

Central Administration of Akbar

The Mughal rule is distinguished by the establishment of a stable government and other social and cultural activities. The arts of life flourished. It was an age of profound change, seemingly not very apparent on the surface but it definitely shaped and molded the socio-economic life of our country. Since Akbar was anxious to evolve a national culture and a national outlook, he encouraged and initiated policies in religious, political and cultural spheres which were calculated to broaden the outlook of his contemporaries and infuse in them the consciousness of belonging to one culture.

Akbar prided himself unjustly upon being the author of most of his measures by saying that he was grateful to God that he had found no capable minister, otherwise people would have given the minister the credit for the emperor's measures, yet there is ample evidence to show that Akbar benefited greatly from the council of able administrators.¹ He conceded that a monarch should not himself undertake duties that may be performed by his subjects, he did not do this for reasons of administrative efficiency, but because "the errors of others it is his part to remedy, but his own lapses, who may correct?"²

The Mughals were able to create the such position and functions of the emperor in the popular mind, an image which stands out clearly not only in historical and either literature of the period but also in folklore which exists even today in form of popular stories narrated in the villages of the areas that constituted the Mughal's vast dominions when his power had not declined. The emperor was

looked upon as the father of people whose function it was to protect the weak and average the persecuted.

It is true that sometimes, there were rebellion that had to be punished and there were war's of conquest or reprisal, but these did not succeed in obliterating the image among the large mass of the people.³

Abul Fazl introduced a new dimension to the Mughal theory of kingship. To him, the institution of kingship, rather than the individual who held the office, was endowed with farri-izadi(divine effulgence). His padshah or shahanshah (king of king) was a unique personality and was the viceregent of God on earth. Another important scholar on this subject was Shaikh Abdul Haqq Dihlawi who wrote the Nuriyya-i-Shltaniyya, a treatise covering all aspects of this subject, during Jahangir's reign.

Complete independence of the sovereign or the king, both internally and externally. Internally, every institution and person was sub-ordinate to the king. Externally the Mughal Sovereign did not recognize any superior authority like the caliph, which was done by the Delhi Sultans.

The desire of the Mughals to bring under their imperial rule not only the whole of India, but also territories outside India such as Afghanistan, Central Asia etc. The Mughal administration was based on dynastic loyalties. Though in theory administrative posts were open to all, in practice mostly those persons having royal origins were taken into administration and the government servants owed loyalty to the dynasties rather than to the institution.⁴

The centre of the whole structure or government was sovereign. Before the sovereign all important matters relating to appointments, increments, jagirs, government grants, mansabs, order of payment, petition of princes, governor's, bakhshir, diwans, faujdars and private petitions sent through nobles were submitted. Even when the sovereign was on the move, daily routine was observed.

He unrestricted use of powers of a Wazir by Bairam Khan was a warning against the appointment of all powerful Wazir. The office of the Vakil was retained but none of the Vakils after Bairam Khan exercised the power's and influence of a Prime Minister.

Mughal empire was divided into Subah or Province which was further subdivided into Sarkar's, Parganas and villages. However it also had territorial units as 'Khalisa' (Royal Land) Jagirs (Autonomous Rajas) and inams (gifted lands mainly waste land). There were twelve territorial units, during Akbar's reign which increased to twenty one during Aurangzeb's reign. The administrative agency in the provinces under the Mughal was an exact miniature of that of the central government. The provincial administration was based on the principles of uniformity. The Mughals efficiently carried on the judicial administration with the help of Qazi-ul-Quzat. He also used to supervise the law of courts within the empire. At the provincial level Sardar, Kotwal, Muqaddam and Chowkidar heard the cases. The consumer cases were heard by Amil.

Mansabdari system introduced by Akbar in 1573-74 was the steel frame of the emperor's military policy. The mansabdar was an official who out of his pay, was expected to furnish a certain number of cavalry to the imperial army.⁵

Salient features of the mansabdari system were as follows :

- Mansabdar's were graded into 39 classes, ranging from commander's of 10 to 10,000.
- Twin ranks- Zat and Sawar-were allotted. The former indicated a noble's personal status, while the latter, the number of troops he had to maintain.
- Mansabdari had three scale gradations : (i) Mansabdar (500 Zat and below), (ii) Amir (between 500-2500 Zat), (iii) Amir-i-Umda (2500 Zat and above).
- Mansab was not an hereditary system, mansabdars were paid through revenue assignments (jagirs) land was classified into four types : Polaj (continuously cultivated), Parauti (left fallow for a year or two or recover productivity), chachar (left fallow for three or four years) and Banjar (uncultivated for five years or more).

During the early years of Akbar reign several revenue experiments were made. Here were three principal revenue systems in the mughal empire which may be described as follows :

- Ghallabaksh or Crop division : Under this system , a share of each crop was taken by the state. His system prevailed in lower sind, a part of Kabul and Kashmir.
- Zabti System : Todarmal, who was appointed Akbar's financial minister (diwan-i-ashraf) in 1552 set up a regulation or standard system of revenue administration known as Zabti System. This system was Applied from Bihar to Multan and in large parts of Rajputana, Malwa and Gujarat. Under this system, land were accurately surveyed Polaj and Parauts lands were subdivided into 3 grades (Good, mild and bad). The average produce was

calculated from the mean of the three grades. He demand of the state was one third of average produce. The settlement under the Zabti system was made directly with the Cultivator.

Under the Zabti system, the cash rates were fixed on the average of ten years actual i.e. from the past experience of ten years . That is why this system is also called Dahsala system. Advantages of Dahasala system is as follows :

- It enabled the administrators to guess fairly the revenue of the state.
- Cultivators knew what they were required to pay.
- The government also promised to reduce the revenue in cash of unforeseen circumstances of natural calamities.
- The state advanced loans to the cultivators.
- Remissions of revenue was granted in bad seasons.

(III) Nasaq or Estimate : Past assessment determined the present. Todarmal collected the accounts of the Qanungos and in some places ascertained their accuracy by local enquiries. From these accounts he prepared the rent roll of the Surabh. He Nasacal system did not depend the survey or seasonal records of produce. It resembled the Zamindari settlement.

The form of mughal government was despotic monarchy. The king was the head of the executive, legislature, judiciary and the army. His main duty was benevolence towards the subjects. The royal Uruk (small signet ring) was affixed to formans granting senior appointments, titles, jagirs etc. The only limit on the autocracy of the king were the nobility and the ulema.

Though in theory the nobles owed their position to the king, in practice king could not easily ignore the strength of the nobility.

Although I have to focus mainly on central administration but keeping the interlink of center, province & local administration a glimpse is essential (from top to bottom) to display which is shown below-

A-CENTRE

- **WAZIR** (Akbar abolished the post of all powerful wazirs)
- **DIWAN** (Responsible for all income and expenditure and had control over Khalisa and jagir land)
- **MIR BAKSHI** Headed military department, nobility, information and intelligence agencies.
- **MIR SAMAN** In charge of imperial household and karkhanas.
- **MIR MUNSHI** In charge of Royal correspondence.
- **SADR-US-SADR** In charge of charitable and religious endowment.
- **QAZI-UL-QUJAT** Headed the judiciary department.
- **MUHTASIBE** censor of public morals.
- **MUSHRIF-I-MUMALIK** Accountant general.
- **MUSHTAUF-I-MUMALIK** Auditor general.
- **DARGO-I-DAK-CHAUKI** Officer in charge of imperial post equivalent to today's post master.

- MIR BARR Superintendent of forests.
- MIR-I-ARZ Officer in charge of petition.
- WAQIA-NAVIS News Reporters/writers.
- DIWAN-I-KHALISA In charge of crown lands.
- MIR-I-MAL In charge of privacy purse.
- MIR-I-TOZAK In charge of ceremonies.
- MIR-BAHRI In charge of ships on boats.
- MIR-MAUZIL In charge of Quarters.
- MIR ATISH

OR

- Daroga-i- Topkhana Head of Artillery
- Khufia Navis Secret letter writers.

B-PROVINCE

- SIPAHSALAR The head executive (known as sipahsalar under Akbar and later known as Nizam or Subedar)
- DIWAN In charge of revenue department
- BAKSHI In charge of military department
- SADR In charge of judicial department

C-DISTRICT/ SARKAR

- FAUZDAR Administrative head
- AMAL / AMALGUZAR Revenue collection

- KOTWAL Maintenance of law & order trial of criminal cases and price regulations.

D-PRAGNA

- SHIQDAR Administrative head combined in himself the duties fauzadar & kotwal.
- AMIN, QANUNGO Revenue officials.

E-VILLAGE

- MUQADDAM Headman
- PATWARI Accountant
- CHOWKIDAR Watchman.

It is an important to mention here that Akbar devoted considerable attention to agrarian administration. He was forced to do this because the conditions threatened to become chaotic unless reforms were introduced. This was not the result of any inherent basic shortcomings of the system. Akbar inherited a number of officers who had grandiose titles and pretensions which were out of all proportion to the financial resources of the empire. They claimed with large salaries and were not willing to compromise with their dignity by accepting smaller but more realistic emoluments.⁶

Besides a great conqueror Akbar was an extraordinary administration having excellent system of administration. Although this system of administration

was based on the principles and institution introduced by Shershah Suri, but Akbar effected many improvement in the system to make it more effective. The Mughal administration under Akbar was highly centralized. All the power of the state was vested in the God on the earth. There was no one who can challenge his authority. He was not only the head of the state but also the commander in chief of the military forces as well as the head of the judicial authority in the country.⁷ Although Akbar enjoyed absolute power's he did not behave in a despotic manner. He always kept the interest of his people in his mind and carried administration in a manner which won him the administration and that respect of his people.⁸ Everyone tried to win over the good will⁹ of the king as success in Akbar has shared the life depended upon his good will of fate of all great reformers in having his personal character assailed, his motives impugned his actions distorted upon evidence which hardly bears judicial examination.¹⁰

Though the king was assisted by a number of Ministers in the administration of the country, but he was not bound by their advice. The final decision rested with the king. In short the king enjoyed absolute authority and there was hardly any check on his authority.¹¹

Man's selfish and preserve nature is the chief obstacle in the preservation of order in society and peace in the country. Low qualities and base morals, like cruelty, oppression, injustice and insurrection, have become a part of man's nature. Hence God has ordained that, from amongst the people, there should be one hakim-i-adil, to direct the actions of the sons of Adam and the affairs of the people of the world on the right path, and keep them safe and secure. If a just king is removed, 'swords are drawn and blood flows. The one who

possesses a strong hand does whatever he likes. It is like a fire which spreads in a reed-bed and burns all that is dry. The green plants are also reduced to ashes by the nearness of dry ones.'

Abul Fazl also starts with the same assumption. 'If royalty did not exist the storm of strife would never subside, nor selfish ambition disappear. Mankind, being under the burden of lawlessness and lust, would sink into the pit of destruction, the world.....would lose its prosperity and the whole earth become a barren waste.'

Anarchy, confusion, man's selfish nature and the tyranny of the strong, being the justification for royal power, 'protection' becomes the chief duty of the monarch. 'One should first have the king, then wife and afterwards wealth for if there were no king, how could one enjoy wife and wealth. A king who duly protects his subjects receives from each and all the sixth part of their spiritual merit ; if he does not protect them, the sixth part of their demerit also will fall on him.' ' The king receives revenue as his fee for the service of protection.' He who does not properly protect his subjects is a thief among kings.'

The duty of Hakim-i-Adil is to curtail the hand of the strong upon the weak. It is the sovereign who closes the doors of mischief, trouble and sanitation. God made the fear of him penetrate the hearts of the people, so that they may live in peace under his justice and desire the stability of his power. ' By the light of imperial justice, some followed with cheerfulness the road of obedience, whilst others abstain through fear of punishment and out of necessity make choice of the path of rectitude.'

When protection is guaranteed and peace is established, its blessings follow and the blessings or conditions following peace and protection enumerated by these writers indirectly give us idea of their conception of kings' duties and the scope of state activities. 'People sleep with the doors of their houses unbarred; the women decked with all their ornaments and unguarded by males, fearlessly walk about the streets; the people practice virtues instead of harming one another; the three classes perform great sacrifice of various kinds; the science of agriculture and trade, which is the root of this world, exists in good order.' So with Abul Fazl under the rule of a true king, 'sincerity, health, chastity, justice, polite manners, faithfulness truth, an increase of sincerity...are the result.' He is continually attentive to the health of the body politic and applies remedies to the several diseases thereof. The object of the state under him because to remove oppression and bring out the latent faculties, or utilize the capacities of subjects under him and so 'by means of the warmth of the ray of unanimity and concord, a multiple of people become fused into one body.'¹²

Thus the existence of the people, their happiness, the institutions of society and the rules of morality and religion depend upon the king's office. Hence it is no wonder that the king's importance is emphasized. He becomes supreme in his sphere. He represents sovereignty in his person and all the seven elements of sovereignty are absorbed in one.'

King should act as time demands he must follow enquiry and not led by authority.

If he does not regard all conditions of humanity and rests of religions with the single eye for favor and not be mother to some and he step mother to others, he will not become for the exacted dignity.

The position of the king in this respect is further emphasized in one of Akbar's letters to the Shah of Persia. The sections of mankind who are a divine deposit and treasure must be regarded with the glance of affection. It must be considered that divine mercy attaches itself to every form of creed and supreme exertions must be made to bring oneself into the ever vernal flower-garden of "peace with all". The eternal God is bounteous to all souls. Hence it is fitting that Kings, who are the shadow of divinity, should not cast away this principal.¹³

The custom of an open darbar was a great step to create a closer contact and direct connexion between the people and the king, a fact which was entirely ignored by the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate. Beside the state chroniclers, contemporary writers and European travelers, who visited the Mughal Court at different time, agree on the point that people had direct access to the king.

The three daily meetings of the king had a profound influence upon the general administration of the empire. The institution of the darshan at the Jharoka, where the king sat with his face towards the rising sun, was an innovation base upon an intelligent study of the Indian mind. It meant indirectly respect to the practice of the worship of the sun. It afforded facilities to the Hindu to offer their prayer and recite the river hymn on the bank of the sacred river Jamuna. It created the means of attracting the masses towards the person of the king and impressing his existence and his personality upon their

mind. In short it appealed to the psychology of the mob and stirred the imagination of the masses. 'Akbar was a profound student of Indian history and made a direct appeal to the deepest feelings of his subjects. When the padshah appeared at the Jharoka windows of the palace every morning.....crowds of Hindus assembled, determined to begin the day auspiciously with the sight of "Visnu's viceregent" on earth.

The regularity with which the routine established by Akbar was followed by himself and the importance which it had gained under him, was a sufficient guarantee of its continuance under his immediate successors who had personally witnessed it. On the whole, it shows the spirit with which they started and the aims and objects they had placed before themselves. It also shows that they fully understood that the success of administration under monarchy depends upon the manner in which a king spends his time. The realization of this important facts forms the key note to the measure of the success in which the three great Mughals achieved. They performed their duties cheerfully and themselves set examples to others on whom ultimately the carrying out of their desires and orders depended Abul Fazl says;" His Majesty looks upon the smallest details as mirrors capable of reflecting a comprehensive outline, he does not reject that which superficial observers call an unimportant and counting the happiness of his subjects as essential to his own,never suffers equanimity to be disturbed. Monserrate, who as highly impresses by Akbar's personality, supports this statement. He says: "It is hard to exaggerate how accessible he makes himself to all who wish audience of him. For he creates an opportunity almost every day for the common people or for the nobles to see him and converse with him and he endeavours to show himself pleasant spoken and affable rather than severe.....Though at times

he may seem at leisure and to have laid aside public affairs, he does not cease to revolve in his mind the heavy cares of state.’

Akbar paid great attention to the organization of the Central and provincial governments, his system of central govt. was based on the structure of the government which had evolved under the Delhi sultan, but the functions of the various departments were carefully recognized and meticulous rules and regulations were laid down for the conduct of affairs. Thus he gave a new shape to the system and breathed new life in it.¹⁴

The wakil was the highest officer next only to the emperor.¹⁵ Theoretically, at the head of the administration was the wakil who was considered to be “emperor’s lieutenant in all matters connected with the realm and the Household.” As such he was the emperor’s chief advisor; he was also specially responsible for advising the emperor upon “appointments, dismissals, promotions and demotions. The financial officers were not under his immediate superintendence, yet he received the returns from the heads of all financial departments and kept abstracts of their returns.”¹⁶ In practice, however, such an officer depends for its authority upon personal equation. These powers were exercised by Bairam Khan in the days of Akbar’s tutelage; when the emperor grew up, he began to resent the wakil’s authority and brought about his downfall. No other wakil was so powerful until the decay of the monarch’s authority in the later days of the empire; mostly the office was ornamental; sometimes it was not even filled. Even when the wakil did not have much power, he was influential as the highest official of the realm having access to the monarch and often his confidence.

The Wakil and his position

Akbar's reign is a period of evolution and development of all the institutions which can be termed Mughal. Hence it is described to trace step by step the determination of the position of the vazir of the Empire and the division of functions and powers generally associated with the institution of vizarat.

Akbar has the advantage of the experience of three hundred years of Muslim rule in the country and it goes to its credit that he did not ignore it. Like the problems of maintaining peace in the vast area of the northern plains, the problem of vizarat of the great Empire also presented difficulties.

Akbar's personal experience of Bairam's vikalat was a sufficient warning against placing all powers in the hands of one vazir.

THE VAKILS OF THE EMPIRE¹⁷

	Name	Year of resign	Period
Akbar	Shihab-ud-Din	6th	1 year
	Bahadur Khan	6th	1 year
	Atka Khan	7th	1 year
	Mun'im han	7th – 12th	5 year

	Muzzaffar Khan	22 nd – 24th	2 year
	Khan Khanan	34th	A few months
	Mirz Khan (Abdur Rahim)	34th	A few months
	Khan-i-A'ZAM	40 th – 50th	10 years
	Mirza' Aziz Koka	40 th- 50 th	10 years

WAZIR / DIWAN

The wazir or Diwan was the chief advisor of the king in the administration.¹⁸ Only when the monarch appointed an officer well versed in the fiscal administration as the wakil, could be exercise any supervisory authority over the diwan. In exeception instance the two offices were even combined :this, however, ran counter to the Mughal administrative theory. The wazir's authority stemmed out of his expert knowledge. Monarchs were inclined to be more tolerant of type failings of experts than of others ; financial experts were held in high esteem. The wazir had to be strict with the highest officers in their financial dealings with the state and sometimes had to perform unpleasant duties by calling them to account. If the monarch desired orderly fiscal ffairs he had to give the wazir support ; the wazir, on his part had to be tactful and not too harsh in his dealings with the officials. This was even trainer in the earlier period of the consolidation of the authority of the state, khwajah shah Mansur, whose execution was miscarriage of justice, had incurred the displeasure of the powerful officers because of his harshness. He was not removed until a trumped up charge of high treason based

upon forged evidence, brought about his execution. Even when Akbar believed in the truth of the evidence, he was sorry that he had to lose such a good officer. He disliked Todar Mal's religious fanaticism ; but the emperor did not permit his private feelings in the way of Todar Mal's Promotion.¹⁹

Akbar reorganized the central machinery of the administration on the basis of division of power between departments and of checks and balances, while the post of vakil was not abolished it was stripped of all the power and became largely decorative. The post was given to important nobles from time to time, but they played little part in administration. The head of the revenue department was continued to be the Wazir.²⁰

Under Akbar Generally the Wazir did not hold a high mansab. Many nobles hold mansabs which were higher than this. Thus he was no longer the principal advisor to the ruler, but one who was an expert in revenue affairs. To emphasize this point Akbar generally used the title of diwan or diwan-i-ala in preference to the word Wazir. Sometimes several persons were asked to discharge the duties of the diwan jointly. The diwan was responsible for all income and expenditure and held control over jagir and inam lands.²¹

In the eighth year of the reign Muzzaffar Khan appointed as was divan and thus the revenue and the financial matters were separated from the office of the vakil and a further blow was given to its power and prestige.

The appointment of a person brought out from prison to this post was another assertion of power in the matter of appointments to the vizaat.²²

Muzzaffar was the last of Akbar's vakils who exercised some influence over the administration and wielded power, but his position was purely personal and the respect which Akbar showed to him was due to his capacity, loyalty and efficient services both in the field and in the ministry and not to his office.

Muzzaffar remained in office for two years and the ministry worked efficiently till Muzzaffar was transferred to Bengal, in the beginning of the twenty fourth year. His transfer, like that of Mun'im, ended his career as the wakil of the empire and he ceased to have any connection with the administrative affairs of the central government.

Akbar's Diwan were responsible for many reforms in the administration and its procedure these brought about efficiency in place of the chaos which had prevailed because of wars and disorder's immediately preceding Akbar's reign.²³

When the emperor felt that a single person was not adequate for the responsibilities of this onerous office, another expert was associated with him; the second man occupied only a slightly subordinate position. Sometimes the office was put into commission and two persons with equal authority were given charge of it. Occasionally an officer was appointed who was higher than the diwan, but who was not given the status of the wakil or his authority; his supervisory powers were limited to fiscal matters. He was called *ishraf-i-diwan* or *mushrif-i-diwan* ; Akbar once put Salim in charge of supervisory duties of the fiscal administration and the diwan was asked to consult him in all matters ; this was done probably to acquaint the prince with the work.²⁴

The procedure adopted by the diwan's office in making payment shows how many checks were provided against the possibility of defalcation of funds or wrong payments.

The tradition created by the Mughal bureaucracy have yet not been overcome in the subcontinent inspite of the need for great dispatch in the modern conditions of society and the expanded requirement of the government.

The Iranian word *dewan* connected with *dabir* which is connected with the Assyrian *dap* public registers of receipts and expenditure kept in Greek (Syria and Egypt) and in Pahalavi (Persia) in the early years of the conquest, then translated into Arabic and continued in that language from this time. . . . The name, next, passed to the offices of the treasury and then was extended to the government of the 'Abbasid Caliphs.....²⁵

Muzzaffar Khan was the first *divan* of the Empire and the work of the revenue and finance was, at his appointment, separated from the *vikalat*. He had practical knowledge of revenue in the country and besides having worked under Bairam Khan he had served as a *pargana* official, and as the *diwan* of the *Buyutat* he was acquainted with the machinery of the central government, as it then stood. A man rising from the base of the department to the top possesses certain advantages of first-hand knowledge of its working and details, which heads of departments suddenly coming to power do not generally possess. His choice and high connection's or recommendation is a sufficient testimony of the ability and capacity which must have impressed Akbar.

He served as divan with Mun'im as the wakil and Khavaja Jahan as his colleague, till the twelfth year of the reign, when Mun'im was transferred to Bengal and Khvaja Jahan was removed from his office.

During these three years, Akbar took every opportunity to raise the status of the divan and his position appears to have been firmly established by this name. It was on his report that Mir Bakhshi Lashkar Khan and Khvaja Jahan were removed from office and it was the sequel of the same affair in which Mun'im was involved and which led to his transfer from the central government to the east.

From the twelfth year up to the seventeenth, Muzaffar acted as an independent minister and divan without any wakil over him. In the thirteenth year further division of work was made and Shihabud -din was placed in charge of khalsa lands. It appears that these lands were kept separate from the divan and the minister in charge of them was not under him.²⁶

In the seventeenth year Muzaffar fell from favour and was removed from his office for bad behavior towards the king.

This ended the first phase of the career of Muzaffar. During the eight years of his office (9th-17th), the position of the divan, as head of the department and the first minister of the Empire, was firmly established.

During Akbar's tour in Punjab in which Abul Fazl also accompanied him the following matters were decided :

- The assignment of the sarkar of Behar as a jagir to a number of Officers.
 - The taking of mints from the charge of the chaudhris under government management and their assignment to government officers as below ;
 - The mint of Lahore to Muzzaffar.
 - Bengal to Raja Todar Mal.
 - Jaunpur to Mansur.
 - Gujarat to Kh. 'Imad-ud-din Hasan.
 - Patna to Asaf Khan.
 - Fatehpur to K. 'Abdul samad Shirin Qalam.
- An order was passed that square rupis(chahar gosla) should be coined.²⁷

During the same tour the Raja was ordered to disperse a group of Afghans to different provinces, as certain cases of their oppression were reported and their hold on certain villages created delay in the administration of justice and difficulty in getting evidence against them.²⁸

Saivid Muzzaffar and Raja Birbal were dispatched to Jalundhar to inquire into the condition of the needy and report deserving cases to the kind.²⁹

The Governor of the Punjab, Husain Quli Khan Mahram, was removed from office on charges of maladministration and neglect of duty. Sa'eed Khan was appointed in his place.³⁰

Muzzaffar Khan and Shah Mansur were appointed to inquire into the case of the ‘amal juzar (collector) of Delhi against whom the petition of the public was received.³¹

On their return from the tour, Mansur and Muzzaffar were appointed to inspect the treasury of the capital.³²

In the beginning of the twenty fourth years, Muzzaffar was appointed the Governor of bangal and a few months later the Raja was sent to Bihar on military duty to help the officers in dealing with the political situation and the revolt of the army. Thus the ministry was broken and the Khvaja alone continued as the divan.

Mir Bakhshi

The mir bakhshi of the mughal empire enjoyed all the powers of the divan-i-arz, as the head of the department, but his influence extended beyond his own department and his nearness to the king in the darbar added much to his prestige. The recruitment of the service on military lines the dependence of the rank of an officer on the number of soldiers required to be maintained by him and the payment of the salary on the presentation of the stipulated number of horsemen at fixed intervals, naturally led to the division of the power of the vazir and the chief bakhshi become an equal sharer with him on his responsibilities and prestige.

He looked to the enforcement of the regulations in the case, supervised the branding of the horses, inspected the stipulated number of soldiers and specified the amount

of the monthly salary on its basis. He kept the ta'liqa (abridgment) received by him and gave in its stead a certificate signed and sealed by hi, called sarkhat.

It was on the basis of this certificate that the divan made enteries in his records, which he put before the king for sanction.

The sanction thus obtained was again reported to the chief bakhshi, and it was after his signatures and the seal that the divan forwarded it to the vakil.

Like the farmans, parvanchas and barats also passed through him and on all such orders when completed he put his seal side by side with that of the divan of the Empire.³³

Thus his influence extended to all the departments of the central government and he dealt with them on an equal footing.

The Mir Bakhshi in the darbar

As the head of the military department, he was in touch with every mansabdar and hence his presence in the darbar formed a part of his permanent duties, In this capacity he stood on the right side of the throne and put before the king all matters connected with his department.³⁴

Presentation of Candidates

He presented all the candidates for service. Iranis, Tranis, Rumi, Firangi, Hindi and Kashmiri came from service, their salaries were fixed by proper officers according to the regulations and the bakhshis presented them before the king.³⁵

Presentation of soldiers and horses

The soldiers and horses of the mansabdars after the dagh-o-tashima (branding and verification) in cases of fresh appointments and at regular intervals in cases of permanent officers, were also presented by the bakhshis before the king.³⁶

Presentation of the officials and visitors

As the head of the department, he presented before the king all high officers of the state coming from the provinces or leaving the capital for their headquarters as well as embassies and other distinguished visitors. Hawkins calls him 'Lieutenant-General' in this connection.³⁷

Presentation of the names of guards for rewards

As the chief officer connected with the guards of the place, he presented their names for rewards. The king gave them elephants, horses and other articles as well. 'The bakhshis read out daily the names of the guards and other soldiers, mentioning such first as have never received anything before. His Majesty gives them horses. When a soldier has received a horse, he is not recommended to his Majesty for the space of a year for any other donation.

The mir bakhshi at the capital

As the chief officer of the state and the head of the military department, he kept the list of the guards. The mansabdars at the capital were divided into seven divisions

and a day of the week was allotted to each. The duty was compulsory and was enforced strictly. The list was prepared by the chief bakhshi and presented before the king. The king supervised the changing of the guards every day.³⁸ Hawkins says : ‘It is the custom of all those receive pay of living from the king to watch once a week, none excepted, if they be well and in the city’.³⁹

There was the very interesting case of Shahbaz Khan under Akbar. His name was put on the list next to Mirza Khan (afterwards “Akbar Rahim Khan Khanan). He not only resented it but strongly protested before the king and exceeded the limits of politeness. He was imprisoned for his bad behaviour for sometime ⁴⁰and placed under the charge of Rai Sal Darbari.

Another important case of the guards is associated with the name of Shaikh Farid, the mir Bakhshi, who saved a very critical situation by his bold use of the power of nominating the guards of the palace. At the time when Akbar was on his death bed and every hope of recovery was lost, Khan-i-A’Zam, the vakil of the Empire and Raja Man Singh, both of whom were interested in Prince Khusrau, were busy in their schemes to prevent the accession of Prince Salim. The contemporary writer, Tahavvur Khan, says that Shaikh Farib, who was anxious to see that no disturbance was caused in the city, took a very bold step at that time. He took the soldiers of the guard with him, went to the fort, took out all the heavy material of war and dissected it outside the city and himself walked courageously and with all befitting dignity to the residence of Prince Salim, congratulated him and saluted him as king. All the nobles and officers who were watching the turn of events followed this lead and at once rushed with their armies and followers to do homage to Prince Salim and when the situation was thus changed, the mir bakhshi took another step to checkmate the intrigues of the opposite party.

The mir bakhshi on tours with the king

Though the charge of the management of tours and establishment that accompanied the king was under the mir saman, who was the head of the karkhanas, the chief bakhshi had his hand in it also. As the head of the military department and chief connecting link between the king and the mansabdars he accompanied the king on tours, pleasure trips and hunting expeditions.

He looked to the arrangement of the camp and allotted places to mansabdars according to their rank.

Mansabdars and officers accompanying the king obtained leave to appear in the darbar through him. The list of such officers who were eligible for admission was changed every month.⁴¹

On tours he acted in his official capacity as he did at the capital and attended to all the business associated with him. He also looked to the convenience of the troops and their conveyance.

The mir bakshi on the battle-field

There were three different positions in which the mir bakhshi or any of his colleagues could be presented on the battlefield.

Firstly, if the Emperor led the army personally, as Akbar usually did or accompanied the army to supervise the arrangements and ensure efficiency and unity among the

officers as Shah Jahan generally did on all important occasions, the chief bakhshi performed his ordinary duties as on tours.

Secondly, he could be placed in charge of any particular division of the army or given complete command of the expedition. In such cases, he acted like an ordinary military general or the commanding officer.

Thirdly, he could be sent with an army placed directly under the charge of some prince or high amir. In such a case the mir bakhshi would be deputed only when the expedition was an important one or his presence was necessitated by any emergency. Shahbaz Khan under Akbar was deputed to Bihar in the Twenty fifth year of the reign with Raja Todar Mal and Mirza 'Aziz Koka'.

Besides these duties Mir Bakhshi Issued certificates under his seal and signatures for the following purposes:

Issue of certificates

- Grants of mansabs and sanctions of increments to the princes and other royal personages, amirs of high rank and other high officials.
- Branding of horses.
- Assignment of guard duty.
- Permission withheld to appear at the guard.
- Muster of troops.
- Branding and verification of hter troops of high amirs and mansabdars, required in case of their death or dismissal.

- Orders of the postings of mansandars.
- Posting of the bakhshis and vaqi'a navis of the provinces.
- Appointments of the darogha, amin and the writer of thw guard.
- Appointment of the darogha, amin and mushrif for the branding and verification of troops attached to the king and the postings of the same to provinces and different armies.

The mir bakhshi also had the following duties:

Other papers dealt with

- Yad dasht of all orders relating to high amirs passed through his hands.
- The division of the armies into different sections was made in his office.
- He prepared the list of high amirs in attendance on the king.
- All appointments made in his presence at the court were certified by him and the yad dash revised and sealed in his office.
- He dealt directly and received papers from the bakhshis and vaqi'a navis of the provinces and the staff of the guards.

The mir bakhshi kept the following records in his office

The records kept in his office

- List of mansabdars stationed at the capital and deputed to provinces.
- Account of demands due from mansabdars.
- Abstracts of pay bills.
- Dastur-ul 'amal (regulations) governing the salaries in cash and jagir and the conversion of jagirs into cash salaries.

- List of the rank of mansabdars and the salaries drawn by them and the manner in which they were drawn.
- Descriptive rolls (chahra) of mansabdars and savars.
- Records of branding and verification.
- Records of the attendance of mansabdars in the provinces and different armies.
- Records of the attendance of guards at the palace.
- Lists of the armies and their arrangement on the day of meeting the enemy.

Role of Bakhsh in absence of Mir Bakhsh

In the absence of the mir bakhshi, the second bakhshi prepared the list of mansabdars every day in attendance at the court but all orders issued at the court in his absence were put before him in his office.

As far as the account of the salaries of the mansabdars were concerned, the mir bakhshi kept in his office all the papers which were signed and sealed by him, but the records of leave and absence affecting the salary were kept by the second bakhshi.

The military accountant (sahib-i-taujih) kept the account of receipts and disbursements, item by item, but the total was made and entered by the officer who prepared the cheque (barat navis).

No definite number is mentioned in the A' in, but the expression bakhshian used at different places suggests that there were more than one bakhshis. In the Akbar nama the distinction in their position is found in the use of the term mir bakhshi, but it does not settle the number . Throughout the records of Akbar's reign the mir bakhshi, bakhshi or bakhshian, are the term used and an inference can be drawn from them that there was one chief bakhshi and one more bakhshi besides him and that he was not called the second bakhshi as he came to be called in subsequent reigns.

Under Akbar and Jahangir the designation was not settled. The chief bakhshi was called the mir and the other two only bakhshis. The proper designation as first, second and third bakhshis is found under Shah Jahan. The other two retained their distinct titles.⁴²

LIST OF THE PROMINENT MIR BAKHSHIS

Akbar	Lashkar Khan Shahbaz Khan, Kamboh Asaf Khan Qazvini Shaikh Farid	No definite period of service of each as mir bakhshi can be determined.
Jahangir	Shaikh Farid (continued) Vazirul Mulk	1 st year to 2 nd year =1 year 2 nd year to 7 th year = 5 year
	Khvaja Abul Hassan Sadiz Khan	8 th year to 6 th year =8 years 16 th year to 18 th year =2 year

	Iradat Khan	19 th year to 22 nd year =3 year
Shah Jahan	Iradat khan (continued for a short time)	
	Sadiq Khan (second time till death) Slam Khan	1 st year to 6 th year = 5 year 6 th year to 8 th year = 2 year

The Mir Bakhshi is generally regarded as the pay master of the army, but it was not a part of his regular and permanent duties. He was concerned with the financial matters only when the army was on active service. The divan and his representatives did not move with it and they only acted through him. Thus it was only on the battlefield that the sanctioned amounts were placed under his charge and he distributed the cash salaries and advanced necessary loans to the army but when the army returned from active services the mir bakhshi submitted the account to the divan's office and ceased to be the paymaster.

Another feature of the office was the nature of the work attached to it made its holder essentially a military man. Military qualifications and a military career became the chief basis for appointment to the post, but the nature of the office-work, together with an equally important duty in the darbar, naturally led him to possess literary qualifications also and to be a cultured man. Thus the combination of two different types of work necessarily prevented him from becoming purely of a military type and the list of the office holders of the period shows that most of them did combine both qualities and particular regard was paid to this point in their selection.

Asaf Khan Qazvini and Shaikh Farid under Akbar were regarded as men of the pen as well as of sword.

It will be interesting to mention here that Akbar's chief bakhshis, Lashkar Khan and Shahbaz Khan were purely military men and both of them though noted for efficiency and loyalty, were punished for rude behavior on more than one occasion.

MIR SAMAN

Mir Saman or Khan-i-Saman was the minister of the royal family and looked after royal building, roads, parks, karkhanas etc.⁴³ He was in charge of the imperial household including the supply of all the provisions and articles for the use of inmates of the haram or the female apartments. Many of these articles were manufactured in royal workshops called Karkhanas.⁴⁴

In the real sense Mir Saman was the Superintendent of stores and was also the head of majesty's personal staff. The karkhanas dealt with every article from pearls, precious stones, swords and scimitars to guns and heavy artillery. It maintained horses and elephants for the army, beasts of burden for baggage and other animals for royal hunt.⁴⁵

It is important to point out that during Akbar's reign the term Mir Saman is not used at all. Mr. Blochmann has pointed out one example of his use in a biographical note on Khwaja Jalauddin Mahmud of Khyrasan, but there it is used as a title conferred upon him by Humayun which under the circumstances are not mentioned nor his power's defined.⁴⁶ In the Akbarnama also there are fewer references to him than to other of his rank.

Under Akbar this office did not hold the rank and position which he did under his two successors and the entire work associated with his office had not developed upon him in that region. In connexion with the Karkhanas, the *divan-i buyutat* is more conspicuous under Akbar and it was later developments which placed him in charge of the whole department and settled his position in the administrative machinery and in this capacity he came to be known as Mir Saman.

The system of maintaining the Karkhanas by the central govt. not only fulfilled all the needs of the state at a low price, but gave an encouragement and impetus to different industries of the country and the improved works executed and articles manufactured in the state factories must have served as models and furnished better designs to local artisans.

The attention which Akbar paid to his karkhanas and to recruiting artisans from different countries and in training local men in every art is recorded in the *Ain-i-Akbari*.⁴⁷

SADR-US-SADR

According to Muslim Jurists the *sadr* is the connecting link between the king and the people the upholder of *shara'* and the spokesman (*naqis*) of the *ulama*. He is indispensable to the state and the king.

The king should show him every possible mark of respect and consult him in all matters of the law and religion. Whatever opinion he gives on such matters, the king should not show the slightest hesitation in acting upon it.

All civil and military officers of the state should carry out the orders passed by him in his capacity as a sadr, and if any opposition is offered even by a noble or a pillar of the state, the king should not be slow to punish him, so that the position of the sadr be upheld and his respect increased in the eyes of the people.

The stipend or salary of the sadr should be fixed in such a way that he may not be required to apply to the divan, the vazir or any other officer of the state.

Duties of Sadr-us-Sadr

The sadr should keep a close watch over the ulama of the state, inquire into their condition and capacities as teachers and instructors and exercise full control over the teaching of all sorts of knowledge in the state. Thus, while exercising a sort of censorship in this matter, he should be in touch with teachers and students and discourage and if necessary prohibit, the teaching of subjects which might affect the religious ideas of the Muslims.

He should encourage and properly reward honest and capable teachers and intelligent and promising students.

The qazis and the muftis should be appointed from this class of teachers and students and deserving cases recommended to their king for award of stipends and lands.

If the king appoints such a sheikh-ul-Islam and he carries out his duties in a way calculated to enhance the prestige of Islam and the dignity of shara and the

promotion of its knowledge, the king can be said to have fulfilled the duty of the protection of shariat.

His position in the state determined the scope of his activities and outlined his duties which were three :

- As the most distinguished scholar of Islam and the religious head, he exercised a sort of censorship over education, ideas and morals of the people. It was in this capacity that he exercised an immense influence and his hand reached every individual of the state. Here he acted as the representative of the ulema of the state and brought to the notice of the king what he thought detrimental or prejudicial to the interests of religion and the king had title option in acting upon such advice.
- Islamic law being the basis of the law of the state, he become the head of the judicial department and as such responsible for the appointment of the qazis and muftis in the state and the proper discharge of their duties. In this capacity he kept himself in touch with the ulema, scholars and the students of Islam, to ensure a regular supply of officials for his department. This enhanced his power and gave him a definite place in the administration of the state.
- As the chief connecting link between the King and the people, by virtue of his position as the chief of Islam, he recommended to the king the cases of the ulema and scholars developed to the service of religion for suitable stipends to relieve them from the anxiety of the earning their livelihood and also brought to the king's notice other deserving cases for state help. This duty brought him in contact with the divan of the state and further increased increased the sphere of his influence.

At the beginning of Akbar's reign the sadar occupied an important position, but as far as the history of the period and its administrative side is concerned their position appears to have been limited to the use of their power to award stipends and jagirs to the ulama and needy people.

The reforms of Akbar were directed in the first instance towards the resumption of lands held by undeserving persons without legal authority. The inquiries which began with the holdings of five hundred bighas and above were in the end carried even to less than a hundred bighas. Abul Fazl is silent about the resumptions of lands which were made as a result of these inquiries, but Bada'uni is loud enough in announcing and condemning them in his own way. Though he has nowhere given any figures, his remarks are suggestive enough and they give a clear idea to the extent to which these resumptions were carried under Akbar. He says that in the year 987 A.D. (A.D.1579) when political disturbances in Bengal and Bihar spread to other parts of the Empire also, the ulama said that the king disturbed our madad-i-ma'as lands and God has now disturbed his country.⁴⁸ Similarly, at the appointment of Mir Fatahulla to the sadarat, he remarks that the office was nothing more than siyaha navisi (clerkship) and the mir was raised to the office not to give lands to the poor but to take from them that which they held. In the year 994 (1585) when kamalai shirazi was made the eficiatingsadr in the absence of Mir Fatahulla, who was sent to the Deccan, Bada'uni thought the arrangement was made to resume the remaining tracts of charitable lands from their holders.

The second object was to regulate the department and the future grants of madad-i-ma'ash. As a result of a series of inquiries into the grants of lands, the power of the sadr were greatly reduced. Shaikh' Abdul Nabi could award as much as he

killed (alammidad), but Mir Fatahulla inspite of his high position and the favour of the king had not the power to grant even five bighas.⁴⁹ Though the statement is not without exaggeration it is not very far from truth because Abul Fazl says that under Mir Sadr Jahan, the successor of Mir Fatahulla, the powers of the sadr were limited to the grant of fifteen bighas. This was the last of the orders of Akbar in this matter and it appears to have stood till the end of his reign.

Though resumptons were made on a large scale and the powers of the sadr were reduced , there is no reason to believe that further grants were not made. As late as the forty first year of the reign, Qazi Nurulla was deputed to inquire into the condition of the sayurghal lands of the province of Agra and to make fresh grants to the needy.

Another reform in the same connexion and with the same object of curtailing the powers of the sadr was that separate sadrs were appointed for the provinces and the list of appointments shows that no regard was shown to the necessary qualifications for the office as required by Shara. In the words of Abul Fazl they were experienced persons of good intentions.⁵⁰

Akbar abolished the appointment of sadr altogether, substituting in its place six provincial sadrs. This statement is incorrect and he has not given any authority for it. The office of the chief sadr continued throughout the reign of Akbar, as the appended list of their names shows. The appointment of provincial sadrs was in connection with the organization of the department and similar to the appointments of provincial divans and bakhshis. The arrangement continued as a part of the administrative system throughout the long period of Akbar's reign.

Akbar's objects appears to have been achieved and efficiency established in the department. After the fall of Shaikh 'Abdul Nabi, Akabar's personal vigilance appears to have continued throughout the remaining period of twenty seven years (1578-1605), and during this long period there is only one case of irregularity in the department, in which the charge of corruption and bribery was brought against Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi, the sadr of Gujarat, in the twenty- eighth year of the reign. He was tried, found guilty and imprisoned.

Miran Sadr Jahan, the last of Akbar's sadrs, was known to Jahangir since his boyhood. When as a prince he used to go to Shaikh 'Abdul Nabi's house to take lessons in hadis, Miran acted there as Shaikh's assistant. Jahangir was on familiar terms with him, and had on once occasion said to him : 'After my accession to power, I will pay off all your debts or give you the rank which you then demand.'

Other Important duties

Another important function connected with the duties of the sadr was looking the poor and the destitute and meeting their needs and requirements out of the funds placed at his disposal for this purpose. This mostly consisted in feeding the poor on particular occasions or during famines and providing for their clothing, especially in winter. Under Akbar, this part of the department also appears to have been organized. Abul Fazl, in the A'in, under the chapter on alms, says, 'His Majesty bestows upon the needy money and necessaries. . . . Many enjoy daily, monthly or yearly allowances, which they receive without being kept waiting. . . it would take up too much time to describe the presents made daily to beggars'⁵¹ "There is a treasurer always in waiting at court and every beggar whom His Majesty sees, is sure to find relief,'⁵²

Akbar had cash ready by his hand at court, in the palace and on his outings. A courtier nominated by him kept some gold and silver in the court, a kror of dams (Rs. 2,500) in the palace and a large sum of money was always carried in a purse on his excursions.⁵³

The chief feature of those charities is that they proceeded from the conception of the King's duties towards his subjects and as far as the poor were concerned Muslims nowhere made any difference between caste and creed. The state considered it to be its duty to provide the means of living for its subjects ; thus those unable to earn their living were maintained by the state and the department of sadr performed that function. It was for the same purpose that Akbar devoted so much attention to purging this department of its evil practices and limiting its benefit to the deserving ones. The four groups of people considered to be deserving included those whose energies were devoted to the good of the public and whose time was better engaged in it than it could otherwise have been, hence they were freed from the care of earning their livelihood. This referred to scholars of all classes and the ulama and dervishes devoted to the cause of their religion. The third ensured the protection of the old families of good birth whose descendants through the vicissitudes of time were unable to support themselves. There are numerous examples of such cases and special instructions were issued to provincial officers to attend to them. The provisions made for the descendants of government officers and arrangements to maintain and educate the sons of nobles at the court, after the death of their fathers, were all the result of the same policy. The fourth group included the old, the weak, the disabled or incapacitated and also those who at times feel under adverse circumstances. They can be termed as unemployed in the modern sense. The case of one Sheikh Ziaulla was referred

to Akbar and it was said that his family were so hard pressed that they were all living on grain only. He belonged to a respectable family of scholars. Akbar was much affected and he included him among those who attended his private assemblies in the “ibadat khana.”

The second feature was that Akbar took this duty upon himself and most of these charities were distributed by him or under supervision.

The Sadrs of Akbar

- Shaikh Gadai Kamboh
- Khvaja Muhammad Salih
- Shaikh ‘Abdul Nabi’
- Sultan Khvaja
- Mir Fatahulla Shirazi
- Miran Sadr Jahan

The third feature was that inspite of the good intentions of these monarchs and the large sums spent on such charities the benefits were not lasting. Charities do not appear to have been well regulated under Muslim monarchs. The benefits in this sense were occasional and temporary. No permanent institution or organization came into existence for charities apart from the fixed vazifas and grants of lands. At the most it had the advantage of saving a section of the poor from starvation and the king made it his chief concern wherever he moved.

Qazi-ul-Quzat

Qazi-ul-qazat was the chief official with position next to the emperor above. He decided cases in accordance with the Islamic law and also appointed Qazis in different parts of empires.

‘The Mughal organization proceeded entirely on these lines. The king appointed the chief qazi sadr who possessed the powers of judge the had the power of appointing subordinate qazis in the dominations, through the king’s sanction was necessary in all such appointments. The king also exercised his power to appoint more than one judge in a city and their duties were accordingly defined. These were the qazis and mir adls. In all big cities and towns the two existed side by side.

The second agency for the administration of justice was the court of the king. The Mughal emperors utilized to the utmost the sanction given by muslim jurists to kings to try judicial cases.

The king tried both civil and criminal cases and acted both as a court of first instance and a court of appeal. The cases on record scattered in the chronicles of the period show that the king received before him more criminal cases than civil for which the explanation is quite simple.

Justice is a name to which every knee will bow. Equality is a word which many fear and detest. Yet the just was rightly declared by Aristotle to be a form of the equal. Hence impartially in justice means two things:

- Law is applied impartially: with accurate equality to all cases that fall within its definitions. The law may be good or bad. As judged by an ethical

- standard, the rule itself may be just or unjust; but in every case the rule is universal for the cases to which it applies. But equality before the law goes further than this. It is not enough to administer law impartially as it exists.
- The law itself must be the same for all without any distinction of caste or creed, rank or race. Professor Hobhouse says : ‘ Equality before the law as a modern understands it, means not merely that the penalties attached to a case of homicide, whatever they may be, will be impartially enforced, but that the penalties will be the same whoever and whatever the slayer and the slain may be. It means equal protection of life and limb for everyone under the law and equal penalties on everyone violating them.’⁵⁴

The mughal emperors can fairly claim to be impartial in justice according to the standard set above. Apart from theoretical references and the saying of these emperors which are frequently found in the annals and emphasized by the chroniclers of the period, actual cases can be quoted in which impartial justice in the above sense was rendered by them in the period covered by this book. In the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Akbar a case was brought forward against the king’s favorite governor and boyhood playmate Khan-i-a’Zam Mirza ;Aziz koka , who during his governorship of Gujarat had arrested an ‘Amil ‘Ala-ud-din for embezzlement and handed him over to one of his servants. This servant had a grudge against the ‘amil and he had him beaten to death. Khan-i-A’Zam punished his servant capitally for the offence and Abul Fazl says’ this act of justice he performed not at the request of anybody but from piety of God’. Thus the man who was guilty of the murder was brought to justice but the matter did not end there. When the father of the ‘amil came from Persia to seek redress the case was reopened and the king ordered it to be tried by the ordinary court of justice. The responsibility lay upon Khan-i-A’zam to prove himself innocent in the matter. In the end he succeeded in

setting the matter by paying a large sum as fine (khinbaha) according to Shara' to the father of the murdered' amil. Hence Abul Fazl feels justified in remarking upon the occasion,' His Majesty. . . . in his court makes no difference between relative and stranger and no distinction between a chief of chiefs and a tangle-haired beggar⁵⁵

Similarly, Akabr created a surprise in Gujar by punishing with death Jujhar Khan, one of the most powerful military chiefs of the late kingdom of Gujarat, for the murder of one Changez Khan. The case was brought forward by the mother of the murdered man during Akbar's stay there. Inquiry was made and the accused was found guilty and sentenced to death . It may be observed that it was done in the eighteenth year of the reign when the conquered province was not even properly subjugated. 'The old and deserted women never imagined that so powerful a man would be punished for misdeeds and was astonished on beholding such justice.General public (umum I khaulariq) received enlightenment from this just sentence.'⁵⁶

In this way judicial administration was based on the principal of equality. Now only was the law one for all but the punishment awarded in recorded cases were the same for high and low. The courts were few, procedure simple trials Quick.

Here it is pertinent to mention here that opening of kings council to other officer's and nobles was another check upon the power's of minister's. There were three kinds of councils (majlis) (A) Those in which departmental affairs were discussed. (B) In which all political and military matter's apart from purely administrative affairs were discussed and (C) In which topics of general and academic interest were discussed in the presence of the king. This custom was very popular during Akbar reign and was followed by his successors.

In true sense the system of balancing power did not stop with its division among the ministers. Akbar appears to have carried it much further during the process of the development of his institution.

Besides these prominent officials Mir munshi was the incharge of royal correspondence. Muhtasib combined both secular as well as religious duties.⁵⁷ He formulated necessary rules for the regulation of the market. As Dr. A.L. Srivastava has observed he tried to prevent the use of wine, hemp and other intoxication cants. He also tried to prevent gambling and other types of evils. He also ensured that the muslims carried out prayer's (Nimaz) five times a day in according with the religious laws and those who failed to abide by these principles were punished by the Muhtasib.⁵⁸ Mushrif-i- Mumalik was the Accountant General. Mushtanf-i-Mumalik was auditor general.

Daroga-i-Dakchauki was in charge of postal department and responsible for the carriage of news from various parts without any delay. These news were carried on horse back to different parts at the quickest possible speed.

Mir Barr was supdt of forests. Mir-i-arz officer incharge of petition. Waqia Navis was news reporters &writers. News reporters used to kept the centre informed all the happened in the province.⁵⁹

Diwan-i-khalisa was the incharge of crown lands. Mir-i-Mal was the incharge of privy purse. Mir-i-tozak was incharge of ceremonies. Mir Bahri was incharge of ships and boats Mir Manzil was incharge of Quarters. Mir atish or Daroga-i-topkhana was the chief of the artillery. Khufia News Navis was the secret letter

writers. Undoubtedly Mughal administration under Akbar was highly centralized and its efficiency has been testified by various foreign observers.⁶⁰

Akbar made division and systematic organization of the empire into different provinces or subas. There number was fifteen at the time of death of Akbar, rose to nineteen under Shahjahan and twenty one under Aurangzab, Akbar established a uniform pattern of administration in the provinces. A province was under a governor who in the beginning was called a Sipahsalar or commander of armed forces.⁶¹ Sometimes it was also known as nazim. As his title signifies the main duty was the defense of the area and maintainance of peace and order. However from the very beginning he was also the head of the civil administration, Abul Fazl says that the forces of the province and its inhabitants are under his order. On the civil side his duty was to encourage and expand cultivation. He was required to extend all help to the peasants and to appoint the amils and keep himself informed about their work. He was also to undertake the construction of tanks, wells canals and other buildings of public utility. He was also to interest himself in laying orchards and gardens.⁶²

One of the main problem of a large empire in an age when fast means of transport were unavailable was that of maintenance of the means of communications. It was fully realized that roads and rivers are the life live of the empire. Various national highways were maintained and improved communication between capital and various provinces were maintained similarly. New roads were built to open up the country. New bridges were built and old ones repaired.

Akbar has the credit of several architectural highlights, which can be listed as follows :

- Building built by Akbar are : Agra Fort (1655) Lahore Palace(1572),Fatehpur Sikri, Buland Darwaja and Allahabad Fort(1583).
- The architecture of Fatehpur Sikri is an excellent blending of Persian, Central Asian and various Indian (Bengal and Gujarat) styles. It is also known as epic poem in Red Sandstone . Indian Tradition included deep eaves, balconies and kiosks. Central Asian style is evident in the use of glazed blue tiles.
- Two unusual buildings at Fatehpur Sikri are Panch Mahal and Diwan-i-Khas.
- The panch Mahal has the plan of Buddha Vihar.
- The Jodhabai palace, Diwan-i-Aam and Diwan-i-khas are Indian in their plan.
- Buland Darwaja (built after Gujarat victory) formed the main entrance to Fatehpur sikri. It is built in the Iranian style of half dome portal.
- Salim Chisti's Tomb(redone in Marble by Jahangir is the first Mughal Building in pure marble), palace of Birbal, Anup Talao, Mariam Mahal are also Inside the Fatehpur Sikri.
- He built the Jahangiri mahal in Agra Fort according to Hindu design based on Man Mandir.
- Haroon Minar- a tower built by Akbar in memory of his elephant (Haroon).
- He also began to built his own tomb at Sikandara which was later completed byJahangir.

These buildings, minar, tombs and mahal were properly maintained during reign of Akbar. It reflects his socio-cultural and administrative outlook. Diwan-i-Bayutat was responsible for its maintenance and worked under Mir Saman.

The government of the province was organized on the same lined as the government at the centre. In brief provincial officers worked under the general supervision of the

governor, but they were really responsible to their counterparts at centre.⁶³ The function of the governor included maintenance of law and order, enforcement of imperial decrees, administration of criminal justice etc.

The provincial diwan was in charge of revenue administration of the province. His responsibilities were similar to those of the central diwan(diwan-i-kull). He acted as a check on the subedar and was directly responsible to the central diwan. The bakshi was directly responsible to the mir bakshi and discharged duties similar to those of the latter. Other provincial officials were qazi, sadr, muhtasib etc.

Relationship between Centre and Provinces

The centre appointed the officials of provinces, sarkars and paraganas and hence they were directly responsible to the centre. Further the centre could frequently transfer the provincial and local officials in order to prevent them from acquiring local roots and interests. Frequent tours were undertaken by the central Officers and the emperor himself in order to make the local officials function properly.⁶⁴ Further, horsemen as well as dispatch runners transmitted news and reports expeditiously from different parts of the empire. According to Ibn Battutah, the horse-post, called ulaq, used royal horses stationed at four-mile intervals. The foot-post which was called dawa, had three stations per mile. Between the two, the human runner traveled faster than the horseman. Despite all the above precautions, the control of the centre above the provinces and local units were not always very effective, particularly during the reign of weak rulers.

In the administrative set up the last and the greatest check was the king himself whose presence in the court, in councils, on tours and expeditions and his vigilance

over all the activities of the state, at times held together the most discordant elements and utilized them to the utmost possible advantages of the empire.⁶⁵ The wonder, therefore, is not that Akbar maintained peace and established law and order throughout the length and breath of their far flung empire, but he did so admirably.

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