



The Early Trade Routes of Western Bharat Included Trading Across the Thar Desert also, Bhinmal, Barmer, Jaisalmer.
Global Long-distance Trades have been around since 3000 BCE

The 8 ancient trade routes that changed the face of our earth:
 1. Silk Route, 2. Spice Route, 3. Metal Route, 4. Horse & Tea Route, 5. Incense Route, 6. Amber (gems) Route, 7. Salt Route, 8. Trans Sahara Trade Route

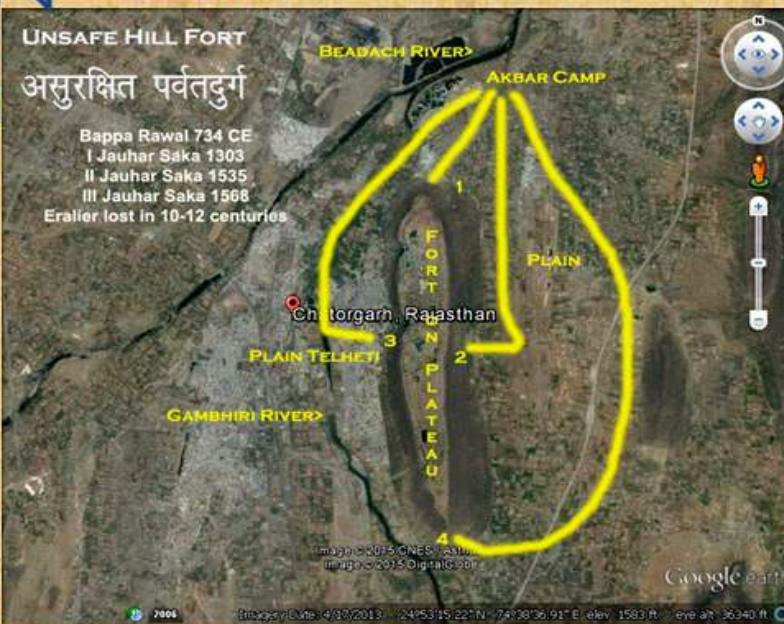


The Indus civilization's economy appears to have depended significantly on trade, which was facilitated by major advances in transport technology. The IVC may have been the first civilization to use wheeled transport. These advances may have included bullock carts that are identical to those seen throughout South Asia today, as well as boats.



VULNERABLE HILL-FORT=PARVAT-DURG
 Chittaudgadh provided psychological higher platform, BUT the space, water, & food resources were at the command of invaders, while the defenders were prisoners in their OWN citadel with limited space & resources! This resulted in three sieges of 1303, 1535, 1568 with resultant loss of life of tens of thousands of humans through the three Jauhars, Sakas, & Slaughters.

UDAIPUR IN GUHA-DURG
 Guha-Durg=Hill-encircled Valley with Vana-Durg (forest-fort) to its west-an ideal safe set-up for human habitation. Nagda, Ayad, Udaipur were all safe capitals for over 1000 years (since 566 CE), with NO history of Jauhar, Saka, & Slaughters



The Geoheritage Advantage of UDAIPUR

As per the ancient Indian scriptures (including Kautilya's *Arthashastra*) the forts have been classified into six major types (Ref, e-link below), three of the main ones are:

1. Guha-Durg- "...the living quarters are situated in a valley surrounded by high, impassable hills. The hills house a chain of outposts and signal towers connected by extensive defensive walls"...

2. Vun-Durg-Vana-Durg or Vrikshya-Durg-Forest-Fort "is characterized by a terrain being surrounded on all sides with a **dense, impassable forest** for over a distance of at least 4 *kroschas* (~15km)..."

The Girwa-Valley, an amphitheater valley of Aravalli Hill Range, in which Udaipur is located is typical *Guha-Durg* in addition to *Vana-Durg* at its west. These two natural defenses in a fertile valley that had adequate water supply, agriculture fields, forest and mineral resources (copper, iron, zinc, lead, silver metals and building materials) made this area ideally suitable for human habitation for thousands of years. Additionally, this area lay on an ancient **main trading route** from coastal Gujarat to Delhi & beyond to north and Ujjain and adjoining areas to east. Nagda and Ahaad/Ayad are ancient settlements of this terrain, which are more than 4000 years old as per archeological surveys. It was here that the first Rajah Guhaditya/Guhaditti/Guhil (566 CE) was born and he established his kingdom; he also started the Guhilot lineage of *Kshatriyas*, both these names are derived from *Guha-Durg* terrain! There is record of great wealth generation during the reigns of these kings, notably by Guhaditya's fifth descendant Rajah Shiladitya (Sambholi/Samoli inscription 646 CE. *Shila* in Sanskrit means rock,). With the generation of wealth, Shiladitya's grandson Kaalbhojaditya moved to an elevated seat of power at Chittaurgarh (चित्तौड़गढ़ Chittaudgadh) which was a Vindhyan plateau that dominated a flat fertile plain below it, which was drained by the perpetual rivers *Bedach and Gambhiri*. Kaalbhojaditya (734 CE) became the first Rawal and successfully defended the Arab attacks on Indian soil from the west, for which he earned the public admiration through the name "Bappa Rawal".

He now ruled from **3. Parvat-Durg-** "hill-fort refers to an elevated (flat) site with ramparts. Many small early hill forts were abandoned, in favor of safer location or with the larger ones being redeveloped at a later date..." Whenever Chittaurgarh was lost to enemies, the Guhilot Rawals returned to safer Girwa-valley-located Ayad town from where they still controlled the resource-rich *Guha & Vana Durg* areas of the kingdom. Seventeen Rawal ruled from Ayad during tenth through twelfth centuries (971-1172 CE). With the establishment of more powerful seats of power in India, Chittaurgarh suffered two major Jauhars, saka, and massacre in which tens of thousands of men, women, and children perished (1303 & 1535 CE), and the third one was to follow.

Having had a firsthand experience of the vulnerability of hill-fort Chittaurgarh and value of the *guha-vana durg* terrains, **Maharana Udai Singh laid the foundation of a new capital Udaipur on April 15, 1553** on the eastern shore of Pichola Lake away from the flood-prone Ayad town and at an elevated ridge that was protected by a strategic high hill Macchalamagra on which an artillery fortress

was established, now Eklinggadh. Maharana Udai Singh moved with his nobles and family from the vulnerable Chittaurgarh to Udaipur in the spring of 1559. He also constructed a defense dam (1559-1565) which, created Udaisagar Lake that blocked the "gap" in the 'ring of natural protective Aravalli Hills'. The decision of Maharana Udai Singh proved right when Mughal Emperor Akbar attacked Mewar (मेवाड़ Mewad) in 1567, first capturing the hill-fort Mandalgadh and reached the revered Chittaurgarh on 20 October 1567. After a well defended siege of four months, the defenders, who were 'prisoners in their own fort, while the enemy had access to spaces, water and infrastructure resources' had to come out of the fort, which resulted in the third jauhar, saka, & massacre of February 24, 1568. Earlier, Akbar sent Kuli Khan to capture or kill the Maharana at Udaipur but he could not cross beyond the *Guha Durg* into the Van-Durg at Gogunda where the Maharana was now based (leave alone the cavalry and artillery, Mughal infantry too could not cross the "impassable *Vana-Durg*"!) Maharana Pratap successfully continued his independence campaign from this terrain utilizing the resources of hilly area, the *maidani*-plain area was under Mughal control but the population had migrated out leaving a non-productive area in Mughal control. Annoyed at the failure of his generals to capture or kill Maharana Pratap who succeeded Maharana Udai Singh in 1572, Akbar himself attacked Udaipur in 1576, but he too failed to achieve his aim, though he captured Udaipur and renamed it "Mohammadabad", but people did not accept the new name, as was done by the people earlier in rejecting the name "Akbarabad" for Chittaurgarh in 1568! This should be appreciated in light of the fact that one of the holiest and oldest cities of India- Prayag (*teerthraj*-premier holy place & Kumbh Mela city), became Allahabad (इलाहाबाद) when Akbar captures it in 1583 and renamed it so! Further, the capital town of Fatehpur Sikri founded by Akbar in 1569, could NOT be sustained because of its faulty location and even with the enormous Mughal resources at its command the city had to be abandoned in 1585.

Maharana Pratap establishing a new capital at Chavand (1585) in a *Guha-Vana-Durg* area that additionally had an iron ore deposits (Nathara-ki-Pal). Following the Shahzada Khurram and Kr. Karan Singh brokered Mewad-Mughal Treaty of 1615, Maharana Amar Singh-I returned to Udaipur, which he started strengthening by starting the construction of the city-wall but it was put off in preference to other more pressing constructions. Udaipur continued to thrive gradually and Maharana Amar Singh-II (r: 1672 -1710) resumed the works of ~9-km construction of city-wall around Udaipur with 12 gates and small fortresses on small hillocks nearby. The vulnerable east was further protected by a moat-all these were finally completed by Maharana Sangram Singh-II in 1733. This second-line of man-made defense system served its purpose when in early 1769 the Maratha general Mahadji Scindia (महादजी सिन्धिया 1730-1794) attacked Udaipur and laid unsuccessful siege for six months. The City Palace Complex has its own strong defense-wall and four main gates, to the west, the city as well as the Raajmahal are protected by the Lake Pichola and impassable forested hill further to its west.

Cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forts_in_India , <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillfort>

