

# The Power Structure of the Lucknow Government in the 1857 Rebellion

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Very few studies on the rebellion in 1857-59 have dealt with the power structure. The Present study is an attempt to shed the light on the power structure of the Lucknow rebel government established in July 1857.

According to the documents concerning the enthronement of Birjīs Qādar, son of ex-nawab, people belonging to the old ruling class such as his own mother Ḥaẓrat Maḥal and Mammū Khān were able to build up his support after successful negotiation with Sipāhī. though sipāhī who had a strong voice, presented some conditions as requirements for the enthronement of Birjīs Qādar, they expressed no objection against supporting the old ruling class.

Sipāhī introduced the system of "Court" which had been unknown to Awadh administration. Under the "Court" were Nāib, Dīwān Khāna, Collector, Dīwān and Kōtwal.

There were two political nuclei in Lucknow. The one, majority group, was a cluster of old ruling class and Sipāhī. In the other, Aḥmad al-Allāh gathered his followers around him. Persistent incompatibility between the two groups led the "Court" to split.

The "Court" of majority group gradually ceased to function sufficiently in spite of improved organization. This may be attributed to the unproportionately big power of Mammū Khān and Ḥaẓrat Maḥal, as well as to the presence of people like Sharaf al-Daulah who disclosed the matters to the British.

Thus, to the eyes of Sipāhī, who once rallied with the old ruling class, the moral devastation of the class was obvious.

On the other hand, the followers of Aḥmed al-Allāh who were minority in the beginning increased in number. Finally, Aḥmed al-Allāh was elected to a Chief by Sipāhī. It was understandable that the power of fighters was on the increase in the light of Lucknow war situation.