

# Establishment Of The Russian Empire's Colonial Administration In The Namangan Region

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**Abstract:** This article describes how the Turkestan region was transformed into a governor-general after its conquest and many administrative territorial changes were made. It covers the formation of a new administrative-administrative system, the structure and powers of the courts, and the legal reforms implemented on the basis of the "Regulations on the Administration of the Turkestan Region". The study analyzes the role and activities of the civil court, regional courts, and people's courts, and shows their impact on the life of local society. It also describes how the administrative system was changed to focus on centralized management and all high-ranking positions were held by the military minister or governor-general.

**Keywords:** Turkestan, county, governor-general, statute, volost, aksakal, Namangan, Chust, district bailiff, military governor, Mirovoy court, people's court, offenses.

**Introduction:** It is known that the Russian Empire conquered the Central Asian khanates in four stages between 1847 and 1885. The first stage was the conquest of the territories belonging mainly to the Kokand Khanate during the years 1847-1865. The second stage began in 1865 and ended in 1868. At this stage, the territories of the Tashkent and Bukhara emirates were conquered. The third stage was the conquest of the territories of the Khiva and Kokand Khanates during the years 1873-1879. Finally, the fourth stage was the conquest of the territories of present-day Turkmenistan between the years 1880-1885. [1: 153] Then the colonial policy and practice of the Russian Empire in Central Asia was carried out by introducing its own statehood in this country. The Kokand Khanate was completely destroyed and turned into a province, and national statehood in Turkestan was abolished. The imperial government adopted many laws regarding the governance of Turkestan and introduced its own system of governance.

In 1867, the Emperor established the Turkestan Military District and issued a decree on forming the Turkestan General-Governorate based on the newly conquered territories. The Turkestan General-Governor was appointed directly by the Emperor. However, if the General-Governor resigned, died, or was unable to continue his

duties for financial or administrative reasons, his position, according to regulations, was temporarily filled not by someone appointed by the Emperor but by one of the senior local military governors. [2: 2] Initially, the governor-generalship consisted of two regions: Syrdarya and Semirechye (Jetisu). By the 1890s, the Turkestan General-Governorate consisted of five regions: Syrdarya, Fergana, Samarkand, Semirechye, and Transcaspian. [1: 190] According to the imperial administrative system, oblast (regional) governors were appointed by the Minister of War, with the approval of the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Turkestan General-Governor. [2: 7] One of the regions within the General-Governorate was Fergana, which, according to the "Regulation on the Administration of the Turkestan Region" adopted in 1886, was divided into five counties: Kokand, Margilan, Andijan, Namangan, and Osh.

A. Kun notes that before the Russian conquest, during the reign of Khudoyorkhan, the territory had been divided into 15 beklik (districts) by his decree. These were Kokand, Margilan, Andijan, Namangan, Sokh, Mahram, Buloqboshi, Aravon, Baliqchi, Chortoq, Novqat, Koson, and Bobadarxon. [3] This clearly shows that the Russian government carried out profound changes not only in the administrative system but also in the territorial division. According to information provided by

Is’hoqxon Ibrat, “Namangan had four market-towns under its governor — To’raqo’rg’on, Chust, Chahortoq (Chortoq), and Koson, each of which was a beklik.” [4: 36] From this, it becomes clear that Namangan originally consisted of four beklik, and after the Russian conquest it was turned into a district (uyezd), while the remaining beklik—except Chust—were transformed into volosts (rural districts).

In accordance with the directive issued on 3 March 1876 by K. P. Kaufman, the Governor-General of Turkestan, the Namangan and Chust district (uyezd)s were officially established. [7: 2] The territorial boundaries of these district (uyezd)s approximately correspond to the present-day territory of Namangan Region. The Chust district (uyezd) comprised the following thirteen volosts (sub-districts): Chust, Olmos, To’raqo’rg’on, Asht, Bobodaxxon, Varzik, Boyaston, Koson, Qutlug’ Said, Pop, Tergachi, Chodak, and Axsı-Shahand. [5] The Namangan district (uyezd), likewise, included more than ten volosts and over one hundred villages. Subsequently, the Chust district (uyezd) was abolished, and its entire territory was incorporated into the Namangan district (uyezd). Following this administrative reorganization, the former head of the Chust district (uyezd), Lieutenant Colonel Aravanatki, was appointed as the head of the Namangan district (uyezd). [8: 1] It should be noted that the administrative–territorial restructuring implemented by the Russian Empire in the Turkestan region did not take into account the region’s natural, historical, economic, or ethnocultural characteristics. Rather, these measures constituted a continuation of the broader imperial policy aimed at organizing territories deemed to be of military–bureaucratic significance, reflecting the general logic of governance within the Russian Empire.

The Namangan district (uyezd) was administered from the city of Namangan by the head of the district (uyezd). Under the authority of the district (uyezd) head operated assistants and a chancery, through which administrative and police affairs were conducted. The appointment and dismissal of the district (uyezd) head, as well as administrative–territorial changes within the district (uyezd), were carried out by order of the General Governor. If the district (uyezd) head could not continue his duties due to health reasons, his assistant assumed the position; if the assistant was also absent from the district (uyezd),

the head of one of the district precincts temporarily filled the position in accordance with the instructions of the provincial military governor. The Namangan district (uyezd) consisted of five precincts (see Table 1): the areas surrounding the Namangan city, Chodak, Chust, Nanay, and Yangikurgan precincts.[6: 12] Each precinct was governed by an individual precinct chief (uchastka pristav). The district (uyezd) head and precinct chiefs were authorized to take measures against minor offenses committed by the local population. District (uyezd) heads were permitted to impose imprisonment not exceeding seven days and fines not exceeding fifteen rubles. Precinct chiefs, in turn, were allowed to impose imprisonment for no longer than three days and fines not exceeding five rubles.

**Minor offenses included:**

1. Violations of moral and behavioral norms in churches and mosques—appearing inappropriately during religious ceremonies, causing disturbance, and creating disorder through words or actions;
2. Offenses against state and public order—causing noise and insults in the streets, fighting in any place, showing disrespect or rudeness toward persons representing the state or state authorities, disobedience or insult toward parents;
3. Acts involving disorderly conduct and immoral behavior, such as drunkenness and other actions contrary to ethical and moral norms. [2: 9]

According to the “Regulation,” the district (uyezd)s were divided into volosts, and the volosts, in turn, consisted of village assemblies (aksakal administrations). The volost was headed by volost administrators, while the village assembly was headed by aksakals. Both positions were elected by the local population for a term of three years; however, in certain cases, the General Governor had the authority to make changes. Any local resident who had no criminal record, had not been fined more than thirty rubles, and was not wanted by the authorities could be elected to these positions [2: 12]. If the head of a volost committed an irreparable mistake or abused his office, he was dismissed by the regional military governor. In cases where such misconduct was observed among aksakals or their assistants, they were removed from their positions by the head of the uyezd.

**Table 1: List of precincts and volosts of Namangan Uyezd.[6: 12]**

Precinct	Volosts
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The areas surrounding the Namangan city	Turakurgan, Kirgiz-Kurgan, Xonabod, Kepin, Uychi.
Chodak precincts	Bobadarxon, Asht, Chodak, Pop, Olmos
Chust precincts	Varzik, Aysi-Shahand, Kutluk-Said, Chotqol.
Nanay precincts	Arim, Susomir, Boyaston, Nanay, Bogish, Saruy, Kirk-ugil.
Yangi-kurgan precincts	Yangi-kurgan, Pishkaron, Chortoq, Koson, Tergachi.

The imperial government, as well as the administrative and taxation systems, made significant changes in the judicial system. In the Turkestan region, judicial power was vested in the provincial court, the regional court, and the ruling senate. Among the local population, people's courts operated on the basis of special rules elected by the people. [2: 16] These courts considered cases involving all segments of the population of the Turkestan region, including Russian-speaking peoples and the local population.

According to the "Regulation on the Administration of the Turkestan Region" adopted on June 12, 1886, the regional judicial system was removed from the people's military administration and transferred to the Ministry of Justice. Each district, including Namangan, had one Mirovoy court judge and their assistants. Investigative cases were conducted by the Mirovoy court judge's assistant. If there were no Mirovoy court assistants in the district, investigative cases were also conducted by the district Mirovoy court judges themselves. [9. 33] The assignment of these judges and their assistants to certain regions and their transfer to another region was determined by the regional judges with the permission of the Ministry of Justice.

According to Articles 141 and 142 of the "Regulations on the Administration of the Turkestan Territory", if representatives of the local population act against the state and Christian religion, state administration, state orders and decisions, violate the peace of the population, disobey quarantine rules, provide false information, carry out secret espionage, hide refugees, disrupt telegraph lines and roads, commit murder, rape, embezzle and plunder someone else's property, commit theft, embezzle state money, intentionally burn someone else's house, they are considered guilty

by the Mirovoy court. Also, if the local population commits other violations than those listed above in Russian settlements or in relation to Russians, they are considered not by the people's court, but through the Mirovoy court. At the same time, if any violations were committed by local residents who had other people's judges and by individuals who were not related to the local population, all of them were resolved by the Mirovoy or regional court. [2. 20]

The lowest judicial system in the uyezds was the people's court, which, in addition to the offenses specified in Articles 141 and 142 of the "Regulations on the Administration of the Turkestan Region", tried minor offenses. The judges of the people's court were elected by the people every three years from among the local population, a person with a good reputation and no criminal record. [2. 28] The number of people's judges in volosts with a settled population should not be more than one, and in volosts with a nomadic population - no more than four or equal to the number of aul communities. In 1887, there were 55 people's judges in Namangan uyezd. [9. 35]

"The procedures of the 1886 "Nizom" project reduced the status of the uyezd administration and increased the number of clerical jobs. They limited the frequent movement of the uyezd heads around the territory they governed, and changes in the judicial system expanded the rights of the people's judges and reduced the rights of the uyezd heads. It is clear that the influence of the Russian government on the representatives of the local population has decreased," the 16th issue of the Russky Turkestan newspaper of 1898 wrote. [10.] Baron Verevsky, the Governor-General of Turkestan, said that "the illegal transfer of power based on the 1886 "Nizom" project was a

violation of the rights of the local population, weakening the seemingly strong power.” [11. 59]

In conclusion, after the complete annexation of the Kokand Khanate, the Namangan uyezd was established on 3 March 1876, in accordance with the order of the Governor-General of Turkestan, K. P. Kaufman, on the basis of the former To'raqo'rg'on, Chahortoq (Chortoq), and Koson beklik territories, similarly to other uyezds of the Fergana province. [7] By 1887, the Chust uyezd was abolished and incorporated into the Namangan uyezd.

Taking into account its political, military, and economic interests in the region, the imperial administration introduced a new specialized system of governance. The local population was removed from traditional forms of self-administration, and new administrative units governed exclusively by Russian officials and military personnel were established. In the Namangan uyezd, military-administrative control was strengthened, the taxation system was revised, and the policy of Russification was gradually implemented. Moreover, the judicial-legal system introduced in the Namangan uyezd became an integral component of the Russian Empire's political and administrative strategy in the region. Through this system, the empire sought to control local society, restrict its political and legal freedoms, and embed Russian laws. At the same time, by preserving the activities of people's courts, the authorities were compelled to partially consider the needs of the local population. As a result, a balance emerged between the two legal systems—the laws of the Russian Empire and the local people's courts—which had a complex impact on socio-political relations in the region. Despite changes in agrarian relations and the formation of new infrastructure, public dissatisfaction and resistance movements continued to intensify. The colonial administrative system established by the Russian Empire in the Namangan uyezd thus became a significant turning point in the history of this region.

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