

PEOPLE

GROWTH OF POPULATION

Gorakhpur, Basti and Deoria formed one single district of Gorakhpur up to 1865 when the present district of Basti was carved out. It was split up again in 1946 into the district of Deoria and Gorakhpur. Consequently it is not possible to state the population of the present district as it stood earlier enumerations made in the 19th century.

About 1813 Buchanan endeavoured to estimate the population, calculating it from the number of families and ploughs in each police circle, and on this rough and untrustworthy basis he obtained an aggregate of some 12,26,110 persons in the combined district of Gorakhpur giving an average density of 271 to the sq. mile. The returns of 1872 were 20,19,361 rising to 26,17,120 in 1881 and 29,94,057 in 1891, the number of females being 9,41,279, more 13,10,997 and 15,96,773 respectively.

The decennial growth and the percentage variations of population of the Gorakhpur district as it stood in the census records of 1901 onwards is given in the following statement:

Year	Persons	Decade Variation	Percentage	Males of	Females Decade variation
1901	14,50,884	-	-	7,21,648	7,29,236
1911	15,80,966	+1,30,082	+8.97	7,92,487	7,88,479
1921	16,12,851	+31,885	+2.02	8,17,111	7,95,740
1931	18,01,373	+1,88,522	+11.69	9,21,602	8,79,771
1941	19,93,661	+1,92,28	+10.67	10,06,483	9,87,178
1951	22,38,588	+2,44,927	+12.29	11,28,000	11,10,588
1961	25,65,182	+3,26,594	+14.59	12,97,297	12,67,885
1071	30,38,177	+4,72,995	+18.44	15,80,590	15,57,587

It will thus appear that since 1901 there has been a constant increase in population. The lowest increase of 1911-71 is attributed to plague and cholera epidemics and the highest of 1961-71 as compared to State average of 19.79 per cent, due to perhaps improved medical and health facilities and the decline in overall rate of growth of population.

On July 1,1971, the area of the district according to the figures made available by central statistical organisation,was 6,316 sq. km. The district occupied 15th position in point of area and 2nd position in regard to population in the State. In 1961 the density of population in the district was 402 persons per sq. km. which was higher than the State average of 250. Among the tahsils, Gorakhpur had the highest density of 568 followed by Bansgaon with 434, Maharajganj with 320 and Pharenda with 285 persons per sq.km. The rural density was 375 and the urban 441. Both the highest rural density of 472 and Urban density of 4,640 pertained to tahsil Gorakhpur.

In 1971 the density of population in the district was 481 against 300 of the State. The most density populated tahsil was Gorakhpur with 675 followed by Bansgaon with 512 Maharajganj with 384 and Pharenda with 339 persons per sq.km. The rural density was 446 and urban 5651. The highest rural density of 552 and the urban density of 5,936 continued to be in tahsil Gorakhpur.

The rates of females per 1,000 males in the district was 1,001 in 1901, 944 in 1911, 974 in 1921, 955 in 1931, 981 in 1941, 985 in 1951, 977 in 1961, and 922 in 1971.

The breakup of these rates in the year 1961 and 1971 amongst the various tahsils is indicated below :

Year	In the state	In the state	Rural	Urban	Tahsils					
					Rural			Urban		
					Pharenda	Bansgaon	Maharajganj	Gkp Municipality	Gkp Town	Barhalganj
1971	879	922	933	833	906	1006	921	882	799	917
1961	909	977	996	963	949	1090	971	974	757	950

Population by Tahsil

In 1961 and 1971, the district comprised the four tahsils of Gorakhpur, Maharajganj, Pharenda and Bansgaon including the two town of Gorakhpur municipality and Barhalganj Town area. In 1971 out of 4,625 villages 4,098 were inhabited and 527 uninhabited. The tahsilwise distribution of population and number of villages and towns as per census record of 1971 is given below :

Tahsil	No. of Villages			Town	Population		
	Blocks	Un-inhabited	Inhabited		Persons	Males	Females
	1	2	3		4	5	6
Pharenda	6	30	611	-	5,06,357	2,65,724	2,40,633
Maharajganj	7	34	731	-	6,74,221	3,51,056	3,23,165
Gorakhpur	10	160	1094	-	9,18,500	4,82,335	4,36,165
Gorakhpur (M.B.)	-	-	-	1	2,30,911	1,28,368	1,02,543
Bansgaon	8	303	1,662	-	6,98,941	3,48,284	3,50,657
Barhalganj (T.A)	-	-	-	1	9,247	4,823	4,424
Total	31	527	4,098	2	30,38,177	15,80,590	14,57,587

Tahsilwise urban and total population in 1961 and 1971 is given in Statement I at the end of the chapter.

Immigration and Emigration

According to the census of 1961, about 92.6 per cent people of the total population were born within the district, 6.1 per cent in other districts of the State, 0.7 per cent in other parts of the country and 0.6 percent came from other countries. In the last category, 11,746 persons were from Nepal, 2,692 from Pakistan, 245 from Burma, 78 from Singapore, Malaya and British Borneo, 11 from N. Ireland, 5 from U.S.A. and from Australia.

The number of immigrants from other district of the State was 1,56,616 i.e. males 44,323, females 1,12,293. Sixty percent of the total number of immigrants had been residing in the year 1961 for over ten years. About ninety percent of them had come from rural areas and ten per cent from urban localities. Female immigrants comprised 82.2 per cent probably because of their marriage. The largest number of immigrants were from Bihar and smallest from Delhi, as is evident from the chart below :

States/Union territories	Persons	Males	females
Bihar	11,168	5,318	5,850
Punjab	2,177	1,293	884
Rajasthan	905	536	369
Madhya Pradesh	531	114	417
Delhi	190	69	121

Quite a number of persons must have gone out from the district to other parts of the State or country or even abroad for purposes of education, employment, trade and business or on account of marriage but the data is not available.

Displaced Persons

Most of the immigrants are refugees from Pakistan. In 1951, their number in the district was 3,461. By 1961, however, it had come down to 2,692. Apparently some had left this district for setting elsewhere. Those staying back have now settled down in different trades and vocations. At Peddleganj, Vijaynagar and Gorakhnath muhallas 140 quarters were built to rehabilitate them. These were later sold to them against cash payment.

Distribution of Population

The district of the rural Population as in 1971, is given in the statement below :

Range of Population	No. of Inhabited Villages	Persons	Males	Females	Percentage rural population of the district
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Less than 200	931	89,499	46,044	43,455	3.2
200-499	1,255	4,30,105	2,19,833	2,10,272	15.3
500-999	1,052	7,50,328	3,85,763	3,64,565	26.8
1,000-1,999	644	,63,693	4,47,205	4,16,488	30.9
2,000-4,900	195	5,52,740	2,89,993	2,62,747	19.8
5,000-9,999	16	99,878	52,330	47,548	3.5
10,000 and above	1	11,776	6,231	5,545	0.5
Total	4,094	27,98,019	14,47,399	13,50,620	100.0

LANGUAGE

The languages spoken as mother tongue, in the district, in 1961 are :

Language Percent of persons

Hindi 93.7 percent

Urdu 5.7 percent

In the rural areas

Hindi 95.4 percent

Urdu 4.3 percent

In Urban areas

Hindi 72.6 percent

Urdu 22.6 percent

The dialect common amongst people is known as Bhojpuri which is directly descended from Prakrit of Magadh. It is regarded to be a sub-dialect of Bihari by some of the modern scholars. It has its variations according to locality, and the type in use in Gorakhpur is known as the northern standard of Bhojpuri or Sarwaria, which is spoken by all classes of the population. The more educated employ Khari Boli. The Tharus of the northern part of the district speak broken Bhojpuri.

The Sarwaria sub-dialect is spoken particularly in the western parts of the district.

Script

Devnagari script is used for Hindi and Persian script for Urdu. Other languages use their respective scripts.

RELIGION AND CASTE

The religious followings in the district, in 1971 were as given below:

Religion	Followers	Males	Females
Hinduism	27,03,439	14,06,498	12,96,941
Islam	3,27,085	1,70,251	1,56,834
Sikhism	2,681	1,437	1,244
Christianity	4,658	2,243	2,415
Buddhism	34	20	14
Jainism	148	80	68
Others	132	61	71
Total	30,38,177	15,80,590	14,57,587

Principal Communities

Hindu--In 1961, there were 23,01,973 Hindus, males 11,60,632 and females 11,41,341. This number became 27,03,439 in 1971 with 14,06,498 males and 12,96,941 females. The Hindus have the traditional caste system based on the four Varnas viz. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaish and Shudra. The Shudras include the Scheduled Castes.

The main castes together with their major subcastes, are described below. The Brahmans are found throughout the district though their number is relatively small in Bansgaon tahsil. Sarwarias, an offshoot of Sarjupari are inhabitants of the land north of the Ghaghra. The Sakaldipi, Kanaujia and other subcastes are somewhat sparsely represented. They are said to be the descendants of the earliest Aryan invaders. According to tradition the Tiwaris, Shuklas, Dubey and Misras were the earliest Brahmans to settle in the district. The Dubey are chiefly concentrated at Barampur and Mithabel in tahsil Gorakhpur, and Tiwaris at Rajgarh in tahsil Bansgaon and at Balua in tahsil Pharenda. Most of them are engaged in agriculture, holding considerable area of land.

The kshatriyas or Rajputs have been the principal land-holders in the district. The erstwhile zamindars mostly belonged to this caste who after zamindari abolition are now agriculturists for occupation. They have numerous subcastes in the district. Their number is largest in Bansgaon tahsil and smallest in tahsil Maharajganj. The well-known subcastes found in the district are Bisens, Bais, Dikshits, Surajbansis, Chauhans, Rathors and Sarnets of which the Bisens occupy the foremost place. They are spread all over the district whereas the Bais are confined mainly to the tahsil Bansgaon.

The largest number of the Surajvanshis are found in tahsil Maharajganj. This name is also adopted by the Rajput immigrants from the hills. The Chauhans are found all over while Rathors live mostly in tahsil Gorakhpur.

The Sarnets are chiefly confined to the tahsil of Gorakhpur and Bansgaon. According to tradition, the founder of the sarnet clan was Chandra Sen who settled in Gorakhpur

towards the end of the 12th century A.D., and established his Satasi rule because the perimeter of his territories was 87 Kms. As he proceeded eastwards, he was confronted by the Donwar Rajputs. They were on the point of compelling him to quit the district, when his Brahmin advisor suggested a matrimonial alliance between his daughter and the son of Donar or Donwar chieftain. The proposal was gladly accepted and extensive preparation were made for the wedding. Chandra Sen in due course entered the Donwar fort with a large number of his followers. Seizing this opportunity, he treacherously murdered the Donwar chief, while his followers outside slaughtered as many of the clan as they could find. The power of the Donwars was crippled by this blow, and the Sarnet became one of the most powerful in Gorakhpur.

The Kaushik reside mainly in Bansgaon tahsil in Dhuriapar which is said to have been founded by Dhur Chandra, the first of the Kaushiks to settle in these parts. According to tradition Dhur Chand's ancestor was Raja Kaushik, grandfather of Vishwamitra, the preceptor of Rama. Legend has it that Rama made a perpetual grant of Sarjupur, the tract between the Ghaghra and the mountains, to Vishwamitra and his descendants. More probably Dhur Chand was driven northwards by the Muslim, and crossed the Ghaghra about the middle of the 14th century. He drove out the Bhars whom he found in possession, ejected the Bhumihars who had proceeded from Harpur and established himself all along across the river in the northern parganas of Dhuriapar and Chillupar. He and his descendants distributed the conquered land among their relations. Many of the local families thus trace their origin to members of the Dhuriapar house viz. The Babus of Belghat, Malanpur and Jaswantpur.

The other subcastes of the Rajputs are the Sikarwars, Bandhalgoti and Bachgoti who came from district Sultanpur, Sengars from Ballia, Rathors the earliest settlers from west, Raghubanshis from Ayodhya, and Raikwars from Gonda and Bahraich districts. The few Sombanshis found here mostly came from Pratapgarh and the Amethies from south of Bara Banki district. The Panwars came to the district in small units, gaining ground gradually by virtue of marriages.

The Vaishs are dispersed all over the district, belonging mostly to Kandu and Kasaundhan subcastes. Their other subcastes are Patanwar, Parwar, Rauniar and Unai. Mention may also be made of the Agrahari and Agrawal subcastes, the latter generally reside at Gorakhpur, and are wealthy. The Vaishs occupy a prominent place throughout the district, monopolizing trade and money-lending business. Many are also in government services.

The kayastha are also prominent in the district, one fourth of them having been literate even in 1901. They mostly reside in Gorakhpur and Maharajganj. Almost all their twelve subcastes are to be found in the district.

Among the cultivating castes, the Ahirs, who also call themselves Yadavs, are the most numerous. They are said to have accompanied Rajputs to this district as herdsmen. They are evenly spread over the district which has extensive grazing grounds though a large number are settled in Chillupur. In early days they might have adhered to their traditional calling but now most of them are engaged in agriculture, and form the backbone of the cultivating community. Most of the Ahirs belong to the Gwalbans subcaste found throughout the eastern districts of the State, the rest being of the Dhindhor subcaste.

Of the many subcastes of the Kurmis the chief are the Sainthwars, Jaiswars, Dhelphor, Gadariya, Patariha, Utarha and Naipali. All the Kurmis are excellent cultivators. They are invariably aided by their womenfolk, who also work in the fields.

The Kewats, residing mostly in Gorakhpur tahsil are by occupation cultivators, fishermen and boatmen. Many of them call themselves a subcaste of the Mallahs, to whom they are related.

The Tharus largely concentrated in pargana Tilpur are great rice cultivators and are the best of all husbandmen in terai area. They are, however, very shy invariably preferring the neighborhood of running water and jungles. The traditions of the district indicate possibility of Tharu supremacy in former days. They too claim Rajputs origin and wear the sacred thread.

The other subcastes are mostly occupational and generally included in the Other Backward Classes. The Kahars work as water-drawers, palanquin-bearers, servants and cultivators. Others are Bhars, Lunia, Bari, Kumhar, Lohar, Nai, Mali, Barhai and Bhumihar.

The Scheduled Castes include the Chamar also called Dhusia, Jhusia, or Jatava, Baheliya, Balmiki, Bansphor, Beldar, Bhandu, Dabgar, Dharkar, Dhobi, Dusadh, Hela, Kanjar, Kharwar (excluding Benbansi), Khatik, Kori, Majhwar, Pasi or Tarmali, Rawat, Shilpkar, Turaiha, Badhik, Boria, Dom, Korwa, Nat and Musahar. Their number in 1961 was 5,12,262 of whom 2,47,886 were males and 2,64,376 females. In 1971 it rose to 6,48,152 i.e., 3,30,710 males and 3,17,442 females. The tahsilwise breakup of the Scheduled Caste population in 1971 is as follows:

Tahsil	Number of Persons		
	Total	Males	Females
Pharenda	96,466	49,396	47,070
Maharajganj	1,43,481	73,366	70,115
Gorakhpur	2,17,259	1,13,253	1,04,006
Bansgaon	1,90,946	96,965	96,251
Total	6,48,152	3,30,710	3,17,442

Muslim :- In 1961, there were 2,57,606 Muslim in the district, 1,33,697 men and 1,23,909 women, comprising 10.1 per cent of the total population. The census of 1971, recorded 3,27,085 Muslim with 1,70,251 males and 1,56,834 females constituting 10.7 per cent of the total population. They mostly belong to Sunni sect, only a few thousands being shias. They have numerous subcastes. The Julahas i.e. weavers are the largest in number. They mainly live in tahsils of Maharajganj and Gorakhpur, and are generally also quiet successful agriculturists. There are no further subdivisions of the Julahas, but almost all of them call themselves Momin. Closely akin to them are the Dhunias, Dhunas or Behanas that is cotton carders.

The Sheikhs in the district have their subcastes of the Qureshis, Siddiqis, Ansaris, Abbasis, Faruqis and Usmanis. The Pathans reside chiefly in tahsils of Maharajganj and Bansaon. The Yusufzai, Kakar, Ghoris, Dilazak, Rohilla, and Bangash are their main subdivisions. Bais, Panwar, Chauhan, Bisen, Chandel, Dikhit, Raghubansi and Surjbansi Rajputs who had adopted Islam are also found in the district. They observe Hindi Festivals and customs, and pay homage to at the temple of Gorakhnath and the shrine of Kabir at Maghar in Basti district.

There are also Muslim avocationists called Darzi, Nai, Churihar, Bhat, Kanjra, Dafali, Dhobi, Nat, Fakir and Qassab. The Saiyids, mostly Husaini, Rizvi, and Zaidi, reside mainly in tahsils of Bansaon and Gorakhpur. The head of one of the leading Muslim families of the district is known as Mian Saheb. He owns property, handed down from a line of devotees beginning with Roshan Ali Shah, son of Saiyid Ghulam Asraf. The later was a resident of Bokhara in Central Asia, who came to Delhi in the reign of emperor Muhammad Shah and finally settled in village Shahpur and pargana Dhuriapar. His son, Roshan Ali Shah, remained at Shahpur till late youth. He then became a Shia and left the village. The Imambara at Gorakhpur was built by them.

Sikh :- In 1961, there were 2,020 Sikhs in the district, of whom 1,146 were men and 874 women. Their number rose to 2,681 in 1971 with 1,437 males and 1,244 females. The only Sikh estate of Dumri which dates back to about 1,858, was granted to Sardar Surat Singh, a Kinsman of maharaja Ranjit Singh, of Lahore.

Christian :- In 1961 there were 3,156 Christian in the district, 1,613 being males and 1,543 females. At the census of 1971, the number rose to 4,658 with 2,243 males and 2,415 females. They are generally converts from the local population. The Christian are largely concentrated in the villages of Basharatpur, Sternpur and Dharampur, and they belong mostly to the Roman Catholic and Protestant sects.

Jain :- The Jains numbered 251 in 1961, men being 69 and women 182. In 1971 their number was 148, males 80 and females 68. They mostly belong to the Vaish caste, particularly to the Agrawal subcaste and are immigrant traders.

Buddhist :- Though in ancient times Buddhism flourished in the district, the number of Buddhists in 1961 was only 144, males 111 females 33. Their number decreased to 34 in 1971 including 14 females.

Religious Beliefs And Practices

Hindus :- The Hindus here too entertain, as elsewhere many beliefs and practices, ranging from the transcendental mysticism of the monotheist to an elaborate polytheism. They believe in complete freedom of thought and actions so far as religious beliefs and practices are concerned. This has naturally given rise to many philosophical schools and sects. An individual is free to join the one which suits her/him the most or none. The most unique feature of Hindu religious belief is transmigration of soul and rebirth after death according to ones own actions in life. Some also believe in ghosts, spirits, minor godling and diverse superstitions. The principal deities worshipped are Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, Lakshmi, Parvati, Saraswati, Krishna, Rama, Sita, Hanuman, Ganesha and nine forms of Devi, viz: Shailputri, Brahmcharni, Chitrghanda, Kusmandni, Skandmata, Satyaini, Kalratri, Mahagauri, and Sidhmata. The Ghaghra is the holy river.

The serpent god called Nagadevata is also worshipped. Worship in temples is occasional with only a few visiting daily. Generally there is a separated corner or place in homes, allotted for daily worship where idols of the desired deity or deities are kept. Many offer prayers in morning and evening both. Some also make oblations to fire daily, weekly or occasionally. Fasts are observed weekly or periodically on prescribed dates of the Lunar month or at some festivals. Discourses on and recitations from sacred books like the Upanishads, Gita, Bhagvat Puran, Ramayana or Ramacharitmanasa, and kirtans i.e., collective singing of the glory of the Lord are arranged privately or publicly.

There are large number of Hindu temples and places of worship in the district, the most famous being the temple of Gorakhnath (known as Gorakhsha Devi temple in ancient times). It is a most sacred place for the followers of Machhendra Nath, and his disciple Gorakhnath. His followers are called Yogi, Gorakhnathi, Darsani but most distinctively as Kanphata. The first of these names refers to their traditional practice of the Hatha Yoga, the second to the name of their reputed founder, the third to the huge ear-ring which is one of their distinctive marks, and the fourth to their unique practice of having the cartilage of their ears split for the insertion of the ear-rings. It is said that the practice of splitting the ears originated with Gorakhnath himself. Splitting of ears is ceremony at initiation when the guru, or teacher, splits the central hollows of both ears with a two edged knife or razor. The slits are plugged with sticks of neem-wood; and, after the wounds have been healed, large rings called mudra are inserted. These are a symbol of the Yogis faith. The Gorakhnathis worship thrice a day at the shrine. During the midday worship, accompanied by the beating of drums and ringing of the temple bells, the priest circumambulates the shrine, with his right side towards the inner shrine. He then opens the door and the worship is completed.

Muslims :- Any one believing in one God i.e. Allah and Muhammad, his prophet, is a Muslim. Islam enjoins five duties upon its followers-the recitation of the Kalma i.e. an expression of faith in God and the prophet Muhammad, the offering of namaz or prayer five times a day individually or collectively and preferably in a mosque, roza or fasting in the month of Ramadan, hajj to Mecca, and Zakat i.e., charity in cash or kind. The five prayers are called Fajr, Zuhar, Asr, Maghrib and Isha and are to be offered before sunrise, afternoon, evening, at the time of sunset and before going to bed receptively. Quran the holy book of Muslims is to be read or recited. A person who can recite it by heart is called a hafiz.

There are many Idgahs or prayer grounds for offering annual mass prayers on the occasion Id and Baqrid and mosques including Jama Masjid in the district. Many Muslims have faith in saints called 'pirs' and hold 'urs' celebrations at their tombs. On such occasion some times practices are followed which may not have the sanction of Islam. 'Urs' is held at number of places in honour of Muslim saints. The 'urs' of Syed Salar Masud is held in Gorakhpur city is the biggest. Milad celebrations are also common here and observed with great rejoicing to commemorate the birth of the prophet in the month of Rabi-al-awwal of Hijri era. During such celebrations houses are illuminated and religious discourses highlighting the teaching of Islam are held.

Sikhs :- Sikhism is a monotheistic religion, disavowing idolatry. There is no caste distinction, Wearing by each adherent of a comb, an iron bangle, a dagger and a pair of short drawers and growing long hair is mandatory. This is known as the five 'ka' viz., kangha, kara, kripan, kachha and kesh. The Sikhs believe in congregational prayers at

Gurudwaras and reading the holy book called 'Granth Saheb'. They celebrate the birth anniversaries of their gurus when the Granth Saheb is taken out in the procession. They also perform collective marriages in Gurudwaras. In summer they offer water free sweet and drinks to all and sundry on certain occasions.

Christians :- The Christians believe in God and HIS son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. After the terrestrial death there will be resurrection of the dead followed by the life everlasting in the other world. The Bible is their holy book which has two versions, the old Testament and the New Testament. The Christian believe in the one loving and merciful God controlling the universe who directs the affairs of men to certain predetermined goals. Congregational prayers are held in Churches every sunday which also serves the purpose of a get together.

Of Buddhists :- Buddhists believe in the eightfold middle path of righteousness viz.: satya vichar (right views), satya biswas (right aspirations), satya bhasan (right speech), satya karma (right conduct), satya nirvah (right living), satya prayatna (right effort), satya dhyan (right mindfulness) and satya bhao (right meditation). This path ends sorrow and leads to the attainment of peace, enlightenment and nirvana. Avoiding the two extremes of indulgence in sensuous pleasure and of total denial of worldly enjoyments and objects, the Budhists try to adopt the middle course. They also worship in their temples and offer daily prayer at home.

Of Jains :- The jains follow the creed of the jinas or tirthankars and install their image in their temples. Their faith enjoins upon them to follow vegetarianism and uphold ahimsa as the highest dharma. The strict ones do not eat or drink after sunset. They observe sanyama periodically when they keep fast. They have two branches called the digambara and the shvetambara. They have Jain munis.

Manners and Customs

Though the general pattern of life of all the communities is becoming increasingly uniform under the socio-economic stresses of modern living nevertheless each community has its own particular way of life, distinguishable by varying manners and customs. Among the Hindus some of the important ceremonies are namkaran (naming of the child), mundan (the first tonsure of the hair), janeu or upanayana (sacred thread ceremony), vivah (marriage ceremony) and anteyesthi (death ceremony). Some of the important ceremonies of Muslims are akika, a ritual which has two parts, namely, the shaving of child's head and the sacrifice of one or two goats, bismillah, which consists of initiating the child to the study of 'Quran', khatna (circumcision), nikah (marriage) and death ceremony.

Inter-caste Relations :- As in other parts of country inter-caste relation were very rigid nearly a generation ago. The members of different castes and subcastes lived in watertight compartments and matters such as inter-caste dining and marriage were a sort of taboo and looked down upon. picture has greatly changed especially in the post-independence period. Inter-dining is no longer looked down upon with disapproval by the people anywhere in the district particularly in towns, though the restriction still persists in a diluted form in the rural areas. Inter-caste marriages, though not very common, are more frequent than before and many of the traditional restrictions on

marriage based on caste are gradually disappearing as a result of the spread of education influence of western culture, equality of sexes and consequent removal of disabilities from which women suffered in the past.

New Religious Leaders And Movements

The Arya Samaj is a protestant and reformatory movement of the Hindus. It is founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1869. In 1869, the number of followers of the Arya Samaj in the district was 15 only. Since then it has made a considerable progress so that at the census of 1951 the number increased to 1,666.

Arya Samaj philosophy is monotheistic and professes to be a reversion to the original tenets as given in the Vedas. The objective of the Arya Samaj has been the reform of the Hindu faith and the accommodation of the masses in a national religion free from rigid rituals but incorporating simultaneously certain platitudes to which the more educated Hindus can subscribe without misgiving. Arya Samaj condemns idolatry, Shradha and early marriage and is opposed to the prevalent, rigid caste system. They give women a higher status in the social life than do the orthodox Hindus.

There are also some followers of Radhawami sect which is an offshoot of the bhakti cult of Hinduism but is appreciably different from that religion. It is open people belonging to any caste, religion or walk of life. The Satsangis (followers of the order) believe that the true name of the Supreme Being is Radhaswami, that the universe has three divisions—the spiritual-material and the material-spiritual and the four essentials of religion are sat-guru (the true teacher), sat-shabad (the true word), sat-sang (the true order or association) and sat-anurag (true love).

FESTIVAL AND FAIRS

Hindu :- Almost all the common Hindu festivals are celebrated in the district.

Sitala Astami falls on the 8th day of the first fortnight of Chaitra, when Sitala Devi, is worshipped. On the ninth day of the bright fortnight of the same month falls Ram Navami, birth anniversary of Rama. Some people keep fast on that day. Ramayana and Ramcharitmanas are read and devotional music and discourses etc., are arranged. In some temples the idol of Rama is exhibited on a cradle. The Vata Amavasya falls on the 15th of the first half of Jyaistha. It perpetuates the devotion of Savitri to her husband Satyavan, whence it is also named Vat Savitri. It is observed by married women praying and wishing for their husbands, life and prosperity. The typical feature is women's worshipping and twelve times going round the banyan tree or a branch of it in their houses.

Naga Panchami is celebrated on the fifth day of the bright half of Sravana, to appease the serpent god. It is an important rainy-season festival in the district for girls particularly. Married daughters look forward to visiting their parent's homes for this festival. They swing and sing jhoola songs called kajari and baramasi. Actually swinging along with singing these folk songs by women, children and also men, during the twin rainy month of Sravana and Bhadon is popular in the whole of eastern part of the State. Fairs and wrestling bouts are also held at many places on this occasion, a typical feature

being the bamboo pipes blown by the brother carrying coloured neem sticks and going with their sister's dolls.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival denoting brother's pledge to protect the sister. It falls on the full Monday of Sravana. The sister ties rakhis i.e. coloured thread on the right wrist of the brother and thus the latter's pledge to protect the sister is renewed. At some places the Brahmin or pundits or class IV staff also tie rakhi to their yajamana or officers and receive money from the latter.

Harchatha falls on the 6th day of first fortnight of Bhadra, when mothers keep fast for the well-being of the sons eating only the rare variety of rice and green leaves without salt or sugar, milk and curd permitted. Hartalika Teej falls on the 3rd day of the first fortnight of Bhadra and is a well-known festival of the district, when the women keep fast for the welfare of their husbands.

Janamastami falls on the birth anniversary of Krishna on the eighth day of the first fortnight of Bhadon. Staunch devotees fast without taking even water till the time of birth at midnight when they eat prasada. All the temples of Krishna are decorated and illuminated. Dolls and toys are also arranged in homes around idol of Krishna in cradles or depicting events of his life. These are called jhanki meaning a glimpse of the auspicious event. People go from house to house and temple to temple appreciating the artistic arrangements some of which show great ingenuity and skill. Singing of devotional songs relating to Krishna and his life is a special feature of this festival.

Anant Chaturdasi falls on 14th day of later half of Bhadra and is celebrated in memory of Rishi Ananta.

Dashehra falls on the tenth day of the bright half Ashvin and commemorates the victory of Rama over Ravana. It is celebrated for nine days and coincides with the Navaratra celebrations of worship of goddess Durga. Ramlila and Durga puja celebrations are held at innumerable places in the district and in the city. Many dramatic performances are also arranged besides literary and other programmes. Vijai Dashami is the tenth day which marks the death of Ravana and Mahishasur, representing evil, at the hands of Rama and Durga, representing good. The entire Bengali Community of the district celebrates these ten days—they put on new clothes. Many people fast on all the nine days by eating non-grain diet only once a day. Ramlila processions are taken out with great enthusiasm at many places in the district. The fourth day of the dark fortnight of Kartika is called Karwa Chauth, observed by married women for the well being of their husbands.

The 13th day of Kartika is called Dhanteras, when the Dewali festivities begin and people purchase jewelry and metal utensils according to their means. Some also worship Dhanwantari, the presiding deity of Ayurveda. The next day is Naraka Chaturdashi or Chhoti Diwali when daridra, that is god of poverty, is supposed to quit houses which are cleaned and kept ready for the reception of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. Next day is diwali or Deepawali, the festival of light, falling on Kartika Amavasya. It commemorates the return of Rama to Ayodhya after destroying Ravana. Homes are illuminated and Ganesha and Lakshmi are worshipped. For traders and businessmen Deepawali marks the end of a fiscal year when they close the account books, open new ones and pray for profit and prosperity, labha and shubha in the new year. None fasts in this festival.

Eating of zimikand also called sooran which is a root vegetable, is must on this day. On the second day of the next fortnight falls the famous festival of Bhaiya Dooj, to renew fraternal affection when sister puts tika on the brother's forehead after performing some puja, keeping fast till then. For Kayasthas this is an important day as they worship pen and inkpot, the means of their livelihood, after offering prayer to Chitragupta their ancestor. Some people worship the god of cattle wealth on the day next to Diwali.

Kartiki_Purnima is a bathing festival. People here take a dip in the Ghaghra believing that all their evils will thereby be washed away as shiva conquered demon Tripura on this day.

Makar Sankranti usually falls on January 14 or sometimes 13. It is the last day of the sun on the tropic of Capricorn where after the sun travels northwards. It is also a bathing festival. Its typical feature is alms-giving and eating of khichari and laddoos of black and white til and gur. It is followed by another bathing day the Amavasya of Magha. Basant Panchami is the fifth day of the succeeding fortnight of Magha dedicated to the worship of Saraswati, the goddess of learning. Its typical feature is bathing and wearing of basanti i. e., a shade of yellow, coloured clothes. Some men put on basanti caps to mark the day.

Shivaratri is the thirteenth day of the first fortnight of Phalguna dedicated to worship of Shiva. The devotees fast throughout the day and are supposed to keep awake at night singing the glory of the god but generally they go to sleep. The Shiva temples are specially decorated and illuminated. A large number of devotees offer water, yellow flowers and belpatra to icons and images of Shiva. For the Arya Samajists, Shivaratri is a memorable day because Dayanand a son of a devotee of Shiva and the the founder of this school got enlightenment on this night. The Arya Samajists celebrate the week preceding this day as Rishi-bodha-saptah and arrange discourses by learned scholars during the seven days.

Holi, the festival of spring, is the concluding festival of the Vikrama era falling on the full-moon day of Phalguna. People in the rural areas sing phaag, the folk song of the season, to the accompaniment of dholak before and after the day of festival. Holi is sung even by classical singers in cities. Fires are lit at important points in public places at the fixed time in the previous evening or night to commemorate the annihilation of all illwill, malice and evil forces of the previous year represented by the demon god's sister, Holika. The newly harvested ears of barley and wheat are thrown on fire as offering to the gods. The following day people rejoice throwing coloured water on each other, meeting without any distinction and putting dry coloured powder on each other's forehead or face. Rural people put on new clothes before playing coloured water, whereas urban people do so in the evening before visiting relatives and friends.

The number of Hindu religious fairs is quite large. Most of the festivals are accompanied by local fairs too. Nearly a dozen of these fairs are visited by about ten thousand or more people. The biggest are the fairs of Rama Navami falling in the bright half of Chaitra held at Narainpur, and Nagri in tahsil Maharajganj and at Adrauna in tahsil Pharenda. About 1,50,000 persons attend these. All types of household and fancy goods are sold in the fair. The Kartiki Purnima fairs of village Tirmohini in tahsil Maharajganj and of Birsghat in tahsil Gorakhpur are also famous. They attract about 60,000 persons each. On this occasion small fairs are held at other places also. Fairs at

Karmainghat in tahsil Pharenda, at Barhalganj Town at Gola in tahsil Bansaon can be mentioned. On Dashehra, also fairs are held at many places, important being of Raj Ghat in tahsil Gorakhpur attended by nearly 50,000 persons.

Gorakhnath fairs is held at the Gorakhnath temple in Gorakhpur. About 20,000 devotees attend it. Rubber and clay toys, utensils, glasswares, hosiery goods and clothes, etc., are sold in the fair. The fairs of Suraj Kundis held at Gorakhpur on the first Sunday of Jyaistha in which 20,000 persons come. On the dark half of 13th of Phalguna, Sivaratri fairs are held at Bharhova in tahsil Pharenda and Harpur Mahant in tahsil Maharajganj. About 25,000 persons attend it.

Muslim:- The Muslims too celebrate a number of festivals most important being Barawafat, Sab-e-Barat, Id-ul-fitr, Id-uz-Zuha, Giarhween Sharif and Muharram, the last named being an occasion for mourning rather than rejoicing. They fall on particular dates of the Islamic calendar Hijri and depend upon the visibility of moon. Barawafat, the birthday of prophet Muhammed, falls on the twelfth day of Rabi-al-awwal. Alms are distributed and discourses called Milad Sharif on the prophet's life are held.

Sab-e-Barat falls on the night of the fourteenth day of Shaban when prayer i.e. fateha is recited for peace to souls of one's deceased kin Fateha is recited or read over sweets and bread which are then distributed. On the first of Shawal, the festival of Id-ul-Fitr is celebrated by offering prayers in mosques or at Idgahs and meeting each exchanging gifts and greetings. Typical feature of this festival is eating of sewain. Id-ul-Zuha (or Bakrid) is celebrated on the tenth day of the month of Zilhijja to commemorate prophet Ibrahim's submitting himself to the will of God. Men attend morning prayers in mosques or Idgahs and sheep and goat are sacrificed in God's name.

Giarhween Sharif is a festival of special importance to the Sunnis and is observed on the eleventh day of the month of Rabi-us-sani in honour of Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani, the ancient Muslim saint of Baghdad, believed to be a descendant of prophet Muhammad. Prayers and sweets are offered in his memory on this occasion.

The first ten days of the month of Muharram commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Husain and his companions on the historic field of Karbala. The Muharram, the first month of Hijri era i.e., the Muslim year is a period of mourning, specially for the Shias whose women observe all the mourning customs during this period e.g., breaking of their bangles, abstaining from use of ornaments, wearing of black clothes, non-participation in social functions, etc. Many Shias Majalis in their homes to hear marsia describing the life of Imam Husain and the scenes of the battle of Karbala, followed by lamentation and beating of chests. On Ashura, the tenth day of Muharram the tazias which are installed on the first or subsequent days are taken out in procession for burial at Karbala. On the Chelhum or the fortieth day from Ashura which falls in the second month called Safar of the Hijri-era the remaining tazia processions are taken out in the morning by the Sunnis, and in the afternoon by the Shias. This arrangement holds good according to a settlement arrived at long ago between the two communities in order to prevent any clashes between them. On the 8th day of the third month of Hijri i.e., Rabi-al-awwal, mourning concludes and a procession of Alams i.e., banner's is taken out by the shias. In Shia processions there is no external demonstration of grief and it marches in silence.

Besides the above festivals, urs ceremonies are held at the tombs of famous saints. They are usually accompanied by local fairs. The urs of Saiyed Salar Masud at Gorakhpur falling on first Sunday of Jyaistha, is of great importance. On the tenth of Muharram, big fairs attended by about 65,000 persons are held at Balua in tahsil Maharajganj and at Imambara-Mian Bazar in Gorakhpur proper.

Sikh :- The Sikhs celebrate the birthdays of their gurus, Nanak Dev, Teghbahadur and Govind Singh, portions from the Granth are read, congregational prayers are held at Gurudwaras and processions taken out. The Baisakhi is another Sikh festival. Local fairs are held at Gurudwaras on each occasion.

Christian :- The main festivals of the Christians are Christmas the birthday of Jesus Christ, which falls on December 25, Good Friday, the day of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, Easter, which always falls on Sunday in March or April is, the day of His resurrection and New Year's Day on 1st January. People attend services in their churches and exchange presents. On Christmas eve scenes from the nativity of Christ are enacted and cribs are set up in the churches which people, particularly children, flock to see. The Roman Catholics celebrate the festival of Corpus Christi by taking out a procession in honour of Christ's body. Christians organise fair on the occasion of Easter or Easter Monday.

Jain--The Jains in the district celebrate the birth and nirvana anniversaries of Parshvanath and Mahavira, their twenty-third and twenty-fourth tirthankaras. The other important festivals of the Jains are Paryushan (the last ten days Bhadra and Asthanika falling on the last eight days of Kartika).

Buddhist :- The principal festival of the Buddhists is the Buddha Purnima on which day Buddha took birth, got enlightenment and attained nirvana. On this occasion they worship in their temples and recite verses from the Pali books Tripitaka.

A list of important fairs held in the district is given in Statement-2 at the end of the chapter.

SOCIAL LIFE

Property and Inheritance

The Hindu, Sikhs and Jains are governed by the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, the Muslims by their personal law and the Christians by the Indian Succession Act, 1925 in respect of inheritance. Before the passing of the U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 (Act No.1 of 1951) agricultural land other properties were governed by the provisions of the U.P. Tenancy Act and the personal law of the individual concerned. Since its enforcement on July 1,1952, however, inheritance and succession to agricultural land and property is regulated by it.

In this district, as elsewhere in the State, the joint family system was an important feature of the Hindu society which is fast disintegrating owing to changing conditions in the economic and social life of the people. Rapid industrialization and urbanization, is responsible for the change in rural areas whereas the individualistic approach to life has affected the joint family system in the urban sector.

Marriage And Morals

According to census of 1961, 31.1 per cent of the population were married in the age-group 15-34. Also 26.7 per cent were married persons in the age-group 5-14, which together with 14.1 per cent of age-group 0-4 years gives the incidence of child marriage in the district. Only 8.5 per cent of age 55 and over were married couples. In the rural areas 40.4 per cent were unmarried, 51.3 per cent were married and 8.3 per cent were widowed or divorced. In urban areas they were 48.0 per cent, 46.6 per cent and 5.3 percent respectively.

Of Hindus :- Among the Hindus of the district, as elsewhere in the State marriage is a sacrament. Variations in performance of different ceremonies occur between castes and even families but the chief ceremonies viz., saptapadi, literally seven steps and kanyadan, giving of the daughter, are essential and common. Mostly they marry within their sub-castes although intercaste and inter religion alliances are increasing gradually.

The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, declared polygamy to be illegal among Hindus, the term Hindu including Sikhs and Jains in this context. The marital age is 18 years for the bridegroom and 15 years for the bride but in the event of the latter not having completed the age of 18 years, the consent of the guardian has to be obtained. The customary restrictions observed mostly by Brahmins e.g. prohibiting marriage between persons of the same gotra (eponymous group descended from a common ancestor in the male line of descent) have legally been abolished with the passing of the Act. Marriages are mostly arranged by the parents still. The bride's side approach first in some cases through intermediaries. The rigidity about fixation the date and time of the marriage to be fixed only in consultation with a pundit only after astrological calculations, has been relaxed. In arranged cases first ceremony is performed by the bride's side which amounts to booking of the boy. The next is a major ceremony performed at the bridegroom's house, called tika or tilak when presents and cash sent by the bride's party are placed in the hands of the bridegroom and the date and time of marriage as proposed by the bride's people is formally communicated to the opposite party. The barat comes on the appointed day to the bride's house where dwarpuja, i.e., puja at the door-step is performed and reception of the bridegroom and his party takes place. Some also perform the garlanding ceremony thereafter. The main marriage ceremony consists of kanyadan, sindurdan, saptapadi i. e., seven steps taken round the sacred fire, by the two together, showing of the polar star, Dhruwa to the couple, placing foot on the stone by both together to show that their relationship will remain firm and strong like polar star and the stone, and finally of the promises made by both to each other for a happy conjugal life in the presence of the fire-god Agni. The guests are feasted according to duration of the stay of the barat. After farewell and the ceremony of Vidai, the barat returns along with the bride and the articles of dowry to the bridegroom's house. In some cases among the Scheduled Castes a declaration before the caste panchayat by the bride of her willingness to accept the bridegroom, or the reciting of kathas, or the tying of one end of the bride's garment to the bridegroom's or the putting of vermilion on the former's head by the latter are enough to complete the alliance. Once married, divorce or separation though prescribed by law are not considered advisable or good. So both make utmost effort to continue together. A male issue is also considered a must to propitiate the elders and to continue the line.

Of Muslims :- Islam permits polygamy, a man being allowed to have up to four wives at a time. With the Muslims marriage is a contract and every Muslim of sound mind who has attained puberty may enter into such a contract but a marriage of such a Muslim is void if it has been brought about without her/his consent. The amount of mehar, to be paid by the bridegroom is fixed but can be paid before, at the time of or after the marriage. The proposal is initiated by the bridegroom's side or on their behalf. The acceptance by the bride has to be personal, in the presence and hearing of the priest and 2 men, or a man and 2 women witness who must be sane and adult. According to the Shia law the presence of witness is not necessary in any matter regarding marriage. The proposal and acceptance both must be expressed at one meeting. Sometimes it is obtained on telephone also by the priest. In this district also as elsewhere, after the settlement of the marriage, the sagai or mangni takes place. The nikah is performed by the qazi, on the date fixed, when the barat with the bridegroom arrives at the bride's house and her wakil(who usually an elderly relative), in the presence of two witnesses, obtains the consent of the bridegroom to the contracting of the marriage. He then informs the parents or guardians of both the parties. The qazi then reads khutbah after obtaining the acceptance by the bride through the wakil and the witnesses and the ceremony is over only the feast remaining. Among the Shias one Maulvi from each side participates in performing the marriage instead of the qazi.

Generally the rukhsati or vidai takes place immediately after and the bride accompanies the bridegroom to his place. there is provision for the guardian of a minor to enter into a marriage contract on behalf of his ward.

Of Christians :- Christian marriage are governed by the Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872 as amended in 1952. The minimum marital age is 18 years for males and 15 years for females, but in case the latter is under 18 years of age, the consent of her guardian is necessary. Usually the proposal for marriage is made by the man and when accepted by the woman the engagement is taken to be complete. The period of engagement continues till the marriage is solemnised. The banns are published thrice once every week by the priest of the church, where the marriage is to be solemnised, to give an opportunity for objection. On the fixed date the bride and the bridegroom get married in church, the ceremony being performed by the priest. The essential items are kanyadan by the father or any other relative or friend, the taking of marriage vows by the bride and bridegroom both, bridegroom placing a ring on the third finger of the bride's left hand,(sometimes the two exchange rings), pronouncement of the couple as husband and wife by the priest and singing of the marriage register by both and their witnesses. Wedding festivities then usually follow at the bride's home.

Dowry :- With the passing of the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, offer and acceptance of dowry, which was previously customary has become illegal, though in practice it is still prevalent and in some communities in a virulent form.

Civil Marriage :- The special Marriages Act, 1954, provides for marriages to be performed and registered by the district marriage officer appointed by government for the purpose. He is usually one of the magistrates. In this system the parties give one month's notice before the proposed date of marriage officer indicating their intention to marry. The notice of marriage is exhibited on the notice board of the marriage of officer or of the deputy commissioner inviting objection if any. After the expiry of the notice period if no valid objection is raised the marriage is performed and registered. The

parties sign the register and receive the marriage certificate from the marriage officer. The number of such marriage was 8 each in 1969 and 1970 and 2 and 10 in 1971 and 1972 respectively with 15 in 1973. The simplicity of procedure is one of the reasons of the popularity of this system which is the only option for inter-religion alliances.

Widow Marriage :- The Hindu Widow's Re-marriage Act, 1856, provides for remarriage of a widow. Even before that widow's marriages were performed by Arya Samaj according to Vedic rites. However the incidence of such marriage is very small particularly among the higher classes. In 1961 the number of widows was 1,36,917 and that of widowers 66,345. But no conclusion can be based on this regarding widow's remarriage. Among the Scheduled Castes and some of the Other Backward Classes widow remarriage is common. The orthodox people, to whichever community they may belong, still do not favour widow remarriage or appreciate it even if it is permitted by their personal law.

Divorce :- Among the Hindus the dissolution of marriage once performed was not permissible except among the Scheduled Caste and that too with the sanction of the panchayat. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, therefore made divorce legal under certain conditions and circumstances. The Muslim law permits the husband to divorce the wife on payment of mehar. The Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, gives, under certain conditions, the right to the wife to claim dissolution of her marriage. The Indian Divorce Act, 1869, is applicable to all civil marriages and generally to the Christians. Nevertheless, among the higher classes instances of divorce are rare. Details of divorce cases decided in the district during the past five years are given below:

Year	No. of cases filed			No. of cases in which divorce was allowed		
	Total	By Men	By Women	Total	By Men	By Women
1969	15	8	7	-	-	-
1970	14	11	3	1	-	1
1971	41	24	17	1	1	-
1972	15	12	3	2	1	1
1973	23	15	8	3	1	2
Total	108	70	38	7	3	4

Prostitution and Traffic in Women :- Before the enforcement of the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women And Girls Act, 1956, in the district, Sarai was the main red light area in Gorakhpur city, and the number of prostitutes was 450. With the enforcement of the Act their activities have been curbed. During 1969 to 1973 not a single case of prosecution was launched. The old prostitutes are all rehabilitated now. The evil has however shifted to clubs and posh hotels as complained by the accomplices of the erstwhile professionals. Similarly traffic in women particularly young girls from

rural areas is also continuing as is evident from the stray cases detected at times. The incidence is not high however.

Gambling :- The public Gambling Act, 1867, (Act No. 3 of 1967) as applicable to the State under the Uttar Pradesh Public Gambling Acts of 1952 and 1961, prohibits gambling in district. It is usually indulged in as a pastime throughout the year. The number of prosecutions launched in the district in 1969 and 1970 was 62 and 55 respectively and in 1971,1972 and 1973 it was 90, 120 and 133 respectively. The number of convictions was 40 and 39 in 1969 and 1970 respectively and in 1971,1972 and 1973 it was 69,31 and 66.

Housing :- As per census records of 1971, there were 702 houseless persons 415 being males. Of these 240 were in Maharajganj, 320 in Gorakhpur and 125 in Bansaon tahsils. There were 4,63,480 occupied residential houses in the district of which 4,26,135 were in rural area and 37,345 in the urban. The average size of a household in rural areas is 5.8 and in urban 5.6 against 5.4 and 5.2 of 1961. This shows that the rural and urban averages registered an increase obviously due to expansion of the population of Gorakhpur district. There are 32.1 per cent single room houses, 32.4 two-roomed, 15.7 three-roomed, and 7.9 per cent four-roomed apartments. Only 11.6 per cent have five or more rooms. Still there are pavement dwellers and street sleepers in the city.

The residences of erstwhile big zamindars, were well-built spacious and sometimes palatial but they are not well maintained now. In rural areas, there is a vast change in the people's outlook so far as the use of building material is concerned, but there is not much change in the basic pattern either of the houses or of the village modelling. An appearance of modernity has however been achieved due to use of bricks, cement, and iron and rolling shutters, etc. Some builders have adopted modern designs also in front elevations. The opening of their offices and branches by commercial units e.g. banks, roadways etc. has also contributed urbanisation in housing particularly in tahsil headquarters and in market villages on main roads. Tiles constitute an important roof material in villages which also have thatched roofs. Roofs in towns are mostly of concrete and stone slabs. About 57.6 per cent houses in villages had tiled roofs while 54.8 per cent householders in town lived under pucca roof and 34.6 percent preferred tiled roof. Thatched roofs in villages covered 32.9 per cent households. Thatched and tiled roofs are slanting as usual.

Furniture and Decoration :- The lower class household in rural areas ordinarily have munj and bamboo cots or wooden takhat and mondhas for furniture. Those who are better off keep chairs, tables, cane or reed mondhas, sofa sets, cots,niwar beds etc. The people in the urban areas use ordinary furniture, such as chairs, tables, beds and also have posh furniture and furnishings depending on their means and aesthetic sense and taste. Pictures and calendars bearing pictures, clay toys, and colourful painted designs wrought on walls and doors form the usual decoration. Some women do mica work on walls. On festivals and ceremonial days mango leaves called bandanwar are hung on the main doors, besides buntings, etc.

While taking meals usually in the kitchen, people generally sit on ground floor or on wooden planks with foot or on small mats, in villages and towns both. The modernised families use dining tables and chairs. Use of china or clay crockery was quite in vogue particularly among town folk, but some have taken to steel utensils now. In villages

metal utensils are preferred. Recently plastic goods have also found their way in most households.

Food :- The people are mostly rice eaters by habit and preference. The number of those who eat meat, fish and eggs is also considerable. Meat is not generally available in the villages and many even in towns, can hardly afford it. Wheat, rice, gram, maize, and pulses along with curd, milk, vegetables, ghee and vegetable oils, constitute the items of daily food, rice being the staple food of the people. Coarse grains like jowar, makka, bajra, barley, kodon, and sawan form the staple diet of the poor. Among villagers sattu, flour of parched gram and barley mixes mixed, and chabena (parched grain) are quite popular. Finely ground sattu is used in towns also. people generally take meals a day, about midday and at sunset or after or morning and evening. Roti or chapati or rice is eaten with a bowl of pulse or with cooked vegetable, pickles, curd, or only salt jaggery or onion. Tea is common. Milk is gradually becoming rare. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are used. Efforts are being made by various food departments to change the food habits of the people and to induce them to grow and eat more vegetables, use more eggs, etc, but there has not much impact upto now.

Dress :- The normal dress at home of the men, both Hindus and Muslims is shirt or Kurta and dhoti or pyjama. While going out, however, they generally put on trousers with coat, shirt or bushirts, etc., which has become the dress of working class. Once back home they revert to the normal dress. On formal occasions, men wear sherwani or achakan and churidar or the loose pyjama. In villages men still wear turban.

The normal dress of women is sari and blouse or choli i.e., short blouse. The punjabi women however put on salwar, kurta and dupatta. Some Muslim women still wear churidar pyjama or garara with kurta and dupatta. In the town of Gorakhpur young girls are also seen wearing skirt and slacks, salwar, garara or sharara with kurta and dupatta and recently now bell-bottomed pyjamas with kamiz have in vogue. The use of the lehanga (full long skirt) still persists among the women of the villages or on ceremonial occasions in Hindu families. Women usually cover their head with dupatta or sari and men use cloth caps.

Jewellery :- Men do not wear jewellery except a gold chain in the neck and rings on the fingers are worn by a few. Women as usual wear gold, silver or nickel jewellery according to their means and taste. Costume jewellery is also in vogue now in all communities. The following are the common items in both the rural and urban areas.

Bunda and jhumki(ear ring), kara for hands and feet both, lachcha, payal (anklets), keel and nath (nose-stud and nose-ring); hansuli (tight neck-lace), karadhani(gold or silver waist band), anguthi (ring), and panchhaila (wristlet). Silver bichhia i.e.toe-ring is a must for every married Hindu women.

COMMUNAL LIFE

Amusements and Receptions :- There are thirteen cinema house in the district having a total capacity of six thousand seats. Cinema is the cheapest and the most popular means of entertainment. Documentaries and mobile cinema cater for the rural areas of the district. Dramatic societies and circuses also visit the district now and then. Dangal (wrestling matches), nautanki (indigenous open-air dramatic performances),

bhajan and qawwali programmes, kavi-sammelan and mushaira are also arranged at different places from time to time. Besides in the local fairs swings, children's carnival, magic shows etc. are also arranged. Ramlila and Krishnalila provide entertainment in their own way. Occasionally artists and troupes from outside visit the district and provide entertainment.

The village folk generally look for recreation and amusement during the rainy season between agriculture operations, and on winter nights, when they are comparatively free. They sing folk songs called biraha, kajari, bidesia and malhar, to the accompaniment of handy musical instruments like dholak and majira and often harmonium too. Kajari and holi are sung in groups. Among some castes e. g. Kahars and dhobis the men also have folk-dance in groups.

The people with religious bent enjoy Kathas and Kirtans. Puppet shows are held normally in winter and are very popular. Recently radio has become the greatest source of mass-media for news, education as well as entertainment. The All India Radio broadcasts special programmes for the rural listeners. There are more than 25,586 privately owned licensed radio and transistor sets in the district besides the unlicensed. The government had also provided radio sets to gram Panchayats but most of these are not properly maintained. Programmes for the youth, women and children, by the Yuvak, Mahila and Bal Mangal dals, respectively are organized by all development blocks. Kabaddi, gulli danda, gulhar, choon-ghora, lukwal and kho are the indigenous games and sports common in the district. Of the modern games, volley-ball, hockey, cricket, badminton and tennis are commonly played.

Impact of Zamindari Abolition

With the passing of the Uttar Pradesh Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 (Act 1 of 1951) which was enforced in the district on July 1, 1952, a significant change has come in the social and economic life of the rural people of the district. Formerly life centred round the zamindar but now the village community has its own panchayat vested with powers of land management. The cultivators are now owners of their land and have no fear of ejection or undue increase in revenue or Begar i. e. forced, unpaid or under paid labour and nazarana or pugree. They are socially on an equal footing with the erstwhile zamindars and enjoy better status than before. The ex-land-lords, on the other hand, except those who had extensive sir and khudkasht have been hard hit by the change. Most of them have adapted themselves to the changed circumstances in the last twenty years to the tilling of their own lands or have engaged themselves in other pursuits for a living.

The old conception of the zamindar acting as the guardian and helper of his tenants has disappeared. The question of total exemption because of personal needs does not arise now. The men of letters, musicians, artists and craftsmen, have lost his patronage. The average villager has inculcated a sense of self respect and dignity and awareness of the importance of his role in the body politic of the country. Of late, however lawlessness has increased and considerable politics has entered the village life which has become insecure too in many respects. The rising prices of agricultural produce with fixed land

revenue and no charge on holdings upto 6 1/4 acres of land have improved the financial condition of the peasantry.
