

Shipping From an Inland Indian City: How Does ICD Cargo Reach the Port?



Yash Khatri

Founder, SourcingFrom

Updated 18 Oct 2026 8 min read

Goods from an inland Indian city reach the sea in one of two ways. A full container can be cleared by customs and sealed at an export-capable inland container depot near the supplier, then moved by rail or road to Nhava Sheva or Mundra. A small LCL lot often cannot be consolidated inland, so it is trucked to a freight station at the port. Which route your order takes changes the Incoterm you should use and how much of the cost you can see.

The Short Version

- A full container can be cleared and sealed at an export-capable inland depot, then railed or trucked to the port.
- Small LCL lots from depots such as Jaipur are often trucked to the port to be consolidated there.
- Not every inland city has a depot that clears exports. Jalandhar, Mirzapur and Agartala had only domestic terminals in the lists we read.
- Gurugram and Faridabad have no depot in their own district on the official lists, so their cargo stuffs at a Delhi-area depot or goes to the port.
- Quote FCA at the named depot for a full container, and price small lots to the port.

From an inland city like Jaipur, your order travels to the sea in one of two ways. A full container is usually cleared by Indian customs and sealed at an inland container depot (ICD) near the supplier, then sent by rail or truck to Nhava Sheva or Mundra. A small shared-container (LCL) lot often can't be consolidated at the depot, so it goes by truck to a freight station at the port and is packed into a shared box there.

That split matters more than most buyers expect, because it decides which Incoterm makes sense, who pays for the long road, and whether you can even see that cost. Below is the route from factory to ship, which inland cities have a depot that can clear exports, and what to ask before you book. The facts come from our own cluster-to-port map, built from official terminal and customs-site lists read in September 2026, plus importer and forwarder voices from our forum research. Caveat up front: distances are our straight-line calculations, so the road is always longer.

SourcingFrom Intelligence

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- 01 **Jaipur's depot is about 770 km from Mundra and 932 km from Nhava Sheva in a straight line.** It is ICD Kanakpura, listed as a mixed export and domestic terminal. *(CONCOR terminal register, read 23 Sep 2026, our great-circle distances · Verified terminal, Computed distance)*
- 02 **"For LCL jaipur icd dont stuff a console box."** A vendor's description of why small lots leave Jaipur by truck for the port. *(r/exportersindia, Jul 2026, one vendor)*
- 03 **Not every export town has a depot that clears exports.** Gurugram and Faridabad have none in their own district on the lists we read (ICD Tughlakabad sits in South East Delhi), and Jalandhar, Mirzapur and Agartala are left with domestic-only terminals. *(CONCOR terminal register and the CBIC/ICEGATE list of customs-connected sites, both read 23 Sep 2026 · Verified for the lists, private depots not covered)*

What we don't know yet

- Rail transit times from the northern depots to either port. No official source publishes them.
- Private ICDs in towns where the official lists we read show none, such as Tiruppur and Gurugram.

1. What Happens Between the Factory and the Ship?

Picture a block-print maker on the edge of Jaipur. The order can leave in three legs.

Leg one, factory to depot. For a full container, the empty box is brought to the factory and stuffed there, or the goods are trucked to the depot and stuffed on site. The exporter's customs broker files the shipping bill, India's export declaration, and customs clears the cargo at the depot. The box is sealed.

Leg two, depot to port. The sealed container moves on by rail or road to the gateway port. For Jaipur that's usually Mundra or Nhava Sheva, more than 700 km away.

Leg three, port to ship. The box waits at the terminal for its vessel and is loaded.

A small LCL lot skips the first neat part. It's loaded loose on a truck, driven to a container freight station near the port, and packed into a shared container with other exporters' goods. Where customs clears it depends on the forwarder's set-up, so ask.

So the two routes look alike on a map and behave very differently on a bill. One moves a sealed box you can price from a depot. The other moves loose cartons a long way before anyone consolidates them.

2. Which Inland Cities Have a Depot That Can Clear Exports?

Not all of them, and this is the part nobody publishes in one place. We joined the rail operator's terminal register with the customs department's list of connected freight sites to see which export towns have a terminal in their

own district. "Mixed" means the terminal handles export and domestic cargo. "Domestic only" means it doesn't clear exports.

Town (product)	Terminal in district, per official lists	Straight-line km to Mundra / Nha
Jaipur (handicrafts, textiles)	ICD Kanakpura, mixed	770 / 932
Jodhpur (furniture, handicrafts)	ICD Bhagat ki Kothi, mixed, and ICD Thar Dry Port	376 to 514 / 773 to 811
Ludhiana (knitwear)	ICD Dhandarikalan, export	1,093 / 1,360
Noida (apparel)	ICD Dadri, mixed	1,005 / 1,158
Gurugram, Faridabad (apparel)	None listed in district. ICD Tughlakabad is in South East Delhi	972 to 990 / 1,136 to 1,142
Moradabad (brassware)	ICD Moradabad, mixed	1,133 / 1,248
Agra (leather footwear)	ICD Agra East Bank, mixed	972 / 1,051
Panipat (home textiles)	ICD at Jattipur, customs site	1,036 / 1,230
Jalandhar (sports goods)	Domestic-only terminals	1,118 / 1,402
Tiruppur (knitwear)	None listed in the district	Cochin 172, Tuticorin 278

Sources: CONCOR's terminal register and the CBIC/ICEGATE list of customs-connected freight sites (Feb 2024), both read 23 September 2026, with our distance calculations. Verified for the terminals, Indicative for which port the cargo actually uses.

Three rows deserve a word. Gurugram and Faridabad, two of the three apparel towns on the government's export list, have no depot of their own in the lists we read, so their exporters use a Delhi-area depot or truck to the port. Ask which. In our lists only Jalandhar, Mirzapur and Agartala were left with domestic-only terminals, so an exporter there has to take the goods to a depot elsewhere or straight to a port. And Tiruppur's cargo runs south and through Colombo rather than to the west coast, which is a story of its own on [why South Indian cargo ships via Colombo](#).

3. Why Does a Small LCL Lot Still End Up at the Port?

Because a shared container needs enough cargo, going to the same place, to fill it. An inland depot rarely has that for every destination. A vendor on an Indian exporters' forum put it in one line in July 2026 - "for LCL jaipur icd dont stuff a console box" (r/exportersindia, Reported, one voice). So the cartons travel by truck to Nhava Sheva or Mundra and are consolidated there.

That has two effects. The truck leg is paid on a small volume, so it costs a lot per carton. And the consolidation charges at the port come on top. A UK importer summed up what that did to one Indian quote: "it was the inland trucking in india that made it none viable so hopefully your suppliers are near a port" (r/smallbusinessuk, Jan 2024, archived thread, Reported).

The same thread gave a rough rule that above about 10 pallets a full container usually beats LCL. Treat it as one importer's experience, not a rule, and test it with a forwarder on your own lane. The wider trade-off is on [LCL vs FCL](#).

4. Road or Rail, and Does the New Freight Corridor Help?

The dedicated freight corridor from the north into Nhava Sheva was finished on 31 March 2026 ([DFCCIL milestones](#), Verified), but in August 2026 only

about one in nine of the port's containers arrived by rail, by our count from the port's own figures. What that means for the choice of port is in [Mundra or Nhava Sheva](#), so we won't repeat it here.

What matters for your order is narrower. We found no official rail transit times from any northern depot, and no official word on the feeder lines into Mundra. A depot being "rail-connected" tells you nothing about when the next train leaves with space for your box. So the question isn't "will it go by rail" but "who books the inland leg, and how long does it take on this supplier's usual route". Check that with your forwarder before you book.

5. What Does the Inland Leg Do to Your Quote?

It's either hidden or visible, depending on the Incoterm, and the point to take from this page is that two FOB quotes from different inland cities aren't comparing the same thing. A Jaipur maker quoting FOB Nhava Sheva has a 900 km road trip inside the unit price. A Moradabad maker quoting the same port has 1,200 km inside it. Neither is dishonest. You just can't see, compare or question the leg.

The fix for a full container is to name the depot under [FCA](#), so the supplier hands over a sealed box at, say, ICD Kanakpura and your forwarder quotes the rail or road leg as its own line. For a small LCL lot the depot route often fails, so price it to the port. The [Nhava Sheva port](#) page sets out when FOB there makes sense, and the [Jaipur cluster](#) page applies the rule to that city.

One thing to avoid is changing the plan late. A lot priced FCA at the depot that turns out to need consolidation at the port creates a truck bill nobody agreed. The charge lines that turn up on India freight invoices are listed in [why FOB India quotes and invoices differ](#).

6. What Should You Ask Before Booking?

Five questions, answered in writing:

1. **Where will the container be stuffed?** At the factory, at the depot, or at a freight station by the port?
2. **Which depot, by name, and does it clear exports?** "Jaipur ICD" is fine. "We will arrange" isn't an answer.
3. **Is the inland leg by rail or road, and who books it?** You or the supplier, and on whose account?
4. **For LCL, where does consolidation happen?** If at the port, get the trucking quoted as its own line.
5. **Which gateway port and terminal?** It should match the port your forwarder plans to sail from, whether that's Nhava Sheva or Mundra.

Getting these answered, booking the inland leg in your own name and making sure the box makes its vessel is execution work. [SourcingSync](#) handles it for foreign buyers who'd rather not manage an Indian trucking leg from abroad.

Questions Buyers Ask

What is an ICD in India? ^

An inland container depot, a terminal away from the coast where containers are handled and, at an export-capable depot, customs clears the cargo before it travels on to a seaport.

My supplier is in Jaipur. Which port will my goods use? v

Can my small order be consolidated in Jaipur? v

Should I quote FOB or FCA for an inland supplier?



Does rail make the inland leg faster?

