

Development of Communication System: Key to Socio-Economic Development of Karachi (1857-1900)

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Abstract

The period from 1857 to 1900 belonged to the foundation years of the colonial economy and its extension in India. This period is also known as establishment phase in the development of communication system in Karachi. British investment was spurred by self-interest, but this self-interest ultimately led to better Karachi. It was a town but it had potential to turn into an incredible city due to its fair weather, natural harbor and plenty of space. The British authorities acknowledged and publicly urged the importance of this natural harbor and started developing the fishing town into a modern city. When British rule became established in Karachi, they observed the traditional communication system could not cope with the demand of the colonial economy. Thus, they introduced modern communication systems through roads, railways and waterways and put Karachi on the path of economic and social development. The major objective of this article is to explore the changes introduced in Karachi under British administration. It also demonstrates the role of communication system in the socioeconomic development of Karachi. This paper employs both the qualitative and quantitative research methodology. It applies analytical, comparative as well as historical models.

Key Words: British Administration, Socio-Economic Development, Communication system, Natural Harbour

➤ Introduction:

Undoubtedly, modern communication is essential in all aspects of socio-economic and cultural development. It plays a significant role in the expansion of trade, in marketing agricultural commodities and in the exchange of ideas, thoughts, knowledge etc. At the end of eighteenth century, before the British Arrival, Karachi was a hub of Maritime trade. Therefore, the keen interest of The British was actually the port located on the western side of the subcontinent. During the British rule, Karachi gradually became a major trading center around a major port. Karachi was connected with the rest of India by introducing modern means of transportation and communication. Sir Charles Napier, the first Governor of Sindh, on his return to Britain, had predicted that Karachi would be the glory of the East.¹ Napier's prediction proved correct and by the end of the 19th century, Karachi had become the largest wheat import hub in the Eastern world. In the British era the introduction of modern mode of transport and communication in Karachi led to social, economic and cultural development which was administratively beneficial.

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¹ J. Forrest. Brunton, "Karachi" Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, Vol.61, No.3148 (March 21, 1913), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41340573> (accessed April 13, 2020), p.479

➤ **Research Questions:**

In this article try to find out:

- What types of changes were introduced by British administration in Karachi?
- How communication played significant role in socio-economic development of Karachi?
- Try to find out the relationship between socio-economic and cultural development of Karachi through communication?

➤ **Hypothesis:**

The modern communication has changed the Socio-Economic set up of the Karachi.

➤ **Historical Background of Karachi:**

The main reason for the British the keen interest in Karachi was actually the port located on the western side of the subcontinent. The main reason for the British interest in Karachi was the location of its port which was located on the far western side of the subcontinent. Therefore, in order to understand the geographical and commercial importance of Karachi, it is necessary to get acquainted with its historical background. Sindh was a part of the Mughal Empire. In the 18th century, the decline of Mughal power in the center supported the growing political power of Kalhora which made them the ruler of Sindh province. Locally, the Kalhora's were religious, powerful and tribal group. But during the reign of Kalhora, political instability emerged in Sindh which was mainly due to the tug of war between the Kalhora chiefs for succession to the throne of Sindh. Then the Talpur's of Sindh took full advantage and began to struggle for the throne of the Kalhora chiefs and in 1783 they were succeed to overthrowing the weak Kalhora rule. The Talpur's belonged to the Baloch tribe and were recruited as mercenaries in the Kalhora court. Sindh was the coastal region of the subcontinent that was commercially connected to the Persian Gulf, Central Asia and the subcontinent. Regarding commercial point of view, Sindh was significant. Its prosperity was due to the Indus River and its existing ports which were attractive to foreign traders. The power struggle between the Talpur's gave the East India Company an opportunity to gain commercial advantage by assisting one of them. As a result, the political negligence of the Talpur Mirs facilitated the British invasion of Sindh. In the end of 18th century, the British realized that Sindh was important commercially as well as strategically.

The main reason for the British keen interest in Sindh was that this area of the subcontinent was strategically important because during the 19th century, on one hand, there was regional political enmity between Sindh, Afghanistan and Persia and on the other hand, enmity between Britain, France and Russia. Thus, Sindh became an important part of Britain's Great Game (regional supremacy between Britain and Russia is called the "Great Game"). Apparently, various British tourist and political delegations such as Commander Carless, Charles Masson, Nathan Crowe and Sir Henry Pottinger, visited Talpur court to maintain diplomatic relations, but behind the scenes the purpose was to gather information about river Indus and its ports and towns in order to establish a strong British administration

in Sindh. The British planned to occupy Karachi before Sindh because this fishing town served both their commercial and political purposes. The importance of Karachi was determined by its both land and sea routes.

➤ **Karachi as a Natural Harbour:**

Ports play an important role in national and international trade and a well organised seaport not simply increase business activities but also generate the revenue and strengthen the economy. Of course, the port is the backbone of the economy and the natural harbour is a gift from God. Fortunately, this gift was given to the people of Karachi in the form of Karachi port. The British already knew the importance of Karachi port. The reasons for the British interest in Karachi Harbor were twofold. One was the commercial and the other was the strong defensive siege and to achieve these two objectives it occupied Karachi before Sindh. Because the British wanted commercial and military supremacy over Central Asia, Asia and Persian Gulf and to achieve this supremacy, the port of Karachi had an important geographical position. After getting control on Karachi British administration focused on improving Karachi Harbor to promote trade activities. Dalhousie said Commissioner Sindh Frere that *“Without a good harbour at Kurrachee I think you would never have really good trade by the way of Sindh. But with a good harbour there, I know not why it should be very far behind Bombay.”*²

➤ **Commercial Importance of Karachi:**

The prosperity and decline of the merchants, fishermen and sailors depended upon the shores of the sea ports. In 1728, two ports, one Kharak-Bunder on the river Hub and the other near Thatta called Shah-bunder, both had become unusable due to heavy rains. So, the merchants of these ports had founded a new port under the leadership of Bhojmal*, which was located in the east of Kharak port 18 miles away. Where there were already twenty or twenty-five huts for fishermen. In 1729 the merchants, fishermen and sailors of both ports such as Kharak-bunder and Shah-bunder selected the coast of Karachi. They chose the port of Karachi because it was a natural port and had the potential to expand its commercial activities to markets in Central Asia, the Persian Gulf, Africa and Europe. Thus, Karachi was settled as a fishing town.³ Before the arrival of these traders, Karachi was isolated from the outside world. After their arrival through sea-route as well as land route, it was connected with far off countries and due to those merchandise contacts, its commercial importance started increasing day by day.

To take advantage of the commercial importance of Karachi port, British continued to maintain friendly relationship with the ruling families of Sindh (Kalhora and Talpur). In the late 18th century and early 19th century, British had succeeded in establishing a strong

² Dalhousie to Frere, 6 Dec.1853, Frere papers.

*Bhojmal was a famous Hindu merchant of Kharak-Bunder. His son Hotchand was also one of the famous merchant of Karachi. His great-grandson Seth Naomal Hotchand was very influential during the British rule. According to his great grandson, “In 1729, his great grandfather laid the foundation of Karachi city”

³ Arif Hassan (ed), *Community initiatives: Four Case Studies from Karachi*, (Karachi: City Press, 1998),p.11

administration in Sindh. When the dispute over the throne between the Talpur Mir's began, these internal feuds were used by the British to gain their foothold in Karachi. When Mir Ghulam Ali, on the orders of the Afghan Sardar, closed the British factory in Karachi and ordered the British agent Nathan Crow to leave Sindh, Nathan Crow considered it an insult and advised the British administration to attack Sindh. But at that time, the British administration maintained a momentary silence and planned to permanently cover its trade losses as well as to gain political advantage. To achieve their goal, the British, with great planning, made a few agreements with the Talpur rulers, which were seemingly friendly but in reality those documents were a preparation to capture Karachi.

➤ **Friendly Agreements between Talpurs and British (1808 to 1839):**

In 1808, Captain David Seton came to Hyderabad as British Ambassador and, after negotiations with the Talpur Mirs, reached an agreement stating that the British Government would assist the Mirs in deterring the Afghan chiefs.⁴ At that time, Persia and Afghanistan were the two enemies of Britain because both countries had the support of Russia and France. Through Tilsit agreement Persia had become a friend of Britain, now they were only threatened by Afghanistan. The British had a feeling from the beginning that India was always attacked by Afghanistan. Therefore, they adopted the strategy that before anyone attacked them from Afghanistan, they would first attack it taking control over it. The real purpose of this friendly agreement of the Seton with Talpur Mir was to alliance against Afghanistan because it was a buffer state during the Great Game between British India and the Russian Empire. In this way, the British strengthened their defensive line in the subcontinent and planned to use this route to gain access to Afghanistan.

After Seton, a new British agent, Nicholos Hankey Smith, came to Karachi in 1809.⁵ The British mission reached Hyderabad Darbar from Karachi via Thatta by both water and land routes. So, in this way, the river routes were surveyed and the objective of mapping the Indus route was achieved. Smith mission had two main objectives. One was to establish a permanent link with Sindh and the other was to use the internal disputes of the Talpur Mir's for the benefit of the company. In this agreement, the British achieved both of their objectives. The first objective was achieved through the mutual exchange of agents and the second one was achieved when Talpur allowed the locals to work as residents of the company in the Hyderabad court.

According to this friendly agreement, the rulers also prevented the French from using the Indus coast. As the British started expelling their rivals in Sindh in the name of friendship, a new friendly treaty was signed in 1821 under which the Americans were also expelled from Sindh.⁶ Thus the British could do business here through the port of Karachi but the French and Americans could not.

⁴ Ijaz-ul-Haq, Qadoosi, *Tareekh-i-Sindh*th ed., Volume.3 (Lahore: Urdu Science Board, 2004), p.16-17.

⁵ Ibid., p.17

⁶ Ibid., p.18

Under the previous treaties, the British established their influence here and now they wanted complete victory. In 1832, a goodwill agreement was finalized between the company's agent Henry Pottinger and Talpur Mir, in which business concessions were made so that the goods brought to Sindh would be taxed fairly and the merchants would not be disturbed in any way.⁷ The British resident would have the option to change his residence or bodyguard. In order to establish its influence as far as Punjab, the British wanted to close the gap between the Mirs and Ranjit Singh, so that an atmosphere of peace and order could be established between the two governments. This agreement was the formal beginning of the complete British occupation of Karachi and especially Sindh. Thus these agreements led to the downfall of the Talpur rulers. Thus the British succeeded in their political and defense intentions.

➤ Occupation of Karachi, 1839:

The British had planned to occupy Karachi in order to use the resources of Sindh for the Afghan campaign and to get the facility of transport for the passage of their troops. For this purpose, Henry Pottinger who was the British resident in Hyderabad from 1838-1840, threatened the Mir Noor Muhammad Talpur:

*"Karachi would be occupied if war provisions were not made available to the British."*⁸

On the other side, Governor General Lord Auckland sent Lieutenant East Wick, Colonel Outram and Lieutenant Leckie to Hyderabad for a new agreement and to persuade the Mir's to pay a subsidy to the British army.⁹

When the British advanced towards Afghanistan, the Mirs were reluctant to help, and then the British Colonel Henry Pottinger suggested the Bombay government that the reserved army be prepared to attack the Karachi fort. In result to Henry Pottinger's suggestion, the Bombay Government formed a contingent of reserved forces to occupy Karachi under the supervision of Commandant Colonel Valiant. On 31 January 1839, he had received a short note by Bombay Government that "Proceed to Karachi and take it".¹⁰

On 7th February 1839, British troops occupied "Karachi and its coastal areas" to better monitor the affairs of the Russian Empire, Central Asia and Afghanistan.¹¹ Instead of the local businessmen of Karachi, the wealthy businessmen sided with the British power to protect their interests. The assistance given to the British was acknowledged and due to this assistance the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, Frederick Maitland, was asked to protect

⁷Ibid.,p.18-19

⁸ From the Resident in Sindh to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 15 December 1838, no.112, *Correspondence Relative to Sindh: 1836-1843*, p.131.

⁹ Robert A. Huttenback, *British Relation with Sindh 1799-1843, an Anatomy of Imperialism* (California: University of California Press, 1962), p.49

¹⁰ C.L. Mariwalla. *Essays on British policy towards Sind upto the First Afghan War, 1839* (Karachi: Indus Publication, 1982),p.107

¹¹ Rustom ji, B.S. *Karachi during the British Era: Two Histories of a Modern City*(Karachi: Reprinted by Oxford University Press, 1952), p.18-19

Seth Naomal's family and his property in Karachi. ¹²Seth Naomal ancestors were traders and due to inefficiency of Kharak Bandar, they came to the shores of the Arabian Sea in search of a new port. Thus his great-grandfather Bhojomal founded the city of Karachi. Gradually, his family became one of the most successful business families in Karachi. Their trade relations extended to various countries in Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. The British also had trade posts in Sindh, so Seth Naomal Hotchand also had friendly and business relations with the British. Thus, the British for the sake of their hidden interest to occupied Karachi had forged friendly relations with the local merchant Seth Naomal.

According to Pir Ali Muhammad Rashdi, *"if Naomal had not betrayed, Sindhi Muslims would still be riding on horses and camels, and Sindhi Hindus would be riding on donkeys and mules"*¹³

As Khuhro explained that British administration took interest in Karachi because:

*"Karachi was also the most convenient location for a maritime colonial power. The city was to be developed to serve as 'the port nearest to Europe'-a military necessity...as the port that would open up not only the hinterland of Sindh itself, but the entire northwestern areas of the subcontinent and also be the port of areas to the north-west, which could thus be safeguarded from the embrace of the Russian bear."*¹⁴

➤ **Karachi under British Administration:**

Thomas Poston, who joined the Bombay Native Infantry in 1829 and served in Sindh from 1839 to 1846, wrote about Karachi in his book "Personal Observation on sindh":

*"Karachi was a miserable looking town, which had about 8000 inhabitants. It was important due to its position, however, it was the only port in Sindh, and a large military cantonment erected here has greatly increased the trade and prosperity of the place."*¹⁵

Since the commercial and defense interests of the British were related to Karachi. Therefore, in order to make their Afghan campaign a success, the British first captured Karachi and then, in pursuit of their commercial interests, appointed Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sindh, as governor, who moved the capital from Hyderabad to Karachi. Charles Napier was a 65-year-old soldier and now the British administration needed a civilian to run Karachi. Therefore, the post of Governor was abolished and Commissioner was appointed.

Karachi was a small town and the livelihood of fishermen, sailors and traders depended on its port. Port changed the fate of this multi-named* fishing town and this emerging town

¹² From Resident in Sindh to Rear-Admiral Sir Frederick Maitland, Naval Commander-in-Chief, 28 January 1839, no. 168, *Correspondence Relative to Sindh: 1836-1843*(London: J.L. Cox & Sons),p.168

¹³ Ajmal Kamal, *Karachi ki Khanai*, Vol.1, (Karachi: Aajki Kitabain, 1995),p.23

¹⁴ Hamida Khuhro, *Karachi: Mega City of our Times*. 2nd ed., (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010),p.25

¹⁵ T, Poston, *Personal Observation on Sindh, 1843* (Reprint Karachi: Indus Publications, 1973),p.24

*Crochey, Krotchey Bay, Caranjee, Koratchey, Currachee, Kurrachee, and Karachi, (Baillie, 2005,p.03)

was renamed as Karachi in the British era. At the time of British occupation, the population of Karachi was 14,000.¹⁶ Actually, the rapid development of the town and its commercial and business centered importance attracted a large number of merchants and laborers, which increased its population to 56,879, according to the 1856 census, 73,560 in 1881, and 116,683 by 1901.¹⁷

No doubt, the development of Karachi began with the four-year governorship of Sir Charles Napier, and later commissioners like Pringle, Frere, Inverarity, Mansfield, Merewether, Erskine and Pritchard also played a key role in modernizing the city in their respective eras. The town was initially developed as a British military cantonment, and then to meet the needs, industrial and residential areas were set up separately. One part of the city was equipped with modern facilities only for the British and the other was used by natives or locals. So, the British administration developed Karachi as a dual city.

Charles Napier had said while leaving Karachi: *"You will yet be the glory of the East; would that I could come again to see you, Kurrachee, in your grandeur!"*¹⁸

Karachi had a striking value both by land and sea routes. In order to take permanent advantage of these routes, the British had taken several steps to increase the development activities in Karachi. In this way, the people there had directly or indirectly benefited from those development works.

➤ **Development of Communication system (1857-1900):**

Communication and transportation was perquisite of economic and social development. The movements of passengers and merchandise were difficult and expensive, as the main means of transportation in use at that time were pack animals, bullock carts, small river craft and small coastal shipping. Sir Bartle Frere described about Karachi, *"There were no mile of bridges or metal roads, no architectural bridges of any kind. In fact, there was no clear road for five miles."*¹⁹

Fortunately, Karachi had both land and sea routes. During the British Raj, these both routes provided easy means for the movement of passengers and merchandise to connect it with other areas. Thus, through these routes, the British administration transformed the inter-regional trade of Punjab and Sindh. Karachi achieved many milestones of Socio-economic development by connecting all parts of the subcontinent through different communication systems such as road, rail and waterways. Mainly Karachi had to rely on the Indus for trade links and on boats for the movement of commercial goods, then in 1861, the laid of railway tracks proved to be a milestone in the communication system. In this way, modern means of

¹⁶ Alexander F. Baillie, Karachi under the raj: 1843-1947: *Kurrachee: Past, Present and Future*, Volume 1. (Karachi: Pakistan Herald Publications, 2005), p.2

¹⁷ Rustomji, 1952, p.69

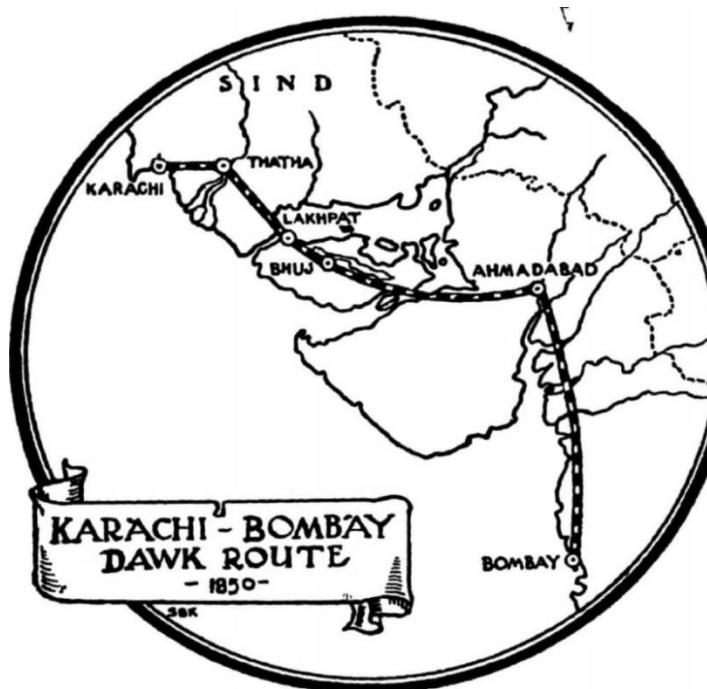
¹⁸ Baillie, Op.cit., p.183

¹⁹ John Martineau, *The life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere*, Volume.1 (London: John Murray, 1895), p.92

transportation improved the commercial and economic activities of Karachi as well as made the postal system cheaper and easier. Now, we will take a look at the development of the communication system, which had played an important role in the socio-economic development of Karachi from 1857 to 1900.

- **Communication by Post:**

Before the introduction of the railway line in Sindh, messages were delivered through foot runners (*Qasid*). These foot runners were the backbone of the postal system. Sometime messages were delivered through fishermen and traders. With the passage of time, horse and camel riders were appointed in the postal department to speed up the postal system in Karachi. In 1850, there were four post offices in Sindh such as Sukkur, Shikarpur, Hyderabad and Karachi.²⁰ These foot runners used to take the route of Thatta, Lakhpat, Bhoj and Ahmedabad to deliver mail between Karachi and Bombay.²¹ In this way the mail was delivered from Karachi to Bombay in nine days. Below picture shows the Dawk route between Karachi to Bombay.



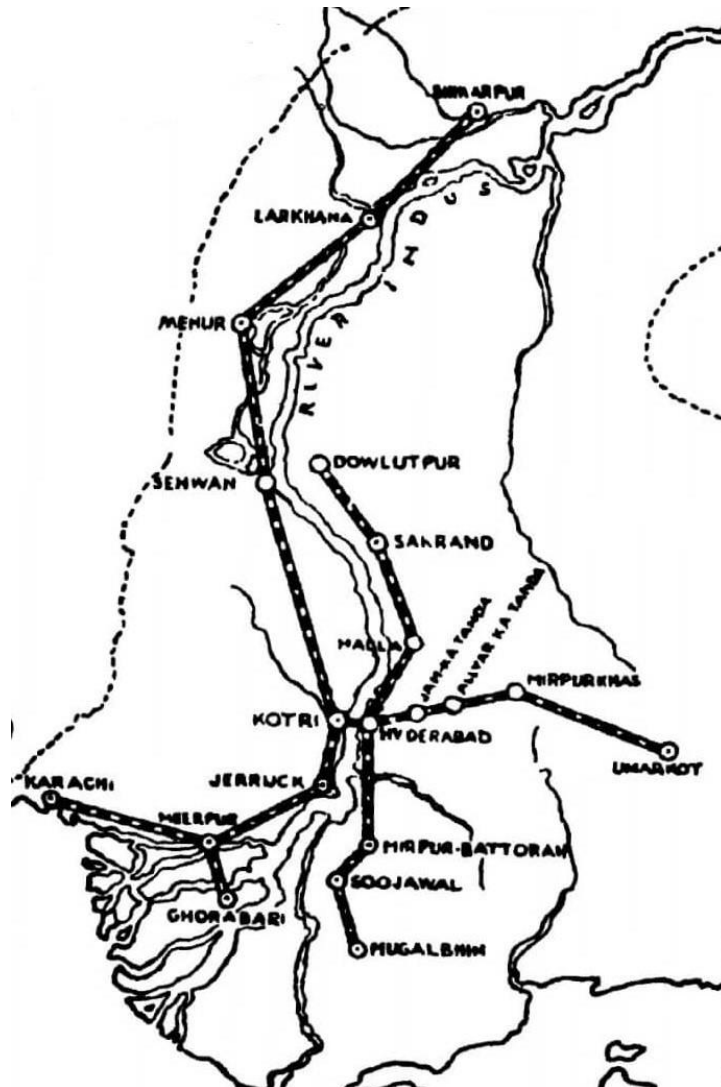
In 1851, according to the postal reforms, post lines were laid to connect all the districts of Sindh with the headquarters. The purpose of introducing these reforms was to improve the formal communication between the collectors of different districts. Sindh Commissioner Bartle Frere, who himself was a big fan of Sir Roland Hill's 'Penny Dock' scheme, introduced a cheap postal system in Sindh so that

²⁰ Jal Cooper, *Stamps of India* (Bombay: India's Stamp Journal, 1942), p.23

²¹ Cooper, *Ibid.*, p.22

everyone could benefit from it.²² Mr. Edward Les Coffey, a postmaster in Karachi, designed the first postage stamp known as the 'Sindh Dawk' and which was issued in three colors: white, blue, and red.²³ These stamps were introduced on July 1, 1852, but were abolished in September 1854, two years later.²⁴ Below picture shows the Sindh postage stamp was used in these postal lines of Sindh.

1851: Sindh Postal lines²⁵



- Communication by Roads:

²² Cooper, *Ibid.*, p.24

²³ Cooper, *Ibid.*, p.25

²⁴ Cooper, *Ibid.*, p.26

²⁵ Cooper, *Ibid.*, p.25

Originally the old roads of Karachi were designed for the animal like horse, camel and donkey drawn carriages.²⁶ At that time the traditional means of land transport of people and goods were hand carts and animal carts such as horse carts, camel carts, ox carts and donkey carts. These traditional means of transport are rare but still in use today. Rah-e-Bandar (currently location is Sindh Madara-tul-Islam) was built to connect the port of Karachi with *Kalifa-Sarai*.*²⁷

From the beginning of the British era, special attention was paid to trade and means of transportation. Old roads were repaired and new roads were built. In 1851, Frere wrote about the roads there: *"there was not a foot of metal road in the whole province, with the exception of the road to entrenched camp from Hyderabad about three or four miles; and this, being unmetalled and unwatered, was only kept in tolerable order by excluding from it all vehicles except gentlemen's carriages"*.²⁸

From Karachi to Kotri, then the same road was extended to Sehwan to promote inner city trade. At that time all the roads were smooth but not metalled. Then a metal road was built to connect the port with the city of Karachi which was named Bunder Road, known today as Muhammad Ali Jinnah Road.²⁹

- **Communication by Rail:**

The aim of the British administration was to connect Karachi with other areas by rail so that goods could be easily transported. Previously, only boats carried goods and passengers through the Indus River. In 1856, John Brunton, an engineer from Britain, was called in with experience in laying railway lines in Africa. Here John Brunton was tasked with laying the railway line from Karachi to Kotri.³⁰ He completed the survey in two years and finally began laying the line in 1859.

Under the British administration, the first railway line between Karachi to Kotri was established which began to function by 1861.³¹ In this way, commercial goods were easily brought from Karachi to Kotri through 110 miles of railway line and then loaded on camels and transported to other areas. Then the chairman of Punjab, Sindh and Delhi Railways, Mr. W.P. Andrew, had proposed to extend the railway line from Kotri to Multan, from Lahore to Peshawar and from Sukkur to Shikarpur, from Jacobabad to Dadu.³² So the laying of such railway lines not only facilitated the transfer of commercial and military equipment to the British but also the local and business people of Karachi benefited themselves from this facility.

²⁶ Yasmeen Cheema, *The Historical Quarters of Karachi* (Karachi: UOP, 2007), p.11

**Kalifa-Sarai* was a terminal for camel caravans located in the southern limits of Karachi port.

²⁷ Class of 95-2000 NED UET DAP, *Lea Market and its Environs* (Karachi; NED University, Department of Architecture and Planning, 1999)

²⁸ Martineau, *Life, I*, p.106

²⁹ CISR, File No. 240, pp. 87-100; "Report of the Sub-Committee Regarding the Roads and Aqueducts to the Bunder of Kurrachee", dated June 10, 1851.

³⁰ J. Forrest. Brunton, "Karachi" *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Vol.61, No.3148 (March 21, 1913), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41340573> (accessed April 13, 2020), p.477

³¹ Rutomji, 1952, p.40

³² A LETTER HIS GEAOE THE DUKE OE ARGYLL, K.T. (SECRETARY OE STATE FOR INDIA IN COUNCIL), by W.P. Andrew, pg 4, 1869)

- **Communication by Water:**

With the construction of roads and bridges up to the port and laying of railway line, the port of Karachi was directly connected to the northern areas and thus Karachi had connected to Central Asian countries as well as London and European markets by water. Basically, Karachi relied on the Indus for trade links and trade goods were transported by boat. In 1843, two steamers called “Planet” and “Satellite” were operated on a commercial basis in the Indus River under the auspices of the East India Company.³³ The primary purpose of these streamers was strategic, but in 1852, the mail service between Karachi to Multan was also delivered by these fleets.³⁴ Commercial goods from these ships were safely delivered to the destination in a short time.

After the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Karachi became India's nearest port to Britain, boosting the economy abruptly.³⁵ Punjab and Sindh merchandise had access to European markets and European merchandise had access to Punjab and Sindh markets. As a result, the volume of imports and exports at the port of Karachi increased and by 1905, Karachi had become an international center for the export of wheat.

More than anything else, the improvement of the harbour and the construction of the railway brought Karachi into the industrial age. The pace of life changed. The railway served the harbour where it had railways sidings and lifted goods for up country---- the city of Karachi had already begun to take shape by this time. The old town... continued to be the heart of traditional and ‘native’ trade.³⁶

Along with the construction and development of roads, railways and waterways, the British also introduced European-style tram transport to the people of Karachi for transportation within the city. The history of trams in Karachi spans 90 years, from 1885 to 1975.³⁷ The tram was sometimes driven by steam power and sometimes by horses. There were two types of trams, one storey and two storey. These trams were very popular among the people.

Karachi also faced problems during the British rule like water supply and drainage, epidemics, and sanitation etc. The Conservancy Board was set up in 1846 to deal with these problems, and then with the departure of Napier, it became inactive. Frere had reactivated it during his tenure as commissioner by renaming it Karachi Municipal Cooperation. In 1873, the British administration assigned Engineer James Strachan to the Karachi Municipality to deal with these problems. As the Chief Engineer and Secretary of the Karachi Municipality, he provided telephone services to the people of Karachi, built hospitals, colleges, markets, roads and installed separate pipes for clean water supply and sewerage.

³³ E. H. Aitken, *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind*. (Karachi: Merchantile Steam Press, 1907), p.354

³⁴ Ibid., p.354

³⁵ Hassan, Op.cit.,p.18

³⁶ Khuhro, Op.cit.,p.43

³⁷ Usman damohi, *Karachi Tareekh kay aneinay mein (Karachi in the History of Mirror*. (Karachi: Raheel Publications, 2013), p.273

Institutions established during the British rule, such as the Karachi Port Trust, Sindh Railway, Karachi Municipality and Karachi Chamber of Commerce played a significant role in the development of Karachi. Although from the time of Kalhora and Talpur rule, Karachi was in the eyes of the British from a defense and trade point of view. Therefore, they also paid attention to its construction and development, which benefited the fishermen, sailors and traders there and in fact the reason for the rise of the Karachi population was that people were getting business and work here. Agricultural commodities and domestic products of Punjab and Sindh were exported from Karachi port. Thus land and water or sea routes changed the destiny of not only Karachi but also Punjab and Sindh.

In a nutshell, it was during the British rule when Karachi began to rise. Its geographical importance, waterways, roads and railway line converted this fishing town into a modern city. There is no doubt that if natural resources are available, communication systems are the key to socio-economic development.

➤ **Conclusion:**

The city of Thatta declined with the closure of Laharibandar and the port of Karachi emerged as an alternate. Karachi was an important trade center between India, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. Karachi as a taxpayer was under the control of Iran and Afghans, and was recaptured by Talpur in 1797. From the very beginning, the British were interested in maintaining trade relations with Sindh. Eventually British supremacy was established at the coastal port of Karachi. There were two main reasons for conquering Karachi

- First they determined its importance through wealth
- The second was to strategically protect British India from the threat of invasion from the northwest.

The British had set up a trading post in Karachi ostensibly for trade, but its hidden purpose was to occupy Afghanistan and Karachi, in view of defensive and commercial importance. The British made friendly treaties with the Talpur Mirs and established trading posts. British tourists such as T.G. Carlisle, Richard Burton's statements show that Karachi had neither facilities as a port nor as a city. The merchants here also settled the city within the walls, but they remained socially, economically and communicably backward, while their own economy also depended on the port. After the occupation, the British administration took an interest in the development of Karachi and made it one of the modern ports of the subcontinent. As a result, there were more economic opportunities and the population grew.

During the colonial era, the city emerged as a port and commercial center. During British Rule, it became a clean and modern city, because at that time Europe had entered the industrial age. So they had experience in town planning. To meet the needs of the citizens and to solve their problems, they also set up an institution of Karachi Municipality. This institution had played an important role in the construction and development of Karachi. So, in the British era, this fishing town had the status of a city of lights.

Karachi, during British Raj, gained recognition at international level. The canal system opened new ways to trade bringing Europe closer to the subcontinent. Hence British and Karachi commenced trade getting benefits for a long period. Subsequently, land and sea routes played a key role in the economic and social development of Karachi by establishing trade and business links with other countries through modern communication systems. Directly and indirectly the socio-economic and communication development of Karachi and the emergence of its port in the world markets, all credit goes to the British administration.

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