

**IMPERIAL GAZETTEER OF INDIA**  
**PROVINCIAL SERIES**  
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**Ajodhya Town** (in Sanskrit *Ayodhya*; now known as Ajudhia).- Town in Fyzabad District, United Provinces, situated in 26° 48' N. and 82° 12' E., on the right bank of the Gogra, and on branch of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. Population (1901), 21, 584. The interest of Ajodhya centres in its ancient history. The old city has almost entirely disappeared, and only its outlines are marked by an extensive tract of elevated ground. But according to tradition Ajodhya was in remote antiquity one of the largest and most magnificent of Indian cities. It is said to have covered an area of 12 *yojanas* or 80 to 100 miles in circumference, though the limits according to modern tradition extend only about 6 miles from Guptar Ghat on the west to Ram Ghat on the east. Ajodhya was the capital of the kingdom of Kosala and contained the court of the great king Dasaratha, fifty-sixth monarch of the Solar line in descent from Raja Manu. The opening chapters of the Ramayana recount the magnificence of the city, the glories of the monarch, and the virtues, wealth, and loyalty of his people. Dasaratha was the father of Rama Chandra, the hero of the epic, whose cult has experienced a great revival in modern times. With the fall of the last of the Solar line, Raja Sumitra, the one hundred and thirteenth monarch, Ajodhya became a wilderness and the royal family dispersed. From different members of this scattered stock the Rajas of Udaipur, Jaipur, &c., claim descent. Tradition relates that Ajodhya was restored by king Vikramaditya of Ujjain, whose identity is a matter of dispute. Ajodhya was of small importance in Buddhist times, when Saketa became the chief city of Kosala. It is still uncertain where Saketa was situated, and it has been suggested that it occupied part of the ancient city of Ajodhya. Numismatic evidence points to the rule of a line of independent Rajas, in or near Ajodhya, about the commencement of the Christian era. The identifications of Ajodhya with the capitals of Sha-chi, 'O-yu-t'o, or Pi-so-kia, visited by the Chinese pilgrims, are all doubtful.

Under the rule of the early Muhammadan kings of Delhi, Ajodhya or Awadh was the seat of a governor whose authority extended over a varying tract of country. When Akbar had firmly established his power in Northern India, the city became the capital of a *Subah* or province. In the eighteenth century it was for a time the nominal head-quarters of the early Nawabs of Oudh. In 1765, however,

Shuja-ud-daula made 'his residence at FYZABAD, a few miles away, and Ajodhya lost all importance, except as a religious centre.

The present town stretches inland from a high bluff overlooking the Gogra. At one corner of a vast mound know as Ramkot, or the fort of Rama, is the holy spot where the here was born. Most of the enclosure is occupied by a mosque built by Babar from the remains of an old temple, and in the outer portion a small platform and shrine mark the birthplace. Close by is a larger temple in which is shown the cooking-place of Sita, the faithful wife of Rama. A lofty temple stands on the bank of the Gogra at the place where Lakshmana bathed; and Hanuman, king of the moneys, is worshipped in a large temple in the town, approached by an immense flight of steps, which bears the name Hanuman Garhi. Other noticeable temples built during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are the Kanakbhawan, a fine building erected by a Rani of Tikamgarh, the Nageshwarnath templ, Darshan Singh's temple, and a small marble temple built by the present Maharaja. Ajodhya also -contains a number of Jain temples, five of which were built in the eighteenth century to mark the birthplaces of the five hierarchs who are said to have been born at Ajodhya. Besides the mosque of Babur, two ruined mosques, built by Aurangzeb, stand on the sites of celebrated Hindu Shrines-the Swargadwara, where Rama's body was cremated, and the Treta-ka- Thakur, where he sacrificed. An inscription of Jain Chand, the last king of Kanauj, has been found in the latter. Three graves are revered by Muslmans as the tombs of Noah, Seth, and Job, and the two last are mentioned under those names in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. A large mound close by, called the Maniparbat, is said to have been dropped by Hanuman when carrying a portion of the Himalays, while another tradition asserts that it was formed by the coolies who built Ramkot shaking their baskets as they left work; it possibly covers a ruined *stupa*.

Modern building include the spacious residence of the Maharaja of Ajodhya (see AJODHYA ESTATE) and two dispensaries. For administrative purposes Ajodhya forms part of the FYZABAD Municipality. There is little or no trade; but three great fairs take place annually in March-April, July-August, and OctoberNovember, which are sometimes attended by 400,000 persons. At special fairs the attendance has been estimated at as many as a million. There is one public school, while ten Sanskrit schools contain 350 students.

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