

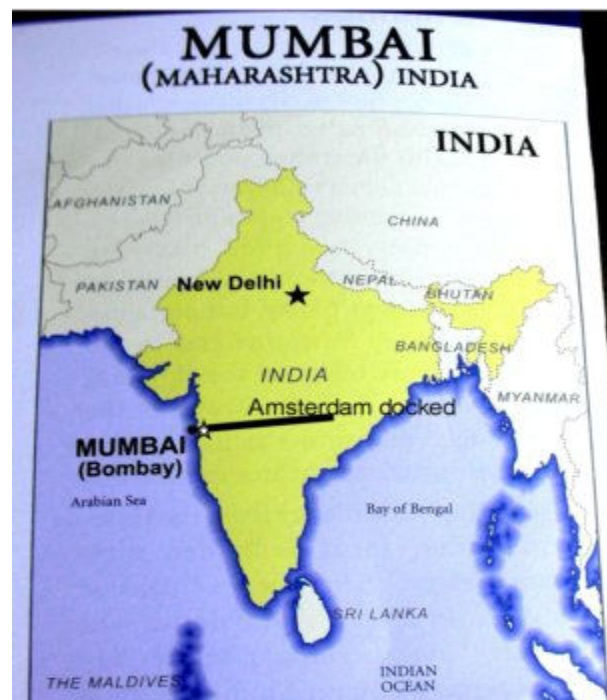
3/20-21-22/07 Days 64, 65, 66 –  
Mumbai (Bombay), India - Tues.,  
Wed., Thur.; 20-21-22 March 2007:  
We arrived at Mumbai Harbor about  
10am on a sunny hazy day. Outside  
the harbor we saw signs of the Navy  
that India has in place. First we saw  
a submarine surfaced and then a  
procession of small patrol boats, a  
passed by on their way out of the  
harbor.

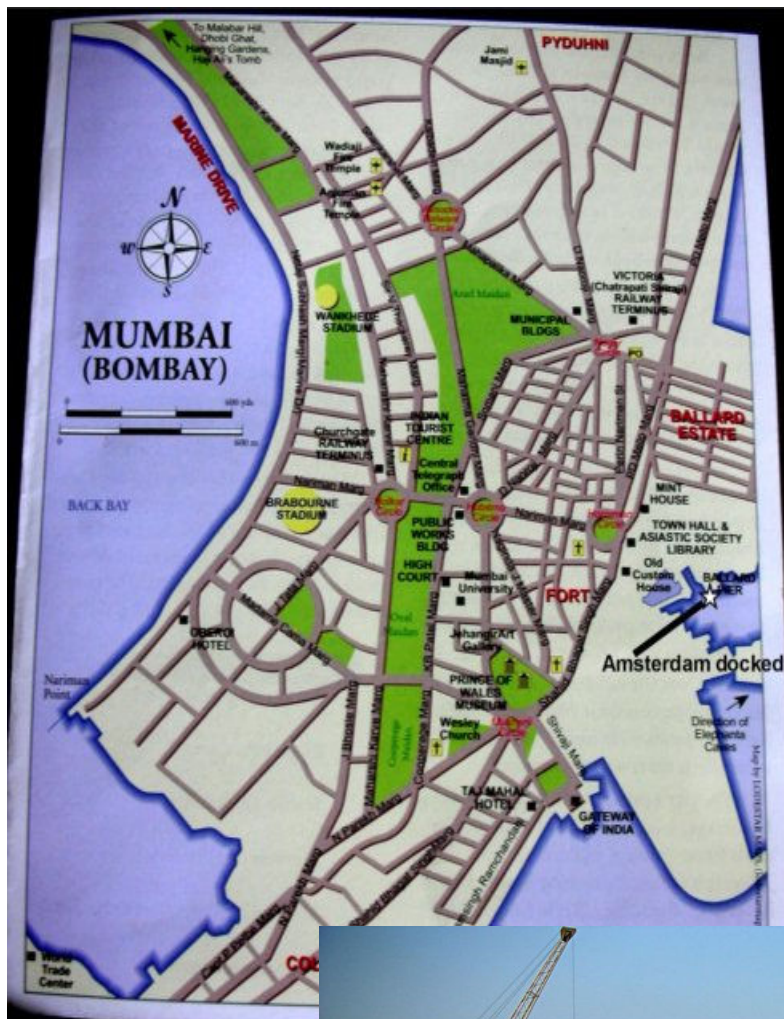


We were docked by about  
11am at the Ballard Pier  
Cruise Terminal. Shown  
below is where we were  
located in India. We were in  
the port of Mumbai which is  
located in the Indian state of  
Maharashtra. According to a  
tour guide the name Mumbai  
was given to the collection of  
islands by ancient people and  
the meaning was "Fishing  
Area". The early Portuguese

traders in the 1500s called it "bom baia" (good bay). The European powers dominated India for the next five centuries and the Portuguese "bom baia" name for the area evolved into "Bombay".

With India's independence from the UK in 1947 there was a spirit of nationalism that developed in India. This nationalism resulted in several cities in India having their name changed back to their pre-European era form. In 1995 the city name of Bombay was changed back to the ancient name of Mumbai.





Ballard Pier, on the right hand side of this map of Mumbai, was where the Amsterdam docked. Ballard Pier is located next to the Navy Yard at Mumbai. The view from the top deck of the Amsterdam showed plenty of Navy ships and the skyline of Mumbai.





The view on the right shows an old Navy aircraft carrier that now serves as a museum. A helicopter and propeller driven airplane are parked on the flight deck.



This was the view from the rear of the Amsterdam on our first day in port.

On day two of our visit the same view, as shown below, reveals several hundred new cars have arrived on the dock and a large ship has moved in. In the meantime we saw

a cruise ship dock briefly in this area and then get underway. These snapshots indicate the huge level of traffic we saw in the harbor all the time we were there.



We had arranged for a tour on our first day in port so about noon we boarded the bus and headed out with our guide into Mumbai. We had expected to see dirty streets and hordes of beggars but the streets we saw were clean and we saw only a few beggars at a couple of the stops made by the bus. Over our three day visit we saw only three or four cases of apparently homeless men sleeping on the sidewalk as people walked around them. Bob and Esther, our table mates had visited Mumbai in 2002 and been disgusted by the dirty conditions and beggars on the sidewalks. They reported that what they saw on this visit in 2007

was a vast improvement in cleanliness and absence of beggars.



Our first stop on the bus tour was the monument known as the Gateway of India. The Gateway of India is located on the shoreline of the bay. This is an icon of the city of Mumbai so Barbara showed her Oak Ridge Library card as evidence of where her card was that day.



The bus tour then took us to the Prince of Wales Museum. This is a large national museum with wonderful displays of Indian artwork and sculpture dating back into ancient times. The building has distinctive architecture visible in the background of the photo on the left.

We passed by the Victoria Railway Terminal which is widely used by the commuters who work in Mumbai. It is shown in the photo on the right. Later, in the evening, about 7pm, we noticed a steady stream of well dressed office workers filling the sidewalks around the station as they made their way back to their commuter trains.



The cows in the streets have been eliminated by the traffic laws of Mumbai but you could occasionally see human powered transportation of goods mixed in with the motor traffic.



One of the most interesting sights of the day was the Dhobi Ghat (pronounced Doby Got). This is the famous outdoor clothes washing facility of Mumbai. Five thousand men rent space in the facility from the city of Mumbai and participate in a laundering service. The men pick up clothes and bedding from customers, wash and dry the items and return them to the customer. The illiterate workers have managed to make it work for centuries.

The following photos show the concrete tubs filled with wash water and the clothes lines used to dry the cloth in the breeze.





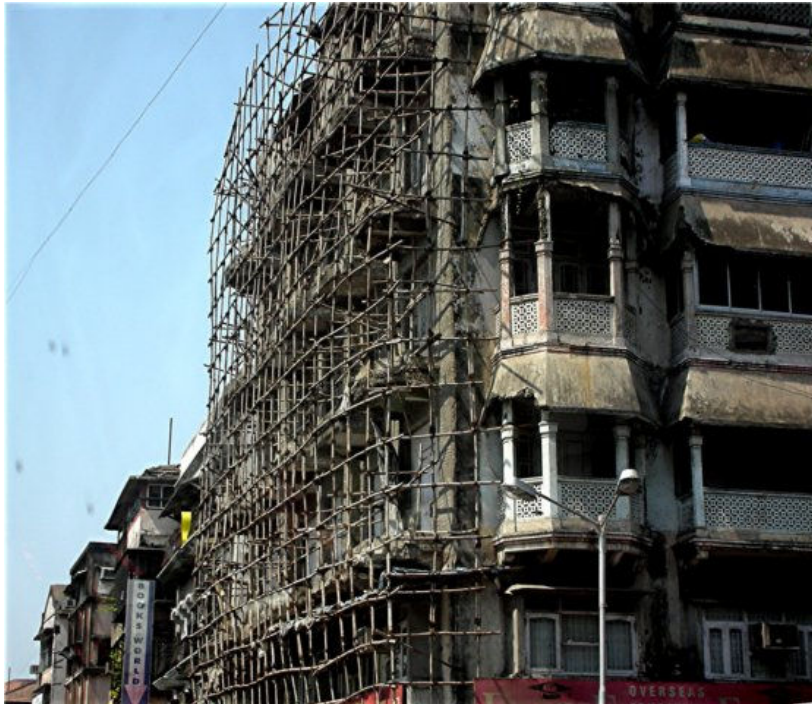
After seeing the washing activity and facilities at Dhobi Ghat, the bus took us to the Mahatma Gandhi Museum. The museum is an unassuming four story building nested between similar houses on a

narrow city street. From the outside, the museum looks like it could be the residence of a family but the sign out front clearly identifies it as the Mahatma Gandhi Museum. The displays were not elaborate but were very well arranged to tell the life story of Gandhi who was a major figure in the movement to gain the independence from Great Britain that was finally achieved in 1947. Unfortunately, Gandhi was assassinated by a deranged man in 1948. The museum memorializes this great man who achieved great things in a non-violent manner. Among many Gandhi displays in the museum was the cutout shown on the right that was life-size.





The stop at the Ghandi Museum finished all the sightseeing highlights of the bus tour and we headed back to the port area. As we have traveled in different Asian cities we have been fascinated by the amount of new construction of large buildings and the innovative way that



materials have been used to put scaffolding on the sides of the buildings for the workers to use. In Hong Kong the preference is for bamboo poles lashed together with cord. In Mumbai the scaffolding looks similar to that in Hong Kong, The poles are not bamboo but the trunks of a tree that appear to be about 3 inches in diameter. We took some photographs of the extensive scaffolding on several buildings.



The large amount of new construction going on in Mumbai was consistent with the apparent healthy economies of Mumbai and the other cities we have visited in Southeast Asia.

Also obvious in Mumbai was that they are busy repairing their infrastructure in the city. Several streets were in the process of being dug up and refinished. The photo on the right shows a pipe repair job in progress in one of the streets we passed.

We came away from our first tour of Mumbai, surprised by the cleanliness of the streets and thinking that Mumbai has a vibrant economy like much of Southeast Asia that we have seen on this cruise.



The second day in Mumbai we teamed up with Trudy, our Amsterdam neighbor, and did some shopping on our own. The first challenge was finding a taxi to take us in to town. Instead of hiking out to the gateway of the port where taxis are plentiful we elected to play it safe and use one of the taxis that had qualified to drive into the port facility up to the ship. We paid a higher fee for this decision but later, after buying several things, we were glad to be dropped off right at the gangway to the Amsterdam. We negotiated an agreement with a taxi driver named Johnny. Johnny agreed to take us into Mumbai to several shops, stay with us and return us to the ship after three hours. This service had a cost of \$ 30 USD.

Following those negotiations we had a wild ride into town through the crowded streets.



Trudy and Barbara were covering in the back seat most of the way while Orlin in the front seat just prayed a lot!

We were first taken to a couple of expensive shops where the taxi driver collected a little reward for delivering us. We didn't buy anything and yelled at the driver long enough that he finally took us to more inexpensive shops. The neighborhood was definitely more downscale.



The driver led us to a nondescript doorway that opened up into a dim hallway and flight of rickety stairs. Orlin followed the driver up the stairs while Trudy and Barbara stood outside yelling hysterically about the dangerous looks of the place. The ladies soon calmed their nerves and came on in. We felt a great sense of relief when we spied Dorothy (Bluewhale of [www.cruise critic.com](http://www.cruise critic.com) fame) and her husband George in the shop at the head of the stairs.

They are travelers and shoppers extraordinaire and knew of PIET from good experience they had on a previous trip. (Shop name and address: PIET, 271 Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Room No.

15, first floor, Near G.P.O., Opp. Sher-E-Punjab, Mumbai – 400 001; email [piet\\_kleermaker@yahoo.co.in](mailto:piet_kleermaker@yahoo.co.in) ).



On the left is a picture of our mentors taken later in the Lido Restaurant on the Amsterdam.

While we were at the PIET shop other cruise ship passengers came and went. It was almost a party atmosphere that developed as the shop keepers, taxi drivers and cruise ship passengers greeted and chatted with each other.

Irene Perry from Kamloops, Canada and her grand daughter Lynette Kitt from northern BC, Canada popped in. We had been on sight seeing tours in other ports with them and were beginning to feel like old friends. As boosters of the Canadian nation they had earlier handed out little red and white maple leaf Canadian flag stick pins to put in your shirt lapel. Johnny, our taxi driver asked for one and with some help was able to proudly pin the Canadian flag to his shirt. Here are our new Canadian friends.



Barbara and Trudy looked through the cashmere shawls and cotton tops and picked out several which they purchased. We finished up the clothing purchases and decided we would move on to looking for carved elephants. In the photo below the victorious shoppers are seen exiting the dimly lit stairwell that leads up to the PIET Company.



Our taxi driver took us to several places where we browsed unsuccessfully. We finally ended up at a promising shop where many carved wooden and stone elephants were for sale (store name and address - Friends Enterprises, 38/39, Rex Chambers, W.H. Marg, Ballard Estate, Mumbai 400 001, India; email – [femumbai@vsni.net](mailto:femumbai@vsni.net) ; Internet – [www.femumbai.com](http://www.femumbai.com) ).

When we were in Cochin, India we had bought a wooden elephant with white bone inlay and trunk hanging down. Now, slightly deranged by shopping fever, we wanted to get a wooden elephant with trunk pointing up. The idea is to place these elephants in your home where visitors can see them. According to

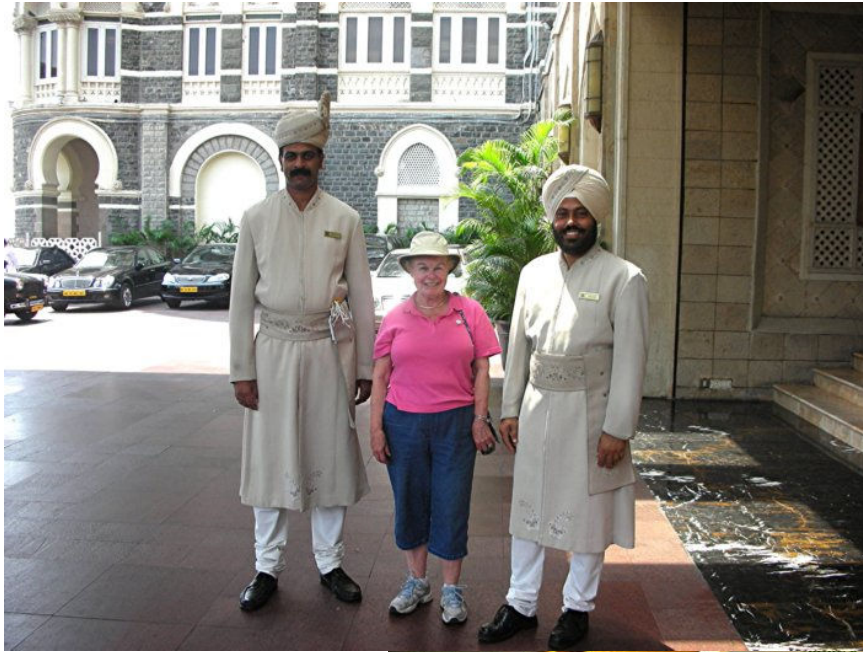
tourist rumor, both elephant types are supposed to bring good luck but an elephant with trunk down conveys a religious blessing while trunk up symbolizes a welcome to your guests.

Several elephants were on display but in order to get a large one with the trunk pointed up one of the clerks had to bring it from the attic. We liked one of them and after haggling over the price ended up buying it. On the right is a picture of our trunk-up elephant back on the ship along with the smaller trunk-down elephant we got in Cochin. Elephants are held in high regard in this part of the world and these carvings will help us remember the visit.



We stashed the elephant in the trunk of Johnny's taxi and headed off for our last stop, the Taj Mahal Hotel. We had heard much about how luxurious the place was and wanted to see for ourselves. Johnny parked the cab on a street behind the hotel and we walked in. Here are some photos we got at the entrance.





Inside the hotel the lobby was beautiful. It was much like a large Las Vegas Hotel.



After our visit to the Taj Mahal Hotel we went back to the cruise terminal at Ballard Pier, known locally as the Green Gate because the entrance with the guard house has a large green door. We said goodbye to Johnny, our taxi driver and headed back to the Amsterdam.

In the evening we took about a 2 hour bus tour that was called "Mumbai by Night". We retraced many of the same streets we had seen during the bus tour the first day in Mumbai but it was a



very different scene. During the day the focus of our attention was the frantic street traffic and occasional large ornate building. At night the street traffic was much subdued and our focus was much more on what was happening on the sidewalks. On the main streets the sidewalks were filled with vendor stalls, each with a couple brilliant lights showing their wares. All kinds of clothing, souvenirs, furniture and other items were for sale and the foot traffic was very active. At one point we were driven to a northern part of the curving bay shoreline so that we could look back in a southerly direction and see the lights of Mumbai. The lights of the city form a pretty curving shape that the local people call the Queen's Necklace. After that we returned to the Amsterdam and turned in for the night.

On our third day in Mumbai we planned to finish buying a few things we had missed the day before and visit an area known as Fashion Street. We got together with Trudy and headed out about 11am. This time instead of hiring a taxi at the cruise terminal we hiked a couple blocks out to the "Green Gate" entrance to the Ballard Pier area. Outside the gate were plenty of the little Fiat taxis and their drivers eager to get customers. After some negotiating we lined up a taxi for three hours at a cost of \$15 USD. Our taxi driver today was named George. We knew where we wanted to go so George took us first to the PIET clothing store where we had been yesterday. The shop keepers recognized us and welcomed the shopping ladies back with open arms. Barbara was surprised that one of the clerks remembered what she had bought the day before and helped her find more stuff. While the ladies were haggling over clothes and shawls, Orlin took some pictures around the shop.



Over the main counter was a Hindu altar that dominated that wall.

Near the door was a round metal lunch bucket. We were interested in the bucket because on the bus tour we had taken the first day in Mumbai the guide had told about lunch buckets. There is an incredible business in Mumbai that provides lunch delivery service to the millions of people who commute to work in Mumbai. Her story went like this. The commuter trains bringing in workers each morning to Mumbai are incredibly crowded and there is virtually no room



for the lunch buckets that each worker will need for his midday snack. The guide said that in response to this situation a service was invented where a runner would stop by each subscribing worker's home about 9am and pick up the full lunch bucket from the worker's wife. These buckets would then be hauled in to Mumbai and delivered to the appropriate person. After lunch, the empty bucket would be picked up and hauled back to the worker's home so he wouldn't have to carry it on the crowded commuter train in the evening. The cycle is repeated every work day. The guide emphasized that this process is carried out by basically illiterate people and it has been working fine for over one hundred years in Mumbai. Apparently several US business schools had studied the system and analyzed the model for the business as part of



their curriculum. Here on the left is a picture of the lunch bucket that we saw in the PIET shop.

One of the PIET clerks saw Orlin taking a picture of the bucket and he said it would be picked up about 4pm. The lunch bucket deliver system seemed like an incredible service to us but this was visual evidence that it exists. Note

the blue and green marks on the lid that may be part of the filing system for the illiterate carriers. Unfortunately, we didn't find out the cost of this delivery service. The lunch bucket system of Mumbai may be worth a Google session when we get back home.

After we finished shopping at the PIET store we went on to another store that Barbara had learned about. This was the Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India Ltd. (A Government of India Undertaking) at 34, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Marg, Mumbai-400 039. India; email -

[ccic.mumbai@gems.vsnl.net.in](mailto:ccic.mumbai@gems.vsnl.net.in) ;

website -

[www.cottageemporiumindia.com](http://www.cottageemporiumindia.com)

George, our taxi driver, wasn't very interested in this place since he probably wasn't getting a kickback from the owners for bringing us to the shop. He complained that he was getting in trouble for parking violation in this area which was across the street from the Taj Mahal Hotel. However, a little tip sweetened the pot and he cooled his heels while Barbara and Trudy shopped for about 45 minutes. The store had a lot of stone carvings, pillow tops, strings of elephants and we bought some of those. Here on the right is a picture of a string of elephants:



They had lots of other Indian handicraft stuff and Barbara was kicking herself for not coming to this store first.

After leaving the Central Cottage Industries store we were subjected to another hair raising drive through crowded Mumbai streets as we returned to the Ballard Pier area. We arrived at the cruise terminal and parted ways with George and his taxi.

George had asked about our family and described his family of a wife, two sons and two daughters. He said he commuted to work from far out from the city where living was less expensive. As with Johnny, yesterday's taxi driver, over a period of a few hours George had become a trusted hard working person in our eyes instead of a faceless foreigner.

In the evening there was an Indian Folkloric show in the Queen's Lounge put on by a local dance group. The costumes, music and dance routines were exotic native Indian fare and very entertaining.



Thus ended our last day in Mumbai. The Amsterdam got underway about 10pm and headed across the Arabian Sea towards Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

