The town Suryapura (modern Surat) (21°12’N; 75°52’E) is situated on the east and southeast bank of river Tapi where its course swears suddenly from south-east to south-west. It was one of the most important ports of Gujarat during the medieaval period. The origin of the name of Surat occurs in the early Jain and Hindu literature as Suryapura. It is interesting to note that Suryapur, is the pauranic name for Surat, Rander (corrupted form of Rannadevi, the consort of Surya) Tapti (Tapi river) being the daughter of Surya and Asvinikumar ghat, named after Asvinikumaras are associated with the family of Surya (Suryaparivar).

The earliest mention of this area of Surat is found in the Maitraka Copper-plate wherein it is referred to as Kantargrama Visaya - the head quarter of the area (district). Perhaps Kantargrama could be one of the 116 villages of Karmanya Ahar (modern Kamreja). Thus Kantargrama was an early historic settlement which developed into a township during c.AD 8th-9th century. And during the time of Chalukyas, Surat (pauranic Suryapura) grew up as an important port-town. Evidently several inscribed Jain literature and images of the Tirthankaras indicate medieval township located along the river Tapi at Surat.
Arab geographers Al-Istakhari, Haukal and Al-Idrusi mentioned it as Surbaya which was identified by Elliot as Surat. The earliest evidence regarding Surat is found in an inscription of VS.1215(1159AD) on an icon of Magarswami temple at Talavani pole, Nanavat, Surat. Second inscription of VS.1235(1179AD) on a Jain icon of Digambar Jain temple at Khapatiya chakla was found. Third inscription of VS.1315(1259AD) is found on an icon of Mulanayak Adinath Swami in Digambar Jain temple. Fourth inscription of VS 1392 (1336AD) is found at Parsvanath temple at Nagarsheth-ni pole, Surat. From these references, the growth of Surat as a small habitation goes back to later part of 11th century AD to the beginning of 12th century AD. First fort of bricks was constructed by deputed administrator Khudavant Khan (1540-1541 AD) at Surat. Fort II (called as Shahar panah) was erected in 1664 AD by the order of Aurengzeeb. Fort III was built in 1715 AD by Hyder Kuli khan.

TOPOGRAPHY

Surat is situated on the cutting side of the meander of Tapi downstream from Rander. It occupies bend (crescent), starting from Katarpore gate (ancient Kantara-grama area) along the bank till almost the end of the bend near Nanpura on the South. This area is the combination of low lands and high prominences developed by the river as well as human action. The main high area is marked in the mugalsara and the fort area. It begins from Mulla Khadaki in the north and ends near Makai pul in the south. This is a narrow strip about 0.75km long and 300ms broad at some places. They are broken up by a few spots which are relatively high, and are the tekro of sonifalia, parts of Gopipura, Vadifalia, Lalgate, Ruwala-no-tekro, parts of Begampura, cliff area of the river in Nanpura, as well as the
old embankment of Gopi talav. These are surrounded by low-lying areas. On the north, the areas of Dhastipura, Rampura, Haripura, Saiyedpura and Mahidharpura constitute the low-lying area with a Khadi outside fort no.2 (Saharpanah) and Fatak gate. On the south low-lying areas are traced in Makaipul Khadi, Ruderpura, Navsari bazar, Sagarampura, Nanpura and Zampa Bazar area. These low lying areas seem to be originally water courses that drained the monsoon water from the consequently formed nalas developed in the inland plain. A look at the wider indicates that the nalas developed near Varacha and Kankra khadi towards Udhna have a watershed of about a kilometer. When the main river is in high spate, the nalas, coalesces and sheet of water covering large parts of the plain moves to the sea. This causes much damage to life, houses and other property. Heavy silt is also deposited. These topographical feature have controlled the growth of Surat as follows; a) The river meander front on the cutting side has developed port on one side and flood damage and silt deposit on the other. b) Highland areas were safer place for habitation and hence Nanavat, Mogalsarai, Sahpora, Gopipura were the first developed areas in Surat. c) The low-lying areas helped to develop tanks and ponds and moat around fortwall. In dry season these areas helped to develop markets and habitation.

**TOPONOMY**

There are four entrances or ovaras to the own from the river side. Lati or Mulla Khadki, Gujari indicate markets while Furja indicates toll station. Raja ovara indicates Royal Ghat. Nanavat is bankers zone in market area and Mugalsarai means Mughal inn for muslim pilgrims. Surat has a number of markets in and around it. These are indicated by names like Kelapith, Macchlipith, Kinari bazar, Chowk bazar etc. Toponomical facts and
historical records and archaeological evidences provided information about old urban Surat. Malek Gopi, who was noble of Surat, at his time developed the area of Gopi pura and built Gopi Talav, Gola, Pancholi, Vora, Tapodhans, Chhipa, Sanghadia, Parsi, Potter, Dakkanis, Luhars, Kaysthas, Oswals etc. were living as indicated by the place names. Area of tamarind plants and garden plot indicated by place names, Amliran and Vadifalia. The term falia indicates small street. Panini Bhit indicates low-lying area. Dhastipura, Rampura, Haripura, Mahidharpura, Sagarampura, Manpura are the names of suburbs owing the suffix "pura". They are named after the Hindus, Muslims and Parsis. Macchi, Pakhali, Kumbhar, Luhar, Hajam, Ghia, Modi, Hatadia, Anavils, Dhamna, Momna, Ghanchi, Navghadias, Dalia, Rana, Gola, Pathan, Purabia, Khatri, Chhipa, Dhobi, Maniar, Panjarigara, Dudhara, Handidhoya, Dabgar, Pasagia, Nagori, Masalachi, Angadia and other groups that have left their marks on the place names. These are small professional service class people. The other place names in the area are indicative of uneven ground with the terms. Tekro, Khadi, Talav etc. the names of trees, gardens, etc indicate the suburban nature of these areas.

Three sculptures were discovered from Rajarajeswara temple on Raja ovara. One was marble memorial stone of about 13th century AD. Another is a Kichaka capital. Other Jain images, inscriptions and their examination seem that they belong to the Solanki or Chalukyan period. The combined evidence of these sculptures indicate the existence of a settlement on the cliff of Surat in the 13th century AD. The archaeological remains help to furnish that there was earliest settlement in linear pattern before 13th century AD on the cliff of Surat, hence history of Surat could be traced back to
Maitrak-Chalukyan period of Gujarat. The downfall of the Chalukyan and the rise of the Sultans brought new elements to this area.

TOWN PLANNING

The growth of Surat as a small habitation goes back to early historic Kantargrama to the beginning of 12th century AD can be assumed from archaeological evidence. It was probably a small village in linear pattern along with Tapi river bank. Nanavat area became the nucleus of international trade and ring around it, specially in south, south east and east side was the market zone, which was the center of trade, which is resembling a township. The town began changing from linear to radial pattern. And the meander of Tapi allowed crescentic-Karmuka growth of the townscape.

Fort I: The first fort was constructed with burnt bricks by Khudavant Khan in 1540-41AD in the rule of Mahmud III(1539-1554AD). The small fort was 200x200mts with wall about 7mts in height and was strengthened by tapered bastions at each corner. Once rampart was equipped with heavy cannons which commanded the river, a deep moat about 20 m broad was constructed to protect the fort from sudden attacks. This fort had two gates. The eastern side gate was featured by a draw bridge while second gate is on the river side.

Fort II (Shahar Panah): This second fort was named as “Shahar Panah”. Areas like Gopipura, Nanavat, Ranitalav, Khapati chakla, Wadi falia, Bade Khan chakla, Khadi were covered by ancient fort wall and this town was controlled by the feudatory chief of an unknown Decan ruler. This fort was ruined along with time. Surat town was captured by muslim rulers and was raided and devasted by Maratha ruler Shivaji in 1660 AD. Mughal king
Aurangazeb ordered for building of fortification and for covering an area of 174 hectares of lands. This second fort was named as “Shahar panah”. It covered an area from river Burhanpuri to Bhagol on in the east-west and from the tomb of Idrus to Makkai pul on the north-south.

The fort was featured by 12 gates; 1) Variavi gate (in North), 2) Saiyed puri gate (east), 3) Burhanpuri gate (east), 4) Navsari gate (south), 5) Majura gate (South), 6) Makkai gate (south-west), 7) Badshah gate (south-west), 8) Dakka Ovara gate (along the bank of river), 9) Furja Ovara gate (along the bank of river), 10) Raja Ovara gate (along the bank of the river), 11) Gujari Ovara gate (along the bank of the river), 12) Lati Ovara gate (along the bank of river).

Gates were named after the areas which were famous for trade and commerce, area of religious importance or an important place in which direction of the gate faced. All gates are now completely ruined and only the name survived. (Figure: 49)

**Fort III (Aalam Panah):** To prevent the attacks of the Maratha looters, covering suburb area a third fort wall was built during Mughal King Aurangzeb’s reign (1707AD). Some sconce were built and were equipped with cannon. Area covered by this fort was 736 hectares. Exploration revealed that the fort has been partly covered by the silt of the river Tapi. The walls are now ruined, the fort wall near river side might have been ruined by flood. This was indicated by remains of fort wall lying on the river bed. There were 11 gates to the third fort. 1) Variavi gate(north), 2) Katarpor gate (north), 3) Laldarwaja (north-east), 4) Delhi gate (east), 5) Saragate (east),
SURYAPUR: (SURAT)

VAR AVI DARWAJA
KATAPOR DARWAJA
LAI DARWAJA
DELHI DARWAJA
SARA DARWAJA
S AL A BAT PURA DARWAJA
V I AN DARWAJA

8 NAVASARI DARWAJA
9 JAFARALI DARWAJA
10 MAJURA DARWAJA
11 ATHWA DARWAJA

FIG: 56

COURTESY: SURAT MUNICIPAL CORPORATION.

Nanpura, Sagrampura, Rustampura, Gopitalav, Salabatpura, Mahidharpura, Haripura, Rughnathpura, Saiyedpura, Rampura areas were covered in fort no.3. The broad road which radiated from chowk bazar and terminated to the main gates fort line of Shahar panah (Fort II), when the fort line of Alam panah (Fort III) (Figure: 50) was built, the same roads were further extended to its gates. It was observed that some of the names of gates of the fort III remained same as found in the fort II. The map of Surat shows that one road starts from chowk bazar and moves towards north and is in correspondence with the Variavi and Katarpur gates. Another road starts from the same point and runs towards north-east through Chowk bazar and joins at Delhi darwaja, a branch of same road gets bifurcated at Delhi darwaja of fort II, and moves towards Sarai darwaja. From here, another road runs towards south and crosses the fort III at Athwa darwaja. All broad roads are of lateral pattern and convenient for traffic. The road pattern of Surat was spider web type. Inner peripheral road to the fort was very common.

The city functioned as a plight image centre and commercial port-town for dual function. Ovaras on river side were quite significant where the river water can be used. Gopi talav, Rani talav and Bhaga talav were the largest public lakes. Kelapith, Macchipith, Kinaribazar, Chowk bazar etc are the known markets. The term pith or bazar indicate markets and commercial places. The term "Nanavat" indicates banking and commercial place for
traders and merchants. Archaeological evidence, toponomical facts and historical records point to old Surat. From the standpoint of town planning and growth it could be noted that, 1) the earlier village was linear in pattern and ovaras. The ancient village was converted into commercial town. The areas covered in the town were Nanavat, Badekh'an chakla, Sanghadiawad, Gopipura, Wadifalia. Khapatiya chakla and Rani talav. 2) Nanavat became the nucleus of international trade and the ring around it in south, south east and east was its market zone. Nanavat, Shahpura and Mugalisarai were the main centers of habitation of traders, bankers and foreigners. The goods were coming from hinterland. 3) The roads in radial pattern generally radiate from the Chowk bazar. The road which runs parallel on the bank of river Tapi is crossed by a number of lanes which in one direction leads to the bank of river and in the other direction cuts through the part of the market area. 4) The first fort was built in 1540-41AD. The second fort Shahar panah was constructed around commercial town Suryapuri in 1660AD. The third fort was Alam panah, those suburbs which had developed beyond the fort II (Shahar panah) came to be incorporated into the main town by the protection of Fort III in 1707AD. 5) the town began by changing the road pattern from linear to a radial might have been influenced by topographical features of land and by the bend of the river Tapi. 6) Surat is approached by land route as well as river water so according to traditional script, it is termed as “Dronamukha”. Surat was a commercial town and port on river bank. Moreover, due to its bow-shaped development it is also known as “Karmukanagar”. 10 (Figure: 51)
REFERENCE


3. Indian Antiquary, Vol.XII, p.179. see also, Acharyya, G. Gujaratna Aithihasika Lekho, p.130.


9. Gujarat State Gazetteer, p.961