

# Whose Animals? Activities of Slaughterhouses in Agra Region under Colonial Rule (1900-1950)

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## ABSTRACT

Slaughterhouses are the main raw material source of Leather industry. The leather is a hide or skin prepared from the pelts of domestic and wild animals by processing with either the bark or fruits of certain trees and shrubs, or some mineral salt, or some chemicals process. These agents are called tanning material. Slaughterhouses provide raw hides and skins to produce leather in the leather industry. Agra slaughterhouses played a vital role in the development of leather industry in United Provinces with their valuable raw material. Govt. of United provinces sanctioned and improved many slaughterhouses in Agra region for development of leather industry in this important province. This paper explores the work with the condition of animals in colonial India and tells about the history of the slaughterhouses in Agra. This paper shows the problems of colonial governments in handling the unsatisfactory condition of slaughterhouses and the uncivilized practice of flaying animals. This paper explores how the animal rather than man became a crucial agent in the colonial government in the history of Agra. This paper refocused on the laws and bye-laws were made by the colonial government in the reference of Agra slaughterhouses and improving the activities occurred in slaughterhouses. This paper argues that whose animals were slaughtered in the slaughterhouses or in other words who gave the authority to slaughter such of animals for human consumption as a food.

## 1. Introduction

A slaughterhouse is a place where the animals are slaughtered in a civilized method for the consumption of human being as a food. Slaughterhouses that process meat not intended for human consumption are sometimes referred to that area of a slaughterhouse where carcasses unfit for human consumption are rendered down to produce useful materials such as glue, meat, hides, etc.<sup>i</sup> Slaughtering animals have a large number of problems like logistical, animal welfare problems, public health requirements, religious problems, etc. Some of Animal welfare societies raised concerns about the method of transport, preparation, herding and slaughtering in slaughterhouses etc. After slaughtering, some parts of an animal are a waste and the remaining parts of the animal is turned into animal products such as leather products, soaps, candles, and glue etc. But in the modern period, the slaughter of animals generally took place in an unsystematic and unregulated manner in a diverse place.<sup>ii</sup>

## 2. Slaughterhouses in India

The slaughtering of animals in slaughterhouses in India was centuries old. These slaughterhouses were primarily catering to the domestic market. Exporters had been also procuring the meat from some of these municipal slaughterhouses. Most of these slaughterhouses are very old and have outlived their utility. The slaughterhouses lack essential amenities such as water, light, drainage, lairage, holding pens, etc. The Government felt the need to improve and modernize the conditions of slaughterhouses catering to exports.<sup>iii</sup> The first slaughterhouse in India was built in Calcutta in 1760 by Robert Clive.<sup>iv</sup> In the British period, the British had to improve the conditions of the slaughterhouse and were

made many of laws and byelaws regarding the improvement of slaughterhouse and meat trade factories. The butchers who hereditary occupation with the slaughtering of animals mostly from the Muslim community such as qassab, Qureshi, etc, because the religion Islam gave the authority to the Muslims for slaughtered some of short-listed animal and birds to consume as a food. So, the importance of slaughterhouses is fulfilling the need of a hygienic place for slaughtering the animal. There were many of slaughterhouses in different regions of India established by the colonial government. According to the census of 1951, livestock population increased by 62% and human population increased by 134% but the number of authorized slaughterhouses has no increased to meet the demand for meat production. At present time, there are 2702 slaughterhouses in the country, which are recognized or authorized by local bodies or Government bodies.<sup>v</sup>

## 3. Slaughterhouses in Agra

There were approximately 9 slaughterhouses in Agra district till 1956, in which 4 small slaughterhouses for the slaughtering of goats and sheep and there was a big slaughterhouse at Basai, *Fatehabad* road, Agra for the slaughtering of Cattle and some of the other slaughterhouses were based on improved method. All of these slaughterhouses had maintained registers were being compiled regularly. The slaughterhouses were meeting his demand of animals from the important cattle fairs, *Bateshwar* Cattle Fair and *Chitpur* Cattle Fair were held in Agra district in every year.<sup>vi</sup> Some of the slaughterhouses are as given below:

Table 1 (Slaughterhouses in Agra Region)

S. no.	District	Pargana	Mauza	Area	For What Purpose	Estd. year	Cost Of Land	Plot No.
1.	Agra	Etmadpur	Khandauli	NA	For slaughtering of big animals such as cattle	1918	NA	NA
2.	Agra	Shahdara	JharnaNala	NA	For slaughtering of small animals such as goat and sheep	1920	NA	NA
3.	Agra	Kiroali	Achhnera	0.681 of an acre	For slaughtering of small animals such as goat and sheep	1921	Rs 51/-	NA
4.	Etah (Agra)	Etah	Village Shujawalpur	NA	For slaughtering of big animals such as cattle	1933	NA	214
5.	Etah (Agra)	Azam Nagar	Aliganj	0.30 of an acre	For slaughtering of small animals such as goat and sheep	1937	NA	NA
6.	Agra	Agra	Village Khataina, Mohalla Alamganj	60 square yard	For slaughtering of small animals such as goat and sheep	1949	Rs. 104/-	NA
7.	Agra	Agra	Village Basai	4.40 acres	For slaughtering of small animals such as goat and sheep	1954	Rs. 5100/-	NA
8.	Agra	Firozabad	Village Rasulpur	2 bighas and 2 biswas	For slaughtering of small animals such as goat and sheep	1955	NA	211 & 212

Source: UPRA, Agra, File no. 1/42-43, 19/35-36, 7/32-33, 21/20-21, 24/53-54, 28/52-53 & Box no. 39, 59, 70, 96, 139, 128 respectively.

#### 4. Burma Meat Trade Factory in Agra

The colonial government has acquired a land for the Burma Meat Trade factory at Agra in 1889.<sup>vii</sup> The butcher of Agra city had been engaged in supplying the dry meat to Burma for about 25 years. Burmese people were liked the meat very much and were known for eating all kinds of preserved meat. Burmese was requested to his supplier who lived in Calcutta and engaged in meat trade that to supplied the dry meat for him.<sup>viii</sup> So, the Burmese were engaged in trade with Agra meat trade factory.

The first installment of meat that was imported into Burma was sent from Agra only a few mounds of dry cattle's and goat's meat. After that, the Calcutta's merchant was asked to the butcher of Agra to start a regular supply of dry meat of goat and cattle. In Agra, *Dholikhar* was the place where the trade was carried out and they used for slaughtering animals in the municipal slaughterhouse and for dry the meat in the Barah (the place where animals kept) erected for the purpose all around the slaughterhouse. These slaughterhouses had no proper arrangements for the disposal of bones and offal, within a few days that place became revoltingly unsanitary or dirty place. The municipal board of Agra had to take action to stop this nuisance trade in 1891. But the trade was continued and then, the board has shifted that slaughterhouse from *Dholikhar* to *Khairadi Tola* near Red fort's Amarsingh gate, but the cantonment authority objected and had it removed from *Khairadi Tola* to *Bhonda Gasoon* and that remained for nearly 10 years.<sup>ix</sup>

After 10 years, Board has again shifted that slaughterhouse from *Bhonda Gasoon* to Jharna Nala (Shahdara) at Agra in 1901 for the needs of the butcher to observed ordinary sanitary. The municipal board had employed a permanent staff to look after the sanitation of the place in which the butcher had to pay a license fee of Rs 120/- per annum for each of 13 enclosures made by the board. In 1901-02, the average animals slaughtered from September to March about 58.4 animals daily and from April to August 13.7 animals daily.<sup>x</sup> This trade was at a cheaper rate only for the Burma trade and was not allowed to go meat into the Agra city for human consumption.

But such of the wasting substances (except meat) were used for manufacturing. The blood meal was the most important and valuable organic manure and contains over 12% Nitrogen, 0.5 to 1% Phosphoric acid and 0.4 to 0.5% Potash. Besides, blood meal was easily becoming quickly available to crops. The manure could be used under all soil conditions should apply before sowing at the rate of 2 to 5 mound per acre. The Department of Agriculture has purchased the entire stock of blood meal prepared by local bodies in UP at the rate of Rs 6/8/- per mounds exclusive of the cost of gunny bags and would arrange for its supply to the cultivator's field.<sup>xi</sup> Some of the other substances for general need of the people of Agra city are as follow:

Table 2 (Some of other substances manufactured from animal kingdom products)

S. no.	Manufactured	Different types of other substances
1.	From Blood	Manure, a large quantity of blood was boiled and sent to Bombay for making paints, etc.
2.	From Flesh	Tallow, refuse of tallow was used for burning purpose, oil used for human consumption and another purpose, etc.
3.	From Hides or Skins	Leather, glue, drum, kuppas, gelatin, scale pans, etc.
4.	From Horns	Pipe, stems, buttons, comb, glue, etc.
5.	From Hoof	Glue, etc.
6.	From Bones	Knife, handles, buttons, glue, manure, fuel, a kind of varnish, animal charcoal, etc.
7.	From Gut	Bows of cotton cleaners and strings or cords for country trading, gold beaters skin, etc.

8.	From Gland	Net, etc.
9.	From Offal	Manure, etc.

Source: UPRA, Agra, File no. 12/1903, Box no. 180, pp. 5-6.

Some of other meat trade factories were established in Agra is as given below:

**Table 3 (Meat trade factories established in Agra)**

S. no.	District	Pargana	Mauza	Area	For what purpose	Estd. Year	Cost of land	Plot no.
1.	Agra	Idgah (Agra)	Village Bhogipura	12 biswas	Wense's bone mill	1930	Rs 86/14 A/- per bigha	NA
2.	Agra	Agra	Village Bodla (near Dargah Shah Nabi Kareem)	25 ½ bighas	Meat dehydration factory	1945	Rs 185/14 A/- per bigha	536
3.	Agra	Agra	Village Bodla	25 bighas 10 biswas	Goat meat dehydration factory	1946	Rs 300/9 A/- per bigha	887

Source: UPRA, Agra, File no. 4/45-46, 2 (2)/27-28, Misc./57-58 & Box no. 78, 109, 189 respectively.

### 5. Jharna Nala slaughterhouse in Agra

In 1920, the municipal board was made the new rules and regulation for the new slaughterhouse with modern techniques at Jharna Nala, Shahdara in Agra. The board was permitted these rules and regulation with force to all of the butchers who used slaughterhouse for slaughtering animals in a hygienic place.

Agra municipal board was made some model bye-laws for the regulation and inspection of slaughterhouses under section 298 (d) and (J) (d) are as given below within the points.<sup>xii</sup>

#### 1. Inspection of animals for slaughter<sup>1</sup>

1. No animals could be slaughtered before inspecting by an officer appointed in this behalf.

2. The board had given public notice of the time and place where at inspection of cattle intended for slaughter in the municipal slaughterhouse were held.

3. Before slaughtering, animals were strictly inspected that it was fit for use as human food, it could not be diseased or advanced in pregnancy, it could not be in milch or the young of any animal in milch and it could not be accidental.

4. When the officer was satisfied that he was filled up under his signature columns 1 to 6 of a pass with its counterfoil in form A appended to these bye-laws and gave it to the person producing the animal for inspection and he marked on the animal's head, hair or skin with a municipal soul or branded with a municipal board might be prescribed.

5. If any animal was found with a contagious disease, it could be seized or removal to the cattle infirmary for treatment.

6. If any animal was found in a dying condition, it could be disposed of immediately in such a manner.

#### 2. Officer Incharge of slaughterhouse<sup>2</sup>

1. A municipal officer should be on duty at the slaughterhouse throughout the hours prescribed for slaughter and such officer should be deemed to be the officer incharge of the slaughterhouse.

2. The officer incharge should keep up a daily register showing the number and description of an animal slaughtered at the slaughterhouse.

### 3. Slaughterhouse fees<sup>3</sup>

1. Every butcher who was using the slaughterhouse should pay fees at the following rates:

- Bullocks and cows 8 annas per head
- Buffaloes 8 annas per head
- Goat, sheep, kids, and lambs 4 annas per head
- Horned cattle 6 annas per head

2. After paying the fees, the butcher got a receipt.

3. On that receipt, the officer should fill up a ticket and counterfoil on form 8 attached to these byelaws and hand the former with the coupon attached to the person who paid the fee.

4. The holder of a ticket should be produced the ticket when called upon to do so by the Health officer for inspection.

### 4. At the slaughterhouse<sup>4</sup>

1. The pass was covered in form A as prescribed in byelaws above and unless the fees prescribed in byelaw had been paid. The pass might be presented at the slaughterhouse within three days at the time issued, after that, no animal should be admitted and no person should bring any animal, into the slaughterhouse.

2. If any animal did not come in the time period as prescribed in the past, it should be taken a fresh pass.

3. The officer incharge should be received the pass, and if it was in order and the fee prescribed in byelaw above had been paid, he should allow the animal covered thereby admission into the slaughterhouse, filling up columns 7 to 9 of the pass. The passes should be dealt with in such manner as the board might be direct.

4. An only permitted person could be entered in the slaughterhouse premises during the process of slaughtering, skinning, or cutting up the carcasses. The carcasses of a large animal could not be allowed to be cut in more than 10 pieces.

5. That person should not be allowed to enter the slaughterhouse premises who had affected with leprosy or with any skin disease.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, pp. 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 4-6.

6. The dogs should not be allowed to enter the slaughter premises. If any dogs were found, it should be destroyed.
7. All awaiting cattle were kept in pens and properly secured with ropes, whose number came for slaughtering one by one.
8. The butchers were made his own arrangement for looking up and for the feeding of their cattle.
9. The butchers have kept their own ropes for binding the legs of the animals during slaughtering.

##### 5. Within the slaughterhouse<sup>5</sup>

1. The butcher should not be slaughter any animal except at the hours fixed by board 6 AM to 6 PM till.
2. The butcher had strictly instructed for the central drain so as to prevent the blood of the slaughtering animal from flowing upon the floor.
3. The butcher should be immediately washed and clean up the place where was the animal slaughtered in a slaughterhouse.
4. Every part of carcass should be inspected by the officer incharge of the slaughterhouse and no butcher should be removed from the slaughterhouse unless in accordance with the next clause of this byelaws.
5. Any carcass was found unfit for human consumption would be destroyed immediately or the health officer of the board whose decision should be final.
6. The skin of an animal whose carcass had been condemned under byelaw above, if the officer incharge, so directed to be disposed of in the same manner as the carcass.
7. After slaughtering, skins entrails and offal should be removed immediately from the slaughterhouse by the butcher or his assistant and any skins entrails or offal was not removed before the time at which the slaughterhouse was closed for the day should become the property of the board.
8. No person should be removed any skin, entrails, and offal from the slaughterhouse until they had been properly washed and cleaned.
9. The solid contents of the entrails should not be washed into the cesspools but should be cleaned up and removed at the time.
10. The butcher should be removed the meat, entrails, and offal or waste parts of the animal which did not consume from the slaughterhouse in covered cards or covered baskets or vessels, of a pattern to be approved by the board.
11. No person should be employed the process of insufflations (cutting up the carcass into pieces) the blowing of the carcass in the slaughterhouse.
12. In the slaughterhouse premises, no butcher should be sold out or allowed to sell meat.
13. If there were any damaged in the premises of slaughterhouse, the butcher should be paid for such damaged.
14. No butcher or another person should be removed, defaced or altered any seal or band impresses in accordance with byelaws above.

15. There were byelaws by the board under section 298 G J (d) for the regulation of the storing of bones or boiling of blood should be enforced at JharnaNala.
16. No animal should be slaughtered in the presence of or in close proximity to other animal awaiting slaughter.

##### 6. Penalty<sup>xiii</sup>

The penalty also should be there in slaughterhouse by section 299 (1) of the act, the board thereby directed that a rupture of any of the provisions of these byelaws should be punishable with fine which might extend to Rs 50/- and when a rupture was a continuing gap, with a further fine which might be extended Rs 5/-for every day after the date of the first conviction during which the officer was proved too had found the rupture.

The number of animals was slaughtered in the three previous years are as given below:

**Table 4 (The number of animals was slaughtered in the three previous years)**

S. no.	Year	No. of animals had been slaughtered
1.	1917	48550
2.	1918	37139
3.	1919	21569

Source: UPRA, Agra, Department of Municipal, File no. 25/1920, Box no. 168.

##### 6. Khandauli slaughterhouse in Agra

A slaughterhouse was established in village Khandauli, Etmadpur, at Agra district in 1918 named as Khandauli slaughterhouse for slaughtering big cattle, buffaloes, and camels. Afterward, that slaughterhouse had been closed due to the protest of the local public. But the slaughterhouse in Khandauli was reopened in the year of 1950. So, the local public had objected to reopening the slaughterhouse. A report was made by government officer that some cows and bullocks were being slaughtered daily at Khandauli and their meat brought to Agra city for sell. The question of communal trouble was arising in Khandauli before that officer should want to take some serious action against the butcher. The Hindu community should want to take that matter very seriously.<sup>xiv</sup>

When the officer had taken an inquiry that the butchers were included in the slaughtering of bullocks, cows, etc in Khandauli much to the dissatisfaction of the local public was reporting the truth. It was also reported that the slaughtering was done with modern equipment which causes great nuisance and inconvenient to the public, in general, owing to the local supply which spreads all over the vicinity. The officer had got some other report that in the premises of slaughterhouse, many carnivores' birds and animals stayed around every time. So, the trees around the slaughterhouse were destroyed.<sup>xv</sup>

The board was want to take suitable action for banning the cow slaughter in Khandauli slaughterhouse<sup>xvi</sup> due to the sake of local public report and also for some conditions regarding the health or physical comforts of the residents of that

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pp. 6-10.

locality.<sup>xvii</sup> On 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 1951, some persons came to the officer incharge for the objection of banned the slaughtering of animals named Noori, Imambux, Chhotey, Akbar, Allauddin, Mannu who were the local resident and the owner of a slaughterhouse in village Khandauli.<sup>xviii</sup>

After many controversies, the results of that cases was only banned of cow slaughter in Khandauli was passed by SDM of Etmadpur in August 1951.<sup>xix</sup>

### 7. License of Flayers

The government officers had inspected the slaughterhouse and flaying techniques of flayers. So, it had been estimated that about 20% of the total production of raw hides in UP was damaged by bad flaying which caused an annual loss approximately 8 lakhs of rupees to this important industry.<sup>xx</sup> So, the board had made bye-laws for licensing of flayers in slaughterhouses of UP.

### 8. Conclusion

The history of Agra slaughterhouse was a tremendous scene in the colonial rule. The government had taken more suitable steps for improvement of the condition of slaughterhouses. The government of colonial India needs to address their own imperatives enforced upon them by the expanding army or its culinary requirement together with the pressing need for sanitary and hygiene in a burgeoning metropolis. Moreover, with the title question, whose animals, the answer is that human being is on the top of eco-system in the world. Humans are omnivorous, so, nature had given the authority to consume meat also of the some selected herbivorous animals and birds such as cattle, buffaloes, sheep, goat, pig, camel, donkey, horse, mule, cock, pigeon, dove, duck, etc. So, the owner of such of the animal is the Almighty God who gave those animals to a human being along with the intelligence for life affairs. But with this big authority, humans being are not being human in this world because of their cruelty regarding the animals such as they do not give proper shelter, food, water to the animals, they flay alive animals for such of profit, they beat the animals or break the tails, while, moving them forward.

### Notes

<sup>i</sup>[https:// en. Wikipedia.org/wiki/slaughterhouse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/slaughterhouse). Retrieved 2016-07-16.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid

<sup>iii</sup> AF\_Animal\_Meat\_Intro.Pdf. Retrieved 2016-09-06, p. 26.

<sup>iv</sup>[https:// en. Wikipedia.org/wiki/Cattle\\_Slaughter\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cattle_Slaughter_in_India). Retrieved 2016-07-16, p. 7.

<sup>v</sup>Goel, Shilpa. "An in-depth study of India's leather industry with special reference to export prospects of leather products." *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences* 3.1 (2014): 56-67.

<sup>vi</sup>UPRA (Uttar Pradesh Regional Archive), Agra, Municipal Deptt., File no. 1/56-57, Box no. 139, pp.11-12.

<sup>vii</sup>UPRA, Agra, Municipal Deptt., File no. 12/1903, Box no. 180, p. 1.

<sup>viii</sup>Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>ix</sup>Ibid, pp. 3-4.

<sup>x</sup>Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>xi</sup>UPRA, Agra, Agriculture Dept., File no. 34/57-58, Box no. 18, p. 1.

<sup>xii</sup>UPRA, Agra, Municipal Dept., File no. 25/1920, Box no. 168, pp 1-2.

<sup>xiii</sup>Ibid, p. 10.

<sup>xiv</sup>Ibid, p. 55.

<sup>xv</sup>Ibid, p. 54.

<sup>xvi</sup>Ibid, p. 55.

<sup>xvii</sup>UPRA, Agra, Animal Husbandry Dept., File no. 2613/49-50, Box no. 266, p. 57.

<sup>xviii</sup>Ibid, p. 57.

<sup>xix</sup>Ibid, p. 56.

<sup>xx</sup>UPRA, Agra, Industry Dept., File no. 10/52-53, Box no. 51, p. 1.