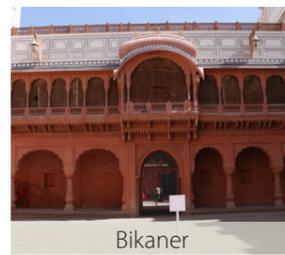
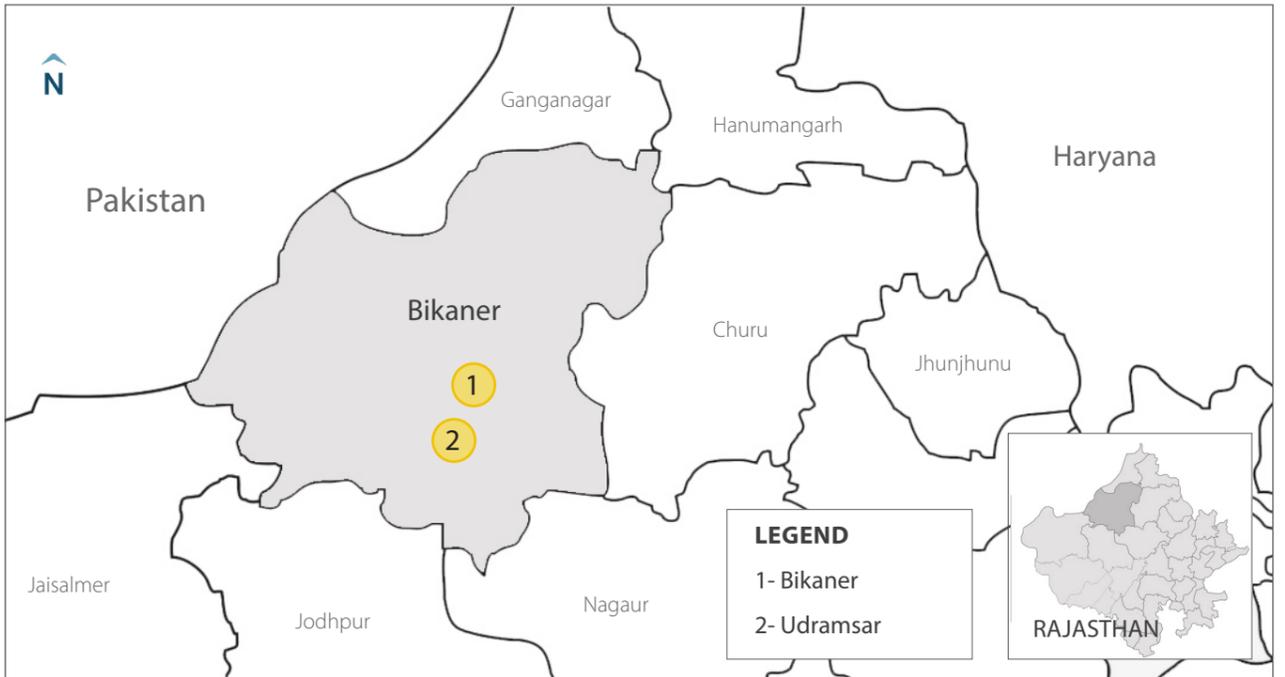


OVERVIEW

Places Visited :	2
Distance Traveled :	1475km
Elements Mapped :	45
Scholars Approached :	6
Craftspeople Approached :	1

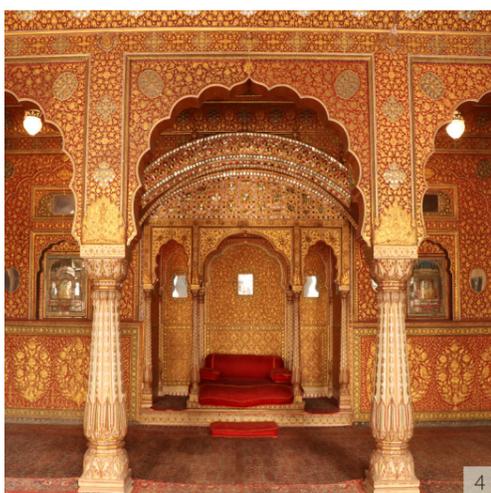


Bikaner is a city in the northwest of the state of Rajasthan in northern India. Although it lies in the Thar Desert, Bikaner is considered as an oasis on the great caravan trade route between Central Asia and the Gujarat coast as it had adequate spring water. The walled city of Bikaner is an amalgamation of many *chowk* and *guwads* (types of residential spaces) with narrow lanes and series of traditional houses called *haveli*. The havelis in Bikaner are highly decorated with an intricately carved facade in locally found Dulmera stone, it is red in colour and giving a peculiar character to the architecture of the walled city of Bikaner.

The havelis have extravagant social gatherings and most of the activities are done by sitting on ground either on *dhurrie* (rug) or *gaddi* (mattress). Seating furniture is not popular inside the houses; exception being the *Paata*. *Paata* literally translates to a wooden plank. The *paata* used for seating is a raised wooden platform with four or more turned wood legs. It is mostly used by the elderly men in the family. A single *paata* can host four to twelve people depending on its size. With such heavy usage the *paatas* have symbolic iron reinforcements between the seating surface and its legs. It is generally kept in large open ground/plazas, crossroads, outside or within

residential havelis of all communities. The furniture hold more socio-cultural value than physical, it's presence marks the boundary of social intercourse between castes around Bikaner. *Paata* is a regulatory component, on which the traditions, custom and rituals of society prosper. The existence of *paata* in the walled city of Bikaner dates back to the genesis of the city and is an integral part of the culture. A surface used to place a *thali* (dining plate) during meals is also referred to as *paata* but the context of speech differentiates them. This *paata* is often accompanied by a low seat in the *barsali* (lobby inside a haveli). In parts of Bikaner, a *bajot* (low table) is used during rituals as a surface to place deities, they vary in materials and style with the social stature of the owner.

Traditional construction method of havelis have thick mud and stone walls. This has allowed the local craftspeople to device in-built storage systems, colloquially referred to as *aada*. An *aada* with three internal divisions or shelves is called *tiyaada* (three *aadas*). These storage spaces are used to keep valuables safely locked with wooden doors. Depending on the user, these doors are decorated with indigenous motifs and painted with figures of gods and goddesses. Applying linseed oil, locally called as *chandas* is used to varnish these doors.



A monthly report of field visits conducted by Directed Research Project at DICRC, CEPT University, as a part of Study of Vernacular Furniture of North West India.

1. Paata (Bench), 2. Aada (In-built cabinet), 3. Khaat (Charpoy), 4. Gaddi (Seat), 5. Chowki (Low table), 6. Palang (Bed), 7. Peti (Chest on stand), 8. Table, 9. Paata (Bench) & 10. Jhula (Swing)