

## Historical information about Karachi

An interesting and informative article being posted for punters. Read on

The book "Sindh Ja Samoondi" by Gul Hassan Kalmatti

From the pages of history:-

Some people believe that Karachi's development took place after 1947. Here are some facts about Karachi & it's history!

Karachi Port Trust	1857
Karachi Chamber of Commerce	1860
Karachi Airport	1924
Karachi Railway St.	1898
NED Eng College	1923
Dow Med College	1945
Sindh Madrisat ul Islam	1885
DJ Science College	1887
NGV High School	1855
St. Patrick High Sch	1861
St Joseph's Convent School, Karachi	1861
Karachi Grammar	1847
St. Paul's High Sch.	1940
SM Law Collage	1947
SM Science College	1943
Civil Hospital	1888
Jinnah Hospital	1930
Karachi Municipal Corporation	1927
Karachi Municipal Commission	1852
KEISC	1913
Sindh high court.	1923
Sindh assembly bldg	1940
Sindh Club	1871
S. Governor House	1843
Civil Hospital Karachi	1898
Karachi Zoo	1878
Victoria Museum (Supreme Court)	1887
Karachi Gymkhana	1886
Hindu gymkhana	1925
Star Cinema	1917
Empress Market	1884
Lea Market	1927
Karachi Boat Club	1881
Mereweather Tower	1884
Karachi Race Course	1913
Fisherman's Coop S.	1945

Sharing the details of his research, Kalmatti said that Bath Island was an island, which was 30 feet above sea level and up to 1935, sea water used to touch its western side. "People of Karachi used to visit this place for swimming. There were remains of an ancient city on this island" he said. About Boat Basin, he said, "It was established in 1912 and the area was originally spread over 21 acres. It used to be a pond for sailing and motor boats, and had four piers."

About Clifton, the writer said that people in earlier days used to call Clifton by its old name 'Mahadev' because of the Mahadev Rataneshwar Temple. Another name in common use was 'Hawa Bunder'. "It was an island connected to the city through a wooden bridge," he said adding that it was named Clifton in British Era.

In his book, Kalmatti has referred to two different theories about this name. He quoted a book 'Kurrachee: Past, Present and Future', written by Alexander F Baillie and said, "The place was named after birth place of English General Charles Napier who belonged to Clifton that is in UK." Referring to his research he said, "I believe it was named after Mr. Clifton who was an assistant collector in the colonial period."

The book said that Gizri was once famous owing to evidence of fish. Its original name is derived from 'Gishri', a kind of fish found in salty waters. The name was changed to Gisri then Gizri. The book talked about how original names of places and areas of Karachi have been changed. It said that in 1967 Mauripur Airport was renamed to Masroor Base after a pilot who had died in a plane crash.

Similarly, Lalu Khet was renamed to Liaquatabad, Banghoria Goth to Azizabad, Molri to Safari Park, and Pipri Bander to Port Qasim.

Regarding Baba Island and Bhit Island, Kalmatti said that there have been settlements on these islands for more than 400 years. "The Katchi community, who are Sindhi speaking and fishermen, and call themselves Morrio Pota, live here. Many of them later moved to Shams Pir and other coastal areas of Karachi," He said adding that head of Katchi is called Patel and chief of Sindhi fishermen is called Jamote."

In his book, Kalmatti referring to Sindh Gazette, mentioned the hurricane cyclone that devastated Karachi in 1902. "Before 1902, the residents of Karachi used to boast that their city is out of the way of tornadoes and hurricanes. But that came to an end in 1902 with two consecutive storms that year. The first storm was on May 13 at 8am that had devastated entire Karachi and killed 225 people. The second hurricane occurred on June 13 with winds and high tides that had become more intense," the book said while quoting AH Atkin's report published in 1907.