**ADMINISTRATION OF SHER SHAH SURI**

**PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF SHER SHAH SURI**

Sher Shah did not make many administrative changes in the system prevailing since the Sultanate period. A number of villages have Pargana. Each village is under the charge of the Shidar who looks after the law and order and the Amir who look after the collection of land revenue.  Above the [Pargana](https://www.definitions.net/definition/pargana" \t "_blank) was the Shiq/Sarkar under the change of Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran and Munsif-i-Munsifan. A number of Sarkars were group into provinces. However, we do not have much information about the pattern of provincial administration during this period.

During his reign, there was the centralization of administration since he was not in favor of investing too much authority in his ministers. He devoted himself to the affairs of the state and frequently taught the empire to know the condition of his people and.

**CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OF SHER SHAH SURI**

The central power was in the hands of the ruler and there was a bureaucratic structure to administer the state. He divided the whole empire into 47 units called Sarkars. Each of the Sarkars was again sub-divided into smaller units called Parganas. Each Sarkar had one Amin, one Shiqdar, one treasurer and one Hindi and one Persian writer to keep accounts.

In addition, every Sarkar was placed under officers called Skiqdar-i-Shiqdaran and the Munsif-i-Munsifan. Their duty is to supervise the work of the Parganas. Besides, the Parganas conducts the administration on the same lines as the Sarkars. Each Parganas comprised several villages and in each village, there was a [Muqaddam](http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Muqaddam" \t "_blank), a Chaudhuri and a Patwari.

The Panchayats also played an important role in the village administration. Sher Shah Suri device the system of transferring government officers every two or three years to prevent them from acquiring undue influence over one place.

It is worth to mention that Mughal rulers and eventually the British Colonial Administration adopts Sher Shah’s practical approach to state administration.

**LAND REVENUE SYSTEM OF SHER SHAH SURI**

Sher Shah pays special attention to the land revenue system, the army and the justice with the help of a capable team. He also introduced a permanent schedule of rates and laid the state share of the different kinds of crops. This could then be converted into cash on the basis of the prevailing market place in different areas. The share of the state was one/third of the produced. Besides, they divide the lands into good and bad middlings.

The peasants have the option of paying in cash or kind. The amount each peasant has to pay for their crop production was recorded in a paper called “Patta”. No one has the permits to charge from the peasants anything extra. In order to provide relief to the empire during famines and other natural calamities, an additional tax of two and a half percent was levied.

**REFORMATION OF LAND REVENUE**

Sher Shah introduced a number of reforms in the l[and revenue system](https://www.gktoday.in/gk/land-revenue-system-of-sher-shah-suri/" \t "_blank). He surveys the entire land, he also fixes one/fourth to one/thirds of the products as land revenue. Besides, the peasants have the option to pay the land revenue either in cash or in kind.

For the collection of revenue, he employs a large number of officials like Amins, Muqaddams, Shiqdars, Quanungos, and Patwaris. He advises his officers to be lenient to the peasants during the land revenue assessments.

The Qabuliyat ( A deed of Agreement) clearly mention the rights and obligations of the peasantry, besides, the state kept in its records and gave Patta (Title Deed) to the peasants in return.

The land was classified into three categories and the land survey measurement was standardized. Sher Shah made it a point to see that, the [peasants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peasant" \t "_blank) do not face any hardship. In times of unforeseen calamities, advances were liberally made to the farmers.

Sher Shah’s land revenue system was so efficient, Akbar later adopts his land revenue and continues throughout the **[Mughal](https://oureducare.com/history/decline-of-mughal-empire/" \t "_blank)** period. Due to his land revenue, Sher Shah is famous as the forerunner of Emperor Akbar.

**JUDICIARY**

Sher Shah plays considerable emphasis on justice, he also improves the judiciary system. In every Pargana there was an Amin and in every district a Qazi to decide the judicial cases. Besides, the Shiqdars preside over the criminal courts.

Besides, he did not allow any distinction on the basis of religion, caste, or creed.

He even laid down rules and regulations for every branch of the administration.

There are many records about several instances of his impartial justice in contemporary accounts. He did not spare oppressors even if they are his sons, near and relatives or high officials. In order to dispense justice, he appoints Qazis in different places. However, the panchayat and the zamindar also deal with civil and criminal cases at the local level.

Sher Shah also gives strict orders that if a theft, robbery, or murder took place within the lands of a Muqaddam, he should bring the culprit to book within a reasonable time. Otherwise, the administration should pay the same penalty as the accused.

Chief Qazi was the head of the judicial department in the Kingdom. The king held his court once a week and tried both appeals as well as new criminals cases.

As a result of these strict and efficient measures, life and property remained secure under Sher Shah’s rule.

**TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION**

Sher Shah also brought about various reforms in the means of transport and communication. Besides, he constructs a number of important roads.  One of his most notable construction is the Grand Trunk Road. The road ran from Sonargoan in Bengal to Peshwar in the North-Western Frontier (which is now Pakistan).

His other roads ran from Chittor to Agra, Agra to Mandu and Lahore to Multan. On both sides of these roads, he planted trees and provided wells and sarais for the convenience of travelers. The sarais also serves as Dakchowkies where horses are kept ready to carry mail to the next post. Market and towns are developed near these sarais and gave impetus to trade.

Besides, Sher Shah also constructs a new city on the bank of Yamuna near Delhi. The sole survivor of this is the old fort Purana-Qila and five mosques within it. Sher Shah was also a patronized and learned man.  During his reign, he completes some of the finest works in Hindi such as the Padmavat of Malik Muhammad and Jaisi. Besides, Abbas Khan Sarwani complies with Sher Shah’s historical work – [Tarikh-i-Sher shahi](http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Tarikh-i-Sher_Shahi" \t "_blank) (history of Sher Shah) dating 15 CE.

Also, in order to promote trade, he abolished a large number of duties which were levied at the boundaries of each district, ferry and trade center. The tax was levied one at the frontier of the Kingdom and the other at the market place. This step greatly encouraged traders and brought prosperity.

**MILITARY ORGANIZATION**

Sher Shah Suri set up a strong army. His main care was the military organization for the safety of the Kingdom against invasion or internal disorder. He organizes his army to be more efficient. He also maintains the descriptive roles of soldiers to avoid malpractices in the army.

Besides, he himself recruited the soldiers and fixed their salaries after personal inspections. He pays the soldiers’ salary individually and not through the commander. Also, he pays the soldiers’ salaries in cash and discontinues the [system of Jagirs](https://www.britannica.com/topic/jagirdar-system" \t "_blank). Though most of Sher Shah’s soldiers were Afghans or Pathans, Hindus also hold high positions in the army.

He also divided his army into divisions of 5,000; 10,000 and 20,000 each under a commander. He introduced the system of Dagh or branding horses. His horsed are branded with the imperial royal sign so that horses of inferior quality may not be substituted. This kind of branding is famously called the “Dagh or the branding system”.

Also, he did away with tribal levies under tribal chiefs and recruited soldiers directly. Every soldier had a descriptive role and recorded.

He also set up outposts in different parts of the empire with a strong [garrison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garrison" \t "_blank). He kept a garrison under the command of a Fauzdar at each of these forts.  Besides the garrisons, he has a standing army comprises of 1,50,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry, 300 war elephants, and efficient artillery.

Sher Shah also built many new forts while repairing and strengthening the old and existing forts.

**COINAGE SYSTEM**

Sher Shah introduced new ideas in the coinage system. He issued a large number of silver coins and fixed a ratio between the copper and silver coins. On these coins, he used both Hindus and Persians characters.

**CURRENCY**

The currency reforms of Sher Shah also helped in the development of trade. He issued five coins of gold, silver, and copper of uniform standard in place of the devalued coins of mixed metal. His silver rupee (dam) was also well executed that it remained a standard coin for centuries even after his death.  His attempts to fix standard weights and measures all over the empire greatly improved trade.

**MINISTERS UNDER ADMINISTRATION OF SHER SHAH SURI**

Sher Shah did not follow the advice of the Ulema (religious Heads) though he respected them greatly. The nature of the administration was not only autocratic but also enlightened. Sher Shah exercised civil and military powers in the interest of the **[people of India](https://oureducare.com/history/the-people-of-india/" \t "_blank)**. In the administration, four ministers help Sher Shah. They were:

1. Diwan-i-wizart (wazir)
2. Diwan-i-Rasalat
3. Diwan-i-Ariz and
4. Diwan-Inshah

**Diwan-i-wizart (wazir)**

Wazir had general control over ministers and was in charge of both income and expenditure of the country.

**Diwan-i-Ariz**

Diwan-i-Ariz was responsible for the recruitment organization and discipline of the army.

**Diwan-i-Rasalat**

Diwan-i-Rasalat was to be in touch with ambassadors and deals with diplomatic correspondence. Besides, he was responsible for the duty of charity and endowment.

**Diwan-i-Inshah**

Diwan-i-Inshah was responsible for royal proclamation and discharges. Its head was called Dabir-i-Khas.

In addition to the above departments, there also exits two other important departments. They were-Diwan-i-Qaza and Diwan-i-Barid. Diwan-i-Qaza was under chief Qazi chief. Qazi was responsible for the supervision of judicial administration. Diwan-i-Barid was the department of intelligence.

Sher Shah established a sound system of administration in his brief reign of 5 years. He was also a great builder. His mausoleum (tomb) at Sasaran is a masterpiece of architecture.

Sher Shah was not orthodox towards the **[religion of the Indian](https://oureducare.com/sociology/role-of-religion-in-india/" \t "_blank)**sphere. He was not dependent on Ulemas. He did not introduce any new liberal policies. Jizyah (head tax or Poll Tax) continued to be collected from the Hindus while his nobility was drawn almost exclusively from the Afghans.

Thus, the state under the Sur Dynasty remained an Afghan institution based on race and tribe. A fundamental change came about only with the emergence of Akbar.

**OFFICERS UNDER ADMINISTRATION OF SHER SHAH SURI**

1. He divides the provinces into Sardars.
2. Munsif-i-Nunsifan and Shiqdar-i-Shiqdarans were the two important officials of Sardars. Munsif-i-Nunsifan was a judge and has the power to supervise Amins. Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran was responsible for maintaining law and order. He had to supervise the Shiqdars (Military officers of Parganas)
3. Again he divides the Sardars into Parganas.
4. Chaudhari, Patwari, and Muqaddam or local headmen were the intermediaries between the people and the government.
5. Maintaining soldiers, assisting in the collection of royal dues, presiding over courts dealing with criminals, dealing with criminal cases were the duties of Shiqdar.
6. Amin or civilian judge had the responsibility of revenue administration and trying civil and revenue cases.
7. The treasurer of Pargana was Fatahdar.
8. He also appoints two Karkuns (Clerks/Writers) in each Pargana.

#### ****CONCLUSION****

Sher Shah was not only a successful general but also an able administrator. In fact, his qualities as a ruler were more remarkable than his conquests. He introduced original and wise changes in every branch of administration during his brief reign of 5 years.