

BACKGROUND ON SIND AND AMILS

Appendix 1

*Extracts from "Sindh Je Hindun Jo Tarrickh" by Bherumal Maharchand Advani
Translated into English by Guli Jethmal Jagtiani*

Original Hindus of Sind

From Vedic times till 710 AD, all residents of Sind were Hindus and Sind was ruled by the Hindus. In 711 AD, Arabs invaded Sind and some Hindus were killed in the fighting. The remaining Hindus can be classified into 3 groups.

One group were those that were converted to Islam by Mohamed bin Qasim who conquered Sind. Most of the Muslims in Sind (prior to 1947) are the converts from the original Hindus that lived there. Some Hindus converted to Islam much later. (See part 1, pages 37, 55, 122, 245, 246).

The second group of Hindus refused to convert to Islam. Mohamed bin Qasim wrote to the Khalifa in Baghdad to get instructions about what was to be done about such Hindus. Per Islam, it is not compulsory to convert others to its faith. As per instructions of the Khalifa, Mohamed bin Qasim allowed these Hindus to stay in their faith (see part 1, pages 36-37). But he imposed a fine on these Hindus who paid the fine but did not leave their faith. These brave Hindus, without thinking about themselves, continued to fight the nabobs of the Khalifa and managed to recover the major part of Sind and ruled over that.

The third group of Hindus left or fled Sind during the Arab invasion. They got into boats and went to Bahawalpur and Punjab to disperse in different directions. Most of these Hindus had escaped from Aror, near Rohri in North Sind. Hence their descendents still call themselves as "Arorvanshis" (see part 1, pages 121-126). Many of the Amils and Bhaibunds are descendents of the original Arorvanshis, such as Ahuja or Bajaj or Sachdev or Manchandya (nukh of Ajwanis, Bhavnianis, Gidwanis, Jagtianis, Karanmalanis) or Motwanis of Sukkur and others.

In 1026, Mohammed Ghaznavi removed the nabobs of the Khalifa and gave the rein of Sind back to the Hindus (see part 1, pages 38-39). Though the power of the Hindus was greatly diminished, till the rule of the Kalharos (1600's and 1700's), Hindus ruled over Karachi Zilla and Hyderabad Zilla and lower or southern parts of Sind (see part 1, pages 41 & 50 and part 2, page 20). Some say that from the Arab invasion in 711 AD to the British conquest in 1843 AD, Muslims ruled Sind completely for 11 centuries, which is wrong as per the above facts.

From where & when did Hindus come back to Sind

During the rule of the Arghuns and Targhuns (1521 AD to 1612 AD), there were very few Hindus in Sind. In their quiet way, they used to carry on farming and trade.

During Akbar's reign (1550 AD to 1605 AD), Sind had more Muslims. Most of these were poor and not as smart as the Hindus. From the end of the 1600th century, rapid changes took place in Sind as the Mughal rule weakened. There was mutiny in Punjab and upheavals towards Jaisalmer and Jodhpur.

Aurangzeb ruled from Delhi from 1659 AD to 1707 AD. His deputies used to collect zizzat or fines from the Hindus and muhawat from the Muslims. Sri Gobindsingh, the 10th Guru of the Sikhs, and his followers refused to pay the zizzat and hence were subject to severe hardships. Seeing the state of affairs, Guru Gobindsingh Singh formed the Akal Panth. He pumped so much military courage in the Khalsas and Akalis, that they were able to seize Punjab from the Muslims (they became masters of Lahore in 1764). By 1823, Maharaja Ranjit Singh became master of Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar.

As the Sikhs were being subject to severe hardships by Aurangzeb, many Hindus left the towns and villages of Punjab and went to Sind. Some Hindus came to Sind from Agra and Avadh (Oudh) provinces. Due to the unrest in Jaisalmer and Jodhpur in Rajputana, many Hindus left and came to

Appendix 1

Sind (for example, the ancestors of Ramchandanis and Hingoranis). Due to the drought and famine in Kutch, some Hindus came and settled in Sind.

Thus during the Kalharo rule, which started from the end of the 16th century, Hindus from many places came and settled in Sind. Amongst these Hindus, many were followers of the Sikh Gurus. Some other Hindus were Devi disciples, Daya pujaris and of other panths. Thus many different faiths collected in Sind.

✓ Beginning of English Rule

In 1843, Sir Charles Napier conquered Sind and became its first Governor. Sind was divided into 3 zillas - Karachi, Hyderabad and Shikarpur. For each zilla, he appointed a Collector, Deputy Collector, Magistrate / Judge who were all military officers that had helped to conquer Sind.

But these military officers did not know Diwani or civil code and hence all work was done as per military systems. The Bombay press criticised Sir Napier quite harshly with the result that he resigned in 1847 and left Sind. Sind now came under the Bombay Presidency. A separate Commissioner was appointed for Sind who had more powers than commissioners of other places.

✓ Desire to learn English

At the beginning of the English rule in 1843, no Sindhi knew English. Hence residents of other states that were ruled by the English came to Sind in large numbers. Amongst them were Marathas, Parsis and Christians from Bombay, Poona and elsewhere who were well versed in English with some having graduated. These non-Sindhis quickly got government jobs - but they did not know Sindhi.

Hence during the first decade of the English rule, all official correspondence continued to be in Farsi as during the time of the Mirs. Those who knew English as well as Farsi used to interpret and translate for the superior officers. Official correspondence continued in Farsi and hence those Amils who knew Farsi got jobs in government. Amils desired to learn English but there were no schools as yet in Sind.

✓ Job opportunities for Amils

The first Collector of Hyderabad was Captain Rathbone, a military officer. The whole of Nawabshah and greater part of Thar Parkar was within the Hyderabad zilla. For this zilla there were 13 Mukhtiarkars (revenue officer cum magistrate). One branch of the Advanis is Kandharanis (named after Adoomal's grandson Kandharimal) who had become Khalsas or Akalis (refer "Why did Khandharanis become Khalsas"). Captain Rathbone saw military stature in these Khalsas and liked them. So of the 13 Mukhtiarkars he appointed, 11 were Khalsas.

The Collectors of Karachi and Shikarpur did almost the same by appointing Amils. If these Collectors saw courageous Hindu or Muslim Sindhis, they appointed them as non-commissioned officers in the army or got them other government posts.

Those Sindhis, be they Hindus or Muslims, that did not know English, were assisted to study and pass the law exams in Sindhi. The British were lenient in these initial exams and hence the number of Sindhi vakils or lawyers increased considerably. Some became excellent Judges and Magistrates.

✓ Sindhi English Schools

During the rule of the Mirs, there were Muktabas or schools in many towns and villages run by the Mullahs. These schools continued till the advent of the English rule. The sons of Hindu officers along with Muslim boys used to study in these schools. Some Amil families used to call the Mullahs to their homes and get the neighbouring Amil boys to also come for the classes. These Mullahs used to earlier teach only Farsi but later started to teach Sindhi too. Sindhi was written in the Farsi alphabet and each person's way of writing was different.

In 1850, Sir Bartle Frere was appointed as Commissioner of Sind. He introduced Sindhi in the Arabic script in July 1853. From then on Sindhi books were written and printed in the Arabic script. In 1853, high schools were opened in Karachi, Hyderabad and Shikarpur. The East India Company gave only

Rs. 10,000 for each school in a miserly manner. This severely limited the size and standard of the schools opened. With teachers getting only Rs. 10 to 15 per month as salary, only poor masters could be recruited. Recognizing the poor skills and abilities of the teachers, a Teachers Training College was opened in Karachi which was subsequently transferred to Hyderabad.

There was a great need for schools in Sind as students were forced to walk several miles daily to study at a Mullah's school. To fill the dearth of schools, Amils in Hyderabad started their own private schools where English was taught upto the 3rd standard (when 7th standard was matriculation or high school leaving).

Captain Brady, the first Collector of Karachi, opened a "free" school at his own cost. This was later handed over to the Karachi Church Mission Society and hence is known as the "Mission School". Another such Mission School opened later in Hyderabad.

At the beginning of the English rule, Mullahs used to feel that English language was irreligious. Thus most Muslims were against teaching English to their children. In 1885, Khan Bahadur Mian Hassan Aferndi with the help of some Muslims opened a Madrassa or school in Karachi. Just a few Muslims took advantage of the Government High Schools or the Madrassa and became backward in their education.

Bhaibunds, unlike Amils, did not worry about getting jobs. They taught their sons some Hindu Sindhi alphabets and a bit of arithmetic. After which they were made to work at their own shops or offices to become knowledgeable about the business. Thus only the Amils remained for learning English.

Christians, Parsis, Marathas, Gujratis and other non-Sindhis took full advantage of the Government High School in Karachi. There were few Hindu Sindhis in the Shikarpur school at first since Shikarpuris were fond of trade and commerce from centuries. The Amils in Hyderabad took full advantage of the Government and private schools.

But all school children in Sind had a problem. The matriculation exams (after 4 years of primary school and 7 years of high school) were only held in Bombay. The travel to Bombay, either by sea or over land, was quite difficult in those days. Hence many students studied upto the 6th or 7th standard in high school and dropped out and got government jobs.

Why did Khandaranis become Khalsas?

Diwan Manik Singh Kishinchand became a Khalsa in the darbar of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Punjab. On his return to Hyderabad, he gave "amrit" (holy water) to some of his family members and made them Khalsas. (They built the family Gurdwara, Akal Bunga Sahib, in Hyderabad, Sind about the year 1843. The first Guru Granth Sahib was sent by Maharaja Ranjit Singh from Lahore)

Maharaja Ranjit Singh invaded Shikarpur in 1836. He demanded an annual tribute of Rs. 12 lacs from the Mirs in Sind. Many Hindus in Sind felt, that sooner or later, Sind will be ruled by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and thus big jobs will be given to the Khalsas. Thus in that anticipation, many Hindus became Khalsas. But that hope was belied by the conquest of Sind by the English in 1843.

Captain Rathbone, the first Collector of Hyderabad, saw military stature in the Khalsas thus appointing 11 Khalsas amongst the 13 Mukhtiarkars in Hyderabad zilla. Since the Khalsas got so much prominence, those Kandharanis that had not become Khalsas now converted in the hope of jobs being rewarded.

In the neighbourhood of the Kandharani family, some Jagtians (descendents of Gulabrai, Bhojraj Jagatrai and others) and other Amils also became Khalsas. Even now many call themselves as "Singh", though they do not sport a beard like the Khalsas.

MAP OF SIND ✓

Map by Mr. K.B. Kumar, reproduced from "The Sindh Story" by Mr. K.R. Malkani



MIGRATION OF AMILS TO SIND

*Extract from "The Origins of Amils of Sindh" By Bherumal Maharchand Advani, Hyderabad, 1919
Translated by Narain Nebhraj Advanie, Bombay, 1975*

WHAT were Amils originally? Why and how and when did they come to Sind? There is no published history nor any treatise available with anybody. As such whatever little material that has been obtained from newspapers and historical publications and considerably supplemented by interviews with old persons whom I met on official tours around Sind.

Most of the Amils who are at present in Sind came from and around Multan and Unch in Punjab. Some of the Bhaibunds also came from Punjab and others from Jaisalmer, Jodhpur and Gujarat.

A few of the present day Amils are Khitri Lohana, that is warriors by caste, who embraced Sikhism while in Punjab. Like Sikhs, many Amils of Hyderabad and other towns in Sind were growing hair on their head and face. Later on some of them cut their hair and beards but many still grow them. Even today most of them revere Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak was born in 1460 AD. During his life time Babur was the Moghul Emperor. During the reigns of Babur to Shah Jahan, that is from 1526 AD to 1658 AD, the Sikh followers of Guru Nanak resided in Punjab.

When Aurangzeb succeeded Shah Jahan, Hindus came under very evil influence. During the first ten years of his reign and while his father was alive, though imprisoned by him, Aurangzeb was afraid of the big Rajput Sardars as they were the Army commanders. Aurangzeb's fear was that the Rajput Sardars may turn against him and install Shah Jahan on the throne again.

Once Shah Jahan died in 1666, Aurangzeb's fear disappeared and he became bold. At once he deprived his Hindu and Christian officers of their posts. He drove out his Muslim brethren who were Shias as he was a Sunni himself.

After elevating Sunnis to important posts, he turned his wrath on the Hindus. There was a beautiful Hindu temple in Mathura, measuring 268 feet by 268 feet, which was constructed at a cost of over rupees 33 lakhs. Such a big and beautiful temple was destroyed by this "blessed" ruler. To rub salt into the wounds of the Hindus, Aurangzeb constructed a mosque on the grounds of this temple. And he changed the name of Mathura to Islam-abad.

To further injure the feelings of the Hindus, Aurangzeb ordered that the idols from the Mathura temple be removed and taken to Agra. These idols were then installed in the steps of the staircase of the Kadisia Begum Mosque so that they can be trampled upon by everyone.

This is only one of the many instances of his ill-deeds. Many say that Aurangzeb insisted vehemently on the removal of the sacred thread from the shoulders of the Hindus. It is reported that the threads removed every day weighed one maund. This may be an exaggeration but the point is that Aurangzeb used to get the threads forcibly removed.

The persecution of Sikhs by Aurangzeb are cited in Sikh history and other history books. The word "Badshah" means protector. In Sanskrit, there is another word for "Badshah", namely "Raja" or "Janak". "Jan" means birth and "Janak" means begetter, that is Father and thence "Raja". Thus "Raja" is considered father of his subjects. However, Aurangzeb turned out to be an oppressor and a great danger to the public instead of becoming a father-protector.

Appendix 2

Such persecution usually forces people to flee the country. Many consider this as one major reason for migration from Punjab, with the masses escaping wherever they could. From what is stated above, it is not to be understood necessarily that the ancestors of present day Amils ran away only because of Aurangzeb's persecution. This may have been the initial cause of the migration to Sind which probably commenced from 1670 AD. (Hence the history of the Amils in Sind can be assumed to start from the late 1600's.)

✓ Hereafter some people went to Sind for the sake of service with the Sind rulers or for business and then settled down there. In the case of some, it is certain that they went to Sind for the sake of service. It is recorded that Mian Nur Mohammed Kalharo, who succeeded as the ruler in Sind in 1719 on the death of his father Yar Mohammed Kalharo, visited Multan. Diwan Adoomal, who was swordsman and the ancestor of the Advanis, was brought to Sind by Nur Mohammed Kalharo. So also he brought Diwan Gidumal (a great great grandson of Adiomal Shahwani from whom are descendent the families of Ajwanis, Bhavnanis, Gidwanis and Jagtianis) to Sind.

KHUDABAD

*Extract from "The Origins of Amils of Sindh" By Bherumal Maharchand Advani, Hyderabad, 1919
Translated by Narain Nebhraj Advanie, Bombay, 1975*

THE city of Khudabad is located about 20 miles from Dadu on the western bank of River Indus. Mian Yar Mohammed Kalharo captured Khudabad in 1702 from Punhu tribes. His son, Mian Nur Mohammed Kalharo, made it his capital.

It is but natural that in a capital city, good government building and captivating private building be constructed. The dwellings of the Kalharos themselves were inside the fort, the traces of which exist even today. The bazaar of Khudabad was straight like the bazaar of Hyderabad.

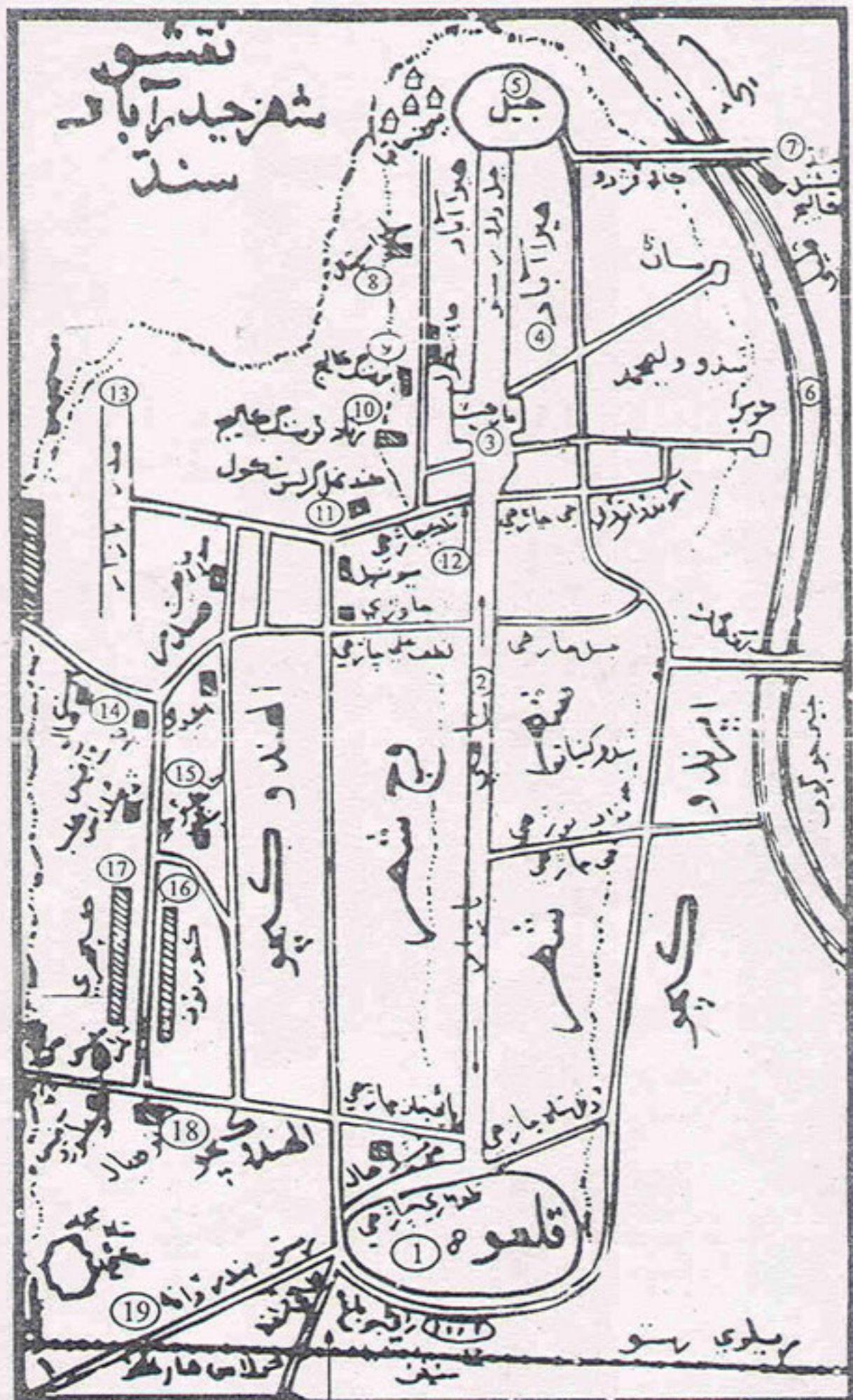
There was a beautiful masjid in Khudabad which is now in ruins. The masjid is under the care of a Mullah who is paid rupees five per month by the Government for his service. The tomb of Mian Yar Mohammed Kalharo is worth visiting. The Government pays rupees three per month to Mujwar to look after the tomb and keep a light burning daily.

After the death of Mian Nur Mohammed Kalharo, some Khosa tribesmen plundered Khudabad and set fire to the city in 1759 AD though the city was not completely destroyed. Mian Ghulam Shah Kalharo subsequently punished the Khosa tribes severely. He tried hard to rehabilitate the city but his attempt was a failure as the people had fled to Sahiti, Talti, Bahawalpur, and other places.

Thereafter, Kalharos built another city across the Indus river on its eastern bank about 2 miles from the village Nawa Hala. It was called Nawa Khudabad. Mian Sarferoze Khan was the first Kalharo to hold a durbar there. It continued to be the capital till 1789 AD and continued to be as well inhabited as Hyderabad in the year 1812 AD. However, by 1844 AD, Nawa Khudabad deteriorated so much that not a single family remained there. Some say that it was washed away by Indus River and so was deserted.

MAP OF HYDERABAD, SIND ✓

Reproduced from "Visaryo Ne Visrun, Muhinjo Watan, Muhinja Mahrnun" (Forget not and unforgettable My Country, My People by Lokram Dodeja)



1. Fort
2. Shahi Bazaar
3. Market
4. Hirabad
5. Jail
6. Phuleli Canal
7. Sind National College
8. Civil Hospital
9. Teachers Training College
10. Ladies Training Coliege
11. Kundanmai Girls School
12. Tilak Incline (Chahurry)
13. Saddar Bazaar
14. Annie Besant Hall
15. Collector's Bungalow
16. Courts
17. Kutchery
18. Vidayala High School
19. Road to Gidu Bandar
20. Rani Baug

✓ HYDERABAD

*Extract from "The Origins of Amils of Sindh" By Bherumal Maharchand Advani, Hyderabad, 1919
Translated by Narain Nebhraj Advania, Bombay, 1975*

HYDERABAD was originally known as Nerankot, the kot (fort or city) of the king Neran. It is stated in the Sind Gazetteer, that on the eastern side of the original city of Neran, a big channel of the Indus River seemed to have flown through the bed of the present channel, Phuleli.

In 1768 AD, Ghulam Shah Kalhora wished to move his capital away from Khudabad and decided to build a new fort at Nerankot. He entrusted the job to Diwan Gidumal (a great great grandson of Adiomal Shahwani from whom are descendent the families of Ajwanis, Bhavnanis, Gidwanis and Jagtianis).

He sent Diwan Gidumal with two boats filled with money and materials to start the construction. Gidumal initially built a small town on the banks of River Indus, which came to known as Tando (village) of Gidu or Gidu Bandar (port), and is a suburb on the west of Hyderabad.

Gidumal then started the construction of the main fort and completed it in three or four years. It was said that the workers and foremen consumed one lakh maunds of the drug, bhang or hemp, while on the job. While this may be an exaggeration, it appears that they were strong addicts but also clever workers.

Mian Ghulam Shah Kalharo changed the name of Nerankot to Hyderabad. 'Hy' means snake and 'der' means killer. Hazrat Ali had killed a snake and was called Hyder and the city was named after him as Hyderabad.

While the construction of Hyderabad was in progress, Mian Ghulam Shah Kalharo died in 1771. After his death, Khudabad continued to be the capital of Sind till 1789 and thereafter Hyderabad became the capital.

As Nawa Khudabad was decaying and Hyderabad was flourishing, people started migrating from Nawa Khudabad and other places to Hyderabad. It is said that the people got pieces of land on perpetual lease free of cost.

Most Amils occupied the land extending from Chhodki Bazaar northward to the present Siroghat. Traders and others who came from Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Gujarat and elsewhere occupied land from Chhodki Bazaar to the Jumanshah Pole.

Diwan Gidumal came later accompanying Talpur Mir Fateh Ali Khan. By that time most of the land had been occupied. Hence he took the remaining portion of the land extending from Jumanshah Pole to the Fort, and this was called Gidwani Ghitti (street). This also enabled him to live closer to the Fort for quick consultations with the Mir Talpur rulers and thus away from other Amil brethren.

Hyderabad flourished so much that Phuleli, on the eastern side, was amalgamated with it. Later the city doubled in the late 1800's after the development of Hirabad Quarters (named after Rai Bahadur Diwan Hiranand Khemsing Advani who was the Municipal President).

As any capital, Hyderabad had its own beauty because of the tombs of the Mirs, the Fort, Navalrai Market, NH Academy, Kutchery and other attractive buildings. A special characteristic of the city were the Mangh or Badgir, that were high rise ventilators. These ventilators were enclosed on the north and east sides and had an open face on the south and west sides to catch the winds and channel them down to the rooms of the house.

NOTE OF DIWAN MULSING KHAIRPURI ✓

*Extract from "The Origins of Amils of Sindh" By Bherumal Maharaj and Advani, Hyderabad, 1919
Translated by Narain Nebhraj Advanie, Bombay, 1975*

THE Ajwanis reside in Kairpur State but are pure Amils. They are cousins of four well know Amil families whose ancestor was Adiomal Shahwani. Particularly they are cousins of Jagtians as also of Bhavnanis and Gidwanis. Ajwanis are descendents of one son of Diwan Jagatrai and the Jagtians are descendents of the other son of Diwan Jagatrai, and as such Ajwanis are not strangers to Hyderabadis.

In what circumstances, Ajwanis got separated from their cousins and what they were originally and where they came from are stated in a note written by Diwan Mulsing Khairpuri. A true copy of this note is reproduced here as follows:

"Our forefather was originally an inhabitant of Satipur (or Sitapur) in Punjab. He came to Sind with Mian Adam Shah Kalhora. When the Sind Riyasat (State) came under the control of the Kalhoras, our ancestors were appointed as Diwans in that Government.

"Later on, when Sind came under the rule of Mir-Talpur, it got divided into two Riyasats. The rulers who were relatives made this division. One group made the capital at Hyderabad and the other group, led by Maghfoor Mir Sohrab Khan Talpur, built Khairpur himself and made it as the capital.

"Maghfoor Mir Sohrab Khan Talpur brought my forefather, Diwan Ajumal, with himself and appointed him as the Diwan, a position he had occupied in the previous unified Riyasat. Diwan Ajumal and some of his brothers adopted Khairpur as their residence. Other brothers and cousins of Diwan Ajumal remained in good positions with the Mirs of Hyderabad. (See note #1)

"Maghfoor Mir Sohrab Khan Talpur declared Mir Rustom Khan as heir apparent (Takhat Nashin) in his own life time. Diwan Ajumal's son had lost his eyesight in the prime of his youth. Hence his grandson, Dalpatrai, was appointed as Diwan in the place of Diwan Ajumal in the Royal Court of Mir Rustom Khan.

"Diwan Dalpatrai had no son and adopted a son of his cousin, Diwan Amalrai, as his own. that is my father whose name was Jethanand and was known as the son of Diwan Dalpatrai. My grandfather, Diwan Amalrai, was appointed to the post of Diwan in the government of Mir Mubarak Khan, brother of Mir Rustom Khan.

"Subsequently, my father Jethanand, lived separately from his real brothers, and became heir to the property and estate of Diwan Dalpatrai. On the day my father Jethanand was appointed to the post of Diwan, Mir Rustom Khan changed his name to Diwan Shersing (See note #2), by which name he became well known.

"When the British conquered Sind in 1843, Diwan Shersing was appointed as Dafardar (Director of Records) with the Collector of Sukkur and Shikarpur. My real grandfather, Diwan Amalrai, was appointed as Mukhtiarkar (Revenue Officer cum Magistrate). Other members of our families were also appointed to good posts by the British.

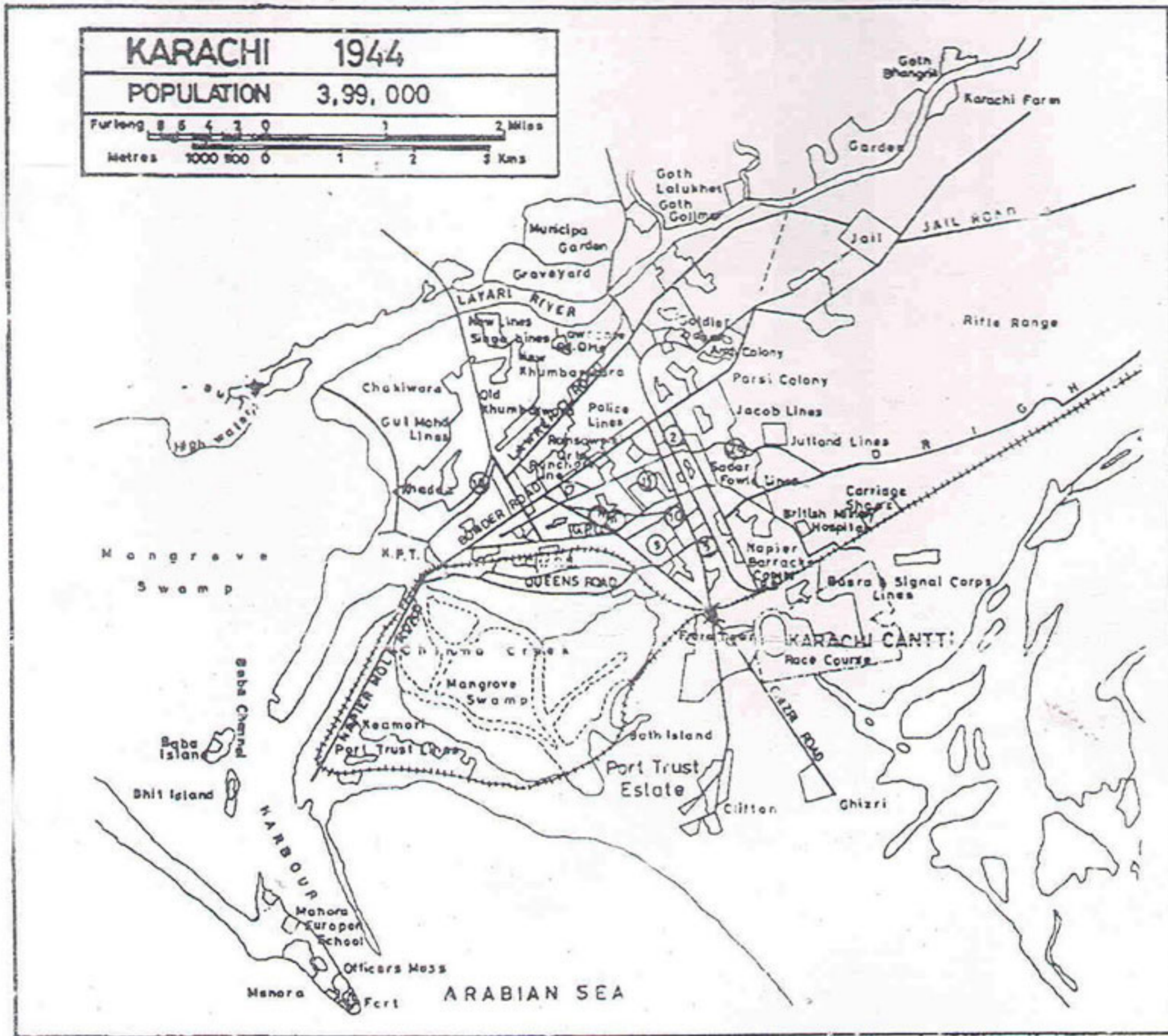
"Unfortunately, just a year after his appointment, Diwan Shersing died. Though I was too young, the British allotted the estate to me and it is in my possession even today." (See note 3#)

NOTES:

- #1 It would be seen that with the bifurcation of Sind into two Riyasats with capitals at Khaīrpur and Hyderabad, the Ajwanis got separated from their cousins. Similarly, other Amil families got separated and over a period of time lost contact with different branches.
- #2 "Sher" means lion and "Singh" also means lion. Often Hindu military officers who performed some acts of bravery were called "Shersingh" by the rulers. It is a title in reality but many persons have adopted it as their name nowadays.
- #3 It is seen from this example, that in awarding the posts of Diwans, the rulers of Sind recognized the claims of the descendents of the original Diwans. This and other reasons indicate that the post of Diwans were meant specially for Amils.

MAP OF KARACHI, SIND

(Source : MPEC - Karachi Development Authority)



- ② Baluch Graveyard (15th Century), Manor Gothmalir
- ⑤ St. Paul's Church 1865 at Manora
- ⑨ Edulji Dinshan Dispensary (1882) at Saddar
- ⑩ Collector's Kutcheri (1850-60) at Club Road
- ⑪ Merewether Tower (1892)
- ⑳ Flag Staff House (1865)

HISTORY OF SINDHI SURNAMES ✓

(Extract from "*Sindhi Through The Ages*" by Prakash Bharadwaj)

GOTRA and Pravara are of paramount importance in the special relationship of Brahmins, Khatri and Vaisyas. **Gotra** means a family village or a caste village. **Pravara** means a call or summon, that is trade or profession. **Nukh** is taken from the Sanskrit word "laksh" which is related to the Sindhi word "lakh", that is, identity. **Surname** is for the name of the ancestor's family, as Advani surname is for all descendants of Adumal and so is Jagtiani surname for all descendants of Jagatrai.

Every Hindu is obliged to pronounce the name of his ancestors who were the founders of his family. At the time of performing a sacred act, marriage, havana, siradh or prayer, he has to mention the name of his Gotra, Nukh and Surname. As we give the complete street address, city name and pin code in a letter to reach its destination correctly, so also our Gotra, Nukh and Surname are very essential to be mentioned as otherwise that act or pooja is invalid as per shastras.

Sindhi Hindu surnames are generally as per the following practice

- Some Arorvanshi Sindhi Rajputs are called Hinduja, Kukereja, Makhija, Pahuja, Talreja, Valecha, etc. **JA** means from that family.
- Most Hindu Sindhi Amils and some Bhaibunds add **ANI** to their ancestor's name. Thus Jagtiani for their ancestor Jagatrai, Gulrajani for their ancestor Gulrajmal, Ramchandani for their ancestor Ramchand, etc.
- A few Sindhis add the word **AL** with their names, such as, Khetrapal, Nagpal, Rajpal, etc.
- Some Sindhi surnames were kept after their villages, such as Mirpuri for Mirpur village, Khudabadi for Khudabad, etc.
- A few names were kept and known for the jobs they did, such as Mehtani for Mehta's works (accountant), Munshiani for Munshigiri work (clerk), Shroff for banking business, etc.
- And still a few added **POTA** to their ancestor's name such as Asarpota (grandchildren of Asarmal), Motanpota (Motanmal's grandchildren), etc.

NOTES :

1# Most Amils have retained their surnames with ANI. However some have modified their surnames, as for example:

- Mangharmalani shortened to Malani
- Sipahimalani shortened to Sippy
- Advani modified to Advaney

✓ TRADITIONAL SINDHI NAMES

(Extract from "Sindh Through The Ages" by Prakash Bharadwaj)

TRADITIONAL Sindhi Hindu names are originally related to Sanskrit words and these names were kept on various factors, civilization and culture.

Some names were kept on Nakhstras or Astrology. Thus Hasi or Hassomal for Asulesha Nakhstra; Menghi or Menghraj for Magha Nakhstra; Jethi or Jethmal or Jethanand for those born in the Jyestha Nakhshtra; and Muli or Mulchand for those born in Mool or Sugina Nakhshtra.

Names were also kept on the days of the week. Sunday is known as Sunie Aditya and Adumal, ancestor of Advanis, was born on Sunday; Somomal for Som or Monday; Mangaldas (and Manglani) for Mangal or Tuesday; Budharmal (and Budhrani) for Budh or Wednesday; Jumrho (and Jumani) for Jumo or Friday. Sindhis kept no names after Vispat or Thursday and Chanchar or Saturday.

A few names were kept on the months. Thus Chetumal (and Chotrani) for Chetie Chaitra month of March-April; Asoomal (and Aswani) for Asoie Aswin month of October-November; Pohumal (and Pohani) for Pohie Poushya month of January-February; Fagunmal for Phagun month of February-March.

Sindhis were very fond of Gods and Goddesses and kept names after them. Thus Ambaram for Ambemaa; Bhagu / Bhag for Bhagwan / Bhagwati; Bherumal for Bhairava; Chandumal for Chandidevi; Chatru for Chaturbhuj; Dharmoo for Damodhar; Ghansho for Ghanshyam; Gobindram for Govind; Ishwardas for Ishwar; Jairam or Jaikishin for Jai Krishna; Lachmi / Lakhi for Laxmi; Kishinchand for Krishna; Nanik / Naniki for Guru Nanik; Naraindas for Narayan; Padu for Padmavati; Parpati for Parvati; Ramchand for Rama; Radhi for Radhika; Shivaldas for Shiva; Tikamdas for Tri Vikram Vaman Bhagwan; Tilok for Trilokinath; Vishnu / Vishni for Vishnu.

Several were named after historical persons. Thus Arjundas for Arjuna; Bheemandas for Bheema; Bhaikhomai for Bhisam; Bhojomai and Bhojwani for Raja Bhoj; Duru and Durupati for Durepati; Jasoti for Yashoda; Kundi / Kundan for Kunti; Pahilraj for Prahlad; Parso for Parshuram; etc.

Rivers and religious places were also remembered. Hence Gangaram for Ganga; Jamnadas / Jamuni for Yamuna; Sarsati for Saraswati; Viboo for Narabada; Tirathdas for Tirath or religious place.

In the old days, Sindhis had a suffix to their names such as Ram, Mal, Das, Lal, Chand, Anand, Sahai, Rai, Raj and Sing. Thus Gobind became Gobindram; Kundan was Kundanmal; Gagan was Gagandas; Amar was Amarlal; Ram was Ramchand; Jetho was Jethanand; Guru was Gursahai; Jagat was Jagatrai; Bhoj was Bhojraj; Prem was Premchand; Lal was Lalsing, etc.

NOTES:

- #1 The traditional Sindhi names often appear funny or peculiar to the current younger generation. The above explanation would probably help to understand the roots of our ancestor's names.
- #2 Over the past 50 years since leaving Pakistan, the suffix to the names has been generally dropped.
- #3 The names of the present generation of Amils are far from the traditional Sindhi names. As Amils are dispersed all over India, many have given names that are popular in that part of the country. This has also happened where Sindhis have married non-Sindhis.
- #4 Parents today try to find unique names for their children. Or give names of famous film stars or cricketers or Westernised names.