



Two Unique Centres Of Indigenous Industries And Local Markets (Mandis & Haats) In United Provinces During The British Period: Agra And Firozabad

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Abstract: Agra and Firozabad were connected by road and other transport from the Mughal Period to now. These are the two important places of trade and commerce in the Mughal period as well as in the British period. These two unique centers were also popular for their business activities as well as indigenous industries and local markets in the United Provinces from the Mughal period to the British period and in present times. However, Agra was famous for its Leather footwear industry and Firozabad was renowned for its Glass Bangles Industries from the British period to the present times. Besides the popularity of the Leather and Glass industries, Agra and Firozabad have also established indigenous industries and local markets in different places of their locality. The local markets also known as Mandis and Haats were situated in different localities of Agra and Firozabad. These Mandis and Haats were important local markets for the local people to meet their local demand for household commodities. This paper highlights the importance of indigenous industries and Local Markets of Agra and Firozabad. This paper focuses on business activities in Agra and Firozabad of the United Provinces from the Mughal Period to the British Period. This paper also focuses on the Mandis and Haats as well as the activities of arhatias (local traders) in Agra and Firozabad.

Index Terms- Agra, Firozabad, United Provinces, Industries, Mandis and Haats.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sultan Sikander Lodi was the founder of Agra in 1504 AD and he chose his capital in 1506 AD. Agra gained popularity in the Mughal period and became the capital of the Mughal Empire. There were many artisans like potters, carpenters, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carvers of stone, hides and skin tanners, leather articles producers, etc., who turned out the unique commodities of their business. Many artisans migrated from the rural areas to the urban areas to fetch their goods in fairs and local markets from the Mughal period to the British period. Agra became a hub of business activities and trade and commerce with highly appreciated varieties of goods in the 16th and 17th centuries. Agra became a revenue division under a commissioner in 1834 AD and the district magistrate of that region had been subordinated to him. The presidency was abolished on July 10th, 1835, and this region was renamed with North-western provinces, with headquarters at Agra. The latitude is 27° 17' 67" N and longitude 78° 00' 81" E, It has an average elevation of 164 meters (542ft) from the sea level.

Firozabad is well-known as the city of glass or bangles and in other words '*Sugaah-Nagari*'. The latitude is 27° 7' N and longitude 78° 23' E, It has an average elevation of 171 meters (538ft). The River Yamuna flows past the village, which is situated in an area covered by the deep ravines of the river. Chandra Sena, a Chauhan raja, was the founder of this village, which was the most important village during the medieval period, when the Chauhan rulers of the village continuously resisted the Muslim invaders. The name of this town was Chandrawarnagar. In Chandrawarnagar, there was a famous gate named Chandrawar Gate, which was built by Raja Chandra Sena. In 1566, Chandrawar was renamed Firozabad by Firoz Shah (Mansabdar of Akbar). According to contemporary sources, Once Todarmal was passing through this town, on a pilgrimage to Gaya, and was looted by Rajpoot robbers who lived at Asfabad village near Firozabad. Todarmal had given that information to Emperor Akbar, and then he appointed a mansabdar permanently at Firozabad.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To focus on the development of business and trade in Agra and Firozabad.
- To highlight the importance of indigenous industries of Agra and Firozabad.
- To highlight the business activities of local markets (*mandis and haats*) in Agra and Firozabad.

III. BUSINESS AND TRADE ACTIVITIES IN THE AGRA REGION

Agra was also popular in the ancient period for its trade and business activities. It was a generally economic and self-sufficient village in the ancient period. It was also a good habitat for its artisans and producers such as potters, carpenters, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carvers of stone, hides and skin tanners, leather articles producers, etc., turned out the products of their business such as pots, cloths, agricultural goods, metal ware, leather commodities, etc.

Agra was also popular in the Mughal period for its trade and business activities. Many contemporary writers mention the trade activities in the Agra region such as white cloths, silk stuffs, gold and silver embroidery, agricultural commodities, sugar, leather articles, etc. Agra had several *karkhanas* (cottage factories) and particular streets were centers of particular industries and skilled artisans.

Agra was most popular in the British period for its trade and business activities. According to contemporary sources, 65,566 artisans in Agra were involved in different types of trade and business activities, particularly leather shoe-making and metalware. It was the center of gold wire (*kandla*) and silver wire (*kala button*) of which brocade and lace-ware were made. With the expansion of railways and roads in the Agra region, it became the global market for different types of global products in the British period. The period of the First and Second World Wars witnessed the growth of trade and commerce in Agra.

IV. INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES IN THE AGRA REGION

Agra became an important center of indigenous and local industries in the United Provinces during the British period. These indigenous industries are divided into three categories by historians: large-scale industries, small-scale industries, and cottage & village industries. These industries were the most important part in the growth of the economy of Agra as follows:

4.1. LARGE-SCALE INDUSTRIES: The metal and iron; cotton-spinning; dal (pulses); oil and roller-flour; the leather tanning factories were the large-scale industries of Agra. The first three employ more than 1000 people each, the fourth 900 and the fifth about 50 persons.

1. **Oil Mills:** There were three large-scale oil mills exist in Agra – Madan Mohan Damamal Oil & Ice Factory, Ltd which was set up in 1941 AD which had employed 84 persons; Chittar Mal Ram Dayal Oil Mill Ltd which was set up in 1946 AD had employed with 82 persons; Gangadhar Ram Chandra Oil Mill Ltd which were set up in 1948 AD which had employed with 99 persons.
2. **Roller Flour Mill:** Moolchand Shyamlal Roller Flour Mill was set up in 1947 with a capital of Rs 5,20,000 which is employed with 60 persons.
3. **Dal Mill:** Bansidhar Premasukh Dal Mill was started in 1943 with a capital of Rs 50,00,000 which employed 470 persons.
4. **Cotton-spinning:** John's Coronation Spinning Mill was started in 1903 and John's Princess of Wales Spinning Mill was established in 1907.
5. **Leather Tannery:** Wasan and Company, a leather tannery was started in Bodla, Agra producing leather goods and shoes.
6. **Rolling Mills:** Prakash Engineering Company and Rolling Mills was started in 1928 with an investment of Rs 50,00,000.
7. **Metal Works:** The Metal Brass Works was set up in 1946 at Freegang, Agra.
8. **Iron Works:** The N.S. Industries were set up in 1941 with an investment of Rs 5,00,000.
9. **Iron Foundry:** The Gulabchand Chhotelal Iron Foundry was set up in 1922 at Freegang, Agra.
10. **Tin Industry:** Agra Tin Manufacturing, Belanganj, Agra was started in 1945.

4.2. SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES: These were the backbone of trade and commerce in Agra City. There were approximately 290 units of different occupations that employed approximately 10,275 persons.

1. **Iron Foundries:** There were about 20 units of Iron manufacturers such as cast-iron weights, pulleys, railway sleepers, chaffs-cutters, iron ploughs, and other agricultural implements. The S. K. Iron Foundry and Engineering, Etmadpur, Agra was one of the biggest units in the Agra region which was started in 1948.
2. **Iron and Steel:** The Agarwal Iron Works, Agra was set up in 1923 producing different types of Iron and steel commodities.
3. **Engineering Works:** There were about ten units in Agra that were producing brass wire and copper wire, rivets, and agricultural implements.
4. **Metal Works:** There were some units which involved in metal work in this region.
5. **Printing Press Industry:** The printing press manufacturing company was started in Freeganj, Agra.
6. **Carpet and Durrie Industry:** Carpets were also an important commodity in the growth of trade in Agra. One of the most important units was the East India Carpet Company, Belanganj, Agra set up in 1924. Also, Durries was manufactured in the Durrie Nirmata Udhyog, Wazirganj, (Agra). Wool-spinning was a feeder industry of the Carpet industry such as Sarin Textiles, Agra.
7. **Niwar Making:** The Rama Niwar Factory, Lohamandi (Agra) was started in 1951.
8. **Hydrogen Making:** The Hydrogen Factory, India Meteorological Department was set up in 1925 at Agra.

9. **Other Small-scale Industries:** Stationery making, Carpentry, Rubber Goods, Cables, Brushes, Veterinary Instruments, chain, and automobile repair were the other small-scale industries that existed in Agra during the British period.

4.3. COTTAGE AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES: Cottage and Village Industries were the backbone of trade and commerce in the Agra region as well as the key point of business activities and growth in that region. These industries run nearby the houses and in the houses of their artisans which were only meeting the local demand of local people in that locality. Different types of cottage and village industries existed in the Agra region such as cloth weaving, spinning of cotton and silk yarn on handlooms, durrie making embroidery in gold, silver, and silver thread, Carpentry, Stationary, Rubber Goods, Cables, Brushes, Veterinary Instruments, chain, and automobile repairing oil pressing, furniture making, making of leather footwear, millstones, pottery making, basket making, toy making, cord making, Leather goods, making of musical instrument, charkha making, *moonj* mat making, soap making, stone-work, and stone-carving, woollen-clothing making, cottage tanneries, marble-carving, etc.

V. LOCAL MARKETS (MANDIS & HAATS) IN AGRA REGION

5.1 HAATS (WEEKLY MARKETS IN VILLAGES): The *haats* were temporary local markets set up in the nearby villages of Agra region weekly. The *haats* were usually a cattle market set up in villages on any particular day of the week. Many traders put up their shops in *haats* and had to travel around. They were in one place today and in another the next day. The traders had spread their sheets to display and sell their goods. The traders who put up a shop at the *haat* wind it up the same evening and, the next day they put up shop at some other *haat*. Most of the local villagers were meeting their local demand from this *haat*. They bought all products which were needed for their daily lives which they didn't produce themselves such as cattle, goat, sheep, clothes, shoes, vegetables, jaggery, chilies, spices, rice, wheat, decorative products for their cattle, etc. There are some important centers of *haats* in the Agra region as follows:

Table – 5.1. (No. of Block & Villages where *haats* were set up weekly in Agra Region)

S. No.	Block Name	No. of Villages	Name of Villages
1.	Achnera	66	Achhnera, Akabara, Arrua Khas, Bastai, etc.
2.	Akola	41	Abhaypura, Akhbai, Akola, Basai Bobla, etc.
3.	Bah	83	Bah, Bamroli, Bateshwar, Chamraua, etc.
4.	Barauli Ahir	73	Akbarpur, Bad, Bagda, Bagichi, etc.
5.	Bichpuri	39	Azizpur, Barara, Bichpuri, Garhsani, etc.
6.	Etmadpur	64	Agwar Khas, Aharan, Chirhauili, Chuaharpur, etc.
7.	Fatehabad	96	Bamraul, Basai, Begampur, Bhalokhara, etc.
8.	Fatehpur Sikri	78	Bharhkol, Bho Pur, Churiyari, Dabar, etc.
9.	Jagner	52	Basai Jagner, Bazidpur, Dahgawan, Ghaskata, etc.
10.	Jaitpur kalan	79	Fatehpura, Gadhbhar, Jaitpura Kalan, Kamtari, etc.
11.	Khandauli	49	Chaugan, Chaukra, Dhaurra, Gijauli Mustkil, etc.
12.	Kheragarh	48	Beri Chahar, Bhaker, Bhenson, Bishrampur, etc
13.	Pinahat	53	Chachiha, Gajoura, Husainpura, Karkoli, etc.
14.	Saiyyan	54	Basai Kalan, Goharra, Hirona, Iradat Nagar, etc.

15.	Samshabad	70	Bakalpur, Banguri, Barobara Kalan, Chitaura, etc.
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Sources: <https://agra.nic.in/village-panchayats> &
<https://www.onefivenine.com/india/VillagesInDistrict/Agra> .

5.2 MANDI (LOCAL MARKETS IN TOWNS): The *Mandis* were the large open yards surrounded by shops and godowns in every particular town and village either weekly or daily. The local traders buy and sell grain in large quantities in the *Mandis*. The grains were packed in sacks and no one was buying or selling in small quantities for their day-to-day requirement. The traders were brought their goods in large quantities and they were meant to further sold and transported to other traders through bullock carts and other sources also known as wholesale trade. The particular goods markets were also engaged in trade during the British period which was popular for their goods trading activities such as *Lohamandi*, *Heeng ki Mandi*, *Sabzi Mandi*, *Tel Mandi*, *Gosht Mandi*, *Chawal Mandi*, *Gehun Mandi*, *Dal Mandi*, *Masala Mandi*, etc. The traders who wanted to trade in these *Mandis* had to pay 2% of the total selling as a *Mandi* fee. There are some important *Mandis* which were existed in the Agra region from the Mughal period to the present times also which were popular for their trading activities as follows:

Table – 5.2. (Popular *Mandis* in Agra region which were popular for trading goods)

S. No.	Name of <i>Mandi</i>	Trading Goods and Commodities
1.	<i>Heeng ki Mandi</i>	<i>Heeng</i> , leather goods & shoes, grains, meat, etc.
2.	<i>Nai ki Mandi</i>	Leather goods & shoes, grains, goat & cattle meat, etc.
3.	<i>Loha Mandi</i>	Iron goods and other commodities
4.	<i>Rui ki Mandi</i>	Cotton and Wool trading
5.	<i>Raja ki Mandi</i>	Leather goods & shoes, grains, goat & cattle meat, etc.
6.	<i>Sikandra</i>	Agricultural goods
7.	<i>Dayal Bagh</i>	Leather goods & shoes, grains, goat & cattle meat, etc.
8.	<i>Khandari</i>	Spinning of cotton and silk yarn on handlooms, etc.
9.	<i>Taj Ganj</i>	Embroidery in gold, silver, and silver thread, etc.
10.	<i>Shahganj</i>	Carpentry, Stationary, Rubber Goods, etc.
11.	<i>Bodla</i>	Grains, goat & cattle meat, etc.
12.	<i>Balkeshwar</i>	Cables, Brushes, Veterinary Instruments, grain, etc.
13.	<i>Rakabganj</i>	Chain and automobile repairing oil pressing, etc.
14.	<i>Gular ka Nagla</i>	Leather goods & shoes, grains, goat & cattle meat, etc.
15.	<i>Kheragarh</i>	Charkha making, <i>moonj</i> mat making, soap making, etc.
16.	<i>Mantola</i>	Stone-work & stone-carving, woollen-clothing making, etc.
17.	<i>Runkata</i>	Furniture making, millstones, pottery making, etc.
18.	<i>Dhanauli</i>	Cottage tanneries, marble carving, etc
19.	<i>Etmadpur</i>	Basket making, toy making, cord making, etc.
20.	<i>Bichpuri</i>	Leather goods & shoes, grains, goat & cattle meat, etc.

Sources: <https://agra.nic.in/village-panchayats> & <https://www.onefivenine.com/india/VillagesInDistrict/Agra> .

VI. ROLE OF ARHATIAS (LOCAL TRADERS) IN MANDIS AND HAATS

Arhatias were the most important element in the local trade in all provinces. They were the commission agents and mediators between the producers and traders through the ages. They had occupied all the trading activities in their hands in *Mandis*. The farmers would take their production to the *arhatias* for selling in the *Mandis*. They would given be a number. The number denoted the farmer's turn to sell their produce. When the farmer's turn came, the *arhatias* would hold the auction and call out the bid and sell off the grain. Then, the *arhatias* would pay the price to the farmers after deducting their commission or share from the amount paid by the trader in the *Mandis*. Hence, the farmers paid the *arhatias* that commission for the service of selling their produce.

VII. BUSINESS AND TRADE ACTIVITIES IN THE FIROZABAD REGION

Firozabad was a popular village with the old name of 'Chandrawarnagar' in the ancient and Mughal period near the capital of the Mughal empire i.e., Agra. It was a generally economic and self-sufficient village in an ancient Mughal period which was the centre of local robbers who lived there and looted the caravans. It was also a good habitat for its artisans and producers such as weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, stone-carvers, carpenters, hides and skins tanners, leather workers, potters, etc., turned out the products of their trade such as pots, cloths, agricultural goods, metal ware, leather commodities, glass articles, etc.

In the British period, the glass factories of Firozabad in United Provinces emerged into four branches: manufacture of crude glass; manufacture of glass bangles or *churis* from crude glass; manufacture of flasks, inkpots, etc., blown or mounded from crude glass; manufacture of lamp chimneys vases, etc., from broken imported glass.

VIII. INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES IN THE FIROZABAD REGION

Firozabad became an important center of indigenous and local industries in the United Provinces during the British period. These indigenous industries are divided into three categories by historians: large-scale industries, small-scale industries, and cottage & village industries. These industries were the most important part of the growth of the economy of Firozabad is as follows:

8.1 LARGE-SCALE INDUSTRIES: The Large-scale Industries of Firozabad were Glass Bangles Industries and Glass Commodities Industries. The first glass factory 'The Indian Glass Works' at Firozabad was started in 1908 by Chaudhari Nand Ram and Chaudhari Moolchand, but after some time, it was run solely by Chaudhari Moolchand with 60 employees working there. A Persian Businessman has established a factory named 'B. Framroz & Co.', which had introduced new technology in the bangle-making industry of Firozabad and could supply some really good specimens. Messrs. B. Framroz & co. had always received the highest praise whenever they had sent samples of their production to exhibitions, and they had on various occasions had medals awarded to them, as, for instance, at Mysore in Southern India in 1913, in the Pudukkottai State in the Madras Presidency in 1914, and in the Baroda State in 1916. The glass industry at Firozabad might be divided into two main branches:

1. Manufacture of block glass or Kanch.
2. Manufacture of bangles or *churis* from block glass.

Besides glass industries, there were five ginning mills running in Firozabad and one in Fatehabad (Firozabad) exists in large-scale industries.

8.2 SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES: There were 147 small-scale units of glass sheets and glass goods in Firozabad. There were uncountable glass bangles designing and export firms which were existed in Firozabad. The glass bangles were exported to another district of the state and other states also and to foreign countries. They were also producing glass pods, beads, and a variety of articles in Firozabad.

8.3 COTTAGE AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES: Besides these glass designing firms, 1000 cottage firms were run in Firozabad. These firms run near the houses and in the houses of their artisans which were only meeting the local demand of local people at that locality. Different types of cottage and village industries existed in Firozabad same as in Agra, such as cloth weaving, spinning of cotton and silk yarn on handlooms, durrie making, embroidery in gold, silver, and silver thread, Carpentry, Stationary, Rubber Goods, Cables, Brushes, Veterinary Instruments, chain, and automobile repairing oil pressing, furniture making, making of leather footwear, millstones, pottery making, basket making, toy making, cord making, Leather goods, making of musical instrument, charkha making, *moonj* mat making, soap making, stone-work and stone-carving, woollen-clothing making, cottage tanneries, marble-carving, etc.

IX. LOCAL MARKETS (MANDIS & HAATS) IN FIROZABAD REGION

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9.2 MANDI (LOCAL MARKETS IN TOWNS): The *Mandis* were the large open yards surrounded by shops and godowns in every particular town and village either weekly or daily. The local traders buy and sell grain in large quantities in the *Mandis*. The grains were packed in sacks and no one was buying or selling in small quantities for their day-to-day requirement. The traders were brought their goods in large quantities and they were meant to further sold and transported to other traders through bullock carts and other sources also known as wholesale trade. The particular goods markets were also engaged in trade during the British period which was popular for their goods trading activities such as *Lohamandi*, *Heeng ki Mandi*, *Sabzi Mandi*, *Tel Mandi*, *Gosht Mandi*, *Chawal Mandi*, *Gahun Mandi*, *Dal Mandi*, *Masala Mandi*, etc. The traders who wanted to trade in these *Mandis* had to pay 2% of the total selling as a *Mandi* fee.

There are some important centers of *haats* & *mandis* in the Firozabad region that were popular for local trade as follows:

1. **Marsalganj:** It was a popular locality of Firozabad which was famous for *haat* and *mandi* for meeting the local demands from the Mughal period to present times.
2. **Chandwar:** It was the old city of Firozabad situated near Yamuna bank which was popular for *haat* and *mandi* since the Rajput period.
3. **Alampur Kaneta:** It was a small village which was famous for weekly *haat*.
4. **Alampura Jarkhi:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
5. **Alinagar Kenjra:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
6. **Anandipur Karkauli:** It was a big village that was famous for big *mandi* and *haat*.
7. **Basai Mohammadpur:** It was also the biggest village in the Firozabad region famous for *mandi* and *haat*.
8. **Basudeopur:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
9. **Bazidpur Kutubpur:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.

10. **Bilahna:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
11. **Datauli:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
12. **Dhakupura:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
13. **Donkeli:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
14. **Gazipur:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
15. **Itora:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
16. **Jahagirpur:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
17. **Jaindamai:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
18. **Jalalpur:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
19. **Jamalpur:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
20. **Jarauli Kalan:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
21. **Jarauli Khurd:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
22. **Khera Ganeshpur:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
23. **Matsena:** It was also the biggest village in the Firozabad region famous for *mandi* and *haat*.
24. **Naglamulla:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
25. **Rasidpur Kaneta:** It was a big village that was famous for its big *mandi* and *haat*.
26. **Salempur Naglakhar:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
27. **Usaini:** It was a big village that was famous for big *mandi* and *haat*.
28. **Vijaypurnagla Bhavesingh:** It was also a small village popular for cattle *haat*.
29. **Wazirpur Jihalpur:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi*.
30. **Asafabad:** It was also a small village popular for weekly *mandi* since the Mughal period.

X. CONCLUSION

This study focuses on the development and growth of trade and commerce in the two important centers of United Provinces i.e., Agra and Firozabad. The richness of these two places is because most of the historians did not pay much attention to the business activities. Agra and Firozabad were the two important markets of trade in the United Provinces from the Mughal period to the British Period. This study also focuses on the local markets also known as *mandis* and *haats* for meeting the demand of local people. The *arhatias* who were the local traders or mediators between producers and sellers played an important role in the business activities in United Provinces during the British rule. These factors which were combined with British economic policies, allowed Agra and Firozabad to become an important trade hub in the region, contributing to its economic growth and development during the British period.

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