

MUGHAL ADMINISTRATION

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Babar % 1526 to 1530



Humayun : (1530 to 1556)



Shershah Suri (1540 to 1545)



Humayun (1545 to 1556)



Akbar (1556 to 1605)



Jahangir (1605 to 1627)



Shahjahan (1627 to 1658)



Orangjeb (1658 to 1707)

I. CONCEPTION OF KINGSHIP

Before the advent of Mughals, the Delhi Sultans deemed themselves to be the representatives of Khalifa. i.e. Niab-i-Amir-ul-Momirin. They always endeavored to get his recognition and struck coins in his name. The Mughal rulers adopted the title of 'Badshah' thereby declaring their political sovereignty. Akbar went to the extent of doing away with the interference of Mullahs and Ulema. In September, 1579 A.D. he issued a special declaration called Mahjar or the Infallibility Decree which bears the signatures of Abdul Navi and Makhdum-ul-Mulk etc., the prominent Maulvis of the time. The decree enunciated that in the eyes of God, a just king ranks higher than a supreme religious chief. Insubordination of the king, therefore is the insubordination of God. According to the decree, Akbar became the sole arbiter of Muslim law and was authorised to give the final verdict or Fatwa. Keeping in view the tenets of Quran, he had the right to issue instructions for the welfare of the public. The decree delinked religion from politics, thereby laying the foundation of liberal policy of religious toleration of the Mughals. Adopting a liberal policy towards non-Muslims, Akbar appointed them at high government posts. He waived off Jazia and Pilgrimage taxes and established matrimonial alliance with the Rajputs. It was a novel political dream which led to the growth of Indo-Muslim culture. A special feature of the political vision was Akbar's domination over about 100 rulers who regularly paid tribute to him, offered him costly gifts and extended him military assistance during war-times. Several such rulers were appointed at government posts as Mansabdars. The Mughal emperors upheld the theory of Divine Right of Kings. For them, a king was the shadow of God (Zileh-Elahi) on earth. He commanded unlimited powers. Even though an autocrat, he worked for the welfare of the people and the growth of art and literature. Mughal administration

was neither totally Indian nor foreign in nature. Rather it was a synthesis of Indian, Arabic and Persian framework of administration. Some historians call it a Paper government. Akbar's administration is known as Police state as well for the administration was based on Military and its every high official (Mansabdar) had to maintain army. Some historians opine that the Mughal administration was a fine synthesis of Indian and foreign factors. "It was a Perso-Arabic System in Indian setting."

II. CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

(i) **Emperor:** Emperor was the hub of whole administration. He enjoyed the sole authority of making and enforcing law to meet out justice, to maintain peace and declare a war.

(ii) **Council of Ministers:** A king had constituted a council of Ministers for his assistance whose main function was to advise the king on important issues. However it was different from its modern counterpart.

(a) **Vakil or Prime Minister:** Prime-Minister was known as the Vakil. Finance and supervision of the other ministers were his main functions. He was also called `Vakil-e-Aala and he enjoyed the confidence of the emperor.

(b) **Diwal-e-Ala or Finance Minister:** The finance minister maintained the account of state income and its expenditure. Finance was wholly under the charge of Diwan, who appointed and supervised the working of the provincial Diwans.

(c) **Mir Bakshi:** Mir Bakshi used to be a prominent Central Minister, who recruited, trained and prepared the nominal rolls of the soldiers. In the absence of the emperor, he led military expeditions as well.

(d) **Sadr-us-Sadur:** Akbar's council of Ministers had a high official known as Chief Sadr who was called Sadr-us-Sadur as well. He managed the Government Grants given to Saints, Fakirs, religious places, educational centers and scholars.

(e) **Khan-i-Saman:** Khan-i-Saman held an important position in the Council of Ministers. He was also called Mir-i-Samon (Lord High Steward). He was a special confidant of the emperors whose main functions were to manage the affairs the Emperor's department of manufactures.

(f) **Chief Qazi:** Chief-Qazi assisted the emperor in judicial matters. He decided the suits as per the tenets of Quran and Islamic traditions. The various courts in the various parts of the country functioned under his supervision.

(g) **Some other functionaries:** Besides the above mentioned central Ministers, there were some other functionaries such as Mir-e-Adil, Mir-e-Tozak and Mir-e-Manzil, Akbar had appointed several detectives and Waqianavis.

III. SUBA

The Mughal emperors had divided their kingdom into several provinces to streamline the administration. The provincial administration followed the pattern of central administration. A special feature of the provincial administration was that the Emperor appointed the provincial Subedar while the provincial Diwan was appointed by Diwan-e-Ala.

(i) **Subedar:** The head of the province was known as Subedar or Nazim or Sahib-i-Subha. He was appointed by the emperor. Usually, the king used to appoint his son or some close relative or his confidant on this post.

(ii) **Diwan:** Finance of the province was under Diwan. He was appointed on the recommendation of the Central Diwan. His primary duty was to determine and collect the land revenue.

(iii) **Bakshi:** Following the central pattern, Bakshi in the province was appointed on the recommendation of Mir Bakshi. His main duties were to supervise the military affairs, to inspect the army, branding of the horses and to prepare the descriptive roll of the soldiers.

(iv) **Sadar:** Religious and traditional matters in the province were under the charge of Sadar, who was appointed at the recommendation of Chief Sadar.

(v) **Qazi:** Qazi was incharge of the judicial matters in the province. He settled the suits according to Islamic law and supervised the functioning of Qazis in Sarkars and Parganas.

(vi) **Waqianavis:** Waqianavis had to keep a record of each incident in the province and to keep the centre duly informed about the same.

(vii) **Bitikichi:** He acted as a check on the Amil. His status was equal to the Amil.

(viii) **Kotwal:** He was a police officer of the town. He was responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the city.

IV. VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

The smallest but nevertheless, the most important unit of administration in the Mughal empire was the village Panchayat which consisted of some respectable and old villagers. Panchayat looked after the cleanliness, primary education and religious places in the village and settled the disputes. Moreover government servants e.g. Patwari Mukaddam and Chowkidars also functioned in the villages. Patwari maintained the record of the land and Mukaddam collected the tax from the farmers while Chowkidar guarded the village.

V. CITY ADMINISTRATION

Big cities were under the care of Kotwals whose main functions were to maintain peace, make proper arrangement for cleanliness, keep a check over the traders, to keep a strict vigil over prostitutes and drunkards and to look after the foreigners in the town.

VI. JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The Mughal emperors were just rulers. Jehangir had hung a gold chain outside his palace for the appellants. Akbar had endeavoured to establish a fair judiciary. The Supreme Court of the empire was the court of the emperor himself. Chief Qazi and Sardar in the centre delivered justice according to the Islamic law. In the provinces, Subedars settled criminal suits while Diwans decided Civil suits. The Civil suits were decided by the provincial Qazis

REFERENCES

[1] Middle Age group, published by NCERT

[2] Kiran Competition Book.