantity of cotton goods, which were superior to the bafias of Gujarat, calico striped clothes, taffetas of yarn and silk and other cotton goods. The local manufacture consisted of ornamental desks, draught boards and writing cases, “very prettily inlaid with ivory and ebony.” Thatta was very rich, both an account of the fertility of that kingdom, which produces a great amount of foodstuffs, particular wheat and rice, and of the abundance of cotton out of which they manufacture, on more than 2000 looms a rich and beautiful cloth which is exported to all parts of Asia and even to Portugal. Six kos from Thatta is a mine of yellow stone, large and small slabs of which are quarried and used for building. The staple consists of rice and fish. The latter is smoked and loaded in boats, and exported to the ports and other cities, affording a considerable profit. Fish-oil is also extracted and used in boat building. There was to be found also in this kingdom a kind of silk, out of which they make very good taffeta (tafetaness) and tapecirias, cattle are plentiful too in the land especially buffaloes. There were so numerous that with their skins alone they load for export in to various countries is great number of boats. Out of those skins they prepare the beautiful leather which the Portuguese call Sinde leather. As they were highly esteemed and very cool in summer, people use them as coverings for their tables and beds and to decorate their drawing rooms. They manufacture also in their city very rich back stitched quilts and the beautiful cushions, called Sinde cushions. On this account, there are in this city a great number of foreign residency and the harbors visited by many ships, which come laden with all kinds of goods converged by the Indus. The town was built on the banks of this river and is as wealthy as it is wicked.

The capital was a great city with more than 1,50,000 inhabitants having houses built of stone and mortar, with large terraces, but the smaller ones are made of poles

173 Palseart, Jahangir’s India, p.32.
175 Manrique, Vol.i, pp.159-60.
covered with grass and mud and quite strong. Muhammadans and Hindus live intermingled. The city of Thatta was famous for learning in theology, philology and politics, and they have above four hundred colleges for training up youth in those parts of learning. It is celebrated in the history of the East. Its commercial prosperity passed away with the empire of Delhi. The wealth and dignity of this city seems to have gradually declined from the period at which the province of Sind became a tributary of the empire of Hindustan.

AGRA

The present city of Agra was founded by Sultan Sikandar Lodhi in the year 1505 A.D. Sikandar Lodhi built a fort there and laid out a city on the eastern bank of the Yamuna, which became his capital. Agra is 28°30’ (or some say 45) north of the equator, and situated in 28° 45’ latitude. It is situated in the extreme southwest corner of Uttar Pradesh, stretches across 26° 44’ N to 27° 25’ N and 77° 26’ E to 78° 32’ E. Its borders touch Rajasthan to its west and south, the district of Firozabad to its East and the districts of Mathura and Etah to its North. In 1540 A.D. Sher Shah Suri took possession of Agra and made it his capital. The great Mughal emperor Akbar was well aware of the importance of its location. He arrived at Agra on 30th October 1558 A.D., made it his capital and named it Akbarabad and completely renovated and expanded it in a systemic manner. Agra continued to expand and flourish during Jahangir’s reign. It was, however, Shahjahan whose building activity raised Agra to the pinnacle of its glory. The Taj Mahal, the Jama Masjid and several other notable building like Diwan-i Aam, Diwani-i Khas, the Moti Masjid, etc, inside the fort were planned and executed under his orders. In June 1658 A.D, however, Agra ceased to be the capital of the empire when Aurangzeb permanently transferred the court to Delhi. Nevertheless, the cultural and strategic

179 The History of India, As told by its own Historian, op.cit., Vol.v, p.98-99.
182 Pelsaert,p.11.
The importance of Agra remained unaffected as in official correspondence it continued to be referred as the second capital of the empire.\textsuperscript{183} Agra was one of the biggest cities in the world. It laid for five kos along the river. It contained many fine buildings of the nobles and a number of good sarais.\textsuperscript{184} It had a fine castle where the king resided. It was a great trading city where such merchants were found who would pass money to all places in India, Persia and Aleppo. People from all parts of the world resorted to it, and it became the emporium of the traffic of the world. \textsuperscript{185} It was not important only as a city of Mughal India during the period of 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} century, but it was also one of the leading cities of the contemporary world because of its phenomenal growth, commerce, trade and grandeur.

The city of Agra attained its urban infra-structure and had been taking shape as a well planned and beautiful city only during Akbar’s time. For economic development the city had great opportunities as it was located on several important highways, which provided facilities to merchants from far and wide to engage in direct trade. Agra during the Mughal rules was well connected by land routes, as it was well connected by road to Punjab, Sind and Afghanistan in the north-west, and Malwa and Deccan in the South. It also passed through Patna, Allahabad, and Banaras on the one side and Delhi, Lahore on the other side. Another road kept up communications with Gujarat in the west, passing through Nagaur, Ajmer, Ahmadabad, Jodhpur and Sirohi. Multan was connected with the capital through Lahore and lay on the way of Qandahar.\textsuperscript{186} Dr. Pant rightly observes ‘Agra was converging center for all routes for the important center of the Mughal Empire.’\textsuperscript{187} Therefore, it could be said that Agra, as the capital of Mughal Empire, was very well connected with the rest of the country through many routes, which is a pre-requisite for flourishing trade activities and commercial interaction. Further, its location in the heart of the empire provided multidirectional communication links with other important cities, ports and regions of the country, and served effectively as the nerve-

\textsuperscript{183} D.B. Srivastava, \textit{The Province of Agra}, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1957, pp.4-5.  
\textsuperscript{184} Ain, Vol.ii, p.180.  
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{186} S.R Sharma, \textit{Mughal Government and Administration}, Hind Kitab Ltd, Bombay, 1951, p.2.  
\textsuperscript{187} D. Pant \textit{Commercial policy of the Mughals}, Idarah-i Adabiyat, Delhi,1978, p.54.
centre of all major political, administrative cum-military and economic, social and cultural activities.\textsuperscript{188}

Among European travelers who visited India and stayed in the capital city of Agra during the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} centuries were Father Monserrat, Ralph Fitch, Pelsaert, Sir Thomas Roe, Edward Terry, Manrique, Peter Mundy, Bernier, Tavernier, Thevenot and Manucci. They all belonged to dissimilar nationalities, professions and creeds. They all have given vivid account of Agra, while some of them wrote more ambitious works, giving full accounts of the places they visited, with descriptions of contemporary events based on their personal experience. These records provide enormous material which, if explored with caution, could yield valuable information on city life. The English traveler Ralf Fitch who visited Agra in September 1585 A.D., in the reign of Akbar, writes about the town that, “Agra is a very great city and populous, built with stone, having faire and large streetes, with a faire river running by it, which falleth into the Gulfe of Bengala. It hath a faire castle and a strong, with a very faire ditch. Here bee many Moores and Gentiles. The king is called Zelabdim Echebar (Jalaluddin Akbar); the people for the most part call him the Great Mogor (Mughal).\textsuperscript{189}” This impression of Fitch is corroborated by another European traveler, William Finch, who remarked about Agra that, it is spacious, large, and populous beyond measure\textsuperscript{190}. All the European travelers who visited Agra during the time of Jahangir have written of its wealth and splendor in glowing terms. Both, Edward Terry and Thomas Coryet, describe Agra as a magnificent city, worthy of the capital of the Great Mughal. Edward terry, who accompanied the mission of Sir Thomas Roe as a chaplain, mentions Agra as one of thirty seven large provinces under the Mughal.\textsuperscript{191}

The city of Agra began primarily as a military cum administrative centre, but it soon developed as a thriving center for commerce and trade. Merchandise poured in to the city from all parts of the country. Besides traders, fine master craftsmen from various parts of the country began to gravitate towards the imperial capital city. The fame of its products led to a growing demand for them from all parts. Agra also

\textsuperscript{188} I.P. Gupta, \textit{Urban glimpse of Mughal India, Agra The Mughal Imperial Capital (16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} century)}, Discovery Publication House, Delhi, 1986, p.3.

\textsuperscript{189} \textit{Early travels in India}, p.17.

\textsuperscript{190} \textit{Ibid.}, p.182.

\textsuperscript{191} \textit{Ibid.}, p.291.
became a financial center, with facilities for transmitting money anywhere in the country and outside. Thus the commercial life of Agra began to overshadow its hitherto administrative functions.\textsuperscript{192}

An impressive socio-cultural infrastructure of the city emerged and at the end of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century it was so populous that it was considered much greater than the city of London.\textsuperscript{193} Father Monserrate calls it ‘a city within a city’;\textsuperscript{194} it was mentioned as, ‘the most famous structure of the world’.\textsuperscript{195} The city of Agra was renowned for its wide range of economic activities which included commerce, inland and foreign trade, industries and handicrafts. It had facilities of banking and credits, transport and commission agents for fostering business, as a result it became the center to which merchants flocked from far and wide. Agra was also directly connected to Kabul and Qandhar via Lahore, and Kabul served as a center for caravan routes to foreign countries such as Khorasan, Iran, Turkey and China. The Dutch factor Pelsaert visiting Agra in the beginning of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century rightly emphasized its importance, its trade activities and about its location. The main commodities from the neighboring regions for which the city was a collecting center were cash crops such as indigo and tobacco, agricultural commodities such as wheat, rice, sugar, vegetable oils and butter and other commodities such as spices, drugs, opium, salt, walnut, lead, lac, gum, vermillion, quicksilver and coral. Indigo was mainly produced in Hindaun, Bayana, Bisor, Khanwa, Khurja, Koil and Itimadpur.\textsuperscript{196} All these commodities were first brought to the markets of Agra before they were sent out.

Cotton textiles especially fine muslins, Ambartee calicoes and coarse cloth came from the city of Patna.\textsuperscript{197} Semianoes and other textile products from Jalalpur and Dariabad and Serbandy in thousands of mounds and silk were brought from Bengal along with musk and civet and various other goods manufactured there and other eastern regions.\textsuperscript{198} Silken cloth with gold and silver work came from Banaras. The products of South India, Deccan and Western India came to the markets of Agra

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Urban glimpse of Mughal India, Agra The Mughal Imperial Capital (16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} century),op.cit.,p.5
\item The commentary of Father Monserrate, p.34.
\item Pelsaert.p.3.
\item Pelsaert,.p.9.
\item Ibid., p.4.
\item Gupta, I.P, Urban glimpse of Mughal India, Agra The Mughal Imperial Capital (16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} century),p.35
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
through Burhanpur, Surat and Ahmadabad. Many of these goods came to Agra to be distributed to the rest of the country especially to the eastern region, for there was no other direct route. Agra was also a great market for horses of good breed and they came in large number from Persia, Turkey, Multan, Lahore and Surat. Products from the cities of Lahore, Multan, Thatta (Sind), Kabul and Kandhar flooded the markets of Agra. Leather articles from Thatta came via Lahore and, fresh as well as dry fruits from Kabul and asafoetida from Kandhar. Precious stones such as diamonds, rubies and pearls came from Delhi.

Monserrate mentions that every necessity of human life could be obtained in the markets of Agra, including articles which have to be imported from distant corners of Europe. Bernier describes the markets being well supplied with all goods and separate market for every commodity. Pelseart describes a huge market where horses, camels, oxen, tents, cotton goods and many other things were sold in the morning.

Agra was not merely a trading center, rather ample evidence points to its teeming with local industries and flourishing crafts. According to the English Factors, “the cloth is very even and substantially made near Agra”. Another important industry was metallurgy. Besides articles of silver and gold, those of copper, iron and brass were manufactured in Imperial workshops for domestic use by be talented artisans in Agra. Thevenot mentions child labor being used for metal industries. The brass rings were manufactured in Agra and chemicals were used to dissolve the brass. There is also reference to quick silver mines near Agra. The stone cutting industry blossomed from the time of Babur. Embroidery with gold and silver thread on beautiful textiles especially silks was one of the most famous crafts of Agra. Another famous craft was inlay work and carving designs on various articles of metals and stones. Thevenot mentions about goldsmiths in Agra of working in Gold.

199 Pelsaert, p.9.
200 Ibid, p.31.
201 The commentary of Father Monserrate, p.35.
202 Bernier, pp.292-93.
203 Pelseart, p.4.
204 EFI Vol.vii, pp.6-7.
205 Pelsaert, p.9.
206 Thevenot, p.55.
207 Pelseart, p.9.
upon Agat, Chrystal, and other brittle matters, who were superior to European goldsmiths.\textsuperscript{208}

Some of the commodities sent from Agra were spices and white cotton cloth to Lahore,\textsuperscript{209} large quantities of cotton and coarse yarn to Multan, cotton goods, turbans prints and red salu to Burhanpur, spices to Bengal\textsuperscript{210} and Indigo, sugar and raw silk to Thatta. Quick silver was sent to all parts of the country from Agra. Thus the economy of many other cities of the empire was completely dependent on Agra, which catered to the local, religious, national and even international trade and commerce. The chief commodities exported from Agra were textiles goods. These included different kinds of cotton, silk and woolen cloth and raw silk. Cotton fabrics occupied the leading position. In addition to this indigo, sugar, saltpeter, salt, gumlac, coral, walnuts, drugs and spices and various other commodities were traded in abundance. Indigo which was in great demand was the chief commodity of export. The best indigo was called by the name of Agra indigo, and it was an important article of commerce throughout the whole world. Sugar was also exported in abundance from Agra both in powder and candy and English factors depended chiefly on Agra for this commodity. Gumlac, which was used for dyeing, was in great demand and quite profitable and it was exported to England and Persia. Saltpeter was another major commodity exported from here in abundance.\textsuperscript{211} Ralf Fitch, an English merchant, went from Agra to Satgaon by Yamuna river with one hundred and sixty boats laden with salt, opium, lead, carpets, and other diverse commodities for export.\textsuperscript{212}

There was a keen competition between foreign merchants for capturing trade at Agra. English merchants installed a regular factory at Agra in 1618 A.D., and carried out over-land trade from Surat in corals, ivory, vermilion, quick silver, porcelain mixed cloth and other miscellaneous goods. The Dutch also set up their factories at Agra because Gujarat was facing serious famine. The factories also engaged Indian brokers for facilitating commercial transactions with the respective countries. The English and the Dutch were the chief traders who collected various

\textsuperscript{208} Thevenot p.55.
\textsuperscript{209} Pelsaert, p.30.
\textsuperscript{210} Ibid., p.31.
\textsuperscript{211} Tavernier, Vol.ii, p.12.
\textsuperscript{212} Early travels in India, p.18.
commodities from Agra for export. The goods of Agra were in great demand in England, and the English factors used to make great financial investments in Agra for their export. The textile goods of various types in cotton and silk were the other chief attraction, which were exported by the English factors. The Dutch, too, made extensive purchases of cloths from Agra for export. They conducted a flourishing trade with it, in broad cloth, looking glasses, plain, gold and silver laces, iron ware and spices. Similarly Agra was also a market for fine English cloth. Thus during 16th and 17th centuries Agra became a nucleus of international trade and reached its zenith in economic prosperity.

A money market is necessary for growth of commerce and trade. This was available at Agra in the form of banking and credit facilities to both Indian and foreign merchants, where some Hindus, who were amongst the richest men, adopted banking as a profession and lived by money lending. There are innumerable instances of the English East India Company taking loans from the Indian bankers. Throughout the Mughal period the emperor favorable in their attitude to the various European nations who wished to establish their trade with India, by giving license to them for trading. The chief factors contributing to the development of Agra as a magnificent and great city were the wealth accumulated here from its extensive commerce, trade and industries and the royal patronage given to it. The geographical location of Agra made the flow centripetal and it stood as the pompous town of the Mughal Empire. All the routes in northern India radiated to and from Agra portraying it as the heart of the empire or the navel of the entire dominion. All goods moving between any two diverse parts of empire were required to make a halt here. Apparently the city, besides, handling its own imports and exports was also acting as transit depot, thus adding to its own financial opulence. Therefore, during 16th and 17th centuries Agra became a nucleus of international trade and reached at its peak in economic prosperity. Besides its favorable geographical setting, incontestable other factors also played a conspicuous role in the economic advancement of Agra. The city of Agra by far was considered the largest and most popular city and biggest commercial center

213 Bernier, pp.292-93.
214 Ibid.
215 Urban glimpse of Mughal India, Agra The Mughal Imperial Capital (16th and 17th century), op.cit.p.42- 43.
under the Mughals. Although the city of Agra existed before the advent of the Mughals, it had never achieved such grandeur in the past.

**KABUL**

Kabul was incorporated in the Mughal Empire at the death of Mirza Hakim in 1585 A.D. Its chief town Kabul being surrounded on all sides by ranges of high hills was naturally protected against the cupidity of its western neighbors’ who at times became powerful. Kabul is an ancient town and was so large as to require two citadels. It was famous for its dual role, strategic as well as commercial, and evidently in both respects the town had gained enormously by the establishment of Babur’s dynasty over Delhi. Since the battle of Panipat in 1526 A.D., Kabul acquires a new dimension both commercially and from the strategic point of view. Moreover its commercial importance was further emphasized because of the domination of the Indian Ocean by the Portuguese, so that the traders whether Indian or central Asian who wished to avoid dealing with these inimical sea masters resorted to this route.

It was a major emporium of overland trade and prospered by taxing the flaw of merchandise between northern India and central Asia. In his memoirs Babur mentions that Kabul was one excellent trade mart and the entrepot of a great trade. He gives a vivid account of the trade and commerce which passed through Kabul. The country he records was a profitable market for commodities. From Hindustan 10, 15 or 20,000 loads of merchandise reached Kabul annually. The principal foreign trade of Kabul was with Hindustan, Persia and Turkistan.

Several roads passing from Kabul led to Badakhshan, Balkh and Kashghar, while Persia was reached through Qandhar. Eastward the town had a good road up to Attock which was in turn linked with Lahore and Agra and through them as far as east as Sonargaon in Bengal. All these converging towards Kabul brought in companies of merchants to the town in the non-winter season. Thus caravan of

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216 *The Empire of the Great Mogol*, op.cit., p.56.
218 *Thevenot p.80*
219 *Early Travels in India*, p.168.
220 *Urbanisation and Urban Centers under the great Mughals*, op.cit., p.78.
merchants from Faraghna, Samarqand, Balkh, Bukhara, Badakhshan, Aleppo and Kashghar used to arrive here once to three times a year all loaded with merchandise. The size and frequency of caravans naturally varied from case to case and time to time. In other words this illustrative evidence bears out the international significance of Kabul as an overland trading centre and also as a transit depot for goods moving in opposite directions; eastern and western, north-eastern and south-western or western countries of Asia.221

The exports to Hindustan were principally horses, furs, shawls, Multani chintz, almond, walnut, and a variety of fruits. According to Bernier, every year many of camels loaded with fresh fruits reached imperial center from Kabul, because in India fruits were insufficient and inferior in quality.222 One of the chief articles of commerce of the Kabul was asafetida of which about 200 mounds gathered annually from plants.223 Vast quantity of asafetida was exported to India where it was a favorite ingredient in the cookery. The caravans heading towards Kabul used to carry from Hindustan slaves, white cloth, and sugar candy, refined sugar, sandal wood, aromatic roots, cotton textiles, muslin, brocade, other fine manufacture and all kind of calicoes.224 Cotton was one of the important items of import to Kabul; cotton cultivation was confined to the hot climates and most of the cloth of that material used in that part, was imported ready woven from India.

Commerce was necessarily carried on with the help of beast of burden. The various means of land transport were camels, mules, horses, asses and bullocks. Among them camels were found to be the most suitable for the commercial purpose because of their strength and endurance. It is estimated that merchandise from Agra to distance places were sent in large camel caravans.225 Horses were needed for military purposes, as cavalry and as means of transport. It was the military role that determined the Mughal’s demand for horses. Manucci, stated that Indian traders purchased horses of Balkh and Bukhara at Kabul numbering 1, 00,000226 Throughout the Mughal Empire horses had been by and far the most significant import item from

221 Urbanisation and Urban Centers under the great Mughals, op.cit., p.78.
223 Pelsaert, pp.31,48.
226 Early Travels in India, pp.217-18; Pelsaert, p.31.
Kabul was voluminous as well as profitable. The trade in horses annually amounted to more than 60,000 rupees.\textsuperscript{227}

In order to meet the demands of the large volumes of interregional and foreign trade, there was a need for network of routes and a developed transport system. It is to the credit of the Mughals that, we find, an elaborate network of routes linking all the commercial centers by beginning of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. The Mughal emperors constructed new routes of commerce and maintained the long established one.\textsuperscript{228} Akbar made the Khaibar pass the safest and preferred routes between Kabul and Hindustan, by widening the road and building the \textit{caravan sarais}. Kabul retained much of its importance when during the reign of Akbar the journey to Kabul was made easier by making the road across in the Khaibar pass fit for vehicular traffic.\textsuperscript{229} Thus by the 17\textsuperscript{th} century merchants and traders who traded between India and Turan via Kabul used the Khaiber pass.

Merchants of Kabul were generally Tajiks, Persian and Afghans. They had to pay taxes on their merchandise, but the levy was moderate. The fiscal system was not oppressive for the merchants and favored trade and commerce. In a major city there was separate shop for each commodity. In these \textit{bazaars} all sorts of goods and commodities such as food grains, cloth, fruits and other items of necessity were available.\textsuperscript{230} Kabul had a \textit{bazaar} consisting of nearly 2000 shops, both side of the streets contained shops of the various bazaars in the city of Kabul. The two principal, almost parallel to each other, were the Sher \textit{bazaar} and the Darwaz-i Lahori.\textsuperscript{231}

\section*{ROLE OF MERCHANTS IN TRADE ACTIVITIES}

The mercantile community appears to have been a heterogeneous class, comprising various racial elements.\textsuperscript{232} In the literature of the period the members of

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item \textsuperscript{227} Tavernier, vol.i, pp.75-77
\item \textsuperscript{228} Manucci, vol.ii,pp.114-15.
\item \textsuperscript{230} Petermundy, vol.ii, 216
\item \textsuperscript{231} \textit{Narrative of various journeys in Balochistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab} (1826 to 1838), vol.ii, op.cit.,p.143.
\item \textsuperscript{232} Duarte Barbosa, \textit{The Book of Duarte Barbosa}, (ed.), Mansel Longworth Dames, Vol.i. Asian
\end{thebibliography}
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the merchants’ community had been variously called Baniya, Banik, Bania Baqqa, Saudagar, Vohra, Sarraf, Seth, Mahajan, Sahukare, Vyapari, Muqim, Dallal and Archatiya.\footnote{For Baniya, Banik, Bania Baqqa, Bani, see \textit{Mirat} (suppl.), p.137-38. For Saudagar, Manrique, Vol. ii, p.248. for Seth, \textit{EFI} (1634-36), pp.196-97, For Bohra, See \textit{Mirat}(suppl.), pp.131,32.}

Here an attempt is made to shed some light on the mercantile communities, the Banjaras (long distance transporters) and Banyas (village and town merchants). The important and large merchant caste in Northern India was that of Banyas, for which much information comes from the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. The community consisted of numerous sub-castes transcending religious affiliations. They controlled practically the whole inland trade and credit system. The Banyas had in each locality a shop where they engaged in both selling to and buying from peasants and artisans served as the universal usurers. The \textit{Mirat-i Ahmadi} gives the actual names of the forty-eight sub-castes of Hindu and Jain Banyas of Gujarat and further adds that they were ‘mostly named after places, villages and settlements.’\footnote{\textit{Mirat} (Suppl.) pp.132, 137-9.}

Their much commended expertise in arithmetic, accountancy and methods of business served them particularly well when they acted as sarrafs (money changers and bankers), or as brokers to merchants and officials. Their services were indispensible where currencies of different countries, metals and of denominations circulated. The practice of brokerage too was a Banya especially on which numerous foreign merchants commented indeed Muslim merchants in India usually has Banyas brokers; and they similarly had a monopoly over money changing and banking.\footnote{Irfan Habib, \textit{Merchant Community in Pre-Colonial India}, in The Rise of Merchant Empires (ed.) James D. Tracy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990, pp.392-96.}

\textit{Banya} merchants of the ports, similarly, had factors overseas. \textit{“Banian merchants”} of Surat maintained factors at Gambroon in the Persian Gulf.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p.391.} In the red sea, the \textit{Banya} factors were probably even more numerous. The conduct of trade in India was very greatly assisted by the system of brokers’ service, mainly supplied, as we have seen, by the Banyas. The brokers performed all kinds of services for the merchants, from arranging the sale and purchase of goods to securing finance. Thevenot gives us a layman’s view of their value, stating that the \textit{Banya} broker are so

Educational Services, New Delhi, 1989. pp.139-41.

233 For Baniya, Banik, Bania Baqqa, Bani, see \textit{Mirat} (suppl.), p.137-38.
expert in their business, that hardly anybody can be without them. They give them commission of all kinds; it be known they make their profit of everything, yet men choose rather to make use of them, than to do their business themselves; and I found often by experience, that I had what they brought for me much cheaper than what I brought myself or made my servants buy. They are of pleasing humor, for they reject no service, whether honorable or base, and are always ready to satisfy those who employ them.237

It was not only in India that the Banyas were indispensible as Sarrafs and brokers. They were present nearly in all the trading ports and towns of the Red sea and the Persian Gulf. The settlements of the Banya merchants mainly from Kathiawar in Gujarat are reported at Aden, Mocha and other ports.238 Undoubtedly, the Mughal era opened new vistas for the Indian merchants and they were now found controlling large sectors of trade in the Red Sea, Iran, Central Asia and South East Asia. Foreign travelers were often dazzled by the wealth of Indian merchants. At the great port of Surat even the English East India Company found it dwarfed by the local merchants Virji Vora, Zahid Beg and later on Mulla Ghafur. Virji Vohra had practically monopolized the pepper trade and dealt in a wide range of commodities. His trading network was extensive with headquarter at Surat, he had branches at Broach, Ahmadabad, Burhanpur and Agra, besides in the port-Town in the Persian Gulf, Red Sea and south-east Asia. He bought opium and cotton from local merchants exchanged these for pepper in South India and the Spice Islands and sold the pepper to the English and Dutch buying from them coral, quicksilver, vermillion lead and other such commodities.239

There was a considerable movement of commodities both manufactured and agricultural products, from the major inland centers for export. There were numerous industrial and trading centers scattered through the length and breadth of the country. The commodities were easily transported from one place to another with the help of a specialized class of carriers known as the banjaras, related to nomadic tribe. The cattle-keepers engaged in transporting goods to various parts of the subcontinent. They transported “rice, corn and salt-in the places where they exchanged these

237 Thevenot pp.77-78.
239 Shireen Moosvi, Merchants in Medieval India’, PIHC.65TH Session, Bareilly2004, p.143.
commodities—carrying rice to where only corn grows, and corn to where only rice grows, and salt to the places where there is none.” Tavernier was astonished to behold caravans comprising 10,000 or 12,000 oxen together for the transport of various commodities. Thevenot notes that caravans commonly consisted of more than two hundred wagons. They carried drums, perhaps, to be beaten as an alarm against danger and sometimes to proclaim their presence.

In view of the meager means of transport, uneven roads and hazardous trade-routes, it is very difficult to undermine the role played by banjaras, in the development of the long distance trade during the 17th century. They almost held a monopoly over trade and transport of articles of the daily need of the masses and exercised considerable influence over the lives of urban and rural inhabitants. The banjaras were itinerant merchants and moved in large caravans carrying goods on the backs of their bullocks. The banjaras started their journey early in the morning. The banjaras used to trade in a number of commodities, but basically they were dealers in food grains and are reported to trade, mainly in wheat, rice, millet and pulse etc. Some other commodities, the trade of which was nearly monopolized by the banjaras were butter, sugar, sugar candy, and salt. During the rainy season the banjaras, due to the scarcity of the means of transport, increased their freight charges and therefore cartage upon oxen would become more costly than upon carts. The transport organized by banjaras was cheaper in comparison with the other modes of land transport. The banjaras took upon themselves whole responsibility of safe delivery of the goods at the appointed place. Agra being the capital of the Empire was the main centre of business for the banjaras, where great volumes of wheat, rice, sugar and butter, brought by them from fertile regions, particularly from the eastern and Bengal, was dumped to be supplied to other parts of the Empire. Banjaras also exercised a considerable control over the prices of the commodities. Since the prices

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241 Ibid., p.39.
242 Thevenot, p.75.
243 PeterMundy, Vol.ii, p.95, 96, 240.
244 PeterMundy, Vol.ii, p.54.
245 Tavernier, Vol.i. p.42.
246 Ibid., p.41.
247 PeterMundy, Vol.ii, p.96.
248 Syed Aslam Ali, Article The Role of Banjaras in Indian Trade during the 17th Century, Aligarh, 1984, pp.4-5
249 PeterMundy, Vol.ii, pp.95, 99.
of articles in trade used to fluctuate in accordance with the law of supply and demand, they rose and fell with the variations in supply by the banjaras. The banjaras also played an important role in Mughal foreign trade. They kept unbroken the supplies of export articles like sugar, saltpeter etc to the export centers of the Mughal Empire. The importance of the banjaras owing to their role in shaping the course of Mughal trade and commerce during the 17th century had been recognized them from time to time by honors and awards.

MODES OF INLAND TRANSPORT

French Jeweler Jean Baptiste Tavernier, who visited India several times in between the years 1640 and 1667A.D., devotes a complete chapter of his travel account to various aspects of travelling in the Mughal Empire. The Means of transport changed from class to class and from region to region. Common people travelled on foot, but those who could afford did make use of more comfortable and faster mean of transport as per their sources and convenience. Prior to the introduction of the modern automobiles, people used oxen, bullock-carts, camels, horses, or other such means for transportation. Those who could afford to travel more comfortably. By any of these means not much distance could be covered in a day. In the town, the principal modes of transport by land were the bullock-carts, camels, elephants, mules and men. Horses were not generally used for transport of goods in caravans. According to Ovington the use of horses for transport was seldom made as they employed in the Mughal’s service in war. Similarly the elephant were reserved for war and maintaining the dignitaries. Rathas were used for passenger traffic but they were very costly. The rich people only, could afford to pay travelled in rathas. Ladies and nobles used to travel in palanquins. Camels were used in crossing sandy areas like Sind as also in the plains for the transport of heavy goods.

250 EFI (1655-60), p.63.
252 Land Transport in Mughal India, Agra-Lahore Mughal Highway and its Architecture Remaining, op.cit., p.80.
253 Ovington, p.134.
254 Mendelslo’s Travels in Western India (1638-1639), p.3.
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Tavernier categorically states that the Indians did not employ in journey either horses, asses or mules, and carried everything on oxen or by wagons.²⁵⁵ For riding too, he writes that the use of oxen, and not horses, was more popular. He adds that if any merchant took a horse from Persia, he did it only for show and led it by hand, or in order to sell it profitably in India.²⁵⁶ Monserrate and Tavernier also mention the use of camels to carry provisions and merchandise.²⁵⁷ Carts were considered more convenient and beneficial, which could be covered and uncovered type. Pietro Della Valle describing the covered type writes that, “they are generally covered with crimson silk, fring’d with yellow round about the roof, and the curtain; and that the oxen……….drown the same…….with these kind of coaches in India.”²⁵⁸ Each cart was harnessed usually to a pair of oxen.²⁵⁹ Thevenot also mentions carts, each drawn eight or ten oxen, according to the heaviness of the loads.²⁶⁰ On the other hand, Tavernier mentions, small, very light cart also, which could carry two people only.²⁶¹ The transportation of merchandise by carts was considered safer and more beneficial over the use of camel for the purpose. The English Ambassador Thomas Roe enumerates the following benefits: first one cart carried the load of three camels; second, a cart covered more distance in a day, third, goods were damaged in the process of loading and unloading on camels and often these fell from the animal during travel; fourth the carts were cheaper to hire²⁶²

MAJOR TRADE ROUTES IN MUGHAL EMPIRE

In this chapter an attempt is made to trace the some major Mughal highways that fanned out from the city of Agra, which considered as a major trading town. There are some major routes, related to other major trade center, of the period of our study. Among them some are-

²⁵⁶ Ibid.
²⁵⁷ Commentary of Father Monserrate, p.11
²⁶⁰ Thevenot, p.75.
²⁶¹ Tavernier, Vol.i, 44.
• Agra to Surat- Surat was well connected with the capital, by two routes, one through Malwa via Sironj and Burhanpur and the other, to the north, through the semi-desert of Rajastahan and Gujarat, via Ahmadabad.

• Agra to Patna and Dacca- This route communicated with the eastern extremities of the Mughal Empire. For the most part, the overland route ran parallel to the riverine route. Hence one could adopt any of the two routes, according to one’s convenience and choice. Many travelers to leave an account of various stages along the land-route are Petermundy and Tavernier. Manrique traveled from Agra to Patna, taking riverine route up to Allahabad and land route afterward. Manucci also traversed this route partly by water but returned from Hugli to Agra by road.263

• Agra to Kabul- Agra Kabul route connected the Mughal Empire overland with the strategic and commercial centre of Kabul and the rest of the western world through the passes in the Hindukush Mountains. It is the one of the most ancient routes in the history of subcontinent. During the Mughal period, it was traversed, in parts or the whole, by father A. Monserrrate (1580-82 A.D.) in the company of Emperor Akbar, William Finch (1611 A.D.), Thomas Coryat(1612-17 A.D.), Edward Terry (1616-19 A.D.), Manrique (1640-41 A.D.), Francois Bernier (1656-68 A.D.). Tavernier alone traveled along the route at least twelve times.264 Besides these travelers Akbar, Jahangir, Shahajahan, Aurangzeb, also passed along the routes a number of times. From Agra to Kabul(see map)

Besides these there were numbers of trade routes which passed through the subas. Some of them are mentioned below;

• Banaras to Patna via Mughal Sarai265
• Delhi to Lahore266
• Agra to Delhi267

263 The Embassy of Thomas Roe, 1625-19, op.cit., p.45.
265 India of Aurangzeb, op. cit., p.cix.
266 Delhi Narela, 12miles Sonepat, 6 m.- Ganor, 6 m Panipat, 12 m. Karnal, 14m. Azimabad, 7 m.
Thaniswar, 9 m.- Shahabad, 12 m.Uinballa, 12 m.- Serai built by Nikanth, 10 m. Sirhind, 10m.
Machiwara, on the further bank of the Sutlcj, 14 m., [the frontier of the province of the Panjab] Rahon,8m. Rajaga, 10 m. -Serai Nuruddin, 10 m. Adinananagar, 15 m. Patiala, 12 m, Kalanor, 12 m.
Serai Amanat Khan, on the road to Atak, Shahdara, 15 m. from Kabanor Lahor, 2 m. (Pp. 146 &
113) Or, from Ludhiana to Phulour, 12 m. Nakodar, 12 m. Sultanpur, 12 m. The Bias, 7 m.
Govindwdl, 5 m, Serai Amanat Khan, 13 m. Lahor, 12 m, Cf. J.N. Sarkar, India of Aurangzeb,
(Topography, Statistic and roads) Compared with the India of Aurangzeb, with extracts from the
khulasatu-Tawarikh and theChahar Gulshan, Patna, 1901. p.xcviii.
THEFT AND HIGHWAY ROBBERY ON TRADE ROUTES AND THE MEANS OF SAFETY

Security on the routes in Mughal India is a much discussed issue and various historians have discussed it in their own way. It appears from the existing sources, that many routes were polluted with gangs of thieves’ and robbers. Peace, stable conditions and the consequent expansion of trade and commercial activity brought more travelers and traders on the road. It seems, however, that in actual practice theft by single individual was less prevalent in Mughal India than by group of individuals operating on a large scale. They would sometime infest the roads, plunder towns and commit robberies in the country side. Highway robbers, in the eyes of the law, were persons too powerful for travelers, who fell upon them with some weapons and robbed them when they were distant from a city. Different punishments were provided for the crimes. They could only be punished for their offence if they were arrested before they had repented and returned the looted property.270 Ralf Fitch who visited India from 1583 to 1591A.D., has recorded, that there were many thieves at that time. They had no certain abode and moved from one to another place in the country.271 Father Monserrate, came across a large number of thieves from Surat to Agra272 and numerous instances which were recorded by several travelers. Sir Robert Shirley, a Persian ambassador, found the way from Thatta to Agra ‘much infested with thieves’ even the road from Agra to Lahore was dangerously full of them.273

267 Agra Goodki Serai, 6 kos, Shaiki Serai (near Mathura), 5 kos Koti Serai, 16 kos Palwal, 15 kos Badalpura, 18 kos Delhi, 8 kos., See, Tavernier, Vol.i, p.104-05.
268 Ibid.,p.48.
269 Tieffenthaler gives the following stages : Lahor Katpur Guzar Serai Noshahra - Satghara Harpan (Harappa) Maktunpur Kanpur Multan ; the total distance is 120 or 160miles., Cf.India of Aurangzeb, p.cvii.
270 S.P.Sangar, crime and Punishment in Mughal India, Yugantar Press Mori Gate Delhi, 1967, p.41
271 Early Travels in India, p.23.
272 Commentary of Father Monserrate, p.13
273 The History of India, As told by its own Historian op.cit.,Vol.vi, pp.495-96
Charan

There were adequate routes and a substantial amount of goods transported in those days. But from the travelers account, we find, that trade route was not safe during 17th century. The caravan moved from place to place under the protection of armed guards. The German traveler, Mandelslo, started from Surat to Ahmadabad on 30 September 1638 A.D. with a caravan, sent by the English president, sufficient guards were provided to him for his security.\textsuperscript{274} Besides these armed guards, there was another tribe, known as charan, who acted as guards to travelers and goods. The charans escorted the travelers from one place to another for small sum. A charan man and woman, when engaged to attend a traveler, protected him by threatening the robbers to kill themselves if any harm was done to the traveler. The sources of their power lay in the wide spread fear that a charan’s blood will bring ruin on him who caused the blood to be split. Thevenot was advised to hire a charan man and woman for his protection on two rupees a day in the journey from Cambay to Surat. But he, however, declined to do so, looking upon it to be too low a kind of protection.\textsuperscript{275} Thevenot travelled from Cambay to Surat without guards and he hardly encountered any danger on the way except at one place a person called on the coach man to stop, but he was satisfied by the payment of a copper coin, (paisa).\textsuperscript{276} This shows that the highways were not so unsafe.

Carvan

In older times, it was quite dangerous to travel alone. The solution lay in combining together in the form of groups and travel together. The very number of people in a group assured the travelers of security. During Medieval period such a convoy of travelers formed for undertaking long journeys was called a caravan or kafila, actually the words of Persian and Arabic origin respectively. The main body of a caravan usually comprised traders with their merchandise. Individual travelers joined caravans to avail of its protection and championship. Thomas Coryat informs her mother that he always travels from place to place, safely in the company of

\textsuperscript{274} Mendelslo’s \textit{Travels in Western India} (1638-1639), p.13.
\textsuperscript{275} Thevenot, p.19.
\textsuperscript{276} \textit{Ibid.}, p.20.
Pietro Della Valle travelled from Cambay to Allahabad, in the company of a caravan “which consisted of above a hundred coaches, besides footmen and horse-men, and great loaded wagons…….” When Peter Mundy left Surat for Agra in November 1630 A.D., he had only 150 people and fifteen to twenty carts and some camels in his caravan, but soon the number rose to between 1,700 and 1,800 persons and 250 to 300 carts, besides oxen and buffaloes. He records that their caravan consisted of such a multitude of carts and people, which drew to such a length that he could never see both ends from one place. The leader of the caravan was called Mir, Salar or Bakhshi. He acted like the captain of a ship and had ultimate control of everything when the caravan was on the road. Manrique enumerates various works performed by caravan-leader. He was responsible for selecting halts, and for announcing the departure of the caravan. He knew how to deal with the custom-officers, and occasionally was even able to evade the formalities of customs and rahdari. Caravans could travel in the subcontinent throughout the year except during the four month period of the monsoon rains when the tracks were muddy and rivers too swollen to be ferried. In the rainy season it was almost impossible for wheeled traffic to move, and if a merchant desired to transport merchandise during this period, he had to employ animal transport only.

Sarais

The other method of security and comfort was sarai. There was a network of sarais or inns, throughout the Mughal Empire on all important routes. These inns served the purpose of rest house, where merchants and traveler could break their journey. The sarais established by Sher Shah (1540-45 A.D.) and Akbar (1556-1605 A.D.) on major highways at intervals of two and five kurohs respectively seem to represent similar kind of rest-house. The sarais set up by the state as well as private individuals or corporate bodies catered primarily to a civilian clientele who

277 Early Travels in India., p.259.
278 Travels of Pietro Della Valle, Vol.i, 91-93.
279 Peter Mundy, Vol.ii, p.45-46.
281 Ibid., p.344.
282 Land Transport in Mughal India, op.cit., p.22.
were charged, though moderately, for food and lodging. 284 Most of these caravanserais were supported by endowments created by the funding of individuals or collective bodies. The income from endowments was used to meet expenses on the general maintenance of the caravanserais, while payments made by the visiting travelers provided sustenance to the varied service group, particularly to the bhatiyaras who worked as attendants’ cum-cooks. There was hardly a town which did not have one. A sarai could be built in the middle of the town or in a separate locality or in a pura. It was usually built in the form of a square and like cloisters divided in to several cells. 285 Architecturally, most of the extant sarais along the route follow more or less the same plan.

The largest number of brick and stone sarais were built during the Mughal period. The brief span of the first Mughal Emperor Babur’s reign was spent in conquests, so he did not have time to engage in building sarais. Although we get no contemporary reference of Humayun’s patronage to sarais, Manucci reports “Since the time of Humayun many more sarais have been built upon the royal highways throughout the realm, from one end of it to the other” 286 According to Ain, “Everywhere also sarais have been built, which are the comfort of travelers and the asylum of poor strangers”. 287 Akbar ordered that in the sarais on the high roads, refuges and kitchens should be established, and that articles of food should be in readiness for the empty handed travelers so that when they had undergone the fatigues of journeying and had sat down to rest they might put food in their mouths without trouble. Jahangir in the first year of his reign, issued twelve decrees to be implemented and observed throughout his realm and one of them was that “on road where there were thieves and highway bandits and where the roads were somewhat distant from habitation, the jagirdars of that region were to construct a caravanserai and mosque and dig a well to encourage habitation in the caravanserai. If such places were near royal demesnes, the superintendent of that place was to carry out these measures.” 288 It could be seen that his orders were fully complied with provided by dozens of surviving sarais of his period. An equal number of sarais survive from the

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284 Early Travels in India, p.225.
287 Ain, Vol.i, p.222.
period of his successors, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb.\textsuperscript{289} Jahangir’s mother, Mariam al-Zamani, built a \textit{sarai} along Fatehpur Sikri- Ajmer route. Jahangir’s wife, Nurjahan, is known to have erected a number of \textit{sarais} in various Mughal highways. Pelsaert records Nurjahan’s fame for erecting expensive \textit{sarais}, in all directions of the Empire, intending thereby to establish an enduring reputation.\textsuperscript{290} Her \textit{sarai} at \textit{Nurmahal} is a unique specimen of Mughal architecture along the Agra-Lahore Highway. Another wife of Jahangir, Khas-Mahal, also built a \textit{sarai} at Nizamuddin, Delhi, in 1642-43 A.D.\textsuperscript{291} Another well known female builder of Mughal \textit{sarais} was Jahan Ara, the eldest daughter of Shahajahan, respectfully called Begam Sahiba. Her most renowned \textit{sarai} was \textit{Begam ki sarai} at Delhi.\textsuperscript{292} Bernier and Manucci both speak highly of this \textit{sarai}, the latter designating it as the “most beautiful \textit{sarai} in Hindustan”.\textsuperscript{293} Nawab Fatehpuri Begam, wife of Shahjahan, patronized a \textit{sarai} near mosque in Chandni Chowk.\textsuperscript{294} Nawab Akbarabadi Begam built a \textit{sarai} as a part of her mosque at Faiz Bazaar.\textsuperscript{295} Aurangzeb’s wife, Nawab Bai, is known to have built a \textit{sarai} at Pharpur, some kilometers northeast of Aurangabad.\textsuperscript{296} Manrique, writing in 1629 A.D., also tells us that “they (\textit{sarais}) are sometimes erected at the expense of neighboring villages, sometimes at the cost of princes or rich and powerful men, who erect them in order to keep their memory green or to satisfy their consciences, and large sums are left for such works, which in their opinion are works of goodness and acceptable to God.”\textsuperscript{297} Thus institution of \textit{sarai} seems to have played an important role in the economic life of Mughal India.

A clear picture of the working of the Mughal \textit{sarais} is provided by various European Travelers in Mughal India. A traveler who wanted to stay in \textit{sarai} was allotted a room. When he had taken up his lodging no other could dispossess him. Manucci records that each \textit{sarai} might hold more or less from 800 to 1000 persons.

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\textsuperscript{289} Manucci, Vol.i, p.159.  \\
\textsuperscript{290} Pelsaert, p.50.  \\
\textsuperscript{291} Maulvi Zafar Hasan, \textit{Monuments of Delhi} 1919, reprint Delhi, 1997, Vol.ii, 107-08.  \\
\textsuperscript{292} Tavernier, Vol.i, 49.  \\
\textsuperscript{293} Bernier, p.280-81; Manucci, Vol.i, p.221.  \\
\textsuperscript{294} Muhammad Salih Kambu, \textit{Amal-i Salih, or Shahjahanama}, Vol.iii, Majlish-i- Tarraqqi Adab, Lahore, 1960, p.47.  \\
\textsuperscript{295} \textit{Ibid.}, p.49.  \\
\textsuperscript{297} Manrique, vol.ii, p.100.
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with their horses, camels, carriages and some of them are even larger, each traveler was provided with a cot but he had to carry his own bedding. Provision like lure, rice, butter and vegetables could be brought inside the sarais or in its neighborhood. During the 17th century, the care of the travelers was usually taken by bhatiyarins, and other house-hold work in the sarais was also done by them; the male members did other jobs or worked in the fields.

By all accounts it can be said that by means of these options of safety, the trouble of travelers decrease to some extent. The Mughal government tried to secure the highway from robbery and plunder and the robbers were severely punished.

298 Manucci, Vol.i, p.69.
300 Tavernier, Vol.i, p.45.
Conclusion

A close study of ‘Major Towns and Ports in the Mughal Empire and the study of their Administration: As Reflected by European Sources’, has been attempted in foregoing chapters can be summarized in the following pages. European travelers played a great role in giving a detailed account related with towns and ports. Most of them had become eyewitness and recorded the materials as they saw. Present work aims at highlighting all aspects related with towns and ports of historical and economic significance under the Mughal rules. In the Mughal Empire ports and towns have played a significant role. Our study indicates that in Mughal Empire, there were large number of major towns and ports which facilitated thriving trade and commerce in this country. These attracted the attention of many other countries for the purpose of trade. Origin and growth of port depends upon various aspects, one of the important aspect is site for the port town to develop, which is associated with water. Among the major ports, especially on western and eastern coast, which I have made a focal point of my work, some of them are not only the ports but also considered as major towns. The study confirms us that the Ports are the vehicles par excellence for transactions. From ancient time, ports have been gateways for the exchange of goods, people and ideas.

Div, Cambay, Broach, Surat and Chaul were the major ports in Gujarat on western coast and played an important role in the overseas trade due to its geographical location in the western coast of India. In the Gulf of Cambay, Cambay port was the most important port in the sixteenth century. Broach was the next port southward which had been a port of eminence from the most ancient period. Further south was Surat, which became the major port for a number of decades and it had the superlative position as transshipment port for trade with Europe. The sea ports of Gujarat continued to be the centre of trade and commerce, in the 16th and 17th century. A. D. Cambay and Surat emerged as the most important oceanic ports of Gujarat, which became the “sea gate” of north India, besides the major emporia for import and export, Gujarat was manufacturing place for every sort of goods. Gujarat used to supply the articles imported into India from abroad. So far as the foreign trade relation with west coast is concerned, it had the
trade relation not only with the internal regions but also with foreign countries like Arabia, Africa and Persia by sea routes.

Bengal on eastern coast had a long tradition of trade and commerce owing to the mildness of its climate and the fertility of its soil. The greater part of manufactured goods and raw silk was exported, out of which Europe received the largest share and the rest went by land and sea to different parts of the empire. Though remarkable quantity of cloth was manufactured in Bengal yet it could not keep pace with the ever increasing global demand in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Bengal was rich in agricultural wealth, where Cotton and sugar were produced in abundance. The East coast, especially Bengal, was the most envious place for the Europe, from the trade point of view, as they carried a profitable trade there in the 17th century. During the Mughal period, certain ports in Bengal like Satgaon, Hugli and Chittagoan were very significant and rose to great fame, but they were mostly controlled by the Portuguese. Another major port was Balasore in Orissa on the eastern coast. The Bengal ports were second in importance to Gujarat ports. Bengal clearly possessed two separate branches of oversea trade, one to Malacca and the other to the coast of Coromandal, Malabar, Gujarat, and Ceylon. Bengal’s traditional trade connection was with Southeast Asia, especially with the kingdoms of Burma, the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. The largest volume of Bengal’s trade was directed towards Southeast Asia, to the Indonesian archipelago, Malay Peninsula and the Burmese and Thai coast. Mostly, the export commodities were textiles, silk, sugar, saltpeter, opium and food stuffs, while in return Tin, elephants, precious stones, and gold were brought. Various foreign companies like Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French established their trade relation with these port-towns lied on the eastern coast of India.

We should not hesitate to term the Mughal period as the golden age of the urban culture in those days. Evolution of the cities across the country can be attributed to the political stability as well as the establishment of a homogenous administrative pattern in that era. The officials related to town administration played a remarkable role to run the administration. The kotwal of the larger towns, being vested with various responsibilities, used to be counted among the high officials of government. His mansab was different in accordance to the degree of work, the size of the population and the administrative status of the city or town. According to the contemporary European travelers, his responsibilities in the maintenance of law and
order, apprehending criminals, executing the decisions of the lower courts and performing many of the functions which in modern times are performed by a number of municipal officers in different spheres. They compared him with various officers of the cities operating in European countries, such as, ‘Lieutenant of Police’, ‘Justice of the peace’, and the ‘Sheriff of the city’. Thus there were miscellaneous terminologies were used for the kotwal, but contemporary authorities, both Indian and European, have mainly entrusted the kotwal with the police duties. The other officials who had administrative responsibility to maintain law and order around the town or had some role to play in the internal administration of the town were the Qazi, faujdar, thanadar, qiladar, muhatsib, waqa-i navis, khufia navis and harkara. Nevertheless, in Mughal administrative setup all were required to work in close cooperation and with mutual help whenever there was danger to the peace and security of the city. Although the kotwal was the head of the town administration, yet without being assisted by other officers the administration of towns and cities could not run in a proper way. In the cities and towns of the Mughal Empire all police duties, including the maintenance of public order and decency, were entrusted to the kotwal, who wielded autocratic powers.

For the administrative workability, ports were regarded as separate unit and kept in the proto independent of the provincial unit. It would be free from exaggeration that the ports had its own well-knit administration, with various officers and departments, which dealt with its especial responsibilities. There were so many officers, related with the port administration, like mutasaddi, shahbandar, qazi, darogha (headman) of mint and the treasure officers were all appointed by the Emperor himself. The port administration was well established at Surat and mutasaddi was considered as the head of the administration. Mutasaddi (governor) was the chief executive officer at port city of Surat. For the appointment of mutasaddi, it was desired that the man, to be selected, should have the perfect knowledge of judging the qualities of horses and jewels. In the port administration several offices could be entrusted with a single person but all of them were under the control of mutasaddi of a port. The practice of farming out the office of mutasaddi was important feature of port administration. The post of mutasaddi was based on the gratification of the emperor. A mutasaddi could be removed or dismissed from his post or his mansab could be reduced in the form of punishment because of several reasons, like complaints from merchant class, dishonesty in fulfilling his responsibilities and corruption. Besides
him the other officers related to port administration worked under his command were *shahbander* for *furza* (custom House) and *khushki*, *tahwildar* and *darogha-i khizana* appointed directly from the headquarters. They worked at the custom house as clerks, who helped the customer to deal with the custom house business. The other worker such as waiter, porter and peons mentioned by the European were called *piyadas*.

After studying port and town administration we find that the officers, whether they were related with town or port administration, could be entrusted with more than one post at a time and several examples could be seen in port administration. The most important thing we find in our study is that the officers of ports and towns could work interchangeably and were not bounded to render single responsibility like port officer could be appointed as a town officer and vice versa. And the Mughal emperors had the vision of colossal task of running the administration. The duties of the officers of the port-town were parallel to the officers’ of the town administration, who were common to both administrations like *qazi*, *waqa-i navis*, *harkara*, etc. Similarly the service of certain departments such as mint and custom house and persons (*sarrafs/brokers*) were availed by both the administration.

Mughal India was definitely a great podium for the birth and growth of various trading centers. Towns performed different types of functions by becoming either administrative or commercial or religious centers. The number of town increased with the conquest and expansion of the Mughal Empire. Various factors were contributed to the growth of trading towns all through this period. Geographical factors played an imperative role in making a town as a successful trading town. Nearness to a water body and having a rich agricultural hinterland was a huge advantage for the expansion of trade. There was no shortage of water and the good quality of soil ensured an ample and continuous supply of agricultural products in the towns. The major towns of Mughal Empire like Delhi, Agra, Ahmadabad, Surat etc, may appear so much vibrant in their position.

Several commodities were traded both luxurious as well as non-luxurious. In Delhi during that time, the popular commodities were sugar, indigo, pepper, jiggery, turmeric, coarse muslin etc. Banaras was popular not only for its commercial significance but also for being a famous pilgrim of Hindus, silk stuff, gold and silver embroidery, sugar, calico, chintz, were among the commodities which were traded. It emerges as a significant trading centre regarding to cotton textiles. The economic
importance of Ahmadabad was immense and basically two types of trade were found in Ahmadabad, local trade and the trade occasioned by virtue of its being and entrepot to the maritime commerce. It also acted as a major market for Indigo and silk industry was quite prominent. Inland trade and maritime trade both flourished during the Mughal period. Definitely a single factor was not responsible for the emergence of these trading centers rather several reasons were responsible for such a scenario. The main trading routes, acted as blood vessels, run through whole of the Mughal Empire and strengthen the interaction between the various trading centers throughout the Empire. One of the trading centers was Agra. Numerous reasons were responsible for making Agra a wealthy town which was known for its grandeur and greatness. In addition its geographical setting was blessed and provided all the requirements needed for trade.

A brisk trade with the rest of the Asiatic world was kept up through these and similar routes. China, Japan, the East Indies, Ceylon, Burma, Persia, Central Asia, Arabia, the red sea port and east Africa were all commercially connected with India. The European traders i.e. Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French took Indian goods to European market. The foreign trade of India at that time consisted mostly of manufactured articles. Cotton cloth from India was in great demand in Europe and elsewhere. Indian trade in dyestuffs centered round indigo, so much sought after by European traders. Salt peter, pepper, spices opium, sugar, silk, woolen and silk cloth of various kind, yarn, asafetida (hing) salt, beads, turmeric, lac, wax, and drugs of various kinds a figure trade today, that in Mughal times may not seem large; but judged by contemporary standard it was considerable.

Among the imports, horses were usually imported for imperial needs. From China, Europe, Persia and the other countries fancy articles and luxury goods came for the use of the official classes and the emperor. Lahore, Multan, Sind, Cambay, Ahmedabad, Surat Satgaon Patna and Agra formed the chief market towns of the empire from where articles of import were distributed and whither commodities for export found their way for being sent abroad.

By present study effort is made to shed light on the major towns and ports due to their greater role in trading and commercial activities and earned the global importance during Mughal period, which controlled and influenced not only domestic but international trade as well and also made the center of attraction for the European travelers and opened the gate for trade and commerce for them as fabulous markets.
Mughal India had considerable coastal area and many navigable rivers, therefore coastal and river navigation played important role in carrying both the goods of bulk as well as high grade products by using various types of vessels. The brisk trade depended on the condition and techniques of transport.
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Map.A

MAJOR PORTS ON EASTERN COAST

Bay of Bengal

Ports: Satgaon, Hugli, Chittagong, Balasore
MAJOR PORTS ON WESTERN COAST IN MUGHAL EMPIRE

Map: B