

COMMUNICATION

TRADE ROUTES AND HIGHWAYS

At the opening of the seventeenth century, there were no metalled roads in the district, though the main routes of land travel were clearly defined by avenues of trees and occasional rest-houses, known as serais. The travelers and merchants could pass the night in comfort and comparative security within their walled enclosures. These roads were of beaten earth and connected the district with the adjoining regions. However they were used only in the dry season. The whole district seems to have been traversed by a network of such roads. These roads connected the district with Basti, Faizabad, Azamgarh, Deoria and Ballia. Gorakhpur was a chief garrison town on the north of Ghaghra in the medieval period. Roads which were unmetalled connected it with Bihar and the adjoining areas. To know what transport would be like in the district of the seventeenth century or an earlier period, one may have to picture to oneself trains of ox-coaches (raths) and ox-carts (bahlis) with hammocks attached to the vehicles for carrying fodder for the animals, as well as small luggage, with a posse of horses ridden by middle class people and palanquins (palki) used by the elites or caravans of oxen, ponies and other pack animals laden with goods and flanked by foot-pilots. There were no bridges on the rivers which had to be crossed by means of ferry boats. The carts and wagons were fastened to boats by the wheel and the pole. The oxen and the horses swimming all the while, goods had to be unloaded before the pack-animals were driven into the rivers for negotiating their waters. The shallower streams had to be forded. In the rainy season wheeled traffic came to a stop and in November every road was covered with green turf.

In the closing years of the seventeenth century, Qazi Khalil-ur-Rahman constructed a road from Ayodhya (Faizabad) to Gorakhpur, the line closely following that of the present road. No further progress was made during the ensuing century and on the transfer of the district to the East India company in 1801, the communications were as backward as in any part of the ceded territories. The roads were improved and by 1830, the road leading to Nepal, Avadh, Ghazipur, Saran (in Bihar) were in a better condition. However in the monsoon months the traffic almost came to a standstill because of the absence of bridges.

In 1880 there were two metalled roads which connected Gorakhpur with Benaras (Varanasi) and Faizabad. The Varanasi road was 35 miles (56 Km.) long in the district and it proceeded via Barhalganj, where Tucker embankment was constructed over the Ami and Birja Tal, which extend for several miles during the rainy season. The embankment is three miles (4.8 km.) long and has two very large, besides two smaller bridges. Before its construction the passage of the road through flooded lakes was dangerous for the passengers. The sides of the embankment are built of stones, which stand the wash of the water, which on a windy day is very great. The construction commenced in 1845 and it

was completed in 1850 and it was named after Mr. Tucker the collector. A large number of convict labour was used in its construction and besides the cost of maintaining this task force, Rs. 70,000 were spent on the work.

The traffic on the road to Varanasi via Barhalganj was great, but not heavy in 1870. The road was metalled in 1875, its course being through the district of Azamgarh. It was 35 miles (56.0 km) long in the district. The other metalled road proceeded to Faizabad via Basti and it was 15 miles (24 km) long in the district. This road was metalled in the seventies of the nineteenth century. At this period there were about 900 miles (1440 km) of unmetalled roads in the district, which were generally not negotiable in the rainy season.

One of these unmetalled roads connected Chhapra (in Bihar) with Gorakhpur via Deoria.

The construction of roads was speeded up after Independence in 1947. The following statement gives the total lengths of metalled roads in 1947 and thereafter.

Year	Total length of metalled roads (in km.)
1947	268.7
1966	627.6
1971	702

During the Fourth Five-year plan period the government induced voluntary mobilisation of rural man-power and introduced a crash programme for rural employment to promote construction of large number of village roads.

The following statement gives the lengths of metalled roads constructed under these schemes:

Scheme	Total length of metalled Roads
Rural man-power mobilisation	37.22 km.
Crash programme for road employment	24.05 km.

Metalled roads have also been constructed by the management of 5 sugar factories in the district. These roads are approach roads to the factories at Sardarnagar, Ghughli, Siswa Bazar, Anandnagar and Pipraich. The total length of these roads is about 60 km. These approach roads to the sugar factories

consistent supply of sugar-cane to the factories and an easy clearance of the stock.

Highways

The roads of the district are now classified as National highways, State highways and district roads. The Central Government provides funds for the maintenance of national highways, the State Public Works department maintains the state highways and major district roads. The less important district roads are maintained by the local bodies, the forest department, and cane unions, etc.

The following statement gives names of National highways, state highways and other district roads with their lengths in the district.

Name	Length(in km.)
1	2
National highway	
Varanasi--Gorakhpur	52.17
Lucknow --Gorakhpur --Kasia	42.17
Total	94.34

State highways

Sonauli--Nautanwa--Gorakhpur--Ballia	96.00
Gorakhpur--Golabazar	61.20
Gorakhpur--Maharajganj	53.34
Gorakhpur--Deoria	26.35
Sonwarsa--Sardarnagar	10.55
Gorakhpur--Kasia(in Gorakhpur city)	6.40
Lucknow--Gorakhpur(in Gorakhpur city)	4.18

1	2
Major district roads maintained by public Works department---	258.02

Campierganj--Partawal	31.20
Pharenda--Maharajganj	29.40
Nautanwa--Thuthibari	27.00

Maharajganj--Nichlaul	24.96
Siswa Bazar--Nichlaul	19.00
Pharenda--Dhani--Uskaraja	17.60
Kolhui--Bridgmanganj	17.00
Chillupar--Golabazar	16.11
Bansgaon--Rudrapur	15.37
Nichlaul--Thuthibari	13.00
Nichlaul--Chiutaha	13.00
Siswa--Hata	11.60
Bhathat--Pipraich	10.62
Pipraich--Majhna nala	10.60
Pipraich--Kusmhi Bazar	10.25
Bishunpur--Pakari	9.60
Tulsidev--Saraya--Gularia	8.40
Ghughli--Shikarpur	8.20
Pauharia--Kauya sar	7.60
Pipraich--Bargadhi	7.20
Chauri Chaura--Nakwa	7.05
Bansgaon--Kauriram	7.05
Nautanwa--Khanuan	6.50
Bela--Sonbarsa	6.40
Katrari--Bailo	6.40
Campiergang--Karmainighat	5.70
Bridgmanganj--Dhani	5.00

The forest department maintains about 150 km. of roads in the tara tract of the district. The Zila Parishad, Gorakhpur maintains 396.52 km. of roads of the district. The municipal board Gorakhpur maintains 307.29 km. of roads in the municipal limits of the city.

Modes of Conveyance

In the pastoral stage of economic progress, man began to use certain animals as beasts of burden. Goats, cows and buffaloes gave him milk and flesh, also skins and hides. Sheep gave him wool. But the ponies and horses provided him with a fast mode of transport. The bullock, mule, elephant served as beasts of burden in the district. With the development of agriculture, the need for moving goods and persons from place to place also increased. Man harnessed horses, ponies and bullocks for carrying heavy merchandise on suitable vehicles and thus began to move heavy loads from place to place. In the district as elsewhere in northern plains the bullock-cart was designed, in such a manner that it could haul heavy loads from place to place and on any [kind of track. Next came ekkas, tongas and kharkharas, which were pulled by ponies or horses. These vehicles were faster and better designed.

The means of conveyance used in the past were horses, ponies bullocks, he-buffaloes, and carriages and carts drawn by these animals. The ordinary cattle of the district were smaller in size and inferior in strength to those of the west, though they were reputed to be endowed with great powers of endurance. Locally bred animals were very cheap, the price of a pair of bullocks ranged between Rs. 18 and Rs. 20, at the beginning of this century. While those brought from other districts had to be paid for any sum between Rs 50 and Rs 100 per pair.

Ekkas, tongas and carts pulled by ponies or horses were generally used in the urban areas of the district. With the development of roads, faster vehicles like ekkas and tongas began to increase in number. An ekka, tonga or a cart, having a good horse or pony covered about 8 km , in an hour. For journeys of more than 25 km., there were relays on important roads where horses or ponies could be rested and changed, and journey continued. The bicycle came into use as a means of transport in this district early in the twenties of this century and this inexpensive conveyance is in use equally in the urban and rural areas.

Cycle-rickshaws appeared on the roads of Gorakhpur district in 1945 and their number has more than double since 1950. The majority of these vehicles are concentrated at Gorakhpur, where there were 5,019 cycle-rickshaws in 1972-73. This conveyance, which is economical both for the passengers and the owner, has driven out hackney carriages from the roads of Gorakhpur city. In 1956-57, there were 147 ekkas and tongas in the city, while in 1973 only 68 ekkas and tongas were available. A cycle-rickshaw driver pays Rs 3 for hiring a vehicle for 24 hours, and earns about Rs 5 to Rs 8 in the same space of time. State Bank of India has drawn up a plan, which will enable 770 rickshaw-pullers to buy cycle-rickshaws. A total loan of Rs 4,77,000 will be made available to them in the Fifth Five-year plan. They will be paying back the principal and interest of the loan in easy installments out of their earnings.

Bicycles are equally popular. There were 18,816 bicycles registered with the municipal board, Gorakhpur in 1973. However, bullock-cart is still used for carrying goods in this city and 42 bullock-carts were registered with the municipal board, Gorakhpur in 1973.

Vehicular Traffic

In the second decade of the twentieth century motor vehicles began to play between Gorakhpur -Varanasi and Gorakhpur--Faizabad. The passenger buses and goods carriages belonged to private persons. Later on they also operated on the road to Chhapra in Bihar.

The volume of goods traffic has considerably increased since 1947. After the first World War surplus motor vehicles of the armed forces became available at low price in large numbers. As a consequence, motor transport developed rapidly in the district and regular passenger and goods services were extended

to adjoining districts. The combined movement of heavy bullock-carts and fast moving motor vehicles, however, proved disastrous for road surfaces. Roads began to wear out quickly and the cost of their maintenance rose. Road expansion could not keep pace with the pressure of vehicular traffic and the condition of roads deteriorated. However, after 1947, the government paid more attention to the development of roads, their improvement and modernisation.

According to an economic survey of the district in 1971, about 60 percent of the goods from and to the district, are carried by trucks. A large number of transport companies have their offices in the city of Gorakhpur, which is the focal point for the inward and outward traffic of goods.

Private Buses - Passenger services operate on six routes, with a fleet of 58 buses. The following statement gives the names of routes and the number of buses plying on them in 1973.

Route	No. of buses
Gorakhpur-Gola	18
Gorakhpur-Kaptanganj	18
Nautanwa-Thuthibari	9
Barhalganj-Kauriram	5
Maharajganj-Pharenda	5
Gorakhpur-Barhalganj	3
6 routes	58

In addition to passenger buses taxis consisting of cars, auto-rickshaws and mini-buses are also available at Gorakhpur and other urban centres of the district. As many as 2 auto-rickshaws, 25 mini-buses and 290 taxis were registered with the local transport authority in 1973. Many of the taxis carry passenger regularly to Nautanwa and places beyond into Nepal territory.

A large number of private vehicles are registered with the regional transport authority. In 1973 as many as 448 private cars, 392 jeeps and 2,880 motor - cycles were plying on the roads of the district. In the rural areas 908 tractors, with 388 trailers served the needs of the agriculturists.

The State Bank of India completed an economic survey of the district in 1972 and the survey revealed that the district requires a larger number of trucks and taxis.

U.P. State Road Transport Corporation - The U.P. Government Roadways started operating passenger buses in the district in 1948. In the beginning, these vehicles plied between Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Faizabad and Deoria.

The U.P. Government Roadways was reconstituted into the U.P. Road Transport Corporation on June 1, 1972. It runs a large number of buses on a number of routes, connecting the district with the adjoining districts and also with important towns like, Kanpur, Lucknow, Allahabad, Varanasi, Faizabad and others. As many as 1,96,98,854 passengers were transported by vehicles of the U.P. Transport Corporation in 1973.

The corporation introduced its city service in Gorakhpur town in 1966. At present one bus operates on each of the following routes:

Route	Approximate length (in km.)
1. Gorakhpur-Fertilizer factory	14
2. Gorakhpur-Maniram-Peppeganj	25
3. Gorakhpur-Bhathat	23
4. Gorakhpur-Motiram-Adda	16

The Gorakhpur city bus service carried 7,43,498 passengers in 1973.

Railway

A metre-gauge railway connects the district with neighboring districts of Basti and Deoria in Uttar Pradesh and Saran in Bihar. The history of the development of the railway in the district dates back to May 1882 when a private company was permitted to lay the Bengal and North Western Railway in the region. The construction of track was sanctioned which was opened for [traffic on January 15, 1885. It enters the district from Deoria in a north-westerly direction and passing through Gorakhpur it proceeds due west to Basti.

A loop connecting Gonda with Gorakhpur via Anandnagar junction and a line emerging from there to reach Nautanwa on the border of Nepal were constructed in 1886. Another loop was constructed in 1907 to link Gorakhpur and Siwan in Bihar through Kaptanganj where from, a branch line was laid up to Chitauni in the north. The total length of the railway line in the district is 197.2 km. The track running all over the district, passes through 24 railway stations.

The extension of railway has been confined to northern and central regions of the district. Maharajganj and Pharenda tahsils in the north and Gorakhpur tahsil in the centre of the district have benefited from the railway. The southern region which is represented by Bansaon tahsil is not served by the railway. As a consequence the infra-structure of this tahsil has not developed and the region is the most backward tract of the district.

The following statement indicates the railway routes in the district and their total length.

Route	Total length(in km.)
Lucknow-Siwan(in Bihar) main line	50
Gorakhpur-Anandnagar-Nautanwa	72
Gorakhpur-Anandnagar-Bridgmanganj	13.2
Gorakhpur-Siswa Bazar	62

Every 100 square kilometres area of the district is served on an average by 3 km. of railway, as against the State figure of 29 km. In the northern region, comprising Pharenda and Maharajganj tahsils, there are only 2.8 km. of railway line for every 100 sq. km. of area. In the central region represented by Gorakhpur tahsil there are 5.1 km. of railway line for every 100 square km. of area. On the average 1 km. of railway line serves 16,774 person in the district.

The railway provides direct travel facilities to Kanpur, Lucknow, Barabanki, Gonda and Basti in the west and to the north-western Bihar, Bengal, Assam and Bangladesh in the east. In 1943, the Bengal and North Western Railway and the Rohilkhand and Kumaun Railway were merged together to form the Oudh and Tirhut Railway.

After the nationalisation and reorganisation of the railway, the Oudh and Tirhut Railway gave rise to north-eastern zone of the Indian railways with headquarters at Gorakhpur.

Besides carrying passengers the railway transports raw materials and finished goods in large quantities. Main items of railway freight in this district have been forest produce and sugar-cane. The total number of wagons loaded and unloaded in 1970 was 3,227 and 21,805 respectively. A forest department tramway links Ekmam and Chauraha-covering a distance of 23 km. and hauling forest products.

Waterways - Before the introduction of the railway in 1885 and the subsequent construction of roads, Ghaghra and Rapti river were extensively used for transporting goods, and passengers. Large country boats and steamers of the India General Steam Navigation Company maintained a regular service up and down the Ghaghra. After the construction of the railway bridges the riverine trade decreased sharply.

At present logs are floated down the Rapti from the Himalayan foot-hills and transported to Deoria, Ballia and Bihar through the river Ghaghara.

Ferries- In the beginning of the century the district had 28 ferries whose number has not reduced much due to road development.

Bridges - Most of the rivers in the district have been bridged providing all weather road communication.

In the beginning of the century, the number of major road bridges was 4, which went up to 14 in 1974.

TRAVEL FACILITIES

With the expansion of passenger traffic there has been a spectacular rise in the growth of hotels and restaurant in the district. If Gorakhpur city can claim to have a good number of modern inns, offering modest lodging and fooding facilities to travellers and tourists, the fast developing countryside may also boast of its multiplying road-side snack bars and tea shops.

Besides a government owned circuit house at Gorakhpur, there are a number of luxurious inspection houses to moderately furnished rest lodges, maintained by the state or the local bodies, at various places of the district. Dharamshalas exist in almost every town and rural marketing centre.

Quick transport service is provided through mail or express railway trains and fast moving motor vehicles on the road. For short journeys, taxis consisting of buses, cars, contract carriages, auto-rickshaws and three-wheelers are available in the urban as rural areas.

POST AND TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES

In the early years of the British rule a postal line was maintained between Varanasi and Gorakhpur. This was the only means of communication with the outer world. Within the district there was no public post of any kind, official correspondence being transmitted through the police stations and the police men acted as the postman. In 1833, the latter was replaced by a service of runners, maintained at the cost of the landholders, but it was not till 1846 that private letter were allowed to be carried along the mail lines and a fee of two paise was charged for each packet. The postal system was extensively developed after 1857. In 1863, the landholders were relieved of their personal obligation and a cess was instituted in its place. In 1866, the Imperial post took over a number of district lines and the process continued till the district post(dak) was finally abolished in 1906. In 1878, there were 18 imperial and an equal number of local offices in the district. In the next thirty years all the local offices were taken over by the imperial government. In 1908 there were 72 post-offices in the district including a head office at Gorakhpur. With the introduction of the railway, the number of runners declined. However the runners served 314 miles (502.4 km.) and a cart service was maintained on the road between Gorakhpur and Barhalganj in 1908. The road was 32 miles (51.2 kms.) long. In 1907, the postal administration in the district was in the charge of a divisional superintendent posted at Gorakhpur and almost the same set-up continues to exist even now.

The development of roads and other means of communication has led to the establishment of a large number of post-offices in the district, particularly after 1947. There were 458 post-offices in the district in 1973. On an average about 6,660 person are served by a post-office in the district.

There are 28 telegraph offices and 36 public call offices in the district.
