



KHOJA HERITAGE TOUR JANUARY 2020 REPORT



THE WORLD
FEDERATION
OF KSIMC

Promote and Preserve the Legacy and Heritage of the
Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Community





6
CITIES



28
PARTICIPANTS



4
**COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**

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TOUR OUTLINE

DATE	DAY	CITY	CITY/MODE OF TRANSPORT
04 JAN 2020	Saturday	Mumbai	Arrival in Mumbai, CHECK IN 12 NOON
05 JAN 2020	Sunday	Mumbai	Opening Ceremony
06 JAN 2020	Monday	Mumbai	
07 JAN 2020	Tuesday	Kandla / Bhuj	Mumbai - Kandla (Flight) Kandla-Bhuj (Coach - 70 kms)
08 JAN 2020	Wednesday	Bhuj	Bhuj-Kera (Coach - 21 kms) Kera-Mandvi (Coach - 45 kms)
09 JAN 2020	Thursday	Bhuj	Sightseeing: Rann of Kutch
10 JAN 2020	Friday	Amreli / Bhavnagar	Bhuj-Amreli (Coach - 345 kms) Amreli-Bhavnagar (Coach - 125 kms)
11 JAN 2020	Saturday	Bhavnagar	
12 JAN 2020	Sunday	Ahmedabad	Bhavnagar-Ahmedabad (171 kms)
13 JAN 2020	Monday	Ahmedabad	Closing Ceremony
14 JAN 2020	Tuesday	Ahmedabad	CHECKOUT 10 AM



Welcome Kit: Khoja Heritage Tour 2018

KHP MESSAGE

The Khoja Heritage Tour 2020 - A Concerted effort link to our faith and cultural legacy.

In the name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the Ever Merciful

The historic Khoja Heritage Tour was undeniably a very inspiring event by the World Federation and its regional members. With a deep yearning for 'connecting with the roots', a group of committed Khoja men and women from across the globe embarked on a journey to venture into the lands of our forefathers. The palpable joy and sense

of belonging felt by the participants gave an instant aura of 'homeness'. They neither acted as tourists nor were they treated as visitors. One should have been there to witness how community members engaged with each other be it from Lalpur or London, Bhuj or Boston. Judging from camaraderie it was their 'sense of one community' became all the more evident. This indeed is the power of our social capital the world over, which makes the Khoja Community so unique.

This exciting 10-days city Tour provided a glimpse of the genesis of the Khoja Community, which dates back to the late

fourteenth century, in the desert of Sind. A saintly man by the name of named Pir Sadruddin, arrived to live among them. His presence amongst them led to the formation of a new path called Satpanth. To fit into the neatly organised Gujarati Society based on trade or vocations, our Satpanthi ancestors needed to have a new identity. Now, they could no longer be called Thakkars.

Pir Sadruddin obliged and gave them the title of Khwaja, which morphed into the term Khoja. Over a period, several Pirs came after Pir Sadruddin including Pir Gulamali Shah and Pir Dadu whose shrines are in Kera and Bhuj respectively. Gradually, the beliefs of the pluralistic Satpanthi faith crystallized into the Ismaili, Ithna Asheri, and Sunni strands.

In the wake of the turmoil of the late 19th century the Khoja Community began to re-define its beliefs which had mixed beliefs from Hinduism and Islam. When some prominent Khoja businessmen such as Nur Muhammad Meghji, Hasham Dosa, and Dewji Jamal visited Karbala. They were introduced to Ayatullah Zayn al-Abideen Mazandarani by an Indian student called Qadar Husayn. As events transpired, at the behest of Ayatullah Mazandarani, Qadar Husein comes to India to promulgate the teachings of Ithna Asheri faith amongst Khojas of Mumbai. Thus, it begins this journey of the nascent Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Community. It was only befitting that the Tour began with a visit to Mulla Qadar Madrasa to pay tribute to this savant in the history of KSI Community. The Khoja Heritage tour highlighted the contribution of many key personalities who helped shape us as a community. During the course of the tour, we paid tribute to Lalji Sajan and Hirji Alarakhia, two brave souls who gave their lives for what they believed, in Mumbai. We also got an opportunity to reflect on the immense contribution of the

great religious author Allama Haji Naji in and the prolific author of the Khoja History, Edalji Dhanji Kaba as we visited their graves in Bhavnagar and Amreli respectively.

The Khoja Heritage Project team passionately believes that a concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a critical link to our faith and cultural legacy. It must never be forgotten that the Community is what it is today, largely because of an integrative locus of Khoja heritage and Islamic faith as per the teachings of Ahlulbayt (as). The two are far from being mutually exclusive



Hasnain Walji
Chair
Khoja Heritage Project



Kumail Rajani
Deputy Chair
Khoja Heritage Project

WHAT IS KHOJA HERITAGE PROJECT?

The Mission is the preservation, documentation and appreciation of the religious and cultural heritage of the KSI Community.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. To promote and preserve all aspects of heritage of the Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Community.
2. To collaborate with other Khoja communities in promoting the shared heritage of the Khojas.
3. To engage with academia to enhance the field of academic Khoja Studies.



Khoja Sunnai Jamat-Khana, Mumbai



Khoja Studies Conference, Mumbai 2019

Camel cart ride in 'Rann of Kutch'





KHP MAIN PROJECTS

- KhojaPedia
<http://khojapedia.com>
- Khoja Timeline
http://khojapedia.com/wiki/index.php?title=Khoja_Timeline
- Collection & Digitizing the books related to Khoja history and culture
<http://khojahistory.org/projects/>
- Collection of Magazines
(Noor e Hidayat, Rahe Najat, Salsabil)
- Resource Library
(Specialised collection)
- Khoja Calendar
- Khoja Family Tree
- Awards and Medals for Khoja Contribution
- Khoja Jamat Directory
<https://interactivemap.world-federation.org/>
- Khoja Community Heritage Day
- Interviews with Seniors
- Khoja Module in Madaris
- Khoja academic conference
<http://www.khojastudies.org/>
- Gujarati Language Promotion
- Khoja Heritage Sites
- Khoja Documentary Extensions
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-08bqh-IRnc>
- Academia Engagement
(Funding for Scholarship)
- Online Khoja Course
- Khoja Heritage Tour
- Khoja Symposia
- Translation of seminal works on the history of Khojas
- Virtual Museum of KSI heritage
- Audio Books on Khoja History
- WF History Archive
- Reading Circle Group
- Youth Camps



Khoja Heritage Exhibition 2019, Mumbai



Funding Library, Nagalpur

KHOJA HERITAGE TOUR

JANUARY 2020

MUMBAI



Opening Ceremony at Mulla Qadar Mehfil

MUMBAI: The name of this largest city of India is associated with trade, finance and commerce. A land of opportunity!

No wonder why our ancestors migrated to this place from Kutch and Kathiawad in early 19th century.



Introduction to Community Luminaries buried in Arambaug



Khojas at Khoja Masjid - Palagali



Early Bonding Days



Gateway of India

BHUJ | RANN OF KUTCH

BHUJ: Has come to be known as the synonymous of culture and heritage. It is house of ancient palaces, shrines of saint and beautiful temples. The sensation of this desert land is undeniably captivating.



Warm Welcome by Bhuj Jamaat



Peer Gulam Ali Shah Dargah - Kera



Visiting Kutch Museum



Camel Cart Ride in Rann of Kutch



Walking through Kutchi Mud Huts



Traditional Wooden Swing in Rann of Kutch

MANDVI | KERA

MANDVI: This port city of Kutch is a perfect destination for a summer retreat. Its shipbuilding industry attracts thousands of visitors who take interest in gaining first-hand experience about how dhows were built and sailed in the sea.

KERA: Is a historical town of the Kutch district. The most significant place of interest for a Muslim visitor is the shrine of the 15th century mystic, Peer Ghulam Ali. The aura of the mausoleum inspires tranquillity, perhaps the most important lesson this sage would have ever shared.



Visiting Shipbuilding Yard



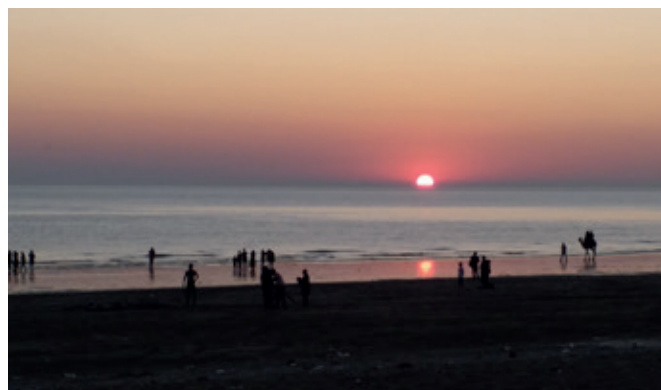
Sandy Beach of Mandvi



At Upper Deck of Ship



KSI Jamaat - Kera



Sunset at Mandvi



Desi Gourmet

BHAVNAGAR | AMRELI

BHAVNAGAR: Is the 5th largest city of Gujarat with a booming economy and a vibrant culture. The most distinguished Shia religious scholar of the community, Allama Haji Naji Saheb is buried in Bhavnagar.

AMRELI: This small town of Gujarat in the Bhavnagar district is a historic place for the Khoja awakening movement of the late 19th century. Edalji Dhanji Kaba, undeniably the most significant historian of the Khoja Community, is buried in Amreli.



Little Stars of Mahdi School



Visiting Umme Kulsum Trust



Amreli Jamaat Mosque



Bonding with Community



Discussing the Legacy of Allama Haji Naji Saheb



Remembering Edalji Dhanji Kaba, Amreli

AHMEDABAD

The largest city of Gujarat claims its name from the founder of this city, Ahmad Shah I. It has since been the political and economical capital of the state of Gujarat.



Imam Shah Bawa - Pirana, Ahmedabad



Khoja Symposium - Sarkhej Jamaat



Introduction to Satpanth Tradition



Birthday Celebration with Foodies



Closing Ceremony



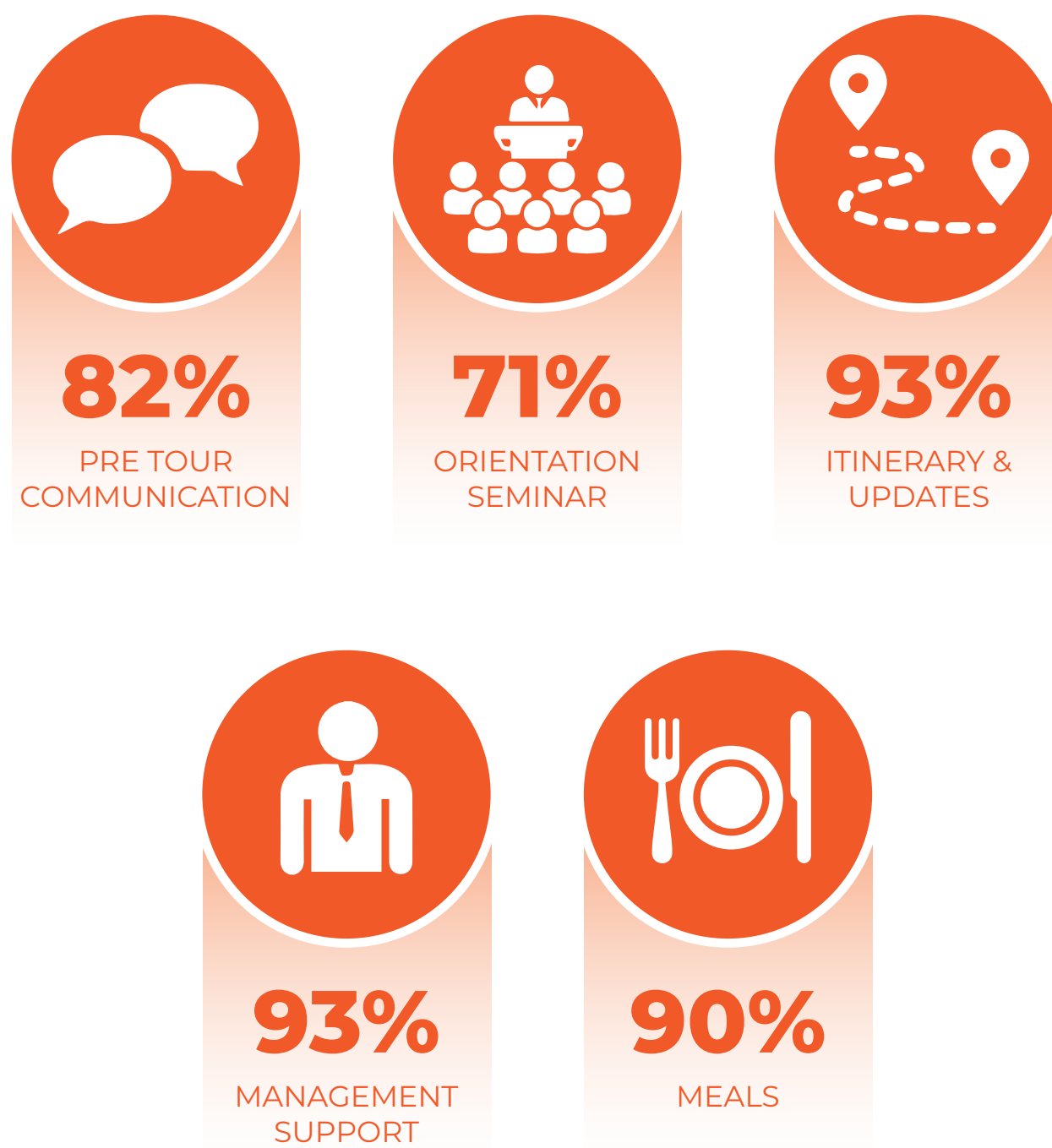
Farewell

Sunset Point, Regenta Resort, Bhuj



FEEDBACK FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

TOUR LOGISTICS PROPORTION OF VERY GOOD/EXCELLENT RATINGS



The tour was good overall. But, if I had to select one best part of the tour it was the visit to the Mahdi School. We saw too many talented students there. I am really amazed to see how they speak up on stage. I have been to India before. But this was in a group setting. Hence, it was a different experience.

Murtaza Karim

TOUR ACTIVITIES PROPORTION OF VERY GOOD/EXCELLENT RATINGS





PARTICIPANTS' TESTIMONIALS



The tour was incredible. I never expected it would be this fun and informative. I can now say that I am proud to be a Khoja. I have learnt that we have everything that other cultures have got & we have stories of sacrifice, stories of martyrdom and stories of struggles. The highlight of the tour was having food together in a Thali. I think that eating together gives a sense of belongings, which is rare to find in the west. Lastly, I would like to say that I thought I knew what hospitality was, but the people here have taken it to another level.

Kazim Sajan



This tour gives us an opportunity to appreciate the old people & our grandfathers from where they came and try to understand their struggles. It was also amazing to see how we all are connected and how our cultures are intermingled.

Abbas Ismail



We met so many people, exchanged ideas & also discovered that many of us are relatives with each other; it is amazing because we didn't even know we are related. I would suggest everyone to go to Heritage Tour as it is really interesting. Our Managing committee is very accommodating and very cooperative. You ask something and you get it right away.

Fatema Datoo



MANAGING COMMITTEE

DR HASNAIN WALJI

The Khoja Heritage Tour of 2020 was a delightful sojourn into the lands of our Khoja ancestors. It was all the more enjoyable being in the company of over 30 of our dear community members. The awe and wonder on the faces of the participants as we moved from place to place reminded me of my feelings when I first visited India in the mid-eighties. Full of vigour and anticipation the group rode rickshaws, buses, camel cars, and a jet in their quest to follow the footsteps of the Khoja pioneers. Representing the iconic Khoja diaspora, they came from Tanzania, Kenya, UK, Dubai, USA and Canada and were efficiently guided by our awesome managing team from India. Notably, within hours they all bonded as if they had known each other forever. The best metaphor I can use is the typical Gujarati Thali with each of the delicacies in the little pots in the Thali. The big round 'thali' being the tour itself and the 'wadkas' as they call them being participants from each geographical region.

I could not but admire the good grace despite the rigors of the marathon ride from Bhuj to Bhavnagar, the group maintained its humour and goodwill. The tiredness disappeared as we sat down to share a much-awaited dinner with the mumineen in Amreli, where the men appreciated the Gujarati 'pickles'; while the women jotted down the recipe of the delectable biryani. All in all, I believe the tour achieved its goal of engendering an appreciation and pride of our Khoja identity and why the social capital we have built up over the past 150 years matters so much.

ASAD VIRANI

The Khoja Heritage Tour has highlighted the importance of the need of recognition of those personalities who have sacrificed a great many things for our Khoja Community. Physically walking on the streets once walked by our ancestors gave me a nostalgic feeling and an experience of a life time.

SHABNAM MERCHANT

The Khoja Heritage Tour helped me gather pearls of wisdom whilst serving the elders of our community and also gain perspective on Khoja ancestry whilst actually visiting those places where our ancestors attained enlightenment. I'm filled with gratitude and respect for all those who have spent their lives in leading and guiding the Khoja community and also those who have taken efforts in preserving its rich heritage.



LIST OF ATTENDEES

Latifa Walji
Meenaz Ladak
Kazim Sajan
Zaheerabbas Khimji
Shenaz Sajan
Hussein Sajan
Mahboob Teja
Mohamed Hussein Jaffer
Hasinabanu Mussa
Mohamed Manji
Altaf Karim
Farida Rashid

Abbas Rashid
Iffat Lalji
Siddiqa Allidina
Murtaza Karim
Rosemin Karim
Shahida Dharamshi
Muslim Dharamshi
Husein Khimji
Kaniz Khimji
Mehboob Raza Datoo
Fatima Datoo
Ibrahim Juma

Abbas Ismail
Yusuf Ismail
Asif Ismail
Hasnain Khaku

MANAGING COMMITTEE

Dr Hasnain Walji
Asad Virani
Shabnam Merchant
Mohamedali Patel



KHOJA
HERITAGE
PROJECT