

**National Mission for Clean Ganga**  
(Reg. Society)  
Ministry of Jal Shakti  
Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation  
Government of India

 Indian  
National Trust  
for Art and  
Cultural Heritage  
**INTACH**  
**INDIA@75**  
*Azaadi Ke Rang Bharatiya Sanskriti Ke Sang*

**नमामि  
गंगे**

# Documentation of Ganga from Gaumukh to Gangasagar

## Bulandshahr District

### Intangible Cultural Heritage



  
**INTACH**

**Front Cover Image:** Khurja Pottery-making process

**Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).

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2021

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage

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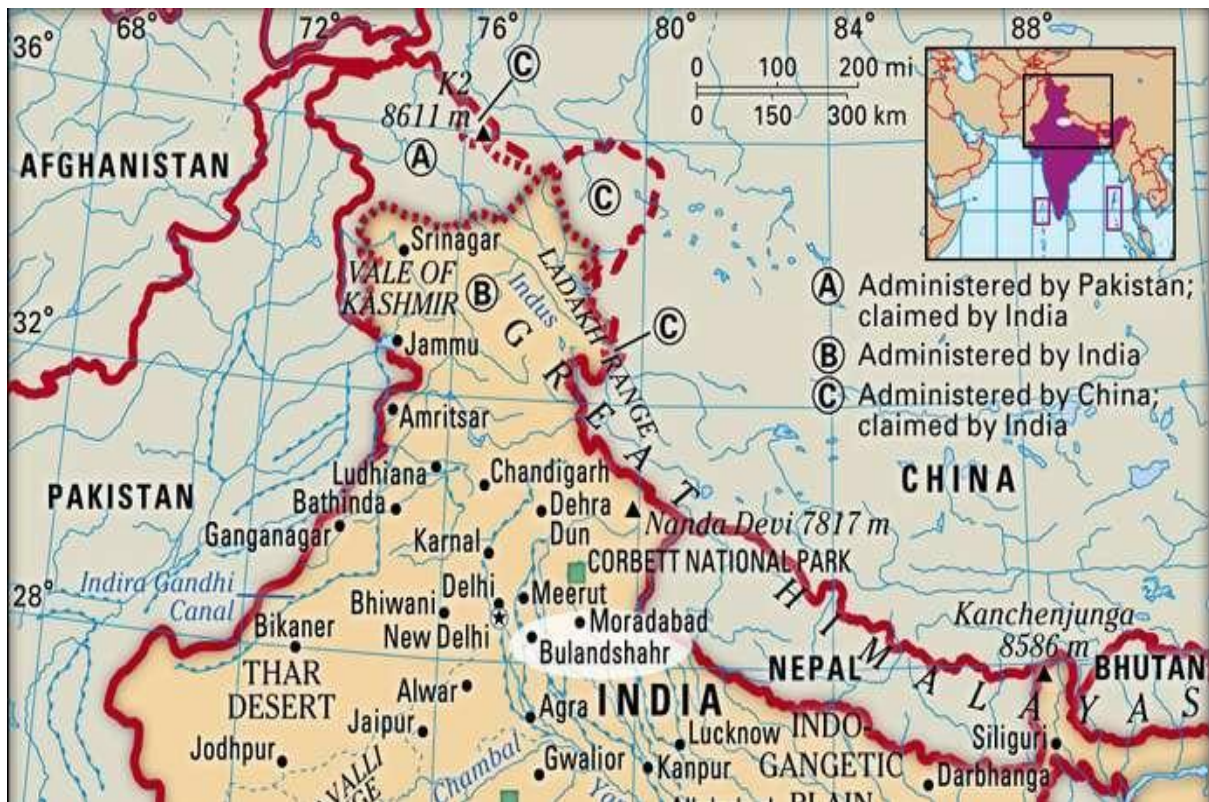


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# History



Map showing where Bulandshahr is located in Uttar Pradesh, India.  
Image Source: Britannica (<https://www.britannica.com/place/Bulandshahr>)

The city was formerly called Baran. Its present name, which means “Elevated Town,” refers to its location on high ground. The area passed from a Hindu raja to Maḥmūd of Ghazna in 1018, was fought over during the 14th century, and then fell under Mughal rule. In 1805, it became part of British India.<sup>1</sup> Currently, Bulandshahr is a district in Uttar Pradesh, which is located at a distance of less than 64 kilometers from Delhi. The city is mainly connected with the roads of Meerut, Aligarh, Budayun, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Ghaziabad districts, and the Ganges River and Yamuna River makes its boundary.<sup>2</sup>

Divided into 7 regions for administrative purposes, Bulandshahr includes regions of Anoopshahr, Bulandshahr, Dibai, Khurja, Shikarpur, Sikandrabad and Siyana. The Bulandshahr city also consists of 16 development blocks like Anoopshahr, Agauta, Arniya, B.B. Nagar,

<sup>1</sup> “Bulandshahr,” *Britannica*, accessed February 12, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Bulandshahr>.

<sup>2</sup> “History,” Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh, accessed February 12, 2021. <https://bulandshahr.nic.in/history/>.

Bulandshahr, Danpur, Dibai, Gulaothi, Jahagirabad, Khurja, Lahaowati, Pahasu, Shikarpur, Sikandrabad, Siyana and Uncha Gaon.<sup>3</sup>

Yarning, fabric work in Jahangirabad, kitchenware work in Khurja, wood work in Bulandshahr and Shikipurpur are famous. Additionally, items like glasses and bangles are also made here.<sup>4</sup> Textile is lined in the district with looms. There are also several units for making water hand pumps in the town of Bulandshahr.

According to F. S. Growse, the area (when he was writing about the District of Bulandshahr in the 1880s) was first administered from Aligarh, and then for a brief period from Meerut, during the first twenty years after the British conquest. As a separate political unit, it dates only from the year 1824. Since then it is reckoned as one of the six Collectorates that, together, make up the Meerut Division of the North-West Provinces.<sup>5</sup>

The present-day district falls under the administrative division of Meerut and is part of the National Capital Region. The river Kalindi runs south-easterly through Bulandshahr city. Until as recently as the reign of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in the 17th century, both the city and the district of Bulandshahr was called 'Baran'.<sup>6</sup> Growse mentions that even in his time, i.e. in the 19th century, Baran was the popular name amongst the masses. Aurangzeb renamed Baran as Bulandshahr, as part of appropriating native traditions and names.<sup>7</sup> The landmark fort of Baran stood on high grounds, typical of forts, which explains the renaming as Bulandshahr. 'Buland' in Urdu means high, and 'Shahr' means city. Bulandshahr literally translates as high-city.

The Indian epic Mahabharata culminates in the legendary battle of Kurukshetra, between King Dhritarashtra's sons, the Kauravas, and King Pandu's sons, the Pandavas, for the throne of the Kuru Kingdom at Hastinapur. The Kauravas were one hundred brothers, whereas their cousins, the Pandavas were merely five strong brothers. Yet, the Pandavas won the battle and the eldest brother Yudhishtira, ascended the throne at Hastinapur. Parikshit succeeded Yudhishtira, and was succeeded by his son, Janmejaya. Janmejaya founded the oldest town in Bulandshahr district, Ahar. Not far from Ahar, Janmejaya established the Fort of Baran.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bulandshahronline.in/city-guide/about-bulandshahr>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Growse, Frederic Salmon. *Bulandshahr; or Sketches of an Indian District; Social, Historical and Architectural*. Benaras: Medical Hall Press, 1884: pages 1-3.

<https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Bulandshahr/zNKVY1WkfCIC?hl=en&gbpv=0>.

<sup>6</sup> Mallick, Bhaswar. "Agency of Labour Resistance in Nineteenth Century India: Significance of Bulandshahr and F. S. Growse's Account." University of Cincinnati, 2018: pages 9-13.

[https://etd.ohiolink.edu/apexprod/rws\\_olink/r/1501/10?clear=10&p10\\_accession\\_num=ucin1543581416769978](https://etd.ohiolink.edu/apexprod/rws_olink/r/1501/10?clear=10&p10_accession_num=ucin1543581416769978).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Soon, a colony grew up alongside the fort. This fort and its colony from approximately 3000 BC, is the origin of Bulandshahr city.<sup>8</sup>

In a contrasting traditional origin-story, a town called Banchhati was founded by Parmal, a Pandava chief from Ahar. Growse reported to find this original settlement in the form of a ruinous mound, which he later transformed into a garden called 'Moti Bagh', a place that still exists and retains this name.<sup>9</sup>

Growse reports another account wherein, these lands used to be the domain of a prominent Naga tribe, under an Ahi-Baran king. To provide support to this theory, Growse deduced that Baran comes from Varana, meaning a hill-fort, or enclosure, and that Ahi, meaning snake, substantiated the claims of the Ahi-Baran king founding the fort of Baran. Further, Growse speculates that these Nagas may have been simply Buddhists, who were reproached by their Hindu neighbours, for their different religion – as serpentine. And again, an alternate theory exists. King Parikshit had died of snake bite, and his son and successor Janmejaya avenged his father by performing a sacrifice to eliminate all serpents. The Brahmin residents who performed the sacrificial ritual were granted the land and villages surrounding Ahar, and Janmejaya himself later shifted the capital to Baran. The association of snakes with the original migrants may thus have asserted the prefix Ahi to Baran.<sup>10</sup> Either way, the Fort of Baran was thus established either by Parmal to protect his new town Banchhati, or by an Ahi-Baran king, or by Janmejaya and his subjects from Ahar.

At the turn of the era with the birth of Christianity, the Bactrian empire and the Gupta kingdom dominated the subcontinent. Coins recovered in Bulandshahr with inscriptions in Pali and Greek, provide evidence of the relative importance and prosperity of Baran up to the 9th and 10th century AD. Antiques dating from 400-800 AD indicate the presence of a significant Buddhist population in the present-day Moti Bagh area.<sup>11</sup>

Around 800 AD, the Dor Rajputs under King Chandraka established Baran as their capital. Hara-datta, Chandraka's descendant in the 11th century, founded the town Hapur. He was the reigning king when, in 1017 AD Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India. When Mahmud laid siege to the fortress of Meerut, Hara-dutta, offering no resistance, fled to Baran. He entrusted his trusted accomplices to negotiate a settlement with the invader. When Mahmud retracted following his plunder, the Dors came back to power. Later in 1193 AD, with death of Chandra Sen while defending his fort against Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghorī, the Dor dynasty ended in Baran.<sup>12</sup> The gates to the fortress was opened by two traitors, a Brahman and a Dor, who thereon converted to Islam. In 1286 AD, Malik Tuzaki became the administrator of Baran. The

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

fort of Baran thus passed into the reigns of Islamic Sultans, and so ended the Hindu rule in the region.

The fort of Baran continued to remain of strategic military significance. In 1290 AD Alauddin Khilji made Baran his stronghold before marching on Delhi in 1296 AD to claim the throne by killing emperor Jalaluddin.<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Tughlaq is the infamous 'mad king' in the annals of Indian history, reigning from 1325 to 1351 AD. When in 1344 AD, a famine devastated Baran, Tughlaq piled on the misery by imposing heavy taxes. The distressed Hindu farmers burned their crops, and let loose their cattle. This further enraged Tughlaq, who massacred the people, plundered the district and ruined the countryside. The native trader community, called Baran-wallas were thus exiled. After 1351 AD the district recuperated its prosperity, under the more benign rule of emperor Firoz Shah. Khurja, the commercial market town, was established by Firoz. In 1356 AD, "The Chronicle of Firoz" was written by the most prominent literary figure from Baran, the historian Zai-ud-din. In 1398 AD, Timur came to plunder Delhi from Persia. The emperor Mahmud fled, but his regent Iqbal Khan retreated to the fort of Baran. After Timur went back to Samarkand, Firoz's grandson plotted unsuccessfully to kill Iqbal. Iqbal recovered Delhi in 1399 AD, and ruled until 1405 AD.

The use of Baran as a refuge for fleeing emperors and noblemen was repeated several times. The fort of Baran served as an outpost to regroup, or recuperate strength before a strike on the capital at Delhi. Baran thus had had a history of being the last resort against attacking foreigners, and was a familiar springboard for resistance against foreign invaders.<sup>14</sup>

Under the Mughals, major architectural work was rarely undertaken in the district. The first governor of Baran was a woman, Bano Begam in 1536 AD. Under her successor, Amir Fakir Ali Beg's administration, Nek-Bhakt Khan built a mosque in Baran. Baran remained an administrative district under the Delhi province until the beginning of the 16th century, but then declined rapidly in prominence, eventually reduced to merely a town under the Kol district. In 1707 AD, the governor of Kol, Sabit Khan restored the fort of Baran, and appropriated its name as Sabit-garh. A Dargah was built, and in 1728 AD the construction of Jama Masjid commenced at the centre of the fortified precinct. The Masjid, or mosque, remained unfinished. Sabit Khan's tomb was built in the adjoining garden called Kinlochganj, which Growse reported as still existing.<sup>15</sup>

By 1780 AD, Baran was abandoned by even the Amil, junior revenue officer, Hakdad Khan. The Amil established his headquarters in the nearby village of Rathora, and built a new fort there under the patronage of the popular saint Malamal. The village was thus renamed Malagarh.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



Thus, when the British came to Bulandshahr with the fall of Aligarh in 1803 AD, they found a half deserted, impoverished village. It was initially administered by the Delhi Resident, but from 1804 AD, Bulandshahr and Khurja were administered as part of the Aligarh district.<sup>16</sup> In 1818 AD, the administration designation changed to Meerut district, and in 1824 AD, the District of Bulandshahr was re-established as an independent administrative entity. It was a part of the Meerut division of the North-West provinces of British East India.

In 1857 AD, Walidad Khan, the grandson of Hakdad Khan, was appointed the Subedar of the region by the last Mughal ruler of Delhi, Bahadur Shah, as part of the first war of Indian independence. Under Walidad Khan, reminiscent of the many former resistances from Baran, Malagarh became a stronghold and rallying point for the revolting native population. The whole region was over-run, and Bulandshahr was freed for some time.<sup>17</sup> Eventually, though, the mutiny was crushed, and the fort of Malagarh was demolished.

In 1858 AD, Bulandshahr's administration was fully recovered by the British, and this time it was made independent and kept out of Delhi's administrative oversight.

Patronage was largely left to individuals such as F. S. Growse, District Officer of Bulandshahr, who promoted the local crafts in the 1870s, by getting the craftsmen to work on the reconstruction of their town. In the process, Western ideas were freely incorporated.<sup>18</sup>

Not only did Growse present a brief history of Bulandshahr, but his work is also famous for his insights into the architectural history and rebuilding of the city, as well as his illustrations.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Head, Raymond. "Indian Crafts and Western Design from the Seventeenth Century to the Present." *RSA Journal* 136 (1988): page 121. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41374508?seq=1>.

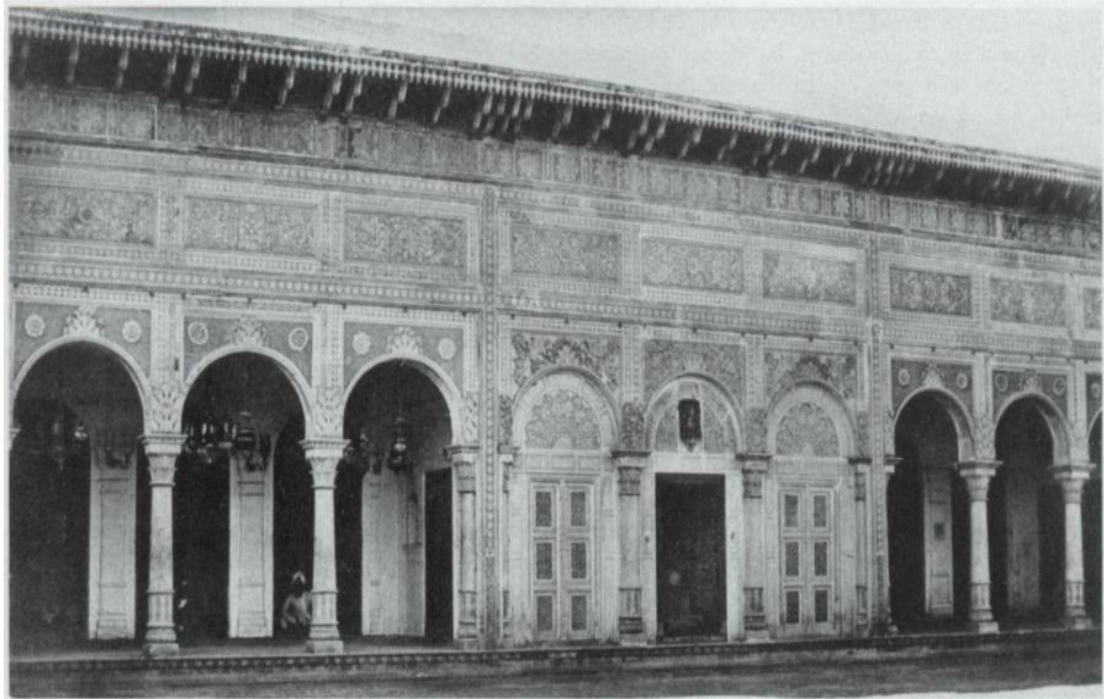


Fig. 4. Lala Janaki Prasad's House, Khurja in the district of Bulandshahr, c.1880, designed and executed by Indian craftsmen at the instigation of F. S. Growse.

Lala Janaki Prasad's House, Khurja, in the district of Bulandshahr, c. 1880, designed and executed by Indian craftsmen at the instigation of F. S. Growse.

Source: Raymond Head, page 122 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41374508?seq=1>).



JAHANGIRABAD HOUSE, BULANDSHAHR. 1881.

Jahangirabad House, Bulandshahr, 1881.

Source: Frederic Salmon Growse (to face title)

(<https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Bulandshahr/zNKVY1WkfCIC?hl=en&gbpv=0>).

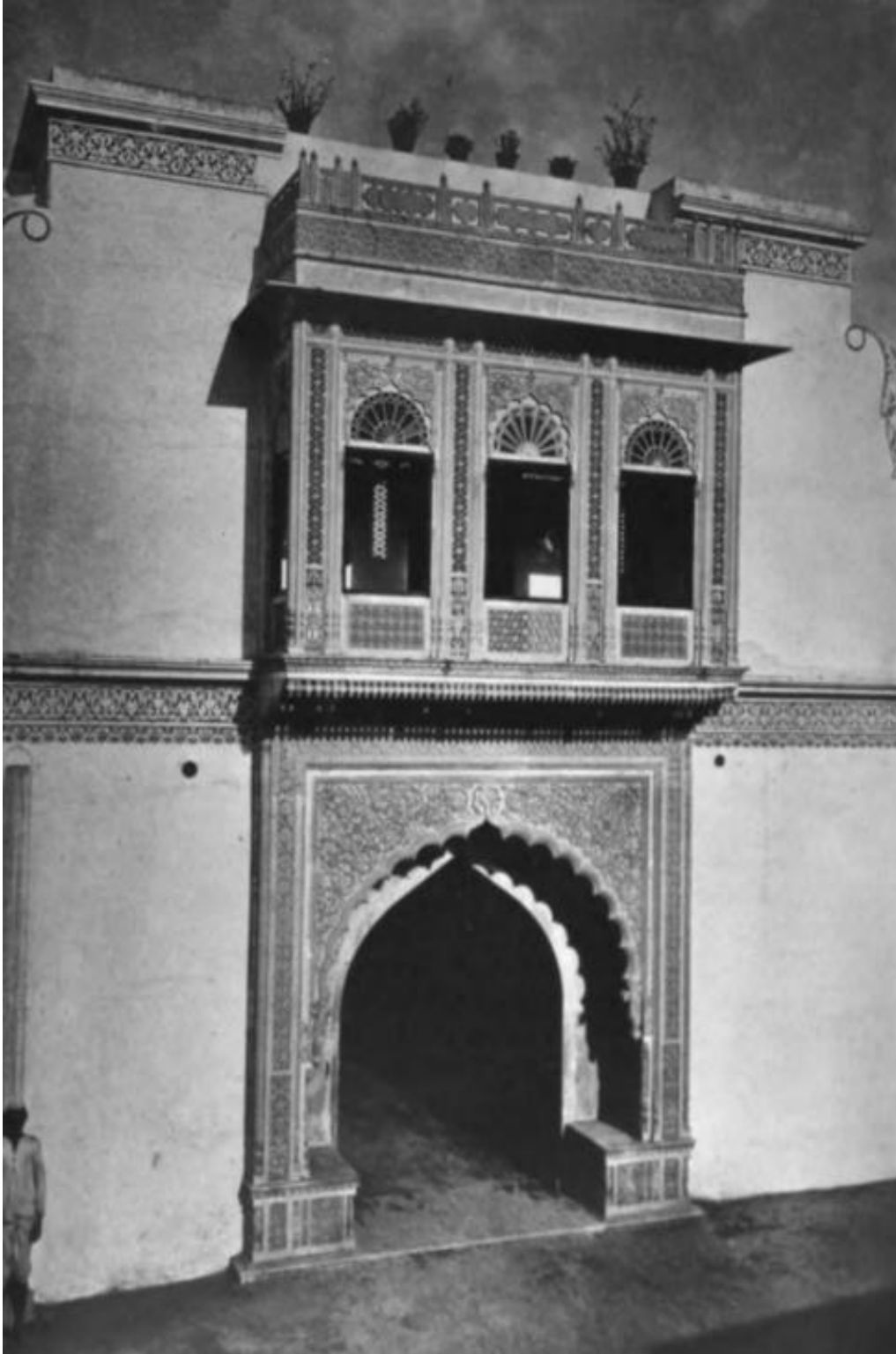


MARKET SQUARE. BULANDSHAHR.

Market Square, Bulandshahr.

Source: Frederic Salmon Growse, page 51

(<https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Bulandshahr/zNKVY1WkfCIC?hl=en&gbpv=0>).

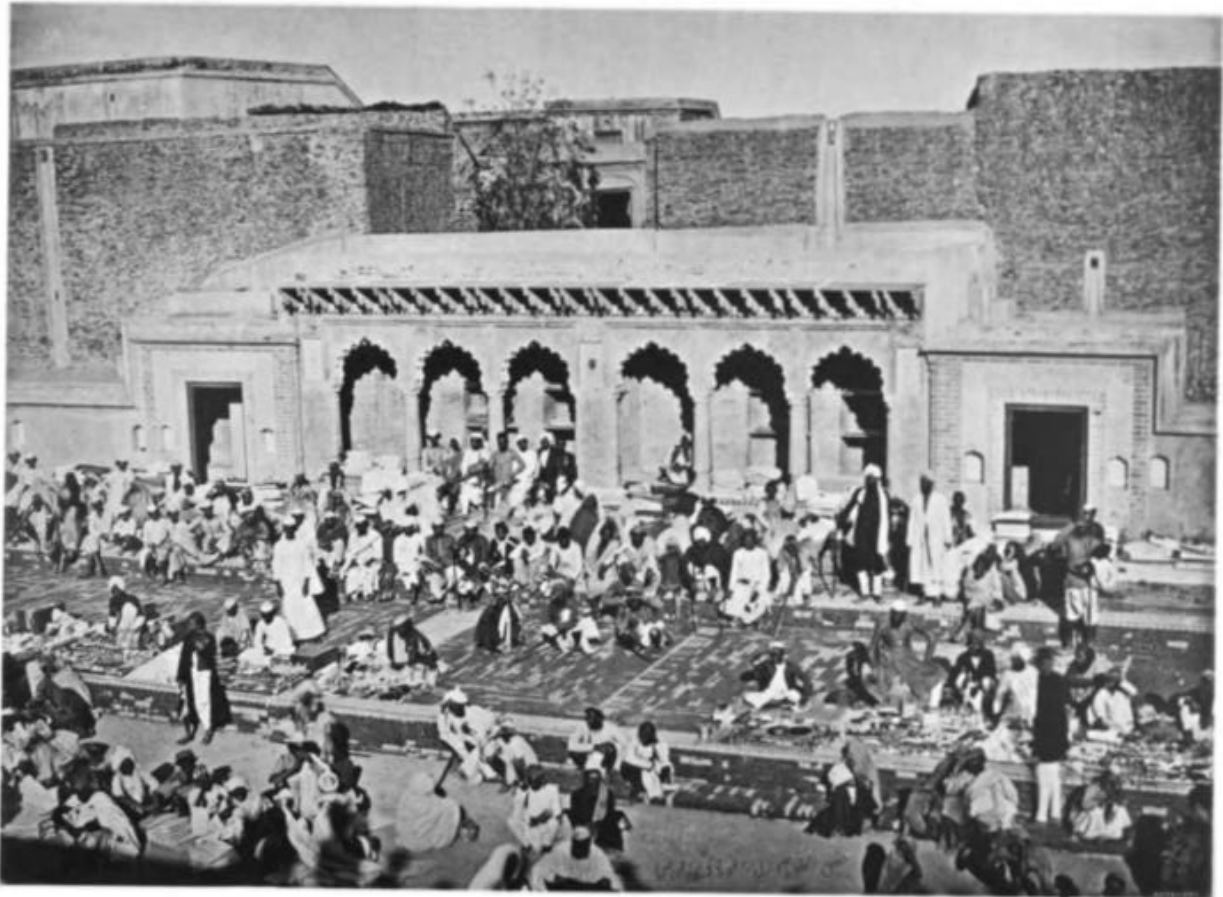


Chapravat Gate, Bulandshahr, 1882.

**Source:** Frederic Salmon Growse, page 60

(<https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Bulandshahr/zNKVY1WkfCIC?hl=en&gbpv=0>).





MARKET TERRACE, BULANDSHAHR 1879

Market Terrace, Bulandshahr, 1879.

Source: Frederic Salmon Growse, page 64

(<https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Bulandshahr/zNKVY1WkfCIC?hl=en&gbpv=0>).

## **MUTINY OF 1857**

Elaborating on the mutiny of 1857, the Bulandshahr district was in the charge of Mr. Brand Sapte and Mrs. Turnbull, Melville, and A. Lyall (who later became Lieutenant-Governor of these provinces) of the Civil Service. Taken from the District Gazetteer, the account is chiefly reliant upon Mr. Sapte's official report, which was written shortly after the restoration of order.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Nevill, H. R. Bulandshahr: A Gazetteer, Being Volume V of the District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. Government Press, 1922: page 153-154.  
<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.235950/page/n5/mode/2up>.

Early on the morning of the 21st May, tidings arrived from Aligarh of the mutiny of the headquarters of the regiment and the departure of the Europeans for Agra. Mr. Sapte, at once, sent off all the ladies and children to Meerut, leaving the garrison reduced to seven Englishmen of the 9th Native Infantry. Towards the evening of the 21st of May, this party was informed of an intended attack by the Gujars, and also heard of the approach of the Aligarh mutineers on their way to Delhi.<sup>20</sup> Upwards of ninety remount horses, sadly needed for the troops, were at this time passing through Bulandshahr to Meerut, under a guard from the 6th and 44th Native Infantry, but General Hewitt refused to receive them, and they still remained at Bulandshahr.

As the Gujars entered the station they fired each house, commencing with the dak bungalow, and during the four days that the station was without British officers all property, public and private, belonging to Government or Government officers, was carried off or burned. The public offices were gutted and all the records were destroyed. Hence, it is almost impossible to reconstruct the history of the district from its formation until the mutiny.<sup>21</sup>

The people of the town and the neighbouring villages took a very active part in the work of demolition. The absence of the authorities from Bulandshahr and Aligarh left the Agra to Meerut road completely at the mercy of the ill-disposed. Travellers were murdered and plundered, and all communications, except by camel-riders, were stopped. The Gurkhas of Dehra were working their way down by the canal, but were stopped at Dasna in the Meerut district by the destruction of the locks on the canal, and on their asking for carriage from the General at Meerut their request was negated. They succeeded in reaching Bulandshahr on 24th May, and, had they been supplied with carriage, would have been in time to prevent the outbreak on the 21st and the loss of the treasure and horses.

On the evening of the 28th of May, the Gurkhas marched to join General Wilson's column at Ghaziabad. The Gujars of parganas Dadri and Sikandarabad were no sooner apprised of this movement than on the very next day they attacked the rich and populous town of Sikandarabad, about ten miles from Bulandshahr. Vast numbers of the inhabitants of both sexes and all ages were brutally ill-treated and murdered. The civil authorities were helpless. Only four miles off lay the fort of Walidad Khan, of Malagarh, who had arrived from Delhi on 26th May with a following of mutineer soldiery and the patent of the subahdari of Koil and Baran in his pocket, granted to him by his connection, the ex-King of Delhi, with whom he had been staying. They knew that if they moved out of the station he would be down upon them

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, page 155.



and cut them off, and eventually the communication with Agra and Aligarh, which was the sole object of holding Bulandshahr, would have been impeded.<sup>22</sup>

Mr. Sapte recounts his journey back, "As we passed Malagarh we found Walidad had sent out a small body of cavalry to oppose our retreat, but these fled on our approach, and, as we pursued them, took shelter in a village close under the walls of Malagarh, from which they opened a fire upon us, but without effect. Thus were we, step by step, driven out of the Bulandshahr district."<sup>23</sup>

The day after the departure of the Europeans, Walidad expelled the police outpost at Gulaothi, whilst Mr. Sapte's party remained at Babugarh, near Hapur, in the Meerut district, watching the Rohilkhand rebels. On the 18th of June Walidad's outpost at Gulaothi was driven back, but on the 22nd June, owing to the arrival of the Bareilly mutineer brigade, the Europeans had to fall back upon Meerut. The Meerut and Agra road thus fell into the hands of the mutineers, and Malagarh became the resort of all the ill-disposed of the surrounding districts. Walidad occupied Aligarh and Khurja, and attracted to his standard the Pathans of the Barah Basti in the Bulandshahr district, who had given so many recruits to the generally mutinous irregular cavalry.<sup>24</sup>

On the 4th October, Bulandshahr was occupied by a force under Lieutenant-Colonel Farquhar, consisting of the right wing of the 1st Baluch Battalion, two horse artillery guns, and a body of Pathan horses under Major Stokes, and from this date confidence began to be restored. Abdul Latif Khan, the head of the Pathans of the Barah Basti, paid up his balances of land-revenue, though he had previously refused to pay one pice. This man was subsequently convicted of aiding the rebels in every way, and was sentenced to transportation for life. His uncle, Azim Khan, had joined Walidad, and was captured by Khushi Ram, the Jat Police Officer of Anupshahr, while trying to escape into Rohilkhand. Azim Khan was tried by court-martial and was sentenced to death. The police stations were at once re-established, and, with the exception of Sahibdad Khan, of Shikarpur, who had deserted, and Pir Muhammad Khan, of Anupshahr, and Khurshed Ali, kotwal of Bulandshahr, whose conduct was somewhat suspicious, the old police officers were reinstated in their posts.<sup>25</sup> The greater part of the rank and file of the police had joined the rebels, and their places were filled by Jats, while a strong force was sent to overawe the Gujars of Dadri and Sikandarabad.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, page 156.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, page 159.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, page 161.

On 17th November the camp moved towards the Ganges, but had only reached Ahar when news arrived of an intended uprising of the Gujars to rescue their brethren who had been captured, but this movement was frustrated by the troops returning by forced marches to Bulandshahr.<sup>26</sup> With regard to the subsequent history of the district since the mutiny, it has remained undisturbed.

According to the District Gazetteer, the most important events that occurred here were the famines of 1860, 1878 and 1897, the introduction of the revenue settlement of 1860-1865, and the later settlement by Mr. Stoker that was completed in 1889.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 166.

# Performing Arts

## SARODIYAS: THE SAROD PLAYERS



A Sarod.

**Image Source:** Grinnell College Musical Instrument Collection  
(<https://omeka-s.grinnell.edu/s/MusicalInstruments/item/642>).

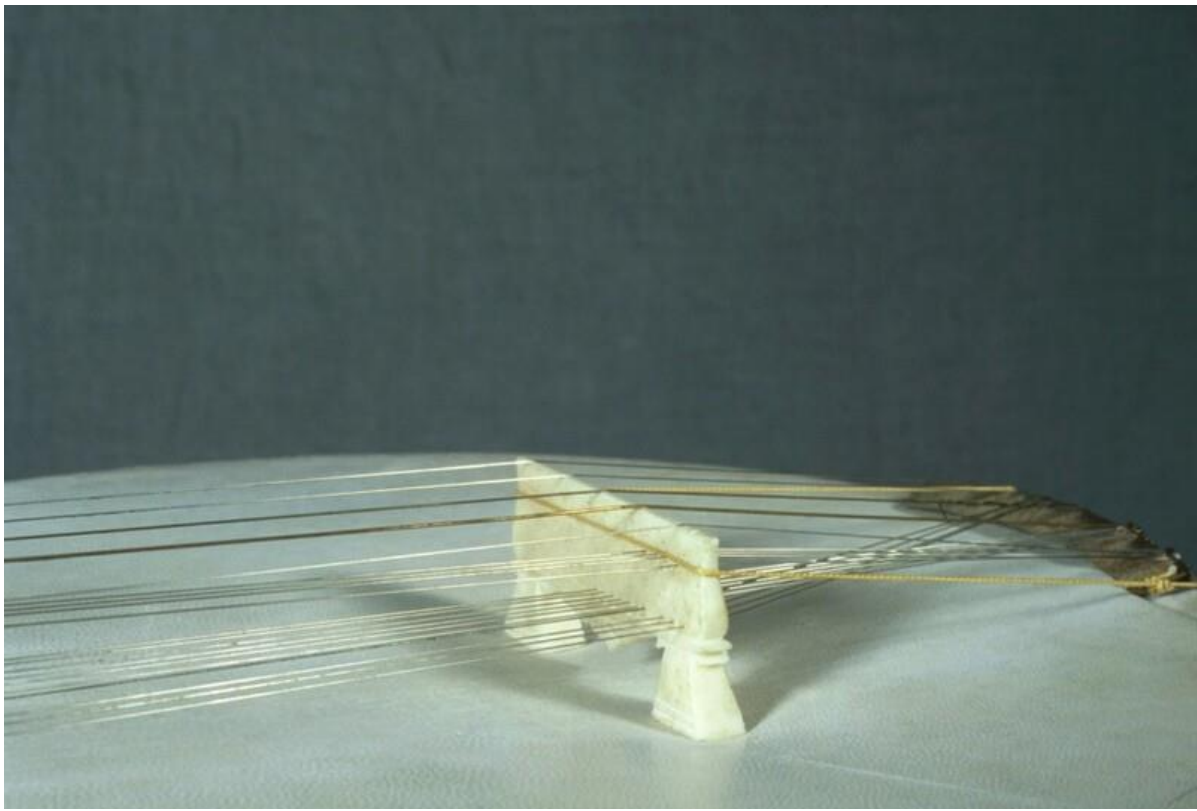
Historical sources on the sarod (a short-necked plucked lute) describe how these musicians' ancestors (lauded mirasis belonging to the Pathan community) came to India from eastern Afghanistan as mercenaries in the early eighteenth century, securing employment with the Mughal army as soldiers, singers and instrumentalists.

In the early eighteenth century these musicians established mohallas around the towns of Shahjahanpur, Rampur, Bulandshahr, Najibabad and Muzzafarnagar in the province of Rohilkhand.<sup>28</sup> The numbers of Pathan military musicians living in this region at that time has been estimated in the hundreds, if not thousands.

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<sup>28</sup> McNeil, Adrian. "Tawa'if, Military Musicians and Shi'a Ideology in Pre-Rebellion Lucknow." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 32:1 (2009): pages 54-55.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00856400802709276?journalCode=csas20>.

Oral histories describe how sarodiyas would periodically visit Lucknow to work as musicians, with some eventually relocating there permanently. From these histories we come to know about the lives of Pathan mercenaries and musicians like Hussain Ali Khan (1752– 1801) who belonged to one of the eleven mohallas of sarodiyas in Shahjahanpur, and also of his relative Karam Khan (1787–1850) who lived in Bugarasi village in the Bulandshahr district of Rohilkhand.<sup>29</sup> Both of these third-generation Pathans from Afghanistan found work in the Mughal administration as mercenaries. After 1775 they turned to Lucknow to look for employment—like the other musicians in regional areas.



A close up looking at the strings of a sarodiya.

**Image Source:** Grinnell College Musical Instrument Collection (<https://omeka-s.grinnell.edu/s/MusicalInstruments/item/642>).

Recorded music has become so much a part of our daily lives that it is now difficult to imagine the impact gramophone records first had on the lives of musicians over a century ago. For the first time in history, this technology made it possible for music to be heard outside of the physical presence of musicians. The act of disembodied music from its physical source was to carry with it a whole new range of cultural, social and economic implications for the practice and patronage of music. Adrian McNeil has addressed the challenge this technology

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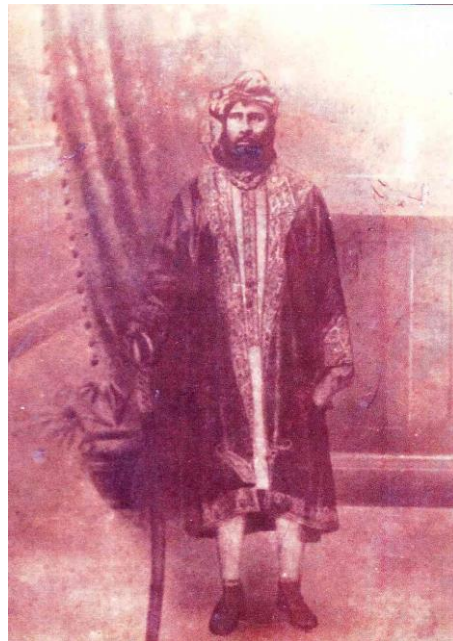
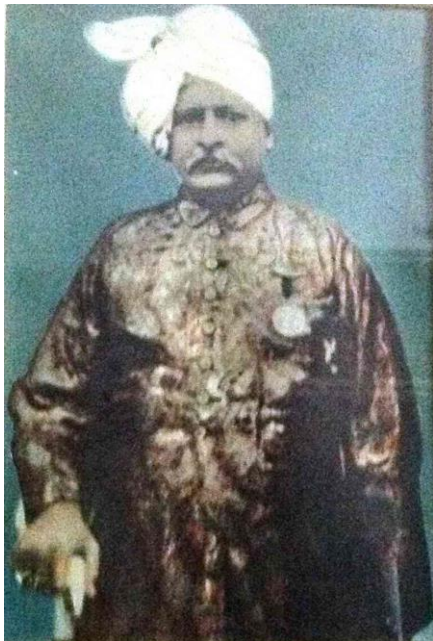
<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

posed for the professional activities of sarodiyas (performers of the plucked lute called a sarod) at the time.<sup>30</sup>

### ***Asadullah 'Kaukab' Khan (1858–1915)***

In 1912, Ustad Asadullah 'Kaukab' Khan recorded the rags 'Mani Khamaj', 'Zila', 'Bhairav', 'Bhopali', 'Brindabani Sarang' and 'Jangla Pilu'. Asadullah Khan belonged to a hereditary lineage of Pathan Bangash sarodiyas who settled in the Bulandshahr district of Rohilkhand. Due to his forefathers' previous service with, and strong links to the Lucknow court, his family lineage became known as the **Bulandshahr/Lucknow sarod gharana**.<sup>31</sup>

His elder step brother was the well-known sarodiya Keramatullah Khan (1851–1933). Their father Niamatullah Khan (1827–1903) had been in the service of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in Lucknow and also during the latter's exile in Calcutta, before joining the court of Nepal. Upon leaving Nepal with his father in 1903, Asadullah Khan apparently went to western India for around four years. Thereafter, he moved briefly to Benaras before finally, in 1907, settling in Calcutta where he established a music school named Sangit Sangha.<sup>32</sup>



Ustad Asadullah 'Kaukab' Khan (L) and his father Niamatullah Khan (Image source- Irfan Khan)

Images taken from: <https://scroll.in/magazine/914063/in-kolkata-the-inheritor-of-the-lucknow-shahjahanpur-gharana-is-trying-to-keep-its-legacy-alive>

<sup>30</sup> McNeil, Adrian. "Making Modernity Audible: Sarodiyas and the Early Recording Industry." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 27:3 (2004): page 315.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1479027042000327156?journalCode=csas20>.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, pages 319-321.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.



Apart from the training he received from his father, Asadullah Khan had also learnt sitar and surbahar from Ustad Sajjad Mohammad, the son of Ghulam Mohammad, who was also resident in Matiyaburj. Asadullah Khan was also known to play surbahar and is said to have taught this instrument, along with sitar, to many students. In 1908, Motilal Nehru arranged for Asadullah and his brother Keramatullah Khan to perform in France and England.<sup>33</sup>

### ***Sakhawat Hussain Khan (1875–1958)***



Sakhawat Hussain

Image Source: <https://musictales.club/article/sakhawat-hussains-sarod-cast-magical-spell-rooted-afghan-rubab-traditions>

Ustad Sakhawat Hussain Khan belonged to the Shahjahanpur gharana of sarodiyas. His Bangash Pathan forefathers had originally migrated from Afghanistan and joined the military service of the Mughal court at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His ancestors had settled in one of the fifty-five mohallas that were established by Pathans during the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.



eighteenth century in the Shahjahanpur district located east of Delhi. Members of this gharana, such as Ustad Enayat Ali Khan (1790–1883) began to establish themselves in Bengal in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Sakhawat Hussain Khan began his musical training with his father, Ustad Shafayet Khan (1848–1920), but after marrying Asadullah Khan's daughter, he became a formal disciple of the Bulandshahr/Lucknow sarod gharana. It was also from this time that these two gharanas effectively merged.<sup>34</sup> At some point in the 1920s Sakhawat Hussain recorded rags 'Tilak Kamod' and 'Pahadi-Jhinjhoti'.



'A traditional hand crafted coconut shell sarod plectrum, also known as a Java.'  
**Caption and Image Source:** Wikipedia (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarod>).

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, pages 321-322.

# Khurja Pottery

Khurja is a small town, with hardly 7,000 houses and with a population of about 70,000 located in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh. With the Ganges and the Jamuna flowing on its two sides at a distance of 45 km, it is situated on G. T. Road, 86 km south-east of Delhi and 45 km north-east of Aligarh. Khurja Pottery Industry forms the largest industrial complex in the small scale sector, set up by the Government in our country, providing the concept of 'Common Facility Centre' and has served as a guiding force for developing small scale industry through such centres.<sup>35</sup>

Khurja Pottery Industry traces its origin to the last decade of the 14th century, when Temur Lane had invaded India. It appears that his army included a large number of civilians including potters from Egypt, Syria, Turkey and Persia. While returning home with a cargo of elephants and cartloads of booty, after conquering India, he gave an option to his people either to settle in this country or to accompany him. A few of the potters appear to have settled down in Delhi, Jaipur, Multan and Khurja.<sup>36</sup> They started making blue pottery, using red clay, giving an engobe of white clay, painting floral designs with cupric oxide and applying a soft glaze containing glass and borax. They used the same type of foot driven kick wheel, which they had used in their own country and made mostly tiles and minarets. However, they remained unnoticed till 1911, when two of them were invited to the Coronation Exhibition in London for giving a demonstration on a potter's wheel.

It was in 1934, when the U.P. government deputed Prof. H. N. Roy, on his return from England, to conduct trials on white ware pottery. He was responsible for evoking interest in the local traditional potters for making white wares by using conventional raw materials, such as, china clay, feldspar and quartz. But, Khurja did not take up the manufacture of white wares till 1942, when the U.P. government set up a factory for making pottery for the defence department.<sup>37</sup> The items produced by the factory included urinal pots, ointment jars, pestles and mortars and feeding cups. When the war was over, the factory started making tea sets (but the techniques for making these articles were actually introduced later in 1951). The quality was so poor that there was no demand for these items and the factory had to be closed down in 1946.

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<sup>35</sup> Sharma, T. N. "Khurja Pottery Industry - Its Growth and Development." *Transactions of the Indian Ceramic Society* 37, no. 5 (1978): page 208.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

The potters, who had worked earlier in the government factory, were allowed to draw their requirements of processed raw materials from the centre and were also provided with the facility of firing their wares, on payment of nominal rent, in the government kilns. It was a mere circumstantial coincidence, and that too forced, that the first common facility centre of the country came thus into existence in 1946. In the initial stages, there were only 8 potters, who availed of these facilities, but their number increased slowly.<sup>38</sup>

**TABLE I: Showing the Number of Cottage Units at Khurja during the Period 1946-47 to 1952-53 and the Value of Goods Produced by them in Different Years**

| Year    | Number of cottage units | Value of goods produced* (Rs.) |
|---------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1946-47 | 8                       | 25,000                         |
| 1947-48 | 11                      | 40,000                         |
| 1948-49 | 16                      | 90,000                         |
| 1949-50 | 15                      | 90,000                         |
| 1950-51 | 16                      | 91,000                         |
| 1951-52 | 20                      | 98,000                         |
| 1952-53 | 16                      | 63,000                         |

\*The rates prevailing during those days were 1/3rd of the present rates.

A table showing the number of cottage units at Khurja during the period 1946-47 to 1952-53 and the value of goods produced by them in different years.

Source: T. N. Sharma, page 209

(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>).

It was realised that the industry, which was of a purely cottage nature, neither could expand nor the quality of the products be improved. Khurja had earned such a bad name for its pottery that there was hardly any demand for it, and the price offered was discouraging. Hence in September, 1953 the U.P. government deputed Dr. T. N. Sharma, its ceramics expert, (who had joined Khurja in December, 1949) to visit Japan for obtaining advanced training in porcelain manufacture. On his return in 1955, he reported that fine porcelain, as made in

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, page 209.

Japan, could be produced on a small scale with raw materials available in this country, provided: (i) the required equipment was made available and (ii) the Japanese technique for making fine porcelain was adopted. Through his book on 'porcelain', lectures, articles in Indian journals and through demonstrations, Dr. Sharma was able to introduce in the country Japanese techniques for processing raw materials, shaping, joining, finishing and drying.<sup>39</sup> He also introduced the use of an improved type of profile for jiggers, using duplicate wooden profile. He also popularised the use of setters, both green and fired, and economic shapes of saggars for saucers, plates, bowls, etc. He also demonstrated the technique of firing porcelain wares, including 'reducing firing.'



**Shri Gian Prakash, the then Industries Secretary, U.P.,  
discussing with Dr. T. N. Sharma after inaugurating  
(1971) Techno Ceramics**

Shri Gian Prakash, the then Industries Secretary, U.P., discussing with Dr. T. N. Sharma after inaugurating (1971) Techno Ceramics.

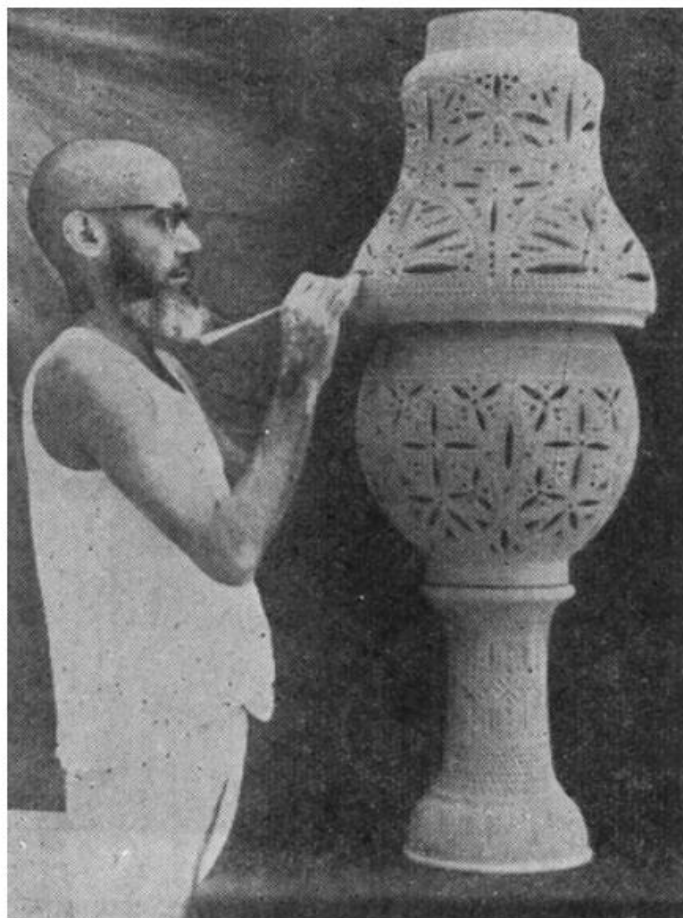
Source: T. N. Sharma, page 209

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>.

A number of schemes were drawn up by Dr. Sharma for implementation under the Second Five Year Plan for the development of the pottery industry of the State, in general, and around Khurja, in particular.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.



**Rashid Ahmed, who got the Master Craftsman Award in 1976, doing cut work on a table lamp**

Rashid Ahmed, who got the Master Craftsman Award in 1976, doing cut work on a table lamp.

**Source:** T. N. Sharma, page 210

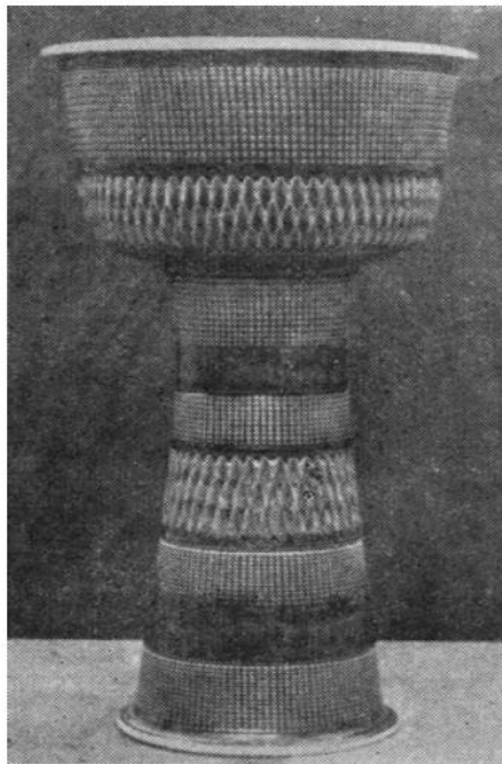
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>.

Under the Pottery Industry Scheme, a training institute was set up to train 20 candidates in Manufacturer's Course and 10 persons in Pottery Decoration Course. Those belonging to the former category were to set up their own manufacturing units after completion of the course whereas the persons in the latter group were to take up decoration work. Laboratories were set up to take up industrial research, analysis and testing.

A potters' colony with 100 working quarters was constructed adjacent to the centre, and under the Third Five Year Plan, an industrial estate with 18 units was also set up. Mr. Izo Kato, a Japanese expert, was invited under the Colombo Plan to train Khurja potters in the

manufacture of fine porcelain.<sup>40</sup> Training was imparted to 5 persons every year in the manufacture of blue pottery. This scheme did not yield the desired results and after working for 3 years was wound up on 31st March, 1962.

Under the Second Five Year Plan, a high tension laboratory was set up at Khurja in 1962 for the testing of insulators according to I.S. specification. This laboratory has served the entire northern India and has been responsible for developing the manufacture of low tension insulators in Khurja. Mr. W. F. Mason, an electrical engineer, specialised in the erection and working of a testing plant, and Mr. James Reid, a ceramist, were invited to visit this laboratory under the United Nations Technical Assistance Scheme.<sup>41</sup>



**One of the cut work flower vases which won the award for Rashid Ahmed potter**

One of the cut work flower vases which won the award for Rashid Ahmed potter.

**Source:** T. N. Sharma, page 210

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>.

A branch of the Central Design Centre, Lucknow, was started at Khurja for the reproduction of designs developed at Lucknow. This branch has done commendable work and has been responsible for producing artistic pottery used by five star hotels. The service of Mr. William Mossch, a German potter, was arranged by the All India Handicrafts Board for a period of 6

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid, page 210.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.



months to train Khurja potters in making artistic glazed pottery, using red clay.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, not even a single unit was started at Khurja for making artistic glazed red clay pottery.



### A young artist painting blue pottery planters

A young artist painting blue pottery planters.

Source: T. N. Sharma, page 211

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>.

The Pilot Research and Processing Laboratory for Porcelain scheme was started under the Third Five Year Plan to manufacture fine porcelain crockery on semi-commercial scale with a view to demonstrating to the cottage workers how this can be produced in their respective units. The building was constructed in 1962 and the entire plant, with the exception of an oil-fired kiln, was obtained and erected in 1963. But with the leaving of Dr. T. N. Sharma in

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, page 211.

December, 1963, this scheme did not function, though it still exists on paper and the staff continues to work.<sup>43</sup> Had this scheme run successfully, the entire Khurja industry which is now producing stoneware crockery, would have been making fine porcelain instead. It was observed that with the increase in production, internal competition among the potters had grown and the prices began to fall rapidly. Hence, the government of India was approached to take up collective marketing. A marketing depot was started by the National Small Industries Corporation in late 1956 for promotional activities.<sup>44</sup>

**TABLE II: Showing the Value of Annual Production by Khurja Units and the Value of Goods Sold by the Marketing Depot during the Period 1957-58 to 1960-61**

|         | Value of annual production (Rs.) | Value of goods sold by the depot (Rs.) | Percentage of goods sold by the depot |
|---------|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1957-58 | 216,000                          | 155,000                                | 72%                                   |
| 1958-59 | 328,000                          | 156,000                                | 47%                                   |
| 1959-60 | 545,000                          | 261,400                                | 49%                                   |
| 1960-61 | 637,000                          | 167,600                                | 26%                                   |

Table showing the value of annual production by Khurja units and the value of goods sold by the Marketing Depot during the period 1957-58 to 1960-61.

Source: T. N. Sharma, page 211

(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>).

The percentage of goods sold by the depot went on decreasing since the depot was marketing mostly crockery items and also because it could not expand its activities commensurate with the development taking place in the industry. However, the greatest contribution made by the depot was to stabilise prices and to retard the process of unhealthy, internal competition.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

**TABLE III: Showing the Number of Units at Khurja during the Second Five Year Plan and Value of Annual Production**

| Year    | Number of units | Value of goods produced (Rs.) |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1956-57 | 37              | 1,71,000                      |
| 1957-58 | 40              | 2,16,000                      |
| 1958-59 | 60              | 3,28,000                      |
| 1959-60 | 85              | 5,45,000                      |
| 1960-61 | 100             | 6,37,000                      |

Table showing the number of units at Khurja during the Second Five Year Plan and value of Annual Production.

Source: T. N. Sharma, page 212

(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>).

**TABLE IV: Showing the Number of Units at Khurja during the Third Five Year Plan and Value of Annual Production**

| Year    | Number of units | Value of goods produced (Rs.) |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1961-62 | 120             | 7,04,000                      |
| 1962-63 | 150             | 8,80,400                      |
| 1963-64 | 200             | 11,71,800                     |
| 1964-65 | 205             | 12,75,350                     |
| 1965-66 | 248             | 14,28,500                     |

\*1956-57 to 1963-64 figures are taken from Census of India. Figures from 1964-65 to 1965-66 are taken from Prof. K. C. Gupta, carrying on research on the Development of Pottery Industry in U.P.

Table showing the number of units at Khurja during the Third Five Year Plan and Value of Annual Production.

Source: T. N. Sharma, page 212

(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>).

Under the Third Five Year Plan, the pattern of Khurja Pottery Industry began changing and the number of small scale units became substantial. Out of 248 units working in 1965-66, 160 were cottage units dependent upon the centre, whereas 88 units were independent, though a majority of them were taking coal from the centre's depot. Though the central excise duty was levied on pottery goods, in 1961, Khurja Pottery Industry, with the exception of 3 units, was exempted. This gave a remarkable impetus to the industry. A great number of units came up for making processed raw materials only and the installed capacity of the industry was

raised to 25 M.T. per day. Ultimately, the industry began to be recognised as a potential supplier of white wares. However, the greatest contribution that Khurja Pottery Industry made during the ten years of these two plans was to diffuse improved technology into other states. It was responsible for setting up several factories in Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.<sup>45</sup> The industry provided hundreds of technicians and skilled workers to the adjoining states. A number of technicians went abroad also for employment and many of them were absorbed by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

As far as the Govt. Pottery Development Centre is concerned, there has been no expansion in its activities after the Third Five-Year Plan, except that two kilns were added. As a matter of fact, a number of technical posts, which remained vacant for a number of years, were withdrawn by the government. The training activity continued to function and the extra trainees were given permission for setting up factories in Khurja and to derive facilities of controlled materials from the government. The laboratories also continued to exist, but there was hardly any work to be carried out. But, with the nationalisation of banks and liberalisation of industrial loan schemes, a large number of entrepreneurs, who had, however, no ceramic background, entered into the industry in 1973-74 and 1974-75 and larger units began to be set up. Only about 275 units were working in 1977-78.<sup>46</sup>

**TABLE V: Showing the Number of Units at Khurja during the Period 1966-67 to 1977-78 and Value of Annual Production in Respective Years**

| Year    | Number of units | Value of goods produced (Rs.) |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1966-67 | 262             | 16,93,330                     |
| 1967-68 | 275             | 14,36,400                     |
| 1968-69 | 282             | 14,76,000                     |
| 1969-70 | 257             | 17,18,400                     |
| 1970-71 | 257             | 24,17,600                     |
| 1971-72 | 289             | 24,25,200                     |
| 1972-73 | 309             | 39,47,800                     |
| 1973-74 | 326             | 35,59,400                     |
| 1974-75 | 417             | 59,52,400                     |
| 1975-76 | 312             | 80,00,000                     |
| 1976-77 | 255             | 94,00,000                     |
| 1977-78 | 325             | 146,00,000                    |

Table showing the number of units at Khurja during the period 1966-67 to 1977-78 and value of Annual Production in respective years.

**Source:** T. N. Sharma, page 213

(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>).

In 1975, the pottery manufacturers represented to the government that the Development Centre should work more effectively and that research, training, testing and development activities should be expanded. According to their request, the government passed over the commercial activities of the centre to the U.P. Small Industries Corporation Potteries Limited in 1976-77.<sup>47</sup> But the SICPL did not pursue much on the development activities, such as supply

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, page 212.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, page 213.

of processed raw materials and renting of kilns, and instead has taken up indigenous manufacture of low tension shackle insulators resulting in some competition for the local potters. On the other hand, the Govt. Pottery Development Centre with its research, training, testing and development activities, remains somewhat inactive.

Khurja has now developed into a pottery town like Seto city and Arita town of Japan or like Stoke-on-Trent of England. However, whereas the industry of these places is well planned, fully developed, organised and technically controlled as well as export oriented, the industry in Khurja suffers from various constraints.<sup>48</sup> Yet, the development of Khurja Pottery Industry forms an unending process.



### Blue painting flower vases made at Khurja

Blue painting flower vases made at Khurja.

Source: T. N. Sharma, page 213

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1978.10840705?journalCode=tcer20>

Khurja pottery has enjoyed renown for a long time. It is believed that the Khurja potters originally migrated from Multan in the Punjab in 1700 and they settled first in Bahadurgarh in the district of Meerut. Later on, some of the families transferred themselves to Khurja and Rampur. At the latter place they received considerable patronage from the Nawab.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Chhibber, H. L., Prof. H. N. Roy. "The Pottery Industry of Khurja, District Bulandshahr." *Transactions of the Indian Ceramic Society* 1, no. 3 (1942): pages 210-211.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1942.11011964?journalCode=tcer20>.





Khurja pottery ceramic bottles and vases.

**Image Source:** Handicraft 4 You (<https://www.handicraft4you.in/elementor-430/khurja-pottery-top-image/>).

According to Mr. Dobbs, it was Mr. F. S. Growse who taught the Khurja potters the art of glazing in 1884 and the patterns were copied from the vessels brought from Meerut and Rampur. Khurja produces a kind of glazed faience pottery. In modern times, the pottery industry of Khurja has received recognition in England. During the Wembley Exhibition, an experienced potter from Khurja was taken to London, where he demonstrated his art. Vases, nearly a man-high and glazed with mosaic colours have been manufactured at Khurja. The



patterns and paintings of the pottery are of the Indo-Persian character.<sup>50</sup> It may also be noted that the characteristic blue and green colours obtained from copper oxide in a highly alkaline glaze consisting of ordinary soda glass are indeed very beautiful but unfortunately this colouring of copper oxide has its very characteristic defect of producing cracks on the wares.

**The process of manufacture<sup>51</sup>** is as follows:

(a) The clay is first kneaded. It may be noted that the clay is of different kinds and is purchased at different rates. They are (1) yellow loamy clay, (2) brown clay and (3) dark bluish clay. The last variety has great strength and cannot be worked alone for thin utensils.

(b) On a potter's wheel, the kneaded clay is shaped into the desired articles, cups, etc.

(c) On partial drying they are turned and the superfluous clay is removed with a curved piece of iron.

(d) The designs are painted with hand on the dried article.

(e) Next the article is covered with a thick coating of the glaze. The glazes are of different colours, blue, green, yellow, red, dark-red. etc.

(f) Finally the articles are baked in kilns.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.



Various types of clays are mixed and prepared into a dough.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Required amount of clay is placed in the mold.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





With the help of jigger and jolly machine the product is shaped in the mold.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



After shaping the mold is removed from the machine and kept to dry.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).

Improved articles of faience pottery are also now manufactured in Khurja by three families. Usually the articles are made from the local clay but occasionally from a mixture of China clay, quartz and felspar. China clay is purchased from Gwalior while quartz is received from Jaipur and felspar is purchased from Delhi.<sup>52</sup>

As mentioned above, the two important clays of Khurja are (1) yellowish dirty loamy clay, and (2) dark-bluish clay. The first is locally called peeli matti while the second is called kali matti, which is found in the beds of ponds and is more plastic. It has been found that these clays contain more than 7 percent of iron and other soluble ingredients and can stand a maximum temperature of about 900°C. To make the clay slightly more refractory, a certain proportion of fireclay is added to it. The addition of 10 to 15 percent of fireclay to the prepared mixture of the two clays reduces the porosity and the wares made from this body-mixture stand a temperature of 1000°C. Other materials like limestone, felspar, etc. may also be used.<sup>53</sup>

The mixing is accomplished by the dry process.<sup>54</sup> The different ingredients are weighed separately as dry powders and they are mixed together in a small, circular masonry tank. The weighed ingredients are soaked in a suitable quantity of water for at least 10 to 12 hours. They are then thoroughly mixed and stirred well until the whole mass becomes quite slurry. Adjacent to the circular tank there is a rectangular tank and the slurry liquid is sieved through 40 mesh lawn into the rectangular tank. The sieved slurry material is again agitated thoroughly in the rectangular tank. The whole mass is now allowed to settle. Some of the water percolates through the bottom and the walls of the tank, and the clear water on the top is also removed. The thick mixture, after stirring it again, is spread on a clear pavement of bricks for drying. The mixture before removing is well kneaded and is kept in underground cellars. It is taken, when required, for making wares. The mixture thus prepared is called a 'body-mixture.'<sup>55</sup>

Out of this body-mixture, the articles are given the shape on a potter's wheel. It may be noted that the wheel used by the Khurja potters is an improvement on the ordinary potter's wheel. Their wheel consists of two wooden discs, the centres of which are joined by a long iron spindle. The bottom disc is in a hollow dug in the ground and the top one four to six inches above the level of the ground. The potter sits near the wheel and lowers his right foot with which he moves the bottom disc while he works with the clay placed on the top disc.<sup>56</sup> It may be mentioned that the Khurja potters are quite deft at the wheel and turn out beautiful and complicated designs without any difficulty. After shaping the articles, they are allowed to dry somewhat and they are again turned on the wheel for scrapping the extra clay and imparting the piece a proper finish. The articles thus finished are allowed to dry.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, page 211.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, pages 211-213.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.



Once partially dried the article is removed from the mold and kept aside to dry.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



In another process solution of clay is filled in required design molds.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Excess of solution is poured out back in the container.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Clay solution spread at the mouth of the mold is removed.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





When dried the article is taken out of the mold and kept to dry.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Some parts are made separately and dried.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Prepared articles are arranged and kept to dry in room temperature.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Excess clay formed while joining or molding is removed using a knife.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Thin mesh is wrapped on a flat board and used to rub the sides to even the surface.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Article's surface is rubbed with mesh to remove clumps of clay and level the surface.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



The articles are then covered usually with a white engobe in order to conceal their true colour. It is applied as a fine coating of a white clayey liquid. White burning China clay with or without some plastic clay serves as an ordinary engobe. It may be noted here that these engobed articles are given such a white coating that they simulate very markedly the white earthenware. The engobed wares, when completely dry, are subjected to a primary baking at about 800°C. This firing may be called the "Biscuit firing."<sup>57</sup>

Next the biscuit wares are sorted and painted. The painters are usually from outside, from Rampur and even from Delhi, and they sketch the outlines of the designs in ceramic colours and the filling of the ceramic colours in the designs painted is done by the women of the potters.<sup>58</sup>



Floral motifs are drawn on the articles with oxide color solution.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).

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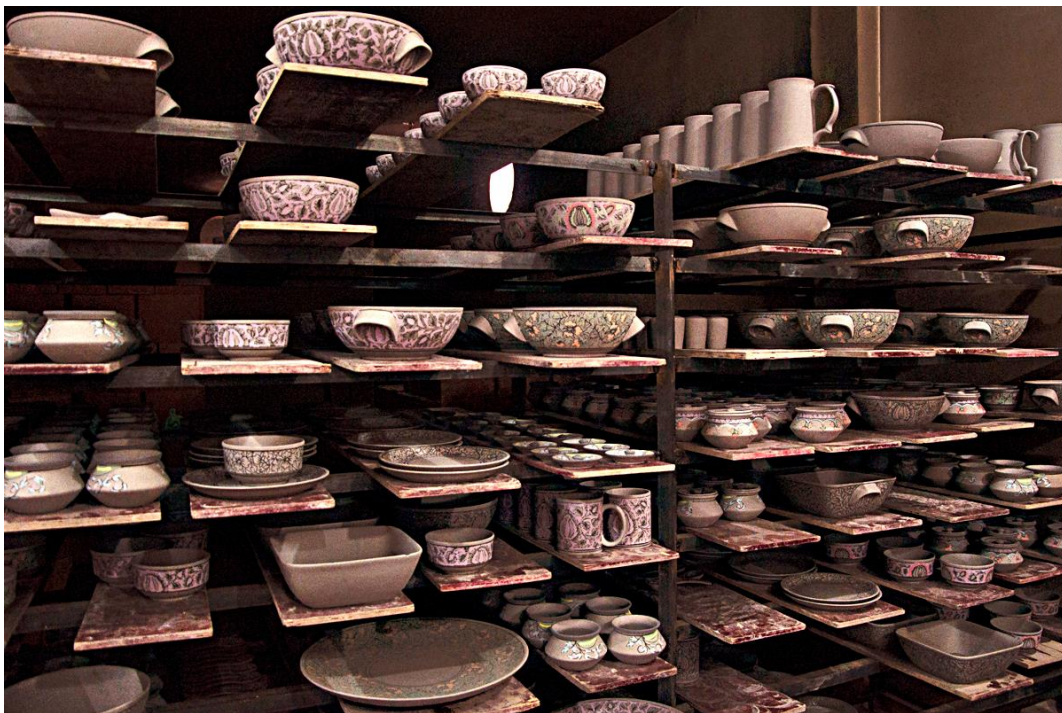
<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.



Colours are filled in required areas of design.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



After painting all the articles are arranged to dry.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Mainly Mughal and modern art designs are used to enhance the projects.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



The articles are next glazed to make them impervious to liquids but it is also done for purposes of decorating the articles with different colours. The glazes are of different colours, viz., yellow, green, blue, red, etc. in different shades, in fact, of all colours.<sup>59</sup>

The glazing materials are as follows:-

(i) Glass and mixtures of glass with other materials. These represent siliceous glazes having a large proportion of silica. Glass is powdered very fine in hand mills. Sometimes it is used in admixture with quartz. Mostly locally made glass from reh is used. These glazes are used in admixture with different colours.

(ii) Plumbiferous glazes containing a large percentage of lead. In these, lead oxide is introduced as white lead, red lead, litharge and even galena.

(iii) Alkaline materials having a large percentage of soda and potash which are introduced in the form of carbonates. The glazes are applied by dipping the articles in the glaze solution. Sometimes some gum is used so that the glaze may not be rubbed off during the handling of the wares while stacking them in the kiln for glost firing.



Equal proportion of materials are mixed to prepare the glaze.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, page 213.





For plain article, colour powder is mixed with glaze solution and applied.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Articles are air blown to remove all the dust particles.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Base of the products are rubbed on a wet sponge to even the base.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Products are dipped in the clay solution.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Glaze is applied as per the design plan.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Glazed products are kept to dry.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Some products are coloured with two colours, dark shade colour is applied inside.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Outside the light colour is mixed with glaze and applied on the product.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).





Painted products are dipped in transparent glaze solution.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



Image of a glazed and an unglazed product.

Image Source: D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).



The furnace or the kiln in which these articles are baked is (sketched in a figure below) a circular masonry structure that is open at the top. About two feet from below, there is a 9" thick arch. This arch has about 12 holes about 2" to 3" each in diameter. The top portion of the arch is made plain and level. The wares are stacked on this arch in Saggars (firing boxes) for firing. Wood fuel is burnt below this arch through an opening that is about 12" X 12" in size. The glazed wares are placed in Saggars, which are stacked to a height of 5 feet six inches in the furnace. In this case the glaze and the body are matured together in one single firing and the range of firing is around 800°C to about 900°C. The total number of hours required for firing is six to eight, depending upon the type of the wares fired.<sup>60</sup>

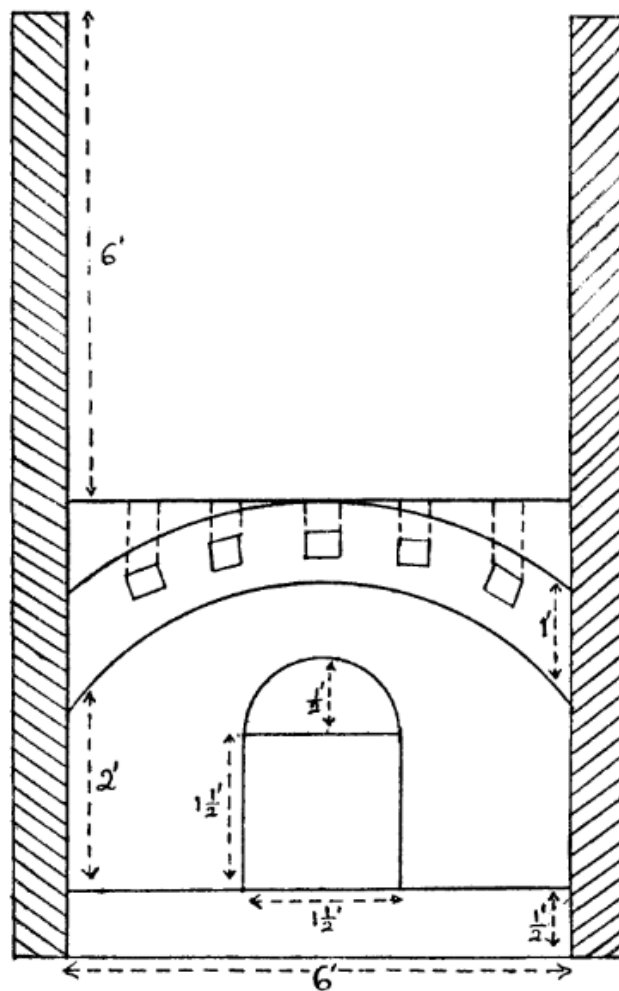


Fig. 1.  
POTTERY KILN, KHURJA.

A pottery kiln at Khurja.

Source: H. L. Chhibber and Prof. H. N. Roy

(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0371750X.1942.11011964?journalCode=tcer20>).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.



Glazed products are baked in a kiln at 1200 degree temperature.

**Image Source:** D'source (<http://www.dsource.idc.iitb.ac.in/resource/ceramic-pottery-khurja/making-process>).

Generally, the wares are allowed to cool for about 12 hours after which the wares are taken out of the furnace and sorted.<sup>61</sup>

A very great variety of articles are manufactured and these include flower vases, tea sets, dinner sets, ash-trays, jugs and basins, plates, lamp stands, bowls of various shapes and designs.<sup>62</sup> The articles may be:

- (i) Glazed.
- (ii) Unglazed hard biscuit.

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid, page 214.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

(iii) Roughened surface decorated with fine chips of quartz and felspar. These are locally called 'mosaic.'

Khurja Pottery also received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2015, in order to acknowledge and preserve the tradition.<sup>63</sup> The GI certificate acknowledges ceramics for household or kitchen utensils, crockery, earthenware, funnels, porcelain-ware, pots, flower pots, pottery, table plates, tableware (other than knives, forks and spoons), teapots, vases, works of art of porcelain, terracotta and containers (not of precious metals or coated therewith), porcelain and earthenware not included in other classes.<sup>64</sup>



The intricate designs of Khurja pottery.

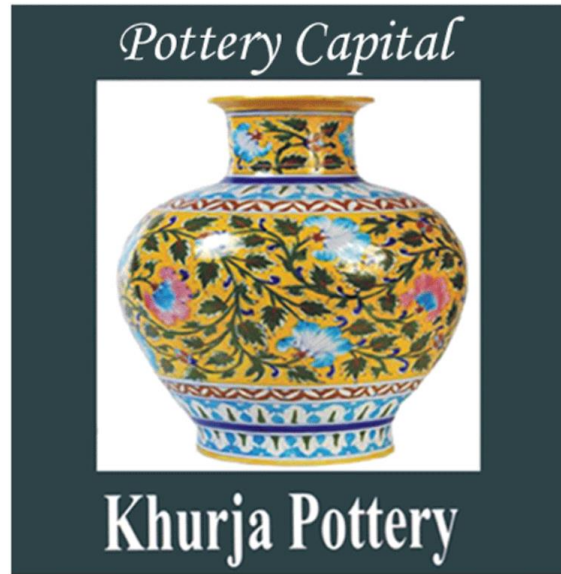
Image Source: HiSour (<https://www.hisour.com/khurja-pottery-58326/>).

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<sup>63</sup> Sharda, Shailvee. "GI certificate to preserve uniqueness of Khurja pottery." *The Times of India*, June 01, 2015. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/lucknow/GI-certificate-to-preserve-uniqueness-of-Khurja-pottery/articleshow/47498632.cms>.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.





Khurja is popularly known as the Pottery Capital of India.

**Image Source:** The Times of India (<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/lucknow/GI-certificate-to-preserve-uniqueness-of-Khurja-pottery/articleshow/47498632.cms>).



A beautiful plate depicting lotuses in Khurja pottery style.

**Image Source:** Sarang (<https://sarangcollection.com/products/ceramic-plate-from-khurja>).

Due to the lockdown and restrictions posed in 2020 because of the novel coronavirus, many potters in the city fear that their colony will soon become a museum of lost art.<sup>65</sup> Just two months into the unprecedented health and economic crisis, many are being crushed under the fear of being unable to pay rent and bills due to zero deals.



The woes of Khurja pottery maker and seller awaiting customers.

**Image Source:** NewsClick (<https://www.newsclick.in/Khurja-Ceramic-Industry-Crisis-COVID-19-Lockdown>).

“It is ironical that we are facing an existential crisis at a time when the BJP led government is promoting artisans and manufacturers under One District One Product (ODOP) scheme. The government talks of promoting ceramic, but it seems like nothing more than lip service,” Zaheeruddin, who has won the prestigious Shilp Guru award by the Ministry of Textile, told *NewsClick*.<sup>66</sup> Zaheeruddin’s opinions are not just his, and it clearly points towards the dire circumstances the industry faces today.

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<sup>65</sup> Jafri, Abdul Alim. “Khurja’s Ceramic Industry Becomes Museum of Lost Art Amid Lockdown.” *NewsClick*, June 03, 2020. <https://www.newsclick.in/Khurja-Ceramic-Industry-Crisis-COVID-19-Lockdown>.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.



Floral pattern adorned Khurja pottery.

**Image Source:** Hindi Crafts (<https://hindikrafts.com/khurja-pottery/>).





Khurja pottery takes shape to form a dainty teapot.  
**Image Source:** Hindi Crafts (<https://hindikrafts.com/khurja-pottery/>).

Due to the harsh blows from demonetisation and recently the lockdown, many have started to believe that the pottery paradise of Khurja is no more. LK Sharma, scientist in charge of Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute (CGCRI) said that the industry has suffered a huge blow due to the exodus of migrant labourers, with 60% of them already off to their home states during the first phase of lockdown. “Later, when the government began running train and buses services in Uttar Pradesh again, the rest 10 to 15% left for their home states. Most of the artisans involved in blue pottery are from West Bengal,” he said. He further added, “Blue pottery is a luxury lifestyle product and it is very costly. Due to economic crisis amid lockdown, people may not expend money on such products but rather choose to spend money on essential commodities.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

# Language and Literature

According to the District Gazetteer, the common speech of the people used to be the form of western Hindi known as Braj, although in the northern part of the district, as in Meerut, the ordinary Hindustani or Urdu was commonly spoken, and everywhere the two forms were intermingled into an amalgamation. The proximity of Delhi must have had a considerable influence on the language of the district, as is the case in all the districts of this division. At the same time, though there was no specific dialect as such, H. R. Nevill found local variations in almost all parganas.<sup>68</sup>

Burhan Ahmad Abbasi, a research scholar, has highlighted the phonological changes in Bulandshahri. According to him, Bulandshahri is considered as one of the varieties of Urdu spoken in Bulandshahr district and its adjoining areas. Data shows profound changes in Bulandshahri, and they are taking place due to its long and direct contact with Hindi and some of its dialects like Khari Boli, Braj Bhasha, etc.<sup>69</sup>

|      | <u>Standard Urdu</u> |                     | <u>Bulandshahri</u> |
|------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| i)   | sabr                 | /səbr/ ‘patience’   | → sabar /səbər/     |
| ii)  | mard                 | /mərd/ ‘man’        | → marad /məɾəd/     |
| iii) | marz                 | /mərz/ ‘disease’    | → maraj /məɾəj/     |
| iv)  | jism                 | /jism/ ‘body’       | → jisam /jisəm/     |
| v)   | vaqt                 | /vəqt/ ‘time’       | → vaqat /vəkət/     |
| vi)  | farq                 | /fərq/ ‘difference’ | → faraq /fəɾəq/     |

The differences between standard Urdu and Bulandshahri.

Source: Burhan Ahmad Abbasi, page 125

<sup>68</sup> Nevill, H. R. Bulandshahr: A Gazetteer, Being Volume V of the District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. Government Press, 1922: pages 72-73.

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.235950/page/n5/mode/2up>.

<sup>69</sup> Abbasi, Burhan Ahmad. “Phonological Change in Bulandshahri: A Social Perspective.” Language in India 19:11 (2019): page 127.

<http://www.languageinindia.com/nov2019/abbasibulandshahriphonologicalchangesocialperspective.pdf>.

(<http://www.languageinindia.com/nov2019/abbasibulandshahriphonologicalchangesocialperspective.pdf>).

|       | <b><u>Standard Urdu</u></b>       |   | <b><u>Bulandshahri</u></b> |
|-------|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| i)    | zaleel /zəlil/ ‘characterless’    | → | /jəlil/ ‘great’            |
| ii)   | zevar /zevər/ ‘golds’             | → | /jevər/ ‘a place’          |
| iii)  | shahar /ʃehər/ ‘town or city’     | → | /sehər/ ‘early morning’    |
| iv)   | shikwa /ʃikvə/ ‘complaint’        | → | /sikvə/ ‘to roast’         |
| v)    | khaas /xās/ ‘personal or special’ | → | /kʰās/ ‘to cough’          |
| vi)   | khali /xali/ ‘empty’              | → | /kʰali/ ‘ate’              |
| vii)  | gul /yul/ ‘noise’                 | → | /gul/ ‘to extinguish’      |
| viii) | hal /Həl/ ‘solution’              | → | /həl/ ‘plough’             |
| ix)   | qalai /qələi/ ‘whitewash’         | → | /kələi/ ‘uncomfortable’    |
| x)    | faqeer /fəqir/ ‘sufi or saint’    | → | /fəkir/ ‘beggar’           |

Examples of differences between standard Urdu and Bulandshahri.

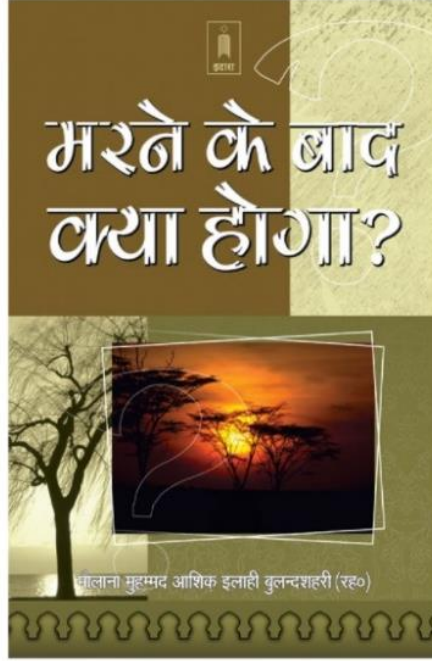
Source: Burhan Ahmad Abbasi, page 126

(<http://www.languageinindia.com/nov2019/abbasibulandshahriphonologicalchangesocialperspective.pdf>).

## **LITERARY WORKS AND FIGURES**

### ***Ashiq Bulandshahri***

Muḥammad ‘Āshiq Ilāhī Bulandshahrī Muhājir Madanī was a prominent Indian Islamic scholar. Ashiq Ilahi was born in Bulandshahr in 1924 or 1925. After completing his studies, he taught in the town of Ferozepur Jhirka, the madrasah Hayatul Ulum in Moradabad, and different madrasahs in Calcutta.



Marne Ke Baad Kiya Hoga? By Maulana Muhammad Aashiq Ilahi Bulandshahri Idara (Hindi)  
Image Source: <https://www.souqalbuhaair.com/product/marne-ke-baad-kiya-hoga-maulana-muhammad-aashiq-ilahi-bulandshahri-idara-hindi/>

Later, at the request of Mufti Muhammad Shafi, he went to Darul Uloom Karachi, where he taught hadith and tafsir for several years. Some of his works are: *Tohfa-e-Khawateen*, *Marne Ke Baad Kya Hōga?*, *Islami Adab*, and *Huququl Walidayn*.<sup>70</sup>

### ***Intizar Hussain***

Intizar Hussain was born in Dibai, Bulandshahr, and migrated to Pakistan in 1947. His exact date of birth is not known, sources indicate that he was born on 21 December 1922, 1923 or 1925. After passing the Intermediate Examination in 1942, he gained a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in Urdu literature at Meerut College in 1944 and 1946 respectively.<sup>71</sup>

He wrote short stories, novels and poetry in Urdu, and also literary columns for *Dawn* newspaper and *Daily Express* newspaper. *The Seventh Door*, *Leaves* and *Basti* are among his books that have been translated into English. Among the five novels he wrote – *Chaand Gahan*

<sup>70</sup> "Ashiq Ilahi Bulandshahri," *Wikipedia*, accessed February 25, 2021.

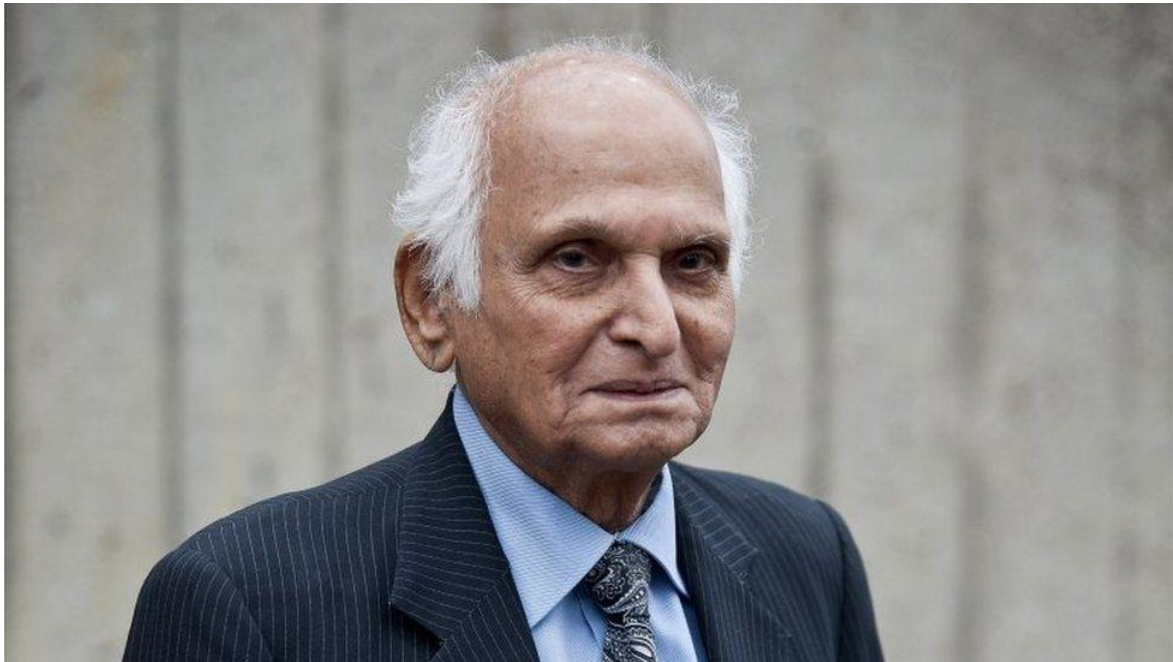
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashiq\\_Ilahi\\_Bulandshahri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashiq_Ilahi_Bulandshahri).

<sup>71</sup> "Intizar Hussain," *Wikipedia*, accessed February 25, 2021. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intizar\\_Hussain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intizar_Hussain).



(1952), *Din Aur Daastaan* (1959), *Basti* (1980), *Tazkira* (1987), *Aage Samandar Hai* (1995) – *Basti* received global praise.<sup>72</sup>

His other writings include *Hindustan Se Aakhri Khat*, *Shehr-e-Afsos*, *Jataka Tales*, *Janam Kahanian* and *Wo Jo Kho Gaye*. *Aage Samandar Hai* contrasts the spiralling urban violence of contemporary Karachi with a vision of the lost Islamic realm of al-Andalus in modern Spain. His novel *Basti* is based on Pakistani history. Among his books, '*Basti*' and '*Khali Pinjra*' have been translated into Persian by Samira Gilani.<sup>73</sup>



Intizar Hussain.

Image Source: BBC (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35486750>).

In 2007, Hussain received the Pakistani civil award Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Star of Excellence) by the President of Pakistan. In 2013, he was shortlisted for the Man Booker International Prize after Frances W. Pritchett translated his Urdu novel *Basti* into English. He received a lifetime achievement award at the Lahore Literary Festival. *Newsweek Pakistan* called him 'Pakistan's most accomplished living author' in 2014. In September of the same year, Hussain was made an Officer of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government.<sup>74</sup> Post his tragic demise in 2016, Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) announced the 'Intizar Hussain Award' which would be given to a literary figure every year.<sup>75</sup> *The Indian Express* termed him the 'best-known Pakistani writer in the world' after Manto.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

## ***Kishwar Naheed***



Kishwar Naheed.

**Image Source:** The Poetry Translation Centre (<https://www.poetrytranslation.org/poets/kishwar-naheed>).

Kishwar Naheed (born 1940) is a feminist Urdu poet and writer from Pakistan. She has written several poetry books. She has also received awards including *Sitara-e-Imtiaz* for her literary contribution towards Urdu literature. Naheed was born to a Syed family in Bulandshahr, India. She migrated to Lahore, Pakistan after partition in 1949 with her family.<sup>76</sup>

Kishwar Naheed has 12 volumes of her poetry published from both Pakistan and India. Her Urdu poetry has also been published in foreign languages all over the world. Her famous poem 'We Sinful Women', affectionately referred to as a women's anthem among Pakistani feminists, gave its title to a ground breaking anthology of contemporary Urdu feminist poetry, translated and edited by Rukhsana Ahmad and published in London by The Women's Press in 1991.

Kishwar Naheed has also written eight books for children and has won the prestigious UNESCO award for children's literature. Her love for children is as much as her concern for women. She expresses this concern in her poem, *Asin Burian We Loko*, which is a touching focus on the plight of women in the present male-dominated society. Naheed has served major positions in various national institutions.<sup>77</sup> She was Director General of Pakistan National Council of the Arts before her retirement. She also edited a prestigious literary

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<sup>76</sup> "Kishwar Naheed," *Wikipedia*, accessed February 25, 2021. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kishwar\\_Naheed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kishwar_Naheed).

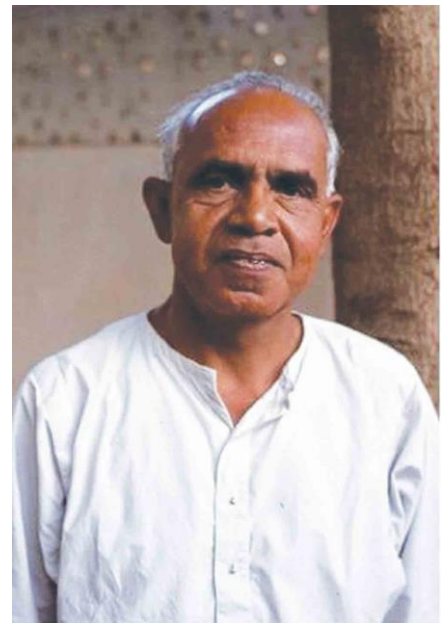
<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*.

magazine *Mahe Naw* and founded an organisation *Hawwa (Eve)* whose goal is to help women without an independent income become financially independent through cottage industries and selling handicrafts.

Kishwar had to fight to receive an education at a time when women did not go to school; she studied at home and obtained a high school diploma through correspondence courses, but went on to receive a master's degree in Economics from Punjab University. Her first collection of poetry, *Lab-i goya*, published in 1968, won the prestigious Adamjee Prize of Literature. This collection of traditional *ghazals* was followed by a collection of *nazms*, by translations of foreign poetry, and by many works in free verse.<sup>78</sup>

### ***Hasan Askari***

Muhammad Hasan Askari was born on 5 November 1919 in a village in Bulandshahr, in western Uttar Pradesh. He was a Pakistani scholar, literary critic, writer and linguist of modern Urdu language. Initially, he translated western literary, philosophical and metaphysical work into Urdu, notably classics of American, English, French and Russian literature. But in his later years, through personal experiences, geopolitical changes and the influence of authors like René Guénon, and traditional scholars of India towards more latter part of his life, like Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi, he became a notable critic of the West and proponent of Islamic culture and ideology. Some of his works are: *Jazirey* (1943), *Insan aur Admi* (1953), *Sitara ya Badban* (1963), and *Vaqt ki Ragini* (1969).<sup>79</sup>



Hasan Askari.

Image Source: Dawn (<https://www.dawn.com/news/749732>).

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<sup>78</sup> "Kishwar Naheed," *The Poetry Translation Centre*, accessed February 25, 2021. <https://www.poetrytranslation.org/poets/kishwar-naheed>.

<sup>79</sup> "Hasan Askari (Writer)," *Wikipedia*, accessed February 25, 2021. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasan\\_Askari\\_\(writer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasan_Askari_(writer)).



# Rituals and Festivals

Bulandshahr is home to a plethora of religious places. Rajghat, Naroura, Karnavas, Anoopshahr, Ahar, Gajroula and the river Ganga are popular sites where ritualistic bathing takes place.<sup>80</sup>



BATHING GHÁT, BULANDSHAHR 1880.

Bathing Ghat, Bulandshahr, 1880.

Source: Frederic Salmon Growse, page 66

(<https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Bulandshahr/zNKVY1WkfCIC?hl=en&gbpv=0>).

The District Gazetteer, published in 1922, gives us detailed insights into the fairs and festivals of the time. With the exception of the horse fair at Bulandshahr, there were no large commercial fairs in the district, but there were several religious assemblies at which a considerable trade was carried on in English and country clothes, metal utensils, sweetmeats and the like. The most important fairs were those held at various places along the banks of the Ganges.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> "District Profile," Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh, accessed February 23, 2021. <https://bulandshahr.nic.in/district-profile/>.

<sup>81</sup> Nevill, H. R. *Bulandshahr: A Gazetteer, Being Volume V of the District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*. Government Press, 1922: pages 56-57. <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.235950/page/n5/mode/2up>.

On the last day of the month of Kartik and on the days of the conjunction of certain planets, as well as on the Somvati Amavas, a large number of pilgrims assembled at Ramghat and Anoopshahr. On Dussehra, similar crowds assembled at Karanbas and Ahar. The Anoopshahr fair lasted for three or four days, and people came from the western districts as far as Bikanir and Multan, but the assembly lost much of its former importance. The Ramghat fairs, too, greatly declined in favour of the newer institution at Rajghat, which gained by its favourable position on the railway. The fair at Rajghat was, like that of Anoopshahr, held on the last day of Kartik.<sup>82</sup> The fairs at Ahar and Karanbas were of small local importance, with the people coming from the adjacent villages.

Besides these, there were a number of minor religious fairs held in different parts of the district. According to H. R. Nevill, "The more important were the fairs at Belon in pargana Dibai, held in honour of Bela Devi during the last week in Chait and Kuar, the fair at Pachauta, about six miles west of Bulandshahr, in honour of an Ahar saint known as Baba Debi Das, the patron of the Lodhs and Chamars, whose women assemble here on Holi and offer up petitions against barrenness and in favour of those afflicted with lunacy, their prayers being accompanied by offerings of calves which are appropriated by the attendant priests; and the small fairs in honour of Devi held at Bitha in Siyana during the month of Chait, and at Bandhaur in Dibai."<sup>83</sup>



Belon Devi (also known as Bela Devi) Source: Wikimedia Commons

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

A number of small fairs were held in various parts of the district in honour of Burha Babu, a deity who is said to represent an incarnation of Brahma, and who is regarded as the patron of women and children and the healer of skin diseases. These fairs were held on the second day of the dark half of the months of Baisakh and Bhadon and Magh.<sup>84</sup> The chief places of assemblage used to be Kakaur and Sunpehra in pargana Sikandarabad, Bildspur in Dankaur, Mangalpur in Ahar, Chachrai in Anoopshahr, Aterna in Pabasu, and Achheja and Kamalpur in pargana Khurja.

As per the Hindu calendar, Sankashti Chaturthi is celebrated on the 4th day of the waning moon half (Krishna Paksha) of the month. It is an auspicious festival dedicated to the Supreme Lord, Ganesha. The ritual ceremony is performed by couples who observe the fast to get the blessings of the Lord. Devotees need to wake up early in the morning and put on clean clothes. The idol of Lord Ganesha is placed on a clean platform. Fresh flowers and Durva grass are offered to invoke the Supreme Lord. Delicacies like modaks and laddoos are placed before the Lord Ganesha. The pooja is observed in the evening after the sight of the moon. The ritual begins with chanting the Ganesh mantra and reciting the stories or the Vrata Katha.

Makar Sankranti is celebrated on the 14th of January every year. Unlike most Hindu festivals which are determined as per the altering positions of the Moon and are based on the Lunar Calendar, Makar Sankranti is based on the Solar Calendar. It is customary to feast on 'Til-Gur' and enjoy a joyous session of kite-flying on Makar Sankranti. 'Til-Gur' or sesame and jaggery can be eaten in the form of laddoos or chikkis and is believed to keep the body warm, considering the cold weather during this festival. On this occasion, generally, people belonging to many different castes and cultures prefer taking a dip in holy water to mark the auspiciousness of this festival. It is also believed that those who die on this auspicious day gain Moksha and get freedom from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Basant Panchmi is celebrated on the fifth day (Panchami Tithi) of the bright fortnight (Shukla Paksha) of the Hindu month Magh. From this day, Vasant Ritu (the spring season) begins in India. Saraswati Puja is also performed on this day. The celebration takes place when the Panchami Tithi prevails during the first half of the day i.e. the time between sunrise and midday.

The festival of Mahashivaratri is the most important festival for the millions of devotees of Lord Shiva. The festival has been accorded a lot of significance in Hindu mythology. It says that a devotee who performs sincere worship of Lord Shiva on the auspicious day of Shivratri is absolved of sins and attains moksha. Ahar is situated on the bank of Ganga in the north-east corner of Bulandshahr. There, on the bank of the river is situated the famous temple of

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.



goddess Avantika and another temple of Shiva. One of the oldest temples located in Bulandshahr devoted to Maa Avantika Devi is believed to be remembered mainly with respect to the mythological story of the abduction of Rukmani Devi (an incarnation of Maa Lakshmi), from here by Lord Krishna. Towards the west of her temple is the Shiva temple and on the north is the bank of river Ganga. It is said that there is mention of this temple in the Mahabharata and the Bhagvad Gita as well.



Temple of Avantika Devi in Ahar, Bulandshahr

Source:[https://santoshkipathshala.blogspot.com/p/blog-page\\_18.html](https://santoshkipathshala.blogspot.com/p/blog-page_18.html)



Hanuman Temple at Karanwas, Bulandshahr

<http://karanwas.blogspot.com/2013/03/hanuman-mandir-karanwas.html>

Hanuman Jayanti celebrates the birth of Lord Hanuman, who is believed to put an end to the miseries and hardships of his followers. The hero of the epic Ramayana, Hanuman, also known as Bajrangbali and Pavanaputra, is remembered for his ardent devotion to Lord Rama. According to the Hindu calendar, Hanuman Jayanti falls in the month of Chaitra. In Bulandshahr, on the banks of the Ganga in Rajghat, several temples are located. Among these is the special temple of lord Hanuman which has a 40 feet high statue of the monkey god at Karanwas, Bulandshahr.

Ganga Saptami is a Hindu festival celebrated mostly in Northern parts of India. It is also known as Ganga Pujan or Ganga Jayanti. It is believed that on this day the holy river Ganga descended onto the earth. This day falls on the seventh day of the Shukla Paksha in Vaisakha month. The river Ganga is considered to be the most holy and sacred river in India. This festival is mainly celebrated in the places where the river Ganga and its tributaries flow. On this day devotees take a holy dip in the Ganga. It is considered to be very auspicious. People worship Goddess Ganga and offer several pujas and rituals on this day. Ganga Aarti is held at several ghats of the Ganga. Ganga Shobha Yatra is organized at various ghats and many people take part in it. Devotees perform deep dan on this auspicious occasion.

The third day of the Shukla Paksha of the Shravan month is called Hariyali Teej or Shravani Teej. The Teej festival commemorates women and their spirit of producing offsprings. As the season of Monsoon commences, Mother Earth is covered with green hued foliage and fragrant flora all around, the women dance and swing their way to zeal and celebration of their abundant life. The day is celebrated around the country by organizing cultural fairs and processions of the Goddess Parvati, blessing her devotees as she goes by the town.

A day prior to the hariyali teej, 'Sinjara' is celebrated. This day begins with the tradition of the in-laws gifting clothes, jewelry, cosmetics, henna, and sweets to their daughter-in-law. This day gives importance to the application of henna on the girl's palms. The intricate patterns and designs of the henna on the palms bring joy to their faces. Application of a red colored liquid (Alta) on the feet symbolises the sacred nuptial bond.

Purnima means the full moon day and the full moon that falls on Kartik month is known as Kartik Purnima. It is one of the most significant days in the traditional calendar. Kartik Purnima is celebrated as the birth anniversary of Vrinda, personification of Tulsi plant.

The last five days of the Kartik month are considered to be the most sacred days and devotees observe fast by eating only once a day, in the afternoon, which is known as Habisha. Tulsi Vivah generally begins on the day of Prabodhini Ekadashi and ends on the day of Kartik Purnima. According to the Hindu scriptures, Tulsi Vivah can be celebrated on any feasible day between the Ekadashi and Kartik Purnima, in the Hindu kartik month. A majority of people

perform the marriage rituals of Goddess Tulsi with Lord Shaligram, representation of Lord Vishnu, on the day of Kartik Purnima.

Bhishma Panchaka fast starts with Prabodhini Ekadashi, and concludes on the day of Kartik Purnima. According to the Vaishnava culture, Bhishma Panchak fasting during the last five days of Kartik month holds great importance. It is considered appropriate to take a dip in the sacred Ganga River, or 'Ganga Snaan'. Vaikunth Chaturdashi Puja is performed one day prior to Kartik Purnima. Shiva temples on this day perform special Puja where Lord Vishnu is worshipped along with Lord Shiva. It is on this day that devotees observe the Kartik Purnima Ganga Snaan by taking a dip in the holy Ganga.

Akashdeep, mundan, deepdaan and annadaan are performed at shukla paksh ekadashi. Many women worship the goddess Tulsi to bless them with a healthy marital life and a long life for their husbands. Shadopchar puja is performed, where 16 kinds of offerings are made to god. These rituals take place during the Kartik Purnima fair. The river Ganga is illuminated with diyas, aarti also takes place, and many devotees make donations to the poor.



# Cuisine

People in Bulandshahr enjoy a variety of foods. There are many kinds of street foods and snacks that are readily available here in stalls. A number of dhabas and restaurants also serve mughlai, north Indian, continental, Awadhi and other foods.

During Eid-ul-Fitr, Muslims in Bulandshahr eat vermicelli and sweet dishes such as sheer khurma, and sweet milk with dried fruits. Desserts such as almond seera, badam halwa, phirni and rabdi are very popular among the locals and the tourists. Kesar pista kulfi eaten with falooda is extremely popular in the summer.

Some other famous food items from this district are:

## KHURCHAN

Khurchan is a sweet popular in Bulandshahr. It is made with layers of malai and sugar, resembling the layers of a cake. As lucidly described by Anuradha Goyal (an author and travel blogger), “surprisingly, though made of malai and sugar, it is neither very heavy nor very sweet. And leaves just a perfect taste in your mouth.”<sup>85</sup>



A representational photograph of the sweet dish.

**Image Source:** Hindustan Times (<https://www.hindustantimes.com/more-lifestyle/trying-and-tasting-have-you-trying-khurchan-yet-heres-where-to-find-the-best-in-delhi/story-Z5maBefPbj0qbNwphg0xvL.html>).

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<sup>85</sup> Goyal, Anuradha. “Khurja - A Potter’s Town in UP and its Delicacies,” *Indi Tales*, November 04, 2009. <https://www.inditales.com/khurja-a-potters-town/>.

## **KANJI WADA**

Kanji Wada is Bulandshahr’s famous delicacy. It is a variation of kanji, a popular winter drink in north India. Kanji comprises fermented water, made from rai (mustard seeds), salt and red chilli and at times with heeng (asafoetida). Usually, red or black carrots are added to this water. Anuradha Goyal highlights: “What you get in Khurja is Dal Wadas added to Kanji instead of carrots. The small wadas are left in the water and they soak in the fermented water.”<sup>86</sup>

## **BAJRE KI BAAL**



Bajre ki Baal Sweet from Bulandshahr. Image source: Bhookajaat on instagram

The sweet that resembles the Baal mithai of Uttarakhand is known as ‘Bajre ki baal’ here in Bulandshahr district. This tasty sweet called Bajre ki Baal is famous in the town of Bhawan Bahadur Nagar (B. B. Nagar) in Bulandshahr and is said to have been invented here.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

# Places of Interest

## KARNAVAS

Karnavas is a historic town on the Ganga near Bulandshahr. Karna of the Mahabharata is said to be associated with this place, which has been named after the hero of the Mahabharata. King Karna was famous for philanthropy, so he is also known as 'Danvir Karan'. According to mythology, Karna used to donate 50 kg gold every day at that time. Visitors can also visit the Goddess Kalyani Temple here.<sup>87</sup>



The famous Goddess Kalyani Temple at Karnavas.

**Image Source:** AskGif (<https://askgif.com/blog/121/top-places-to-visit-in-bulandshahr-uttar-pradesh/>).

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<sup>87</sup> Chourasia, Sumit. "Top Places to Visit in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh." *AskGif*, August 25, 2018. <https://askgif.com/blog/121/top-places-to-visit-in-bulandshahr-uttar-pradesh/>.



## **BELON TEMPLE**

Belon Temple is situated in the Belon village near the town of Narora in Bulandshahr. Narora is located on the banks of the river Ganga. The ancient name of the village, Belon, has been derived from Bilwan which comes from its groves, or a forest of bel trees.<sup>88</sup> Belon holds a lot of importance due to the presence of a goddess by the same name. It is known in folktales that the goddess of Belon had appeared from the ground. She originated from the body of devi Sati.<sup>89</sup>



Goddess Belon.

**Image Source:** AskGif (<https://askgif.com/blog/121/top-places-to-visit-in-bulandshahr-uttar-pradesh/>).

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> "Belon Temple," *Wikipedia*, accessed March 27, 2021. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belon\\_Temple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belon_Temple).

## KALA AAM

The Kala Aam intersection has historic significance because the British used this place for public execution by hanging criminals. Another version of this story is that there was a huge tree on which the British hanged the people of Bulandshahr and the freedom fighters who fought against them.<sup>90</sup> It is said that the original and old name of Kala Aam was 'Katile Aam', maybe referring to these public executions.



Kala Aam. **Image Source:** Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh (<https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/kala-aam/>).



The towering structure of Kala Aam. **Image Source:** Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh (<https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/kala-aam/>).

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<sup>90</sup> "Kala Aam," Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh, accessed March 27, 2021. <https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/kala-aam/>.



The greenery and fountain at the junction.

**Image Source:** Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh (<https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/kala-aam/>).



The serenity of Kala Aam well-lit at night.

**Image Source:** Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh (<https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/kala-aam/>).



## MUD FORT

Kuchesar Fort, also known as the Mud Fort, is an 18th-century fort located in Bulandshahr. Built in 1734, it is surrounded by 100 acres of mangrove forest. It is a heritage resort formed by the restoration of a section of Ajit Singh's ancestral property, which was formerly a part of the princely state of Kuchesar.<sup>91</sup>



The courtyard.

**Image Source:** Trip Advisor ([https://www.tripadvisor.in/Hotel\\_Review-g3337406-d305231-Reviews-Mud\\_Fort\\_Kuchesar-Kuchesar\\_Bulandshahr\\_District\\_Uttar\\_Pradesh.html](https://www.tripadvisor.in/Hotel_Review-g3337406-d305231-Reviews-Mud_Fort_Kuchesar-Kuchesar_Bulandshahr_District_Uttar_Pradesh.html)).



Mud Fort.

**Image Source:** Trip Advisor ([https://www.tripadvisor.in/Hotel\\_Review-g3337406-d305231-Reviews-Mud\\_Fort\\_Kuchesar-Kuchesar\\_Bulandshahr\\_District\\_Uttar\\_Pradesh.html](https://www.tripadvisor.in/Hotel_Review-g3337406-d305231-Reviews-Mud_Fort_Kuchesar-Kuchesar_Bulandshahr_District_Uttar_Pradesh.html)).

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<sup>91</sup> "Mud Fort," Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh, accessed March 27, 2021. <https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/mud-fort/>.

## CLOCK TOWER

The Clock Tower is in the centre of Bulandshahr and is situated in Malka Park.<sup>92</sup>It is said to be one of the oldest parks here from the British era.



Placed in the centre of Bulandshahr: Clock Tower.

**Image Source:** Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh (<https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/clock-tower/>).

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<sup>92</sup> "Clock Tower," Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh, accessed March 27, 2021. <https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/clock-tower/>.



**Image Source:** Official website of Bulandshahr, Government of Uttar Pradesh (<https://bulandshahr.nic.in/tourist-place/clock-tower/>).

## MINI TAJ MAHAL

There are various replicas of the monument of love, the Taj Mahal. One of them lies in Bulandshahr, made by a retired postmaster Faizul Hasan Qadri for his wife who passed away. Qadri spent whatever he saved in his lifetime to construct a Taj Mahal model to commemorate her. For this reason, this monument earned the nickname 'Mini Taj Mahal'.<sup>93</sup>



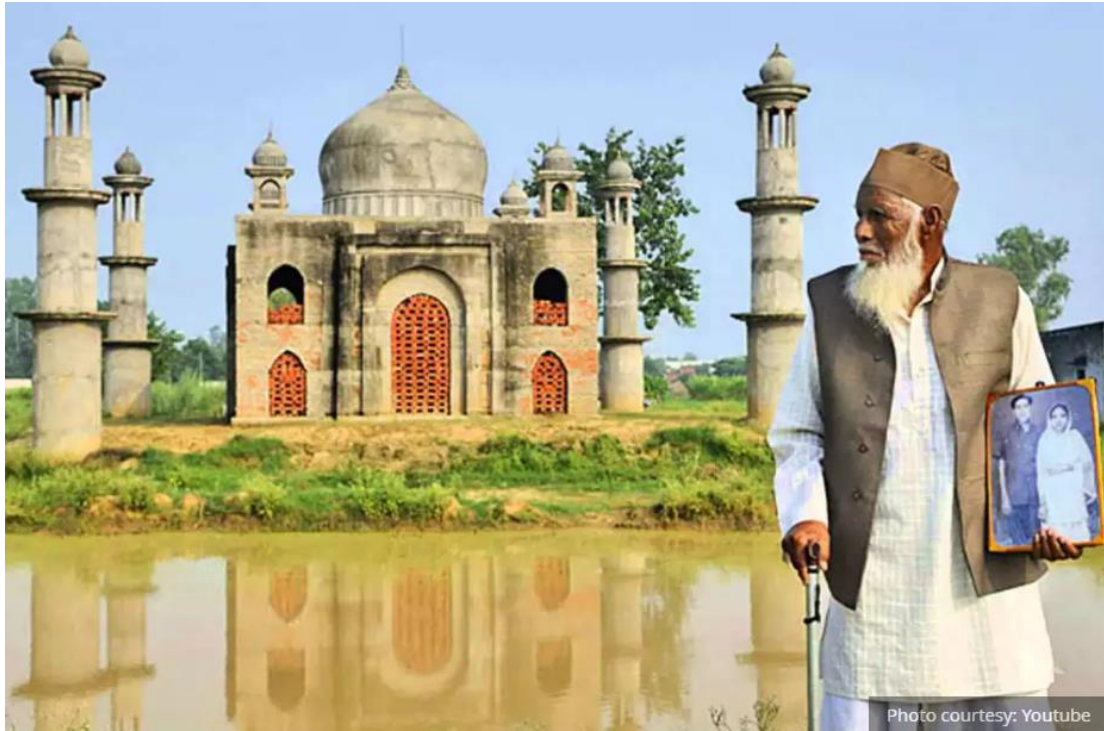
Faizul Hasan Qadri and the Mini Taj.

**Image Source:** Rail Yatri (<https://blog.railyatri.in/the-other-tajs/>).

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<sup>93</sup> Sengar, Resham. "Did you know there are replicas of the Taj Mahal in India?" *Times Travel*, October 27, 2017. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/travel/destinations/did-you-know-there-are-replicas-of-the-taj-mahal-in-india/as61269145.cms>.

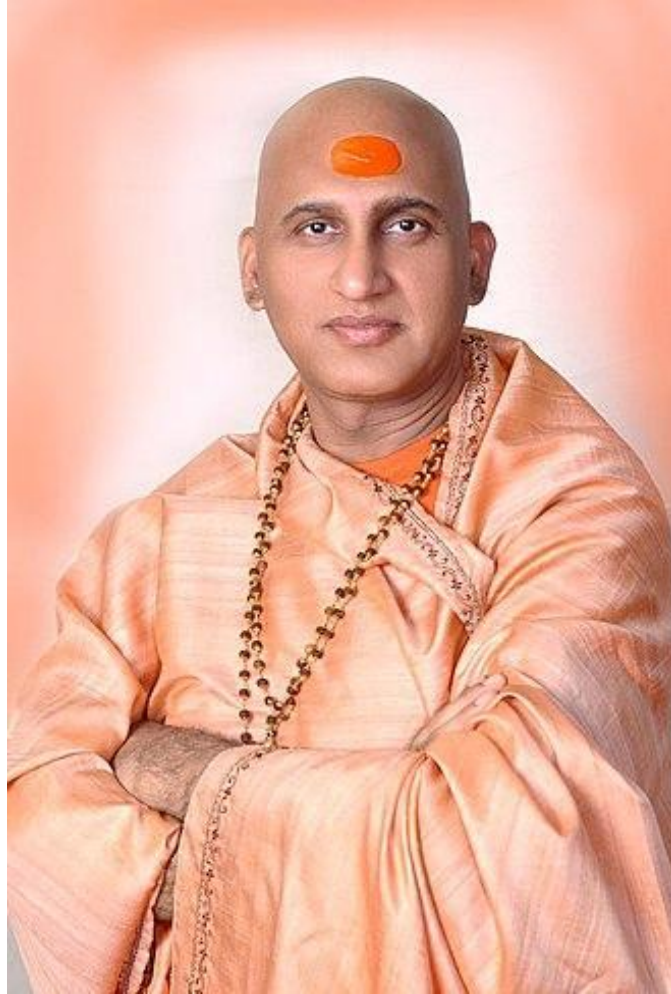




Qadri holding a framed photograph of him and his wife, for whom he made the monument.  
**Image Source:** Times of India (<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/travel/destinations/did-you-know-there-are-replicas-of-the-taj-mahal-in-india/as61269145.cms>).

# Traditional Knowledge

## SWAMI AVDHESHANAND GIRI AND THE JUNA AKHADA



Swami Avdheshanand Giri.

Image Source: Wikipedia ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami\\_Avdheshanand\\_Giri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami_Avdheshanand_Giri)).

Swami Avdheshanand Giri was born in Khurja, Bulandshahr district, Uttar Pradesh. He left for sanyasa at the age of 17.<sup>94</sup> He met Swami Avadhoot Prakash, an expert in yoga and versatile in knowledge about Vedas and other texts. Giri learnt Vedanta philosophy and yoga from him. After deep meditation he left the Himalayas in 1985. He then met his Guru, Swami Satyamitranand Giri and took sanyas deeksha from him, thus entering the holy Juna Akhara,

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<sup>94</sup> "Swami Avdheshanand Giri," *Wikipedia*, accessed March 11, 2021. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami\\_Avdheshanand\\_Giri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami_Avdheshanand_Giri).

the largest order of Sadhus. In 1998 at the Haridwar Kumbh, the saints of Juna Akhara appointed Avdheshanand Giri as 'Acharya Mahamandaleshwar'.<sup>95</sup>

Swami Avdheshanand Giri is a spiritual leader, author, philosopher and preacher. He has initiated about one million Naga Sadhus and he is their first Guru. He is the president of Hindu Dharm Acharya Sabha and a board member of the World Council of Religious Leaders.<sup>96</sup> Swami Avdheshanand is well known for his oratory skills. He has authored many books and has written extensively on the various aspects of Indian spiritual philosophy.

Delving more into the history of the Juna Akhada, while the word 'akhada' literally means 'wrestling ground', when taken into a religious context, it refers to a sect of seers who defend faith. During the ancient times, the members used to get educated in scriptures and also learn warfare. Speaking in an interview with the Times of India, Doon-based heritage expert Lokesh Ohri added, "By the end of the 13th century, the tradition of akhadas was well established. Religious leader Adi Shankaracharya is believed to be the founder of seven major akhadas: Mahanirvani, Niranjani, Juna, Atal, Avahan, Agni and Anand, though the evidence is quite sketchy. The akhadas are divided into four categories: the Sanyasi, Bairagi, Udasi and Kalpavasi."<sup>97</sup>

Most of these akhadas fall under the Shaivite group, worshipping Lord Shiva as their main deity. The Juna Akhada is the largest of all when it comes to the number of followers. When it originated in the 8th century, it was known as the Bhairav Akhada. Once during Mughal rule, seers of Bhairav Akhada were at war with the Nizam of Junagarh when the latter asked for a truce. The Nizam invited the seers to a dinner and allegedly poisoned their meals, which led to the deaths of many ascetics. Those who survived came to be called the Shri Panch Dashnaam Juna Akhada.<sup>98</sup> Even in modern times, the Akhada continues with the tradition of weapon-wielding. They worship the deity Dattatreya.

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Adhikari, Megha. "Akhadas, the main attraction of Kumbh, have a long & interesting history." *The Times of India*, March 14, 2021. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/akhadas-the-main-attraction-of-kumbh-have-a-long-interesting-history/articleshow/81453959.cms>.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.



## MEDICINE MAKING

### FOLK MEDICINAL USES OF PLANTS

During an ethno-botanical survey (published in 1987) of the rural areas of the Bulandshahr district in western Uttar Pradesh, many plant species have come to light as effective drugs used by the local population. The information on the folk use of the plants is based on the observations and records taken during field trips to the area. Since the rural community often observe the positive effect of their preparations, they have strong faith in their own recipes. Thus, the acceptability of these preparations is quite high in the population.<sup>99</sup>

Some of the medicinal plants are listed here as examples:

*Azadirachta indica* Juss. (Meliaceae), neem/margosa: petioles and rachis are dried in shade and chopped into small bits of 1 mm size. The bits are recommended for frequent chewing. It acts as a tonic and prophylactic drug in different ailments, particularly digestive disorders and toothache.<sup>100</sup>

*Woodfordia fruticosa* Kurz. (Lythraceae): in case of cold during delivery, bark decoction of *W. fruticosa* is given in a dose of 10 ml three times daily. This reduces the cold. The drug may be used as a preventive measure against cold.<sup>101</sup>

For preventing bacterial infection in paronychia due to ingrown toenail, anhydrous calcium carbonate is applied on the affected portion and it is kept wet during the course of treatment by applying wet bandages.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Alam, M. Mashkoor, and Mohammad Anis. "Ethno-medicinal uses of plants growing in the Bulandshahr district of Northern India." *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 19, no. 1 (January-February, 1987): pages 85-88. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/0378874187901395>.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

# Folklore

## **DINA SANICHAR: THE REAL LIFE MOWGLI?**

In 1867, in a forest in the Bulandshahr district, a group of hunters came across a surprise. They saw a boy walking on all fours with a pack of wolves. There have been several incidents in the history of infants raised by animals in the wild. Such children are known as feral children. The hunters saw them go into a den and decided to extract the feral child from there and take him back to civilization. They smoked the cave and had to kill the female wolf to capture the boy, whom they took to the Sikandra Mission Orphanage near Agra in India.<sup>103</sup> He was baptized at the orphanage, run by Father Erhardt, a missionary living in India, and since it was a Saturday, he was named Dina Sanichar, Hindi for Saturday. As documented by the Father: “He cannot talk, and though undoubtedly pagal (imbecile or idiotic), still shows sign of reason, and sometimes actual shrewdness.”<sup>104</sup>

Sanichar was not the only wolf child to be rescued. There were cases of four other wolf children found in various parts of India around that time, and many more cases of feral children surfaced in the years to come. Sanichar continued to growl and grunt like a wolf, walked on all fours, ate raw meat, sharpened his teeth by gnawing on bones like an animal and hated wearing clothes. People of the orphanage tried to work patiently with him to rid him of his wildness, and with the passing of time, he became more open to eating cooked food and wearing clothes but showed no progress in speech. He only made animal noises.<sup>105</sup>



Dina Sanichar.

Image Source: STSTW Media (<https://www.ststworld.com/dina-sanichar/>).

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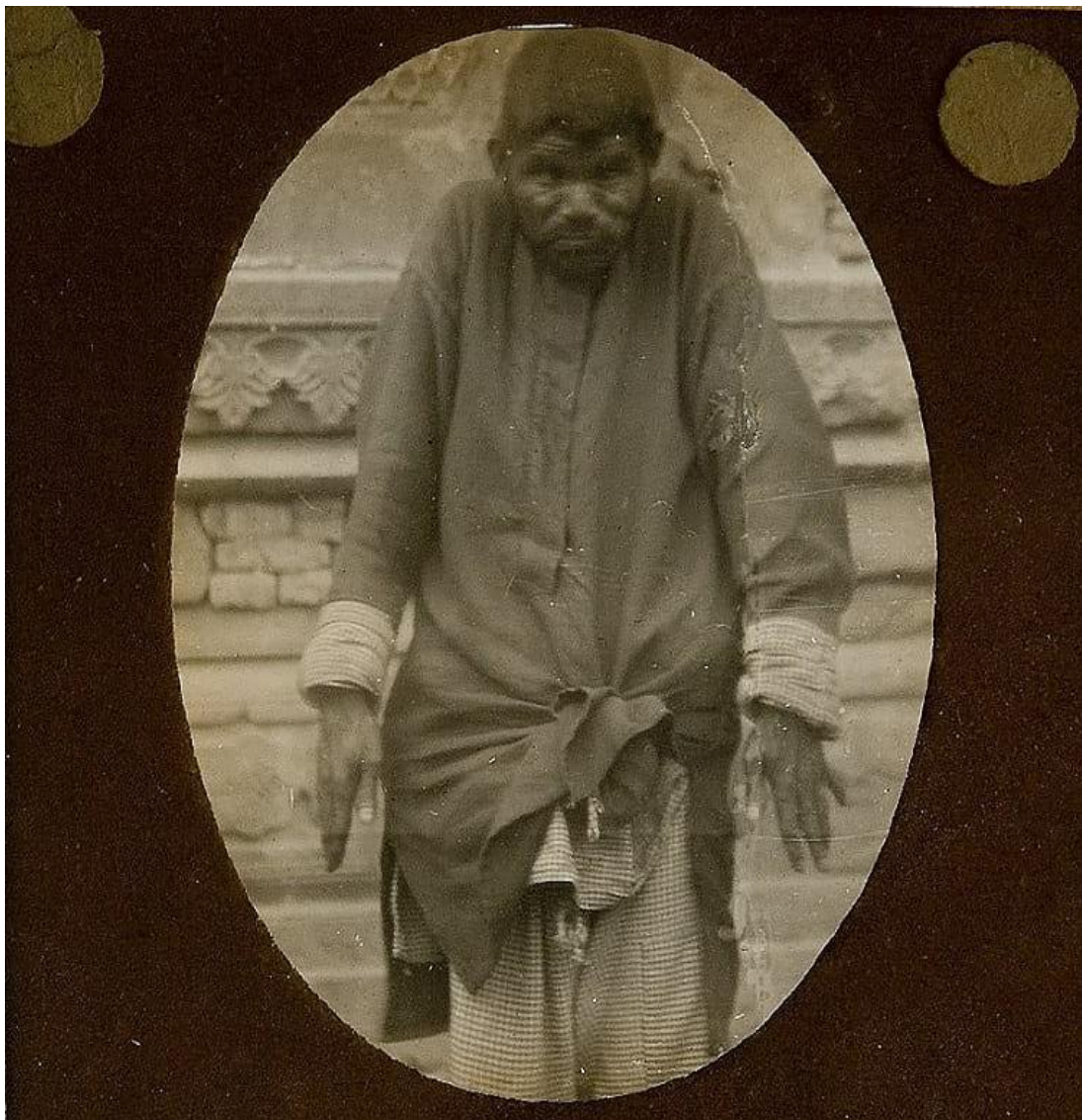
<sup>103</sup> Yadav, Shivani. “Mowgli was Real: Dina Sanichar, the Indian Boy Raised by Wolves.” *STSTW Media*, August 30, 2018. <https://www.ststworld.com/dina-sanichar/>.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

Dina Sanichar lived a short life, dying at the young age of 34. He lived in the orphanage his entire life, showing very little improvement. He could stand erect and walk, dress with a little difficulty, and could monitor his cup and plate. And he had also learned to eat from a plate but would always sniff his food before putting it in his mouth and steered clear of anything that was not meat. Sanichar eagerly took up one human habit, smoking, and turned into a chain smoker. It is speculated that he died of tuberculosis in 1895.<sup>106</sup>

While this is a real life story, many speculate that Sanichar and Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli are the same, and how Kipling might have been inspired to write the work because of him.



A photograph of Sanichar, who is believed to be the inspiration behind Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli.  
**Image Source:** STSTW Media (<https://www.ststworld.com/dina-sanichar/>).

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.



# Calendar of Events

## Tithis and Calendar of Important Events

NOTE: Exact dates may vary according to the Hindu Lunar Calendar/Panchang. Information from old gazetteers and panchang calendar available online.

| MONTH    | EVENT AND DATE                           | DESCRIPTION   |
|----------|--|---|
| January  | Sankashti Chaturthi<br>2nd January, 2021 | As per Hindu calendar, Sankashti Chaturthi is celebrated on the 4th day of the waning moon half (Krishna Paksha) of the month. It is an auspicious festival dedicated to the Supreme Lord, Ganesha. The ritual ceremony is performed by the couples who observe the fast to get the blessings of the Lord. Devotees need to wake up early in the morning and put on clean clothes. The idol of Lord Ganesha is placed on a clean platform. Fresh flowers and Durva grass are offered to invoke the Supreme Lord. Delicacies like modaks and laddoos are placed before the Lord Ganesha. The pooja is observed in the evening after the sight of the moon. The ritual begins with chanting the Ganesh mantra and reciting the stories or the Vrata Katha.  |
| January  | Makar Sankranti<br>14th January, 2021    | Makar Sankranti is celebrated on the 14th of January every year. Unlike most Hindu festivals which are determined as per the altering positions of the Moon and are based on the Lunar Calendar, Makar Sankranti is based on the Solar Calendar. It is customary to feast on 'Til-Gur' and enjoy a joyous session of kite-flying on Makar Sankranti. 'Til-Gur' or sesame and jaggery can be eaten in the form of laddoos or chikkis and is believed to keep the body warm, considering the cold weather during this festival. On this occasion, generally, people belonging to many different castes and cultures prefer taking a dip in holy water to mark the auspiciousness of this festival. It is also believed that those who die on this auspicious day gain Moksha and get freedom from the cycle of death and rebirth. |
| February | Basant Panchmi<br>16th February, 2021    | Basant Panchmi is celebrated on the fifth day (Panchami Tithi) of the bright fortnight (Shukla Paksha) of the Hindu month Magh. From this day, Vasant Ritu (the spring season) begins in India. Saraswati Puja is also performed on this day. The celebration takes place when the Panchami Tithi prevails during the first half of the day, i.e., the time between sunrise and midday.   |
| March    | Mahashivratri<br>11th March, 2021        | Festival of Mahashivaratri is the most important festival for the millions of devotees of Lord Shiva. The festival has been accorded a lot of significance in Hindu mythology. It says that a devotee who performs sincere worship of Lord Shiva on the auspicious day of Shivratri is absolved of sins and attains moksha. Ahar is situated on the bank of Ganga in the north-east corner of Bulandshahr. There, on the bank of the river is situated the famous temple of goddess Avantika and another temple of Shiva.   |
| March    | Holi                                     | Holi—the festival of colors—also known as Vasant Utsav, falls on the Pratipada during the dark half (Krishna Paksha) of the Chaitra Month as  |

|       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
|       | 29th March, 2021  | <p>per Hindu Calendar. Holi is also celebrated as the arrival of spring season by taking inspiration from the colors.</p> <p>According to H. R. Nevill, "The more important were the fairs at Belon in pargana Dibai, held in honour of Bela Devi during the last week in Chait and Kuar, the fair at Pachauta, about six miles west of Bulandshahr, in honour of an Ahar saint known as Baba Debi Das, the patron of the Lodhs and Chamars, whose women assemble here on the Holi and offer up petitions against barrenness and in favour of those afflicted with lunacy, their prayers being accompanied by offerings of calves which are appropriated by the attendant priests."</p> |
| April | Somvati<br>Amavasya<br><br>12th April, 2021             | The District Gazetteer, published in 1922, gives us detailed insights into the fairs and festivals of the time. On the last day of the month of Kartik and on the days of the conjunction of certain planets, as well as on the Somvati Amavas, a large number of pilgrims assembled at Ramghat and Anoopshahr in district Bulandshahr.   |
| April | Ramadan<br><br>14th April, 2021<br>to 13th May,<br>2021 | Ramadan is the ninth month of the 12-month Islamic calendar, a lunar calendar that's based on the phases of the moon. The lunar calendar falls short of the solar calendar by 11 days. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk each day. However, some also read the entire Quran, say special prayers and attend mosques more frequently during this time. The first pre-dawn meal of the day during Ramadan is called "suhoor." Each day's fast is broken with a meal known as "iftar." Traditionally, a date is eaten to break the fast. Iftars are often elaborate feasts celebrated with family and friends.  |
| April | Ram Navami<br><br>21st April, 2021                      | Ram Navami marks the birthday of Lord Ram, who is known to be the 7th incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Each year on Chaitra Shukla Navami (the ninth day of the bright fortnight of the Hindu Lunar month, Chaitra) Ramnavami is celebrated. In several temples, Sriramanavami is celebrated for nine days from the first day of Chaitra Navratri. Also, people observe fast on this day. Narration of Ramayan takes place on Rama Navami. Kirtans are organised. Idol of Shree Ram gets ready with beautiful ornaments and embellishments, and is swung on a cradle.  |
| April | Hanuman Jayanti<br><br>27th April, 2021                 | <p>Hanuman Jayanti celebrates the birth of Lord Hanuman, who is believed to put an end to the miseries and hardships of his followers. The hero of the epic Ramayana, Hanuman, also known as Bajrangbali and Pavanaputra, is remembered for his ardent devotion to Lord Rama. According to the Hindu calendar, Hanuman Jayanti falls in the month of Chaitra.</p> <p>In Bulandshahr, on the bank of Ganga in Rajghat, several temples are located. Among these is the special temple of lord Hanuman which has a 40 feet high statue of the monkey god.</p>   |
| May   | Eid ul-Fitr<br><br>14th May, 2021                       | The end of Ramadan is marked by a big celebration called 'Eid ul-Fitr' (the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast). It starts the day after Ramadan ends and lasts for three days. Mosques hold special services and a special meal is eaten during daytime (the first daytime meal for a month). During Eid ul-Fitr, muslims dress in their finest clothes, give gifts to children and spend time with their friends and family. A typical feature of this festival is the consumption of vermicelli or sewain.   |

|           |                                       |  |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|--|
| May       | Ganga Saptami<br>18th May, 2021       | <p>Ganga Saptami is a Hindu festival celebrated mostly in Northern parts of India. It is also known as Ganga Pujan or Ganga Jayanti. It is believed that on this day the holy river Ganga descended onto the earth. This day falls on the seventh day of the Shukla Paksha in Vaisakha month. River Ganges is considered to be the most holy and sacred river in India. This festival is mainly celebrated in the places the river Ganga and its tributaries flow. On this day devotees take a holy dip in the Ganges. It is considered to be very auspicious.</p> <p>People worship Goddess Ganga and offer several pujas and rituals on this day. Ganga Aarti is held at several ghats of the Ganges. Ganga Shobha Yatra is organized at various ghats and many people take part in it. Devotees perform deepadan on this auspicious occasion.</p>   |
| June      | Ganga Dussehra<br>20th June, 2021     | <p>River Ganga is worshiped like a Goddess and it is believed that it was the tenth day of Jyeshtha bright half when she descended on earth from heaven. The day is celebrated as Ganga Dussehra. On this day, after a lot of hard work and penance of Bhagirath, a Suryavanshi king, got success to bring down the river to earth. Since then, every year the occasion of Ganga Dussehra is celebrated by performing several rites and rituals of Ganga pooja to commemorate her.</p> <p>If it is not possible to take bath in Ganga on Ganga Dussehra, people pray at some other river or reservoir or with pure water at home as per the convenience. After that one should do recital pooja in front of the idol of Ganga. The idol of Ganga is considered as Trinetr, quadrilateral, adorned with white clothes and white lotus. King Bhagirath and Himalaya should also be worshipped which is highly recommended during Ganga pooja. Lord Shiva is the prime deity to be worshipped during the Ganga Pooja as he is sole owner and holder of river Ganga and by grace of his mercy only sent the river on earth for the welfare of mankind. The donation of ten edible items mainly fruits and black sesame seeds are considered most auspicious.</p> |
| August    | Hariyali Teej<br>11th August, 2021    | <p>The third day of the Shukla Paksha of the Shravan month is called Hariyali Teej or Shravani Teej. The Teej festival commemorates the women and their spirit of producing offsprings. As the season of Monsoon commences, Mother Earth is covered with green hued foliage and fragrant flora all around, the women dance and swing their way to zeal and celebration of their abundant life. The day is celebrated around the country by organizing cultural fairs and processions of the Goddess Parvati, blessing her devotees as she goes by the town.</p> <p>A day prior to the hariyali teej, 'Sinjara' is celebrated. This day begins with the tradition of the in-laws gifting clothes, jewelry, cosmetics, henna, and sweets to their daughter-in-law. This day gives importance to the application of henna on the girls' palms. The intricate patterns and designs of the henna on the palms bring joy to their faces. Application of red colored liquid (Alta) on the feet symbolises the sacred nuptial bond.</p>  |
| September | Hartalika Teej<br>9th September, 2021 | <p>Hartalika Teej Vrat is one of the primary Vrats in Hindu religion. Hartalika Teej is celebrated on the third day of Shukla Paksha in the month of Bhadrapada. Hartalika Teej Vrat is kept without the intake of grains and water. It is believed that in order to have Lord Shiva as her husband, Goddess Parvati was the first one to observe this Vrat. Undertaking Hartalika Teej Vrat enables women with marital bliss and happiness.</p>   |



|          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| October  | Ghatasthapana<br><br>7th October, 2021    | <p>The festival of grandiose, Navratri always begins with the ritual of Ghatasthapana. The first day of Sharad Navratri commemorates the invocation of the Goddess Shakti. The Aadishakti blesses her devotees on the very first day as we perform the puja of ghatasthapana. A specific muhurat is chosen for the Kalash Sthapana by abiding by the rules designed for it. To perform the ritual, in a broad earthen pot, sow 7 grains in the garden soil and water it. Fill the Kalash with Ganga water, and tie the mauli around it. Wrap the coconut with intact husk in red cloth and tie a mauli around it. Next, place the wrapped coconut on the Kalash, as well as the mango leaves at the mouth of the Kalash. The process of Ghatasthapana invokes the Goddess into it as the prayers begin.</p>  |
| November | Kartik Purnima<br><br>19th November, 2021 | <p>Purnima means the full moon day and the full moon that falls on Kartik month is known as Kartik Purnima. It is also known as Tripuri Purnima or Tripurari Purnima and is one of the most significant days in the traditional calendar. Kartik Purnima is celebrated as the birth anniversary of Vrinda, personification of Tulsi plant.</p> <p>The last five days of the Kartik month are considered to be the most sacred days and devotees observe fast by eating only once a day, in the afternoon, which is known as Habisha.</p> <p>Tulsi Vivah generally begins on the day of Prabodhini Ekadashi and ends on the day of Kartik Purnima. According to the Hindu scriptures, Tulsi Vivah can be celebrated on any feasible day between the Ekadashi and Kartik Purnima, in the Hindu kartik month. A majority of people perform the marriage rituals of Goddess Tulsi with Lord Shaligram, representation of Lord Vishnu, on the day of Kartik Purnima.</p> <p>Bhishma Panchaka fast starts with Prabodhini Ekadashi, and concludes on the day of Kartik Purnima. According to the Vaishnava culture, Bhishma Panchak fasting during the last five days of Kartik month holds great importance.</p> <p>It is considered appropriate to take a dip in the sacred Ganges river, or 'ganga snan'. Vaikunth Chaturdashi Puja is performed one day prior to Kartik Purnima. Shiva temples on this day perform special Puja where Lord Vishnu is worshipped along with Lord Shiva. It is on this day that devotees observe the Kartik Purnima Ganga Snan by taking a dip in the holy Ganges.</p> <p>Dev Diwali, commonly known as Diwali of Gods, is celebrated on the day of Kartik Purnima. Ancient Hindu scriptures describe that Tripurasura demon was killed by Lord Shiva on this day, and this is the reason that Kartik Purnima is also known as Tripurari Purnima in marathi. Legends describe that Gods were overjoyed with the death of Tripurasura and hence celebrated Kartik Purnima just like Diwali, by lighting earthen diyas in all the temples and at the bank of river Ganga.</p> <p>Akashdeep, mundan, deepdaan and annadaan are performed at shukla paksh ekadashi.</p> <p>Many women worship goddess Tulsi to bless them with a healthy marital life and a long life for their husbands. Shadopchar puja is performed, where 16 kinds of offerings are made to god. These rituals take place during the Kartik Purnima fair. The river Ganga is illuminated with diyas, aarti also takes place, and many devotees make donations to the poor.</p> |

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**Back Cover:** The intricate designs of Khurja pottery.  
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