

Course Name- B.A.L.L.B. IIInd Sem.

Subject- History

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Topic- Administration-Sultnate and  
Mughal period

## Administration in Delhi Sultanate

Administration during the Delhi Sultanate was based on the laws of the Shariat or the laws of Islam. Political, legal and military authority was vested in the Sultan. Thus military strength was the main factor in succession of throne. Administrative units were, Iqta, Shiq, Paraganaa and Gram.

Administration during the Delhi Sultanate was completely dependent on Muslim laws which were the laws of the Shariat or the laws of Islam. The Sultans and the nobles primary duty was to observe the laws of Shariat or Islamic laws in the matters of the state. This period rightfully stated that the Administration of Delhi Sultanate was largely influenced by their religion.

### Central Administration of Delhi Sultanate

The Central administration of the Delhi Sultanate followed a very systematic and well planned administration procedure which was run by different ministers who had specific work assigned to them. Besides, there were also several other departments and the Sultan appointed their officers to carry on specific duties.

- 1. The SULTAN** - was the head of the state and enjoyed unlimited powers in every sphere of state activity.
- 2. The NAIB** - also enjoyed equivalent position as that of the Sultan.
- 3. The WAZIR** - was the Prime Minister of the state and headed the financial department.
- 4. Diwan –I- Ariz** – He was the head of the department of diwani-i-arz and in that capacity was the controller-general of the military department.

**5. Diwan –I- Risalt** - was the minister of foreign affairs he was in command of state tie ups with neighboring kingdoms and also was assigned the task of alliancing with powerful rulers.

**6. Sadr –Ur -Sadar** - was the head of the religious department. His work was to the safeguard the Islamic Laws and its upkeep.

**7. Amir –I-Mazls -Shahi** - he was the minister who looked after the festivals of the state, and made sure of all the public conveniences and arrangements during festive seasons.

**8. Diwan-I-Insha-** was the minister who looked after the local correspondence of and different offices.

## **Administration During Delhi Sultanate**

The Delhi Sultanate was further divided into smaller provinces for it was convenient for the ministers to help them in the administration. They were called IQTAS.

### **Iqta System**

- The Iqtadari was a unique type of land distribution and administrative system evolved during the sultanate of Iltutmish.
- Under this system, the entire empire was very evenly divided into several large and small tracts of land, called the Iqtas.
- These plots of land were assigned to the various nobles, officers and soldiers for the purpose of easy and flawless administration and revenue collection.
- The Iqtas were transferable, i.e., the holders of Iqtas-Iqtadars-were transferred from one region to other every three to four years.
- The holders of small Iqtas were individual troopers. They had no administrative responsibilities.
- Muhammad of Ghur in 1206 A.D. the able king was the first to

introduce the Iqta system in India, but it was Iltutmish who gave it an institutional form. The Iqtadari system witnessed numerous changes during the Sultanate period. Initially, Iqta was a revenue-yielding piece of land which was assigned in lieu of salary. However, during Firuz Shah Tughlaq's reign, in the year 1351 A.D, it became hereditary.

## **Mughal Administration:**

The mughal empire was divided into Subas which were further subdivided into Sarkar, Pargana, and Gram. There were 15 Subas (provinces) during Akbar's reigns, which later increased to 20 under the Aurangzeb's reign.

The mughal empire was divided into "Subas" which were further subdivided into "Sarkar", "Pargana", and "Gram". There were 15 Subas (provinces) during Akbar's reigns, which later increased to 20 under the Aurangzeb's reign. Akbar introduced the Mansabdari system. The term "Mansab" indicates the rank of the holder. Mansabdari was both civil and military. During Mughal administration there were 3 methods of revenue collection i.e. Kankut, Rai And Zabti.

Establishing a firm rule in Indian Subcontinent for nearly 200 years, the Mughals built an Empire with not only great political might but also a firm administrative setup that provided strength for a smooth functioning. From the centralization of power to creating conducive conditions for economic and cultural growth, the Mughals looked at administrative matters with great seriousness and precision.

## Central Administration

Enjoying the absolute power, the Emperor of the Mughal Empire was always the central administrative authority. A number of officers in the different governmental departments were appointed for the smooth functioning of transactions involving various affairs.

- The state had four main departments and the four main officers of the central government were diwan; Mir bakhshi; Mir saman; and sadr.
- The diwan (also called the Wazir or chief minister), held the primary position among them and looked after revenue and finance, but kept an overview of all matters of expenditure and related departments recording all imperial orders and assigning duties and expense to district faujdars.
- Mir Bakshi handled the military pay and accounts and related duties. He not only was the Paymaster for all officers but also played role in recruitment of soldiers, listing of mansabdars and important officials.
- The imperial household was held by Khan-i-Saman. He dealt with matters relating to maintaining record and requirement of the state karkhanas, stores, order, interactions and internal relations.
- The Sadr was the head of religious donations and contributions. He also looked after education and imperial alms. Sadr acted as the Chief Qazi before Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb divided these two offices and allotted two separate persons for these posts.
- Occasionally a dignitary superior to the wazir and other ministers was also appointed called the wakil. He acted as the deputy of the sultanate (naib).

## Provincial Administration

Akbar set the firm base for the provincial administration by fixing the territories of the provincial units and establishing a uniform administrative model subjected to minor amendment to suit local circumstances. Each province had a set of officials representing the branches of state activity, which made control over provinces more effective.

- The provincial administrative structure was the replica of that of the central government.
- Sipah Salaror Nazim (the governor) well known by the name subahdar was appointed directly by the Emperor and was the main officer looking after civil and administrative responsibility of each Suba.
- The Bakshi or the paymaster was the next provincial authority having duties of military establishment, salaries of Mansabdars and occasional duties like news writing for provinces.
- In every Suba (province) was established the Dag Choki that conducted the intelligence and postal service. The Waqai Navis and Waqai Nigars supplied direct reports to the King and Sawanih Nigars were the confidential report providers.
- Provincial Sadr, Qazi etc performed the same duties within provinces as the central administration officials.
- The faujdars (administrative head of district) and the kotwal (performing executive and ministerial duties)

## **Local Administration**

At the village level, the subas were divided into Sarkars which were further subdivided into Parganas.

- Faujdar (chief executive head of a Sarkar) was responsible for maintaining law and order in his jurisdiction and the executed the royal decrees and regulations. He also kept the powerful Zamindars under check.
- Amalguzar or the revenue collector was the next important officer. Shiqdar maintained the general administration and law and order of Pargana assisted by Amil (revenue collector), Amin (assessor of revenue), Patadar (treasurer), Qanungo (keeper of land record) and Bitikchis (clerks).
- Village head or the Muqaddam (sarpanch) dealt with functions locally. The Patwari assisted him by taking care of village revenue records.

## **Revenue Administration**

Land revenue was the major source of the income.

- Akbar had instituted a system of Dahsala/Bandobast Arazi/the Zabti system. Under which, the average produce of different crops and the average prices from the last ten years were calculated. One-third of the average was the share of the state that was mentioned in cash.
- Land revenue was fixed considering both, continuity and productivity of cultivation. Polaj (land continually cultivated), parauti (fallow lands for an year) paid full prices when under cultivation.
- After assessing land revenue in kind, value was converted into cash using price list or dastur-ul-amal, prepared at regional level for various food crops.
- The empire was divided into numerous regions-dastur, at pargana level, that had similar productivity. The government provided the dastur-ul-amal at tehsil level and it explained the style of land revenue payment.

- Each cultivator got a title for land holding or patta and qubuliyat (deed of agreement by which he pays state revenue).
- Various other assessment systems were followed under Akbar's reign
- The most common was called batai or ghallabakshi (crop-sharing) subdivided into three parts (i) bhaoli -reaped and stacked crops divided in the presence of the parties. (ii) khet batai –dividing fields after sowing.(iii)lang batai- division of grain heaps.
- Kankut—In Kankut –measuring the land by Jrib or through pacing and estimating standing crops by inspection.
- Nasaq—a rough calculation of payable amount by the peasant, keeping in mind his past experience.

### **Military Administration**

- Soldiers, horsemen, horses and elephants had to be supplied and maintained by the mansabdars. The number that a mansabdar was expected to provide was specific in his warrant of selection or were indicated by the rank he held.
- The classes of troops under the Mansabdars were: dakhili (services of which were paid by the state), ahadis (the "gentlemen troopers," who drew higher pay than ordinary servicemen). The chiefs were also permitted to hold a degree of autonomy while providing deputation under their own command.
- The army had the following five units:
  - (1) Cavalry having two types of horsemen: (i) 'Bargir', soldiers receiving horses, arms, dress etc. from the state and (ii) Siledar', soldiers who brought their own horses and arms.
  - (2) Infantry: Infantry was structured in two units (i) Bandukchi' (Riflemen) and 'Samshirbaz' (Swordsmen).
  - (3) War elephants: The elephants were used for fighting as well as for carrying load.
  - (4) Artillery: The artillery reached its highest proficiency in Akbar's time.
  - (5) Navy: the Mughals had a weak naval base compared to the Europeans.
- The artillery for the army was paid wholly out of the imperial treasury.



- The organization of the army was loose and the scantiness of officers reduced the efficiency of the army. The discipline was poor, particularly in lower ranks.
- The Mughals took along a great number of camp followers, which occasionally included the families of the soldiers and the imperial harem; this made the army a very burdensome, sluggish group.

### **Mansabdari System**

- The Mughal nobility or mansabdars looked after the administration of the state the central authority of which lay with the Emperor, like the power of conferring, increasing, decreasing the mansab. Frequent transfers of jagirs were made to maintain insecurities among the Mansabdars.
- Mansab was the grant to enjoy a jagir given to every official. Jagir was the revenue assignment as a substitute of a cash salary (not land) for services delivered.
- The mansabdar could collect revenue from his jagir through the Zamindars collecting dues from cultivators.
- No hereditary claim could be made and on the death of a Mansab his personal property taken by the State, of which the balance owed to state was deducted and balance was returned to his heirs.
- Mansabs could be called to give duties in both military and civil spheres in any part of the empire. They played a considerable role in the economic, social and cultural life around them.
- The system promoted exploitation of people in the lower stature and created selfishness, corruption.

## Jagirdari System

- Under the reign of Akbar land was divided into two categories - Khalisa and Jagir. Land revenue of Khalisa was directly for the royal treasury and Jagirs were allocated to the Jagirdars according to their rank. Mansabdars receiving cash payment were known as Naqdi.
- The jagirs were the assignment of revenue given to the Mansabdars and the assignees were Jagirdars. This was similar to the Iqtas and the Iqtadars under Delhi Sultans.
- There were four types of Jagirs – Jagir Tankha (given in lieu of pay), Mashrut Jagirs (given on certain conditions), Inam Jagir (independent of any obligation) and Watan Jagir (assigned in the homelands).
- The Revenue Department maintained a record Jama-Dami that indicated the assessed income (jama) of various areas, indicated in dams, calculated as 40 dams to a rupee.
- The Jagirs were transferable and no Jagirdar was given a same Jagir for a long time. This system was to check the ability of Jagirdars to maintain a area and control the exploitation or tyranny of Jagirdars.