

Oudh State

The **Oudh State** (/ˈaʊd/^[1] also **Kingdom of Oudh**, or **Awadh State**) was a princely state in the Awadh region of North India until annexation by the British in 1856.

Oudh, the now obsolete but once official English-language name of the state, also written historically as **Oude**, derived from the name of Ayodhya, its first capital.

British State of Oudh (1801–1858) Mughal Subah of Oudh (1732– 1801)

1732–1859



Flag



Coat of arms



The Kingdom of Oudh in 1760 (Sapphire blue)

Status	Independent (1732–1801) Vassal of the East India Company (1801–1858)
Capital	<u>Ayodhya</u> <u>Faizabad</u> <u>Lucknow</u>
Common languages	<u>Urdu</u>
Religion	<u>Shia Islam</u>
Government	Mughal State (1732–1816) Princely State (1816–1858)
<u>Nawab</u>	

• 1722–1739

Saadat Ali Khan I

(first)

• 1856

Wajid Ali Shah (last)

History

• Established

1732

• Siege of Cawnpore

5 – 25 June 1858

• Oudh campaign

3 Mar 1859

Area

62,072 km² (23,966 sq mi)

Currency

rupee

Preceded by

Mughal Empire

British East India



Company.

Succeeded by

North Western



Provinces



Nawab Saadat Ali Khan II.



Nawab Nasiruddin Haider



Nawab Wajid Ali Shah



Begum Hazrat Mahal

As the Mughal Empire declined and decentralized, local governors in Oudh began asserting greater autonomy, and eventually Oudh matured into an independent polity governing the fertile lands of the Central and Lower Doab. With the British East India Company entering Bengal and decisively defeating Oudh at the Battle of Buxar in 1764, Oudh fell into the British orbit.

The capital of Oudh was in Faizabad, but the British Agents, officially known as "residents", had their seat in Lucknow. The Nawab of Oudh, one of the richest princes, paid for and erected a Residency.

in Lucknow as a part of a wider programme of civic improvements.^[2]

Oudh joined other Indian states in an upheaval against British rule in 1858 during one of the last series of actions in the Indian rebellion of 1857. In the course of this uprising detachments of the British Indian Army from the Bombay Presidency overcame the disunited collection of Indian states in a single rapid campaign. Determined rebels continued to wage sporadic guerrilla clashes until the spring of 1859. This rebellion is also historically known as the Oudh campaign.^[3]

After the British annexation of Oudh by the Doctrine of Lapse, the North Western Provinces became the *North Western Provinces and Oudh*.^[4]

History

Establishment

Saadat Ali Khan I was appointed Nawab of Oudh on 9 September 1722, succeeding Girdhar Bahadur. He immediately subdued the autonomous Shaikhzadas of Lucknow and Raja Mohan Singh of Tiloi, consolidating Oudh as a state. In 1728, Oudh further acquired Varanasi, Jaunpur and surrounding lands

from the Mughal noble Rustam Ali Khan and established stable revenue collection in that province after quelling the chief of Azamgarh, Mahabat Khan.^{[5]:44} In 1739 Saadat Khan mobilized Oudh to defend against Nader Shah's invasion of India, ultimately being captured in the battle of Karnal. He attempted to cooperate with Nader Shah, but died at Delhi.

In 1740, his successor Safdar Jang moved the capital of the state from Ayodhya to Faizabad.^[6] Safdar Jang gained recognition from Persia after paying tribute. He continued Saadat Khan's expansionist policy, promising military protection to Bengal in exchange

for the forts at Rohtasgarh and Chunar, and annexing portions of Farrukhabad with Mughal military aid which was ruled by Muhammad Khan Bangash.

As regional officials asserted their autonomy in Bengal and the Deccan as well as with the rise of the Maratha Empire, the rulers of Oudh gradually affirmed their own sovereignty. Safdar Jang went as far as to control the ruler of Delhi, putting Ahmad Shah Bahadur on the Mughal throne with the cooperation of other Mughal nobility. In 1748 he gained the subah of Allahabad with Ahmad Shah's official support. This was

arguably the zenith of Oudh's territorial span.^[7]:132 ^[8]:193

The next nawab, Shuja-ud-Daula, further extended Oudh's control of the Mughal emperor. He was appointed vazir to Shah Alam II in 1762 and offered him asylum after his failed campaigns against the British in the Bengal War.^[8]

British contact and control ...

Since Oudh was located in a prosperous region, the British East India Company soon took notice of the affluence in which the Nawabs of Oudh lived.

Primarily, the British sought to protect the

frontiers of Bengal and their lucrative trade there; only later did direct expansion occur.

Shuja-ud-Daula

British dominance was established at the Battle of Buxar of 1764, when the East India Company defeated the alliance between the nawab of Oudh Shuja-ud-Daula and the deposed nawab of Bengal Mir Kasim.^{[9]:25} The battle was a turning point for the once rising star of Oudh. The immediate effect was British occupation of the fort at Chunar and the cession of the provinces of Kora and Allahabad to Mughal ruler Shah Alam II under the Treaty of Benares (1765).

Shaja-ud-Daula further had to pay 5 million rupees as an indemnity, which was paid off in one year.^{[10]:158[8]:252} The long-term result would be direct British interference in the internal state matters of Oudh, useful as a buffer state against the Marathas. The treaty also granted British traders special privileges and exemptions from many customs duties, which led to tensions as British monopolies were established.

Shuja-ud-Daula bought the Mughal provinces of Kora and Allahabad in Treaty of Benares (1773), with the British (who held *de-facto* control over the area) for 50 lakh rupees, increased cost of

Company mercenaries, and military aid in the First Rohilla War to expand Oudh as a buffer state against Maratha interests.^{[9]:65[10]:75} Done by Warren Hastings, this move was unpopular among the rest of Company leadership, but Hastings continued a harsh policy on Oudh, justifying the military aid as a bid to strengthen Oudh's status as a buffer state against the Marathas. To shape the policy of Oudh and direct its internal affairs Hastings appointed the resident Nathaniel Middleton in Lucknow that year as well. At the conclusion of the First Rohilla War in 1774, Oudh gained the entirety of Rohilkhand and the Middle Doab region, only leaving the

independent Rampur State as a Rohilla enclave.

Asaf-ud-Daula

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Asaf-ud-Daula acceded to the nawabship of Oudh with British aid in exchange for the Treaty of Benares (1775), which further increased the cost of mercenaries and ceded the *sarkars* of Benares, Ghazipur, Chunar, and Jaunpur. From this time onwards Oudh was consistently compliant with the Company's demands, which continued to demand more land and economic control over the state.^[11]

The Treaty of Chunar (1781), sought to reduce the number of British troops in

Oudh's service to cut costs, but failed in this measure due to the instability of Asaf-ud-Daula's rule and thus his reliance on British aid essentially as a puppet regime.^[12]

Later rulers

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Saadat Ali Khan II acceded to throne of Oudh in 1798, owing his seat to British intervention including Governor-General of Bengal Sir John Shore's personal proclamation in Lucknow of his rule. A treaty signed on 21 February 1798 increased the subsidy paid to the British to 70 lakh rupees per year.^[11]

In light of the Napoleonic Wars and British demands for greater revenue from the Company, in 1801, Saadat Ali Khan II ceded the entire Rohilkhand and Lower Doab as well as the *sarkar* of Gorakhpur under the pressure of Lord Wellesley to the British in lieu of the annual tribute. ^[13] The cession halved the size of the polity, reducing it to the original Mughal subah of Awadh (excepting Gorakhpur which was ceded) and surrounded it by directly-administered British territory, rendering it useless as a buffer. The treaty also mandated a government to be put in place that primarily served the citizens of Oudh. It was on the basis of the failure to

meet this demand that the British later justified the annexation of Oudh.

Farrukhabad and Rampur were not annexed by the British yet; instead they served as separate princely states for the moment.^[11]

The kingdom became a British protectorate in May 1816 (However, the state was an unofficial British protectorate since 1764, having little external autonomy). Three years later, in 1819, the Ghazi-ud-Din Haidar Shah took the title of *padshah* (king), signaling formal independence from the Mughal Empire under the advice of the Marquis of Hastings.

Throughout the early 1800s until annexation, several areas were gradually ceded to the British.

British annexation

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On 7 February 1856 by order of Lord Dalhousie, General of the East India Company, the king of Oudh (Wajid Ali Shah) was deposed, and its kingdom was annexed to British India under the terms of the Doctrine of lapse on the grounds of alleged internal misrule.^[14]

Between 5 July 1857 and 3 March 1858 there was an upheaval by the son of the deposed king joining the Indian Rebellion

of 1857. At the time of the rebellion, the British lost control of the territory; they reestablished their rule over the next eighteen months, during which time there were massacres such as those that had occurred in the course of the Siege of Cawnpore.^{[15][16]}

After Oudh's territory was merged with the *North Western Provinces*, it formed the larger province of *North Western Provinces and Oudh*. In 1902, the latter province was renamed the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and in 1904 the region within the new *United Provinces*, corresponding to the former

North Western Provinces and Oudh, was renamed the Agra Province.^[14]

Government

Feudatory states

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The following were feudatory estates — taluqdaris^[17] or parganas— of Oudh:

- Balrampur Estate^[18]
- Benares State until 1775
- Bhadri Estate^[19]
- Itaunja Estate^[20]
- Nanpara Taluqdari^[21]
- Pratapgarh Estate
- Tulsipur State

Rulers

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The first ruler of Oudh State belonged to the Shia Muslim Sayyid Family and descended of Musa al-Kadhim originated from Nishapur. But the dynasty also belonged from the paternal line to the Kara Koyunlu through Qara Yusuf. They were renowned for their secularism and broad outlook.^[22]

All rulers used the title of 'Nawab'.^[23]

Title	Reign Start	Reign End	Name
Subadar Nawab	1732	19 Mar 1739	Borhan al-Molk Mir Mohammad Amin Musawi Sa'adat 'Ali Khan I
	19 Mar 1739	28 Apr 1748	
Nawab Wazir al-Mamalik	28 Apr 1748	13 May 1753	<u>Abu'l Mansur Mohammad Moqim Khan</u>
Subadar Nawab	5 Nov 1753	5 Oct 1754	
	5 Oct 1754	15 Feb 1762	<u>Jalal ad-Din Shoja' ad-Dowla Haydar</u>
Nawab Wazir al-Mamalik	15 Feb 1762	26 Jan 1775	
	26 Jan 1775	21 Sep 1797	<u>Asaf ad-Dowla Amani</u>
	21 Sep 1797	21 Jan 1798	<u>Mirza Wazir 'Ali Khan</u>
	21 Jan 1798	11 Jul 1814	<u>Yamin ad-Dowla Nazem al-Molk Sa'adat 'Ali Khan II Bahadur</u>
	11 Jul 1814	19 Oct 1818	<u>Ghazi ad-Din Rafa'at ad-Dowla Abul-</u>
King (<i>Padshah-e Awadh, Shah-e Zaman</i>)	19 Oct 1818	19 Oct 1827	Mozaffar Haydar Khan
	19 Oct 1827	7 Jul 1837	<u>Naser ad-Din Haydar Solayman Jah Shah</u>
	7 Jul 1837	17 May 1842	<u>Mo'in ad-Din Abu'l-Fath Mohammad 'Ali Shah</u>
	17 May 1842	13 Feb 1847	<u>Naser ad-Dowla Amjad 'Ali Thorayya Jah Shah</u>
	13 Feb 1847	7 Feb 1856	<u>Naser ad-Din 'Abd al-Mansur Mohammad Wajed 'Ali Shah</u>
	5 Jul 1857	3 Mar 1858	<u>Berjis Qadr</u> (in rebellion)

Residents

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Name	Start	End
Nathaniel Middleton	1773	1774
John Bristow	1774	1776
Nathaniel Middleton	1776	1779 (second time)
Purling	1779	1780
John Bristow	1780	1781 (second time)
Nathaniel Middleton	1781	1782 (third time)
John Bristow	1782	1783 (third time)
Edward Otto Ives	1784	1793
<u>George Frederick Cherry</u>	1793	1796
James Lumsden	1796	1799
William Scott	1799	1804
John Ulrich Collins	1804	1807
John Baillie	1807	1815
Richard Charles Strachey	1815	1817
J.R. Monckton	1818	1820
Felix Vincent Raper	1820	1823
Mordaunt Ricketts	1823	1827
Thomas Herbert Maddock	1829	1831
<u>John Low</u>	1831	1842
James Caulfield (interi)	1839	1841
William Nott	1841	1843
George Pollock	1843	1844
Archibald Richmond	1844	1849?
Sir <u>William Henry Sleeman</u>	1849	1854
<u>Sir James Outram</u>	1854	1856

Demographics

In the early eighteenth century, the population of Oudh was estimated to be 3 million. Oudh underwent a demographic shift in which Lucknow and Varanasi expanded to become metropolises of over 200,000 people over the course of the 18th century at the expense of Agra and Delhi. During this period the land on the banks of the Yamuna suffered frequent dry spells, while the Baiswara did not. [24]:38

Although it was ruled by Muslims, a majority, roughly four fifths, of Oudh's population were Hindus. [7]:155[25]

Culture

The Nawabs of Oudh were descended from a Sayyid line from Nishapur in Persia. They were Shia Muslims, and promoted Shia as the state religion.^[12] Ghazi-ud-Din Haidar Shah instituted the Oudh Bequest, a system of fixed payments by the British paid to the Shia holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. These payments, along with lifelong stipends to the wives and mother of Ghazi-ud-Din served as interest on the Third Oudh Loan taken in 1825.^[26]

The cities of Allahabad, Varanasi, and Ayodhya were important pilgrimage sites for followers of Hinduism and other

Dharmic religions. The town of Bahraich was also revered by some Muslims.^[27]

See also

- Awadh region
- List of Indian monarchs
- Mahseer in heraldry.
- Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway.
- Oudh and Tirhut Railway.
- Oudh Bequest

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