

## A Survey of Mughal Caravanserais in Eastern Punjab (India)

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### Abstract

In the Mughal period, there was a large flow of people and goods along the Agra- Lahore Highway. To support the transit along the Mughal route, there were few infrastructure built up along the roadways like kos-minars, bridges, caravanserai, boali and tanks. These caravanserais served as places for short term accommodation, rest and security for the caravans including travelers, traders and pack animals. These walled, arcaded buildings played an important point of interaction, exchange and worship along networks of travel. We know from Jahangir's memoirs that on his accession to the throne, he ordered the caravanserai at regular intervals along the major roads of his reign. As the Agra- Lahore Highway was an important route and it passed through present Haryana and Punjab (East & West). It is not surprising to find some of the fine specimens of these caravanserais in this region of the Mughal period. Although these serais are not as splendid buildings as that of Fatehpur Sikri or Taj mahal, still its study is significant to understand the regional differences in the Mughal architecture. This research paper focuses on Mughal caravanserais from eastern Punjab (India) along the Badshahi Sadak from Agra to Lahore. Ruins of some interesting serais are still traceable in parts of ancient Mughal road of Eastern Punjab. The paper examines how these caravanserais were structured and will study some interesting aspects of Mughal caravanserais of the above mentioned part of the route.

**Key Words:** *Mughal, architecture, caravanserai, Punjab, Agra-Lahore Highway, Road transport*

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