

HISTORY

ANCIENT PERIOD

In the epic period, the region covered by the present district of Gorakhpur, known as Karapatha, which formed part of the kingdom of Kosala, an important centre of Aryan culture and civilization. The renowned ascetic Gorakh Nath gave name and fame to this district by practicing austerities on the spot where the famous temple named after him stands.

It appears that the earliest known monarch ruling over this region with his capital at Ayodhya, was Ikshvaku, who founded the solar dynasty of Ksatriyas. It produced a number of illustrious kings till the accession of Ram, who was the greatest ruler of this dynasty. Ram had divided the kingdom, during his lifetime, into small principalities. He coronated his eldest son Kusa as the king of Kusavati present Kushinagar which lay in the Gorakhpur district till 1946. After Ram's renunciation of the world Kusa left Kusavati (Kushinagar) and repaired to Ayodhya. His cousin, Chandraketu, son of Lakshmana, even the epithet of malla (valiant) in the Ramayan, thereupon took possession of this region.

The Mahabharata mentions that at the Rajasuya (imperial) sacrifice performed by Yudhisthira, a behest to conquer the east was given to Bhimasena who in turn subjugated the principality of Gopalak (identified with Gopalpur of Bansaon tahsil). Close to Gopalpur at Bhimtola, Bhimasena is said to have reposed after his victory. The discovery of a series of enormous mounds at Gopalpur and around it suggests that the places has been old sites of extensive cities.

A few development in the political history of the district during the post-Mahabharata period is the functioning of a number of republics under the sovereignty of the kingdom of Kosala. The Ganatantras were precursors of the republican form of government in which the political power was wielded by a group of elected persons, usually Ksatriyas, who were called rajas. One such republic was that of the Mauryas of Pippalivana which has been identified with Rajdhani and Updhauli villages (in the Gorakhpur tahsil) about 14 miles (22.5 km.) south-east of Gorakhpur city. The Moriya state extended to the territories of the Koliyas on the west and the north-west, and to those of the Mallas of Kushinagar and Pava in the east, and north-east. The place still abounds in peepal trees. It is dotted with archaeological remains over an area of about four miles (6.4 km.) in length and two miles (3.2 km.) in breadth. A large mound called Updhauli Dih lies on the eastern bank of river Gaura. To the north-west of village Rajdhani are found, ruins of an ancient brick enclosure called Sahankot, presumably the site of a large

monastery, and several brick-strewn mounds. Mithabel, five miles (8.0 km.) south-east of Rajdhani, perched on a large mount of bricks in ruins, is believed to be the remains of the ancient Nyagrodha forest. These antique pieces of evidence indicate the rich heritage of these places as sites of prosperous cities of the Moriyas. Another republic was that of the Koliyas with its capitals as Ramagrama which marked the site of the Gorakhpur city.

The state was bounded on the north by the Himalayas and with the river Rapti as its southern limit. The Moriyas were its south-eastern neighbours and to the west the river Rohini formed the boundary line between it and the Sakyas. There were several other towns in the state but no remains of any antiquity are now available at this place, only the name of the lake ending in Garh suggests the existence of some ancient fortification there. It appears that the Gopalak kingdom of the Mahabharata period was amalgamated with the Koliya kingdom.

The republics which had only a portion of their territory in the district, were the Sakyas of Kapilavastu (in Basti district) and the Mallas of Kushinagar and Pava (in Deoria district). The state of Sakyas lay in the western part of the district. Maya, the mother of Gautam Buddha, was the daughter of a sakya chief, Anjan of Devdaha near Nichloul in Maharajganj tahsil. Nichloul contains the ruins of a large brick fort. The Mallas were the biggest and the most important of all the republics in Kosala. The western and the north-western boundaries of the mallas touched those of the Koliyas, and in the south and south-west direction existed the Moriya republic. This testifies that the Mallas had the eastern portion of the district under their dominance. The Mallas were so powerful that sometimes all the republics of Kosala combined together were known as Malla rashtra. The republics were always anxious to maintain their political unity to face the challenge of monarchies, not well-disposed towards them.

A number of mounds and sites of ancient forts attributed to the Tharus and the Bhars, found in village Bhauapar and its vicinity, testify that some parts of the district continued to be governed by the Bhars and Tharus. The region flourished greatly under the latter.

By the sixth century B.C. these republics came to be independent quantities with defined territories. They had organised governments and wielded more or less sovereign power. Gautam Buddha of the Shakya clan a great religious teacher, exercised enormous spiritual influence on these republics and the people had great respect for him as is evident from the amicable settlement which he brought about between the Koliyas and the Sakyas in their dispute over the possession of river Rohini. On hearing news of Buddha's death, The chiefs of all the republics of this district sent emissaries to receive their shares in the holy relics. The Moriyas who were late in sending their

messenger to Kushinagar, had to content themselves with only the ashes, which they placed in a stupa out of a reverence. The ruins of a stupa containing the ashes has been found close to the Updhauli di. The Koliyas also constructed stupa containing the relics of Buddha on the bank of the Ramgarh lake. The republics of this district joined to fight against Ajatshatru the ruler of Magadha, who had attempted to subdue the republic of Vaishali.

In the middle of the fourth century B.C. Mahapadma, the Nanda king of Magadha, in order to overthrow the kingdom of Kosala, attacked the district and annexed the territory comprising the republic of the Koliyas and the Sakyas. The Nandas were however, overthrown subsequently, by Chandragupta Maurya, son of the chief of the Moriya republic, under the able guidance of Chanakya, a Takshilian Brahmin. Chandragupta Maurya ascended the throne of Magadha in 321 B.C. and made the Moriya republic a part of his vast empire. His grandson Ashoka, a devotee of Buddha, while undertaking pilgrimages to Buddhist shrines, visited this district. His attempt to remove the relics of Buddha from the Ramagrama stupa and to enshrine them in the new stupas built by him in this district and outside, was resisted by the Koliyas.

After the Mauryas the Sungas became rulers of this part along with other territories, and Pushyamitra Sunga (184-148 B.C.), who was the reviver of Brahmin religions, brought to an end the remaining Buddhist republics of this district.

The discovery of painted pottery red in colour, terracotta and cornelian beads, cast and punch-marked coins, a large number of clay seals inscribed with proper names in the Brahmi characters of the third and second centuries B.C., found in the course of excavations at Sohgaon, in the Bansgaon tahsil, indicate that the people of this area possessed an artistic taste and lived in peace and prosperity.

The history of this region in the era immediately following the fall of the empire of Magadha is shrouded in darkness till the advent of the Kushans. The discovery of some coins of Vima Kadphises and Kanishka (78-102 A.D.) indicates that the district remained under the domination of Kushans. The Kushans were ousted by the Bharshivas of Bundelkhand, and the area covered by this district, thereafter remained under Gupta supremacy.

In the beginning of the fourth century A.D., the region covered by the district fell within the central core of the empire of Chandragupta I (320-335 A.D.), whose political power was enhanced to a great extent by virtue of his marriage with the Licchavi princess, Kumaradevi. During the reign of his grandson, Chandragupta II (376-415 A.D.), one of the most glorious of the

Gupta Kings, the district formed part of the Shravasti bhukti. The Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hian (400-411 A.D.) during his pilgrimage to holy Buddhist places, also visited Ramagrama, the capital of ancient Koliya republic but he did not find the place flourishing. A number of gold coins of Chandragupta II and his son and successor Kumargupta have been found near the village Kotwa Tal in Bansgaon tahsil. The beautiful art piece in the form of a statue of Vishnu enshrined in a temple in Gorakhpur speaks of the excellence of the sculptors of that period.

In the post-Gupta period this region fell in the dominion of the Maukharis followed by Harsha of Kannauj. During Harsha's rule (606-647 A.D.) the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang (630-644 A.D.) also visited Pippalivana and Ramagrama. He found a major portion of the district covered by forests. The ruins of monasteries and stupas also existed in every direction.

According to the tradition the Bhars assumed ascendancy over a large portion of this district after Harsha. From the Kahla plate, discovered in pargana Dhuriapar it is revealed that Mihir Bhoja (836-890 A.D.) of the Gurjara - Pratihara dynasty gave some land to Gunambodhideva, a chief of the Kalachuris in 856 A.D. in recognition of his services in the expedition against the Palas. The inscription on the plate amply testifies that in the ninth century A.D. this district was dominated by the Gurjara-Pratiharas and formed part of the Sravasti bhukti of their empire. Bhamana Kalachuri, a descendant of Gunambodhideva, led an expedition from Gorakhpur to help the pratihara king Mahipala, in his campaign of Ujjain. Evidently the Kalachuris continued to rule over a part of this district under the sovereignty of the Gurjara-Pratiharas.

According to tradition the Tharu king, Man Sen or Madan Singh (900-950 A.D.), ruled over Gorakhpur city and the adjoining area. A large tank at Gorakhpur called Mansarovar is ascribed to him and a smaller one called Kaulada to his wife, Kulawati. He was reputed to have immense wealth which induced Donwar Rajputs to invade his capital and oust him. Thereafter they established themselves in the east of Gorakhpur city and constructed a fort which was called Domingarh. The ruins of Domingarh are still found in the shape of a mound built of large, thick bricks. In the vicinity of this mound a relic casket was discovered in 1884 containing an amulet of thin plate of gold representing Yashodhara and Rahul, wife and son of Buddha as well as the ornaments of a child. The Bhars retained possession of the western portion of the district. The Bhumihars came to occupy Dhuriapur (in Bansgaon tahsil) and the adjoining area, which contained the ruins of a large fort on the left bank of the Kuwana river.

After the decline of the Gurjara-Pratiharas, Laksm Karna (1041-1072 A.D.) of Kalachuri dynasty of Trikuri who came to power, brought under his control almost the entire region covered by the present, district of Gorakhpur. But his son and successor Yash Karna (1073-1120 A.D.), was unable to check the process of disintegration. The Kahla inscription indicates that Sodhadeva, a feudatory of an other branch of Kalachuri dynasty, had proclaimed independence in a portion of Gorakhpur district. During the same period the Kalachuri rule was supplanted by that of the Gahadvalas of Kannauj over this region. According to epigraphic evidence the kingdom of Govind Chandra (1114-1154 A.D.) of the Gahadvala dynasty extended to Bihar including the area now comprising Gorakhpur. Two inscriptions ascribed to Govind Chandra have also been found one each at Magdiha (Gagha) and Dhuriapar in Bansaon tahsil mentioning the genealogy of the Gahadvalas and the charity given by him for the prosperity of his family. A number of mounds of bricks, ruins and masonry wells found at these places go to establish their antiquity. The defeat of Jaya Chandra (1170-1194 A.D.) grandson of Govind Chandra, at the hands of Shihab-uddin Ghori in 1194, paralyzed the Gahadvala power and brought to an end their dominance over the district. As a result a number of small principalities held by Sarnet, Donwar, Kaushik Rajputs and Bhars came into existence in different parts of the district.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

In 1192 A.D., when the entire northern India lay prostrate before Shahab-ud-din Ghori, the Gorakhpur region (however, not then known by this name) was held by the various Rajput chiefs, for instance, the Tharus and then by the Domkatars. The latter were overthrown by the Sarnets, who acquired a vast stretch of country, the portion round Gorakhpur falling to the lot of the Rajas of Satasi and about 1400, settling in the purana Gorakhpur area. Local tradition states that the tract of Bhanpur was formerly held by Tharus and then by Domkatars, the latter being overthrown by Chandra Sen, the Sarent, who established himself in Domingarh. His eldest son became raja Satasi and appears to have extended his sway over the lands on both sides of Rapti. However, the effect of Ghori's conquest over this region was unknown. Before leaving India, Ghori visited his most trusted lieutenant, Qutub-ud-din Aibak with charge of the conquered territories. In 1193, the latter subjugated Avadh and Bihar but he appears to have nominally exercised his authority in Gorakhpur region. In 1225-26, Sultan Iltutmish and his eldest son Nasir-ud-din Mahmud marched against the recalcitrant chiefs of Bihar and Avadha, but they did not penetrate beyond the Ghaghra into the trackless forest of Gorakhpur.

Tradition has it had Ala-ud-din Khilji (1296-1316) ordered the conversion of the old shrine of Goraksha (a popular deity) at Gorakhpur into a mosque.

In course of time, the Muslim subahdars of Bengal extended their suzerainty westwards as far as the boundary of Avadh, but Gorakhpur appears to have remained a non-man's land, for no garrisons were stationed there, and the growing power of the Rajput chiefs proves the absence of any controlling authority. These chiefs, however, paid some revenue in Avadh but during the disorganisation of Muhammad Tughlaq's administration they withheld the payments. Muhammad Tughluq died in 1351, and was succeeded by Feroz Shah Tughlaq. In 1353 when this sultan was marching through Avadh on an expedition to Bengal, the local Rajput chieftains led by Udai Singh offered gifts, tributes and assistance to the imperial army when it reached the vicinity of Gorakhpur. The Sultan was so pleased at their submission that he ordered his army not to plunder any village and the animals which had already been captured were restored to their owners.

In 1394, Mahmud Shah Tughlaq ascended the imperial throne. He appointed Malik Sarwar Khwaja Jahan as governor of Jaunpur and the latter is said to have subjugated the region and realised tributes. Shortly after taking advantage of the weakness of his master at Delhi, Malik Sarwar declared himself independent and founded the Sharqi dynasty of Jaunpur, district Gorakhpur now at least nominally becoming part of his new kingdom. Khwaja Jahan died in 1399 and the same year when Timur (the Central Asian warrior) invaded India, Raja Kukoh Chand, the Kaushik Rajput raja of Dhuriapar in this district, is said to have sent an emissary to the invader. About 1400 A.D., Gorakhnath, a popular ascetic is said to have visited this region, and after him the city is believed to have derived its present name. A shrine was also built at Gorakhpur in his honour and the region came to be known as Gorakhpur.

The district remained under the sway of the Sharqi Kings of Jaunpur till about the reign of Hussain Shah Sharqi (1458-1479) and the rajas of the district seem to have acquiesced in submission to the Sharqi kings of Jaunpur, but they never paid tribute or furnished a vassal contingent.

When Husain Shah Sharqi was driven out by Buhlul Lodi (1451-1488), the Sultan of Delhi, his territories were annexed to the Sultan's dominions and the district of Gorakhpur once more passed nominally into the hold of the Delhi Sultans. Buhlul Lodi does not appear to have enforced his authority on this district. Its rajas appeared to be so powerful that they had to be left in peace of by the Afghan nobles among whom this region was divided.

The Lodi dynasty came to an end with the defeat and death of Ibrahim Lodi at the battle of Panipat in 1526 and Babur, the first Mughal emperor, became monarch of the Delhi kingdom. Raja Suraj Pratap Chand, a descendent of raja Kukoh Chand of Dhuriapar is also said to have sent an envoy to Babur, the splendour of the court of the raja was such that it had remained proverbial for a long time.

Following the death of Babur in 1530 A.D., the struggle between his son, Humayun and Sher Shah Suri (1535-40) seems to have prevented either of them from undertaking conquest of Gorakhpur. In 1565, the region, however, drew attention of Akbar, when the Uzbek under their leader Khan Zaman (Ali Quli Khan) the governor of Jaunpur rose in revolt against the emperor. Khan Zaman instigated the Rajput chiefs of this district against Akbar and dissuaded them to accept his paramountcy. Accordingly, in 1565, Khan Zaman dispatched Iskandar Khan and Bahadur Khan to Gorakhpur to stir up insurrection. But before they could take up arms Akbar dispatched a force against the Uzbeks. Thinking that successful resistance might be difficult, Iskandar Khan and Bahadur Khan fled to join Khan Zaman at Jaunpur and from there to Patna. In the meantime Akbar occupied Jaunpur. The rebels now sought for pardon and were forgiven by the emperor. But as soon as Akbar had turned his back and returned to his capital, Khan Zaman revolted again. On February 2, 1566, Akbar rode fast to chastise the rebels leaving behind orders for the army to follow him. When Khan Zamam came to know about the hot pursuit made by the emperor he fled towards Gorakhpur and crush the Uzbeks once for ever, pardoned Khan Zaman again when the latter prayed for mercy. In 1567, the Uzbeks raised their heads, a third time. Akbar sent an expedition under Todar Mal who after routing Khan Zaman chased Iskandar Khan, (the rebel Uzbek governor of Avadh) upto Gorakhpur from where he latter managed to escape to Bihar. Tradition is that at Gorakhpur Todar Mal received submission of the Dhuriapar raja, who had always professed allegiance to the house of Timur. The imperial army then proceeded towards the town of Gorakhpur, but on its way it encountered the Bisens of Majhauri who challenged it. At first the Bisens contemplated resistance but were eventually disillusioned and found that discretion was the better part of valour and submitted. The imperial troops then marched upto Rapti to Gorakhpur where they were offered resistance by the raja of Satasi who was defeated and later compelled to fly. A Muslim garrison was then stationed at Gorakhpur and for the first time the district became an integral part of the empire.

After the defeat and death of Khan Zaman in 1567, the emperor bestowed his jagirs in Jaunpur on Munim Khan who gave the charge of Gorakhpur to Payinda Muhammad Bangash. In 1572, Yusuf Muhammad (son of Sulaiman, the rebel Afgan, governor of Bengal), ousted Payinda Muhammad Bangas

from Gorakhpur, the Mughal garrisons at Gorakhpur failed to resist Yusuf Muhammad and his Afgan soldiers who, in all probability, were supported by the Rajput chieftains of Gorakhpur. When Munim Khan was conveyed this news, he hurriedly proceeded to liberate the beleaguered town. The Afghans managed to escape and join Daud Khan and others who were raising and rebellion in Bengal. From the days of Munim Khan the town became a place of considerable importance, being the headquarters of sirkar and processing a copper mint.

On Akbar's reorganisation of empire, Gorakhpur gave its name to one of the five sirkars comprising the province of Avadh. The Gorakhpur sirkar with 24 mahats now in districts of Gorakhpur, Basti, Gonda and Azamgarh had an area of 244283 bighas yielding 1,19,26,790 dams as revenue. The suyurghal land also fetched 51,235 dams to the imperial treasury. Under the Mansabdari system the sirkar of Gorakhpur supplied a sizeable contingent consisting of 1,010 cavalry and 22,000 infantry. The double Mahal of Gorakhpur had a cultivated area of 12,656 boghas and 8 biswas and was held surajbansi Rajputs, who paid a revenue of 5,71,304 dams including 3,919 as suyurghal or assignments for troops and other purposes, and supplied a contingent of 40 horse and 200 footmen. Bhaupur had only 3,106 bighas of cultivated land, paying 1,55,900 dams while the contingent was 200 infantry. In Unaula the cultivated area was 4,115 bighas, the revenue 2,03,290 dams including 2,170 as suyurghal, while the military force was 400 foot. Chillupar had 6,537 bighas under tillage, assessed at 2,82,302 dams, but the raja was responsible to provide for a force of 2,000 footmen. Dhuriapar furnished only 60 horse and 400 foot, but seems to be in a far higher stage of development, having 31,358 bighas under cultivated and paying 15,22,145 dams inclusive of 5,067 as suyurghal. The mahals of Binayakpur and Tilpur in the north, had at their headquarters a brick fort each for the security of the frontier. They were held by Surajbansi Rajputs. The Binayakpur mahal supplied 400 horse and 3,000 foot, while the contingent from Tilpur was 100 horse and 2,000 infantry. The latter had 9,006 bights under cultivation and was assessed to 4,00,000 dams. In Binayakpur the area was 13,858 bighas and the revenue amounted to 6,00,000 dams.

In 1610, Jahangir (1605-1627) bestowed the fief of Gorakhpur on Afzal Khan, the governor of Bihar, who made the district his residence in pretence to the official capital at Patna. Taking advantage of Afzal Khan's absence at Patna Qutub Khan an imposter, who claimed himself to be prince Khusrav entered Patna and seized the fort from Shaikh Banarasi. Shaikh Banarasi, however, accompanied by Ghiyas Rihani reached Gorakhpur and informed Afzal Khan of the incident. Therefore, Afzal Khan left Gorakhpur for Patna where he defeated Qutub Khan. When Jahangir was informed of this

incident he called Shaikh Banarasi and Ghivas Rithani from Gorakhpur to Agra where their heads and beards were shaved and they were paraded round the city on the back of asses as punishment for cowardice shown at Patna.

After the death of Afzal Khan in 1612, the faujdar of Gorakhpur incurred the odium by some petty act of tyranny. This gave an opportunity to Basant Singh, the Satasi raja, then residing at Gajpur in tahsil Bansaon and the raja of Bansi who attacked and ousted the faujdar and his Muslim troops from Gorakhpur (1625). From this time onwards the Satasi rajas retained their hold over the district and almost all the local chieftains withheld the payment of tribute to the emperor. In the reign of Shah Jahan (1628-1658) the district continued to be a part of the subah of Avadh and Gorakhpursirkar consisted of 119 mahals. About 1680, Kazi Khalil-ul-Rahman was appointed chakledar of Gorakhpur by Aurangzeb. Kazi Khalil-ul-Rahman forthwith proceeded to reduce, the rajas to submission, marching with a large contingent from Faizabad, he expelled Rudar Singh the Satasi raja from Gorakhpur and forced Basant Singh to retire to pargana Silhat where he founded the town of Rudarpur. He laid out a road from Gorakhpur to Ayodhya, and succeeded in collecting the revenue with some regularity. From that time, the Muslim never relaxed their hold on Gorakhpur. In 1690 Hemant Khan, son of Khan Jahan Bahadur Zafar Jang Kokaltash (the subahdar of Allahabad) was appointed as faujdar of Gorakhpur and subahdar of Avadh. Thereafter, the office of the faujdar of Gorakhpur was integrated with the subahdar of Avadh.

At the close of the 17th century A.D., prince Mauzzam, afterwards known as Bahadur Shah came to Gorakhpur for hunting and to him is ascribed the Jami Masjid at Gorakhpur. In his honour a division newly carved out from the sirkars of Gorakhpur and Saran was named Mauzzamabad and by this title the district of Gorakhpur is mentioned in all official records from this date to that of its cession in 1801.

MODERN PERIOD

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the bulk of the present district of Gorakhpur was included in the sirkar of Gorakhpur in the subah of Avadh. On ascending the imperial throne in June 1707, emperor Bahadur Shah appointed Chin Qulich Khan faujdar of Gorakhpur. The latter accepted the post with reluctance (his preference being for the Deccan) and resigned six weeks later. However, at Munim Khan's (a nobleman) intense. Chin Quilch Khan withdrew his resignation. Afterwards Chin Quilch Khan lost favour with the emperor Bahadur Shah and resigned his post near about 1710, and settled down to a retired life in Delhi. From this time till the establishment of

the Nawabi rule in Avadh, the virtual masters of the territory now covered by the district were the various Rajput chiefs popularly known as rajas. Their independent position is strongly brought out by Mr. Wynne in his settlement report. He notes that they held not as mere middlemen, nor even as more representatives of the central authority but as the central authority itself. It was they who assigned lands and honours, although the confirmation of the Emperor at Delhi might be solicited whenever the position attained by the grantee was so conspicuous as to draw attention to him." The imperial officers were quite content to accept an almost nominal submission from the local potentates.

A considerable change when effected, when on 9th September, 1722, Saadat Khan was given the charge of the subah of Avadh including the faujda of Gorakhpur. By 1724, Saadat Khan had so firmly established himself in Avadh that he and his successors, through nominally subedars of the imperial government, were virtually independent rulers of the kingdom of Avadh which had thus been founded. Accordingly the distinct ceased to have anything to do with the imperial government of Delhi, and formed an integral part of the dominions of the nawabs of Avadh, or nawab-wazirs, as they were often designated. In the beginning of his reign, Saadat Khan made it his policy to reduce the power of the strongest rajas (chieftains); but while he succeeded in the southern parganas, his authority was far less acknowledged or enforced in the northern parts of the district. Towards the beginning of 1725, Saadat Khan was forced to turn his attention to the northern parganas of the district where lawlessness, to the extent of the anarchy, had been reigning for several years. With the help of Banjara mercenaries, a community of merchant robbers (who according to tradition, to shade their camping-grounds planted most of the mango groves in the west and south of the district). Tilak Sen of the younger branch of the house of Butwal, had been laying waste these tracts by plunder and rapine after expelling the Tharus(a rice cultivating caste) from there. So thoroughly had the Banjaras done their work that much of the country had become desolate. To chastise Tilak Sen and his allies, Saadat Khan sent a strong force to reinforce the garrison at Gorakhpur. Several irregular engagements were fought with the freebooters; but little impression could be made upon them. They would disappear in the woods and, on the withdrawal of the nawab's army, emerge out of their jungle fortresses and resume the work of destruction. In the adjoining district of Azamgarh, Muhabbat Khan, a hereditary chief withheld the payment of revenue payable to Saadat Khan. Saadat Khan was not prepared to put up with such recusancy. He resolved to punish Muhabbat Khan. The latter attempted to appease Saadat Khan and made large offers of money; but Saadat Khan intent on making an example of him refused all offers and occupied Azamgarh. Muhabbat Khan at first fled

across the Ghaghra into Gorakhpur; but eventually returned to Azamgarh and submitted himself to the nawab. Muhabbat Khan was put into confinement at Gorakhpur where he later died.

Saadat Khan died on March 19, 1739, and was succeeded by his nephew and son-in-law, Safdar Jang. In his reign matters were rendered more serious by a mutiny of the Muslim garrison stationed since the end of the seventeenth century at Gorakhpur. The nawab accordingly sent a large army into the district. This army first reduced the mutineers to order, destroying a fort which they had erected headquarters. It then marched northwards, routed a force brought against it by the son of Tilak Sen of Butwal and recovered arrears from him. A protracted struggle ensued and it was not till twenty years had passed that the raja of Butwal made his submission.

In Gorakhpur, however, a large force was maintained, and it was possibly about this time that the nawabi rule was the strongest and the most distinctly extent to which it interfered with the powers and prerogatives of the local chieftains. It is certain, however, that it did not even profess to provide protection to its subjects. It is doubtful if, except at the headquarters of the district itself, there were any courts of justice. The people had to depend upon themselves and their rajas for protection against robbers and marauders such as the Banjaras. However the district began to flourish in the sense that rice, ghee, chicken, glass-ware and other articles of daily necessity became abundant. The living was so cheap that it is said that those who visited the place once never settled elsewhere.

On October 5, 1754 Safdar jang died and was succeeded by his only son Shuja-ud-daula in whose reign, the district seems to have continued its voyage to prosperity. It abounded in articles of daily use. Throughout the reign of Shuja-ud-daula extremely fine rice matchless for its witness, delicacy, fragrance and wholesomeness was produced in the district. Agriculture was the most important occupation pursued by more than eighty per of the population. Still a large area of arable land had not been brought under cultivation as it is today, and extensive belts of forests existed in the district. During the winter of 1769-70 Shuja-ud-daula visited this district on a hunting expedition and crossing the river Rapti penetrated into forest of this region where he encountered three wild elephants who made a furious charge on the nawab's elephant causing a fearful rout in his retinue. The Nawab, however, overpowered two of the wild beasts which were shot dead, but not before they had killed two of his own best elephants. With great exertion the drivers were able to capture the third one and put him in chains.

Shuja-ud-daula died on January 26, 1775, and was succeeded by his son, Asaf-ud-daula. In 1778, Colonel Hannay, a British army officer was lent to Avadh and entrusted with the command of the nawab's troops and the collection of revenue in the district. He apparently wielded supreme power and resorted to cruelty and oppression. He abolished the office of chakladar and in its place created a number of amins for collection of revenue. Hannay cared little for civil administration; but he imposed land tax on the rajas and through his troops actually realised it. The method applied in exacting the demand was so unscrupulous that many were compelled to abandon their villages and for a long time his name was recalled with detestation. Hannay was accused by Burke of having done incalculable mischief, and according to Mill he laid waste a vast of country which in former days was very fertile. During Hannay's regime in this district most of the cultivators relinquished their holdings in despair, agriculture dwindled to a vanishing point, lawlessness and discontent were rife, and everywhere a feeling of general insecurity prevailed. Hannay left the district in 1781 and the terror he established in the mind of the Nawab may be imagined from the contents of a letter he wrote to Hastings, the governor general, when he heard the rumour that Hannay was to be re-posted in Avadh:

"Colonel Hannay is inclined to request your permission to be employed in the affairs of this quarter. If, by means, any matter of this country dependent on me should be entrusted to the Colonel, I swear by the holy prophet that I will not concern dependent on me be entrusted to the Colonel,".

Whether owing to this letter or not, Hannay was not sent back to Avadh.

Matters were rendered worse by Banjaras, who again raided and devastated almost the entire district particularly its eastern portion. With their increasing strength they began to take an active part in the politics of the district, fomenting quarrels between the local chieftains aiding whichever side offered the best prospect for advantage or revenge, and in many cases posing as the agents of the Nawab Wazir. To this end they usurped titles, such as chakladar, nazim, naib-nazib, amil and talukdar, but in every case their sole object was plunder, to be achieved in the shortest time possible. The rajas were helpless in the presence of those Banjaras, though they rid themselves of them by combination. Instead they indulged in internecine war, the raja of Satasi who had his stronghold at Bhaupar, conducted a campaign against Butwal in 1788. The kaushik of Dhuriapar in tahsil Bansaon were in a miserable condition, owing to protracted family feuds and the treatment they had experienced at the hands of both Hannay and the Banjaras. Majhauri (now in district Deoria) alone was flourishing, for its raja reserved all his strength to keep his ancestral domains intact and subsequently aiding in the creation of the two great estates of Padrauna and

Tamkuhi, both in Deoria district, with the express intention of utilizing them as interposed defences against the Banjaras. In 1790, Nawab Asaf-ud-daula who was a patron of architecture, assisted Raushan Ali Khan, the head of the Muslim community known as Mian Sahib in constructing an Imambara at Gorakhpur.

In 1801 the arrears of subsidies, due under various treaties for the use of English troops, had reached an amount which nawab Saadat Ali Khan found himself quite unable to pay. To wipe off the debt Saadat Ali Khan ceded Gorakhpur and other tracts to the East India Company by the treaty of 10th November, 1801.

The condition of the district at the time of cession was very wretched. It is described as almost entirely without administration, overgrown with jungle, roadless, infested by robbers, and in many places laid waste by the armed retainers of the principal landholders. The charge of the district (consisting of a very large tract) was entrusted to John Routledge, the first collector, and probably no other officer among those who first undertook the management of the ceded district had a more difficult task. He was appalled at the state of the district on his arrival; he had no reliable subordinates, no police and no means of assessing or collecting the revenue; and he was constantly harassed by the presence of the discharged officials and troops. He wrote to the Board of Commissioners in 1801 "I find it impossible to convey to you adequate idea of the desolated state of this country. I have been informed that in one year nearly 4,00,000 raiyats fled from it; and those who remained only cultivated by stealth for fear of opposition." To establish order, John Routledge stationed a large body of troops in the district till a police force could be organised. He found the chieftains and landholders strongly opposed to any form of police administration and in some cases they even offered armed resistance. During the first four years the district authorities were occupied in reducing them and destroying their forts. Matters were steadily improving till fresh trouble arose in a new direction. Long before the cession the Gurukhas had taken advantage of the prevailing anarchy to encroach their possessions in the plains. Their encroachments had extended all along the terai at the foot of the hills, but were most marked in the Tilpur and Binyakpur parganas in north of the district, which were the nominal domains of the raja of Butwal, the hill chief. On the cession of the district the raja of Butwal had entered into settlement with the collector of Gorakhpur that he would pay a rent of Rs 32,000 to the British for his nominal domains in the district. He was afterwards imprisoned by the British for non-payment of dues. About 1805 the Gurukhas claimed to hold Butwal by right of conquest and sent officials to collect the revenue. When the Butwal raja was released from the prison, he fell into the hands of the Gurkhas, who inveigled him into

Kathmandu, where he was murdered. After his death, his family surrendered Butwal to the East India Company and retired to Gorakhpur with a pension. By 1806 the Gurkhas annexed two-thirds of the disputed territory. The British induced the Gurkhas to give up the usurped country, but the negotiations fell through and the Gurkhas remained undisturbed. In 1810-11 they become more aggressive, entering Gorakhpur and seizing some villages in Pali. A boundary commission (with Major P. Bradshaw as the British representative) was therefore, appointed in 1813, but without result, as the two sides came to a totally different opinion as to their conclusions. In the beginning of 1814 Lord Moira (later Lord Hastings) ordered the Gurkhas to quit both Butwal and Sheoraj, a tract north of Basti district. The magistrate of Gorakhpur, Roger Martin was at the same time directed to march the Gorakhpur contingent into the disputed tract if the orders were not obeyed in 25 days. The Gurkhas, however, remained where they were and Roger Martin handed the dispute over to the military officer commanding, with the result that three companies occupied Sheoraj and Bhutwal without any opposition and three police posts were established in Chitwa, Busauria and Saura.

Before the British troops re-arrived at Gorakhpur the Gurkhas attacked the three stations in Butwal. Eighteen policemen were killed and the chief officer was, after his surrender, murdered in cold blood. War was, therefore, declared in November of 1814. The campaign was planned by the governor-general himself. He directed Major General J.S. Wood, who was commanding one of the four invading columns at Gorakhpur, to march to Butwal. A word's garrison comprised 14 guns and some 4,000 infantry, including the 17th foot, he reported that on account of the difficulty and delay in procuring carriage and bearers, he would be unable to advance towards the frontier. He, therefore, obtained considerable help in the form of elephants and bearers from the Nawab of Avadh.

It was late in November 1814 that Wood left Gorakhpur. Though Binayakpur or Tilpur, he reached Butwal on January 3, 1815, to find the pass in which the town of Butwal lay fortified and held by a force under Wazir Singh, the Gurkha commander. Through the treachery of a servant of the Butwal raja, Wood reached the stockade which barred his way. The Nepalese opened fire, but arrival of the British troops turned the table and the Nepalese fled up the hills. General Wood, however, felt that he would not be able with the force at his disposal to hold the hills. He, therefore, retreated leading back his grievously disappointed troops with a loss of 24 killed and wounded. His apprehension of the numerical superiority of the Gurkhas. Made him relinquish all offensive operations. General Wood dug trenches at Lotan (in district Basti) to guard the main route to Gorakhpur, while he himself moved to Nichloul in pargana Tilpur in this district in order to repeal the Gurkha

incursions. His vacillating policy rendered such incursions as almost a daily occurrence. January February, and even March of 1815, saw villagers in the north of the district plundered and burnt. Though re-informed by further infantry and artillery, Wood still considered himself too weak to act offensively. He burnt by way of retaliation several Gurkha villages and on April 17, 1815 he bombarded Butwal for several hours without result. He then laid waste the Gurkha possession in the plain and returned to cantonments at Gorakhpur. In the meanwhile Ochterlony, the British commander-in-chief, and conquers Dehra Dun and Kumaon, but the Gurkhas were unwilling to relinquish the terai. So preparations were made for a second campaign, and Colonel Nicholas was placed in command at Gorakhpur for the advance on Butwal. The negotiations, however, lingered on till the end of October, 1815, with the result that a compromise was reached and a treaty was signed at Sagauli on November 28, 1815. It soon transpired that this step was intended merely to deceive; for the Gurkhas refused to ratify the instrument of the treaty and prepared to re-enter the theatre of war. Hostilities, were, therefore, resumed and when the British, under Ochterlony, had penetrated into the heart of Nepal and defeated the Gurkha army, the raja of Nepal was forced to ratify the treaty on March 4, 1816. The effect of the war in the district was almost disastrous, Lawlessness became rampant, and it was not till the conclusion of the hostilities that the numerous bands of dacoits and robbers were either captured or dispersed. In this manner development was greatly retarded and much of the progress achieved during the past years was nullified. Gradually, however, order was restored and the district started to advance towards prosperity. Shortly after the Pindari campaign of 1818 in Central India Company endeavored to avert the possibility of further disturbances in that quarter by settling some of the Pindari leaders in remote parts of the country. One such was Karim Khan, who was given a large estate in the Bansgaon tahsil taken away from the raja of Barhiapar in lieu of arrears of revenue. He remained there with his family and friends numbering 600 persons. At first the grant was revenue free, but after the death of Karim Khan it was assessed permanently at Rs6,000 per annum. The descendants of Karim Khan had arrogated to themselves the title of Nawab, which was, however, not recognised by the British. In 1829 Gorakhpur was made the headquarters of a division of the same name comprising the districts of Gorakhpur, Ghazipur and Azamgarh and R. M. Bird was appointed Commissioner. In 1835 Gorakhpur division was abolished and the districts comprising it were transferred to the Benders Division. The district in 1837, passed through severe drought. The collector reported that for want of rains and consequent depletion of natural water stores the price of gram had risen from 60 seers per rupee to only 15, and that of wheat from 33 to only 14. During the next twenty years Gorakhpur suffered more from inundations and excess of rains than from its scarcity. In 1850, however, there was again a partial failure of the autumn crop owing to

scanty rains. In 1853 Gorakhpur Division, was revived. The first regular Settlement of revenue was made by the British in the forties of the nineteenth century. A number of unassisted estates now came under settlement especially in the northern parganas. Similarly the Claims of ownership of the forests raised by some of the landlords were disallowed. These measures aroused strong opposition, and the curtailment of income led to the ruin of many big landholders.

Signs of unrest appeared here also on May 25, 1857 when the India infantry refused to take old cartridges. the chiefs of Narharpur also ejected the police from Barhalganj and liberated 50 convicts. They also took possession of the ferry, and stopped the Azamgarh post. In May 1857, the chief European civil and military officers stationed at Gorakhpur were W. Paterson (collector), W. Wynward (judge), F. Bird (joint magistrate). The military force garrisoned in the district consisted of 2 1/2 Companies of the 17th No. 1., whose headquarters were at Azamgarh (under Capt. Steel) and 1/2 Resala of the 12th Irregular Cavalry. On June 5, 1857, news arrived of the revolt at Azamgarh, whereupon Capt. Steel addressed the parade of the sepoy. The following day, however, they also refused to obey when ordered to march to Azamgarh, asserting their intention to seize the treasury. On June 7, the prisoners in jail attempted escape and 20 of them were shot. The next day, when the sepoy who had by now actively joined the freedom struggle endeavored to seize the treasury, they were checked by the British. Martial law was, therefore, proclaimed in the district but it had little effect in the northern and western parganas where the chieftains of Satasi and Narharpur openly supported the struggle against the British. On June 17 and 19, the fugitives from Gonda reached Gorakhpur, escorted by the raja of Bansi, in Basti district. The next day they were removed in safety to Azamgarh, from where they made food their escape to Ghazipur. On 30 June, 200 Gurkhas from Palpa arrived at Gorakhpur. The Gautam Rajputs under the command of the raja of Nahar rose and dispossessed all the usurpers of land traditionally assigned to them. The Rajputs of Paina closed navigation of the Ghaghra river. Frequent meetings were held by the rajas of Nurpur, Nagar, Satasi and the Babus of Pandepar to obtain help from Avadh. In the second fortnight of July the landholders of the northern and western parganas proclaimed that the British rule had ceased to exist. When the British prestige was visibly on the wane, Jang Bahadur, the ruler of Nepal offered the services of the Nepal army to the British. Although his offer was not immediately accepted, Lord Canning did not deem it politic to repulse his friendly approaches. On July 26, news arrived of the outbreak of the struggle at Sagauli, and Wyn-yard (the judge) who had practically assumed the command of Gorakhpur, at once wrote to Colonel Wroughton, who was marching towards Gorakhpur with 3,000 Gurkhas from Kathmandu by way of Nichloul, to hasten his advance. One regiment was sent ahead and the

remaining five, reached Gorakhpur on the 29th July. Their arrival enabled Wynyard on 1st August, to disarm the 17th Native Infantry which was no longer trusted by the British. The Gurkha brigade was now under orders to march by way of Azamgarh to Allahabad, and as the former place was again occupied by the freedom fighters, Colonel Pahalwan Singh, Gurkha commander, declined to leave a single man at Gorakhpur, though the place was now threatened by the troops from Sagauli. The employment of Gurkha troops did not curb the struggle. When, therefore, the Gorkhas were on the eve of departure for Azamgarh, Wynyard summoned all the European planters to Gorakhpur and then made over the charge of the district to rajas of Satasi and Gopalpur in this district, Bansi, Majhauri and Tamkuhi in Deoria district, while Bird the Magistrate, remained behind to supervise their labour. The other Europeans accompanied the Gurkhas, taking the treasure with them. They abandoned the district on August 13, 1857, and crossed the Ghaghra into Azamgarh on August 22. They were followed from Gorakhpur by a force under Mohammed Hasan, who had proclaimed himself the nazim of Gorakhpur. He was the nazim of Gorakhpur under the old regime but he had lost his office after annexation. On August 18, Mohammed Hasan made a spirited attack at day break on the Gurkha camp at Gagaha, a bout 16 Km. north of the Ghaghra but was repulsed with loss. In Gorakhpur the raja of Gopalpur was only one to attend on Bird, the magistrate. The latter also found that only 17 out of 150 men of jail guard were likely to assist him to destroy the boat bridge on the Rapti, while the rajas of Satasi, Barhiapar and Chillupar were now openly hostile to the British. He therefore, refused the offer of the raja of Gopalpur to move with what remained of the treasury to Gopalpur. Hence the raja also left. thereafter, Muhammad Hasan released the prisoners from the jail who joined him and the magistrate was compelled to fly for his life. A reward was set on Bird's head and he was hotly pursued, but his intimate knowledge of the forests stood him in good stead and he eventually succeeded in reaching Bihar after a difficult journey of about 132 km. Most of the bungalows occupied by the British were set on fire, but Mohammed Hasan did all in his power to prevent the destruction of property.

He was now supreme at Gorakhpur. He ordered all government employees to enter his service. Several thanedars accepted him as their master. The big landholders who made their submission to him in person at the earliest received robes of honour, salutes of guns, and were permitted to exercise full civil and criminal power within the limits of their respective estates. Large some of money were extorted from the merchants and bankers of the city. Those who had lost their estates through the agency of the civil courts now ousted the purchasers and regained the lost possession. The raja of Gopalpur who endeavored to form a league to oppose Muhammad Hasan, was compelled to seek refuge in Azamgarh. The rule of Muhammad Hasan did not remains long in the district. The second contingent of the Nepalese

army under Jung Bahadur advanced again from the north, and the British force under colonel Rowcroft from the south. The former after a brief skirmish at Pipra and Pipraich occupied Gorakhpur on January 11, 1858. The fighting sepoy of Mohammed Hasan were expelled from Gorakhpur and they returned across the Rapti, while Muhammad Hasans himself escaped into the Faizabad district. In February, 1858, the British army advanced towards Avadh and Rowcroft was left behind in charge of the district. On February 20, he defeated the last contingent of the fighting sepoys of Muhammad Hasan. Jung Bahadur and his Gurkhas also returns passing through Gorakhpur on their way to Bihar. After re-occupation the British established civil administration and punished those who had supported the struggle. Thus the estates of Barhiapar, Chillupar, Satasi and Shahpur were confiscated and finished, while those who had rendered help were rewarded, chief among them being raja of Gopalpur and Main Saheb of Gorakhpur. The freedom struggle of 1857-58, was followed by the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British crown with the proclamation of Queen Victoria made in November 1858. As soon as order had been restored, the civil administration was re-established in the district. The Commissionership of Gorakhpur and Banaras Divisions were combined. The size of the district was, however, too large to be administered as a single unit. Therefore in 1865, the new district of Basti was formed with six parganas of Gorakhpur alongwith the greater part of Maghar and a portion of Binayakpur. In 1869, for the administration of the civic town of Gorakhpur, a municipality was set up. The district was visited by a severe famine in 1873-74. On January 15, 1885, the Bengal and North-Western Railway was opened in the district. The commissionership of Gorakhpur was, however, revived on April 1, 1891. In 1893, the Gaurakshini or the anti-cow slaughter movement was organised in the district.

The period following the British rule in the district was one which 'witnessed no disturbance of the peace'. But it failed to take effective steps or even to enact adequate legislation for the betterment of lot of the peasantry or even the urban people. The condition of the actual tiller of the soil continued to be miserable under the intermediary who owed allegiance to the alien rule, and their possession of the lands under their cultivation was most insecure. At the various Settlements made by the government, notice was scarcely taken of the rights of the cultivators who continued to be largely tenants-at-will. On the other hand the zamindars of the district were generally in good condition. Most of the zamindars in this district maintained elephants the number of which denoted their status and wealth. A good deal of discontent continued to brew among the peasantry, which led them to challenge the mighty British control and support whole-heartedly the struggles for freedom launched as in other parts of the state.

The non-co-operation movement of the Congress had taken root in this district in 1920, and received a great impetus from Gandhi ji's first visit to the district on February 8, 1921. The Congress organizers of the district called themselves "National Volunteers" and enlisted members from the entire district. Night patrolling by volunteers was started which gained the general sympathy of the people to the movement. Meetings were organised in every corner of the district and processions became a daily feature. Liquor shops were picketed, and palm trees (tar) from which fermented arrack is obtained, which constituted a major source of revenue to the British government, were cut down the scores. All foreign goods were boycotted and European cloth was burnt publicly. Hand woven and hand-spun khadi cloth and Gandhi cap was adopted instead and propagated. The organisation of National Volunteers gained momentum and during the last week of December, 1921 and first week of January, 1922, nearly 15,000 Volunteers were enlisted in the Gorakhpur city alone.

About the same time, the imperial advisers sent the prince of Wales to India hoping that at his sight the Indians who had joined the national struggle would submit to the prince. But the visit proved a failure and the resentment reached even the remotest of the villages. One such village that hit the headlines was Chauri Chaura in this district. There was hardly any customer of European cloth or liquor in the local bazar of Chauri Chaura. On February 1, 1922, Murera (Mundera) Bazar, another large market adjoining Chauri Chaura, was being peacefully picketed. Some of the Volunteers were beaten by the sub inspector of police-station Chauri Chaura. Consequently a very large gathering of volunteers was convened at Dumari, 15 miles east of the district headquarters on February 4, 1922, and after being addressed by the local leaders proceeded towards the Chauri Chaura police-station. Reaching Chauri on February 5, in a large procession the volunteers stopped in front of the thana and demanded an explanation of the conduct of the police officer. Some sober elements intervened and the whole party moved on peacefully. They had proceeded to some distance only when there was a big hue and cry in the rear. It was alleged that the police had maltreated the processionists at the tail. The front party turned back and threw brickbats while the armed police opened fire. How long the firing lasted is not known, but it resulted in the death of 26 Persians. The firing had only ceased presumably because the police had exhausted their ammunitions. As soon as this was known to the enraged mob, they challenged the policemen to come out of the thana. On their failure, the volunteers rushed towards the thana building, shouting "Through Gandhiji's kindness even the bullets have turned to water, the policemen ran for safety and bolted the doors from inside. The people set fire to the thana and 21 policemen and one sub-inspector or police are said to have been burnt inside. Reinforcements from headquarters arrived after sometime to find the building still smouldering and only one chaukidar alive.

An enquiry was carried out under a deputy inspector general of police and a number of arrests were made. Eventually 228 persons were committed to the court of session where the trial commenced on June 2, 1922. Ultimately, 225 persons were convicted of murder, rioting, causing hurt, dacoity or mischief by fire and sentenced to death, transportation for life or imprisonment for various terms under different sections of the I.P.C. Out of 100 persons awarded death sentence only 20 could ultimately be sent to gallows due to agitation and legal battles waged by Madan Mohan Malaviya who had arrived in the district on June 17, to defend the volunteers' case.

In July 1922, The district was visited by Motilal Nehru who was accorded a rousing reception by the people of the district despite prohibitory orders issued under section 144 of Cr.P.C. The birthday of Mahatma Gandhi was celebrated with zeal on October 2, 1922, all over the district by holding meetings and taking out processions. On December 3, 1922 Smt. Sarojini Naidu arrived, and addressed a gathering of 8,000 persons at Gorakhpur proper. By 1923, the congress committees had been formed in all the tahsils and town and political meetings and conferences were held in all parts of the district. Jawaharlal Nehru visited the district from 25 to 28 March, 1923. He addressed 10 large audiences at different places.

Some volunteers of the district went to Nagpur to participate in the Nagpur Jhanda Satyagraha which was directed against the promulgation of the section 144 Cr.P.C. merely to check a procession carrying the tri-colour flag which was taken out at Nagpur on May 1 of that year. On August 26, 1923, Motilal Nehru came to the district again and addressed a gathering of about 2,000 persons.

In the second week of March 1924, Jawaharlal Nehru accompanied by Dr. Mahmud of Patna and some other leaders arrived at Gorakhpur to appeal for contributions for the congress funds. Gorakhpur was chosen to be the venue of a four-day U.P. political conference started on October 31, 1924, under the presidentship of Purushottam Das Tandon. Among those present were Jawaharlal Nehru and Motilal Nehru.

Many national leaders visited the district again in 1926. The prominent among them were Smt. Sarojini Naidu, Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru. On December 18 of that year Ramprasad 'Bismil' the freedom fighter convicted in the famous Kakori conspiracy case, was hanged to death in the Gorakhpur district jail his last words being " I wish the downfall of the British empire". In 1928, the Simon Commission visited India and as in the rest of the country it was boycotted in Gorakhpur also. Black flag demonstrations and protest meetings were held all over the district.

The second visit of Gorakhpur to this district on October 4, 1929 gave considerable impetus to the Civil Disobedience movement which was started in the district in 1930-34. Gandhiji received a tumultuous ovation every where he went. From Barhalganj Hat where he was greeted by over 4,500 persons, he proceeded accompanied by J.B.Crippling to Gola, 53 km. south of Gorakhpur, where he was given a rousing reception by about 8,000 persons. On his way to Ghughli he passed through Barhalganj, Gagaha and Kauriram. At Ghughli railway station about 10,000 persons welcomed him. The same day he addressed a gathering of about 15,000 at the Gorakhpur Parade Grounds. On October 5 and 6, 1929 he visited and addressed meetings at Maharajganj, Barhaj Bazar and Chauri Chaura. Gandhiji's visit was commemorated by establishing district and tahsil Congress committees actively supported by other bodies, which came into being at about the same time, like the Youth League, the Naujawan Dal, the Nauyuwak Sewa Sangh, the Kisan Sabha, etc. The activities of these bodies developed on an all-India pattern starting with with the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, picketing of such shops and the cutting of toddy trees. During salt Satyagraha movement of 1930, Gorakhpur played an important part. As a protest against Gandhiji's for defying the Salt Act, agitation was started, protest meetings, processions and hartals were organised and contraband salt was publicly manufactured in the district in April, 1930. This was followed by a complete hartal on May 17, at Gorakhpur. Madan Mohan Malviya arrived at Gorakhpur on July 22, 1930 and addressing a meeting of 8,000 persons, he appealed for the Hindi-Muslim unity.

In 1931, the people of the district participated in the Kisan movement which took the form of a protest against the oppression committed by the zamindars. To counteract it the government unleashed a reign of terror. Civil liberties were curtailed and such derogatory laws as the Press Ordinance, the Prevention of Intimidation Ordinance and the Unlawful Instigation Ordinance were issued. These oppressive measures resulted in six convictions under Press Act, 587 under the Indian Penal Code, 219 Under various Ordinances and 22 under the Emergency Powers Act. The torture to which the peasantry was subjected is best summed up in the portions of review of the United Provinces Congress Committee Hindi Bulletin No. 21 dated the 1st of November 1932. " In Gorakhpur oppression by the police and the zamindars continues. Volunteers are arrested, beaten soundly with shoes, kicked and then released....". But these oppressive measures could not crush the spirit of the people of the district. They invited Hridaya Nath Kunzru on July 20, 1934 to address their meetings. Rafi Ahmad Kidwai visited the district in May and Sampurnanand in June, 1935. Both condemned the British tyranny, On August 13, 1936, Jawaharlal Near addressed about 5,000 kisans (former) at Gorakhpur. On April 1, 1937, a complete hartal was observed in the district and a procession of over 10,000 persons was taken out a Gorakhpur, protest

against the Government of India Act of 1935, bitterly opposed by all sections of the people of the country. While the part dealing with provincial autonomy was severely criticised, the federal part was even more resented. In May 1937, Govind Ballabh Pant arrived and addressed 12 meetings in the district.

On March 18, 1939, a three-day conference of the provincial Muslim League was held at Gorakhpur. The same years the Second World War broke out. The Congress decided not to co-operate with the government in its war efforts and on August 26, 1939 Acharya Narendra Deo urged the people of the support the Congress.

In 1940, the district was visited by certain national leaders prominent among whom were Govind Ballabh Pant, Jawaharlal Nehru and Rafi Ahmad Kidwai. The trail of Jawaharlal Nehru was commenced in that very year in the district in which he was sentenced movement of 1940-41, scores of persons in the district offered Satyagraha individually and were awarded various terms of imprisonment. According to jail records they numbered 281.

The district did not lag behind in the Quit India movement of August, 1942. Almost everywhere in the district, it started with hartals, protest meetings, processions, and defying of order passed under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal procedure. Within two to three days prominent workers of the district had been thrown behind the bars. On August 14, some remaining leaders were arrested in Bansgaon. The people being thus provoked, resolved to avenge this humiliation and on August 16, a huge procession was taken out at Bansgaon shouting the slogan "release Congress leaders". This was followed by pulling down a bridge near village Gagaha. Once again, the people had to suffer brutal suppression and the soldiers and the police indulged in free arson and loot. Lalsa Pande of Bansgaon was beaten and jailed while his house was pillaged. It was said that his grand daughter-in-law who had delivered a child only three days before was dragged out of house. A village headman, Ram Lakhan Pande and his two sons were caned and beaten with butt-ends of the guns till they fell unconscious. Smt. Kailash Wati Devi, wife of Ram Bali Mishra, another local leader was caught by her hair and dragged out of her house. She was stripped of her clothes. Khopapar was raided by the police. The property of Ram Lakhan Mishra was burnt. At village Madaria the houses of Ram Alakh Singh and Balram were burnt and they were fined and awarded 10 whips each. In 1942, more than 145 persons of the district were interned and 58 were awarded imprisonment. The collective fines realised from the people of the district amounted to Rs.2,19,170.

This district is proud of giving soldiers to the Indian National Army. Kedar Singh Basurchia, Jungi Singh and Karanal Singh residents of villages, Gagaha Manipur and Khori Bari respectively fought against the British forces in Burma and were killed in action.

1945, marked the end of the Second World War and by this time the British Parliament had veered round to granting independence to India. The British Government was now serious in its intentions to quit India for good. At midnight on August 15, 1947, the Indian Independence Act of 1947, proclaimed India to be independent.
