

**JIWAJI UNIVERSITY, GWALIOR**

**BALLB II SEM**

**HISTORY PPT LECTURE**

**15**

**UNIT III**

**TOPIC- THE MUGHAL EMPIRE**

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# THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

## MANSABDARI SYSTEM:

Probable questions:-

1. Discuss the features of mansabdari system under the mughals. How far did it work successfully?
2. Mansabdari system was a vital element of military organisation. Describe it.

# Mansabdari System

It was essential for the mughals to maintain a large army for the safety of the country. The rebellious tribe in the country, such as afghans, rajputs, uzbeks, jats and marathas also created problems for the emperors, hence the need of a powerful army was realised.

Therefore, all the mughal emperors from babar to aurangzeb paid their utmost attention to the maintenance of a strong and powerful army, this army was the hub of mughal army administration.

The mughal army was based on mansabdari system. Akbar gave it a scientific structure. Normally mansab means rank and honour, so the post of mansab can be said to be of a government officer who was paid salary or jagir according to his mansab by the imperial treasury.

Irwin writes, 'mansabdari was the measure of status under the mughal government which determined a mansabdar's rank, his salary, his office in the royal court.'

The mansabs were from 10 to 10000 in the beginning but later they were enhanced upto 50000.

Generally mansabs above 5000 were reserved for the princes but during the reign of Jehangir and Shahjehan, the members of the royal family were awarded mansabs upto 40000 and 50000.

### Classification of mansabdars:-

There were three categories of mansabdars;

- Mansabdars of 10 to 400 rank.
- Mansabdars of 500 to 2500 rank who were known as Umra.
- Mansabdars of more than 3500 were known as Umra-i-Azam.

Khan-i-khana was the highest army officer during the Mughal period.

Later on, these mansabs were further divided into several categories. Mansabs above 15000 were called sawar. The mansabdars below the rank of 5000 divided into first, second and third categories. Use of the words 'zat' and 'sawar' become necessary for the proper understanding of these categories.

Dr. Srivastava also expresses that while the rank of zat indicated towards the number of soldiers, Sawar indicated towards the sawars (horsemen) to be maintained by mansabdars.

## Method of recruitment:-

The emperor was in charge of all recruitment of imperial officers. He was at liberty to award any mansab to anybody with whom he was pleased. Promotion, degradation and dismissal were also in the hands of the emperor. Akbar was an expert in the selection of right persons and he often appointed efficient persons direct to high mansabs.

## Salary structure:-

Normally cash salaries were given to the mansabdars and they were paid very highly.

In case, any jagir was awarded to some high rank officer, it was not given to him permanently and changes were introduced from time to time.

A mansabdar was paid a monthly salary. At the same time, it is evident that some of the corrupt and dishonest mansabdars did not maintain the exact number of soldiers and received salaries according to their fake pay roles. Thus, they embezzled a great part of imperial treasure for their own benefit and luxuries.

## Merits and demerits of mansabdari system:-

### Merits—

Mansabdari system was a progressive system adopted by akbar for the reorganisation of the army. No other indian ruler ever thought ans planned on such lines as followed by akbar.

- ✓ This system tried to establish a link between chieftainship and feudalism.
- ✓ A system of mansabdari freed the emperor from the grips of the feudal lords at it put an end to the jagirdari system.

- ✓ The post of the mansabdar was not hereditary, hence every new mansabdar received his mansab from the emperor.
- ✓ The promotion and demotion of mansabdar depended on the mercy of emperor, hence he had to be faithful and devoted to the emperor.
- ✓ It lessened the chances of revolt in the empire.
- ✓ Akbar also sought the help of his hereditary martial elements and brave citizens to join the royal army and he, thus, contributed to the political unification of the country.

## Demerits—

- ✓ Besides these merits, there were also certain demerits of the mansabdari system. As most of the mansabdars were foreigners, they did not have any love towards indian empire.
- ✓ Akbar failed to organise a national army with the help of these mansabdars.
- ✓ The soldiers were recruited by the mansabdars and they received their salary and promotion from the mansabdars, they remained loyal to their masters instead of the mughal empire.

- ✓ The central army remained weak as the soldiers of the mansabdars had different training of arms and discipline with their mansabdars.
- ✓ Corruption in high ranking military officers also adversely affected the army discipline and brought decay and downfall of the mughal empire.

# CONCLUSION

However, Dr. R.P. Tripathi praises the army organisation of akbar, 'it was even superior to that of babar which had been pronounced as 'efficient and successful' and hardly inferior to the ottoman army of sulaimans.'

But akbar's successors failed to follow in his footsteps and the army structure of akbar collapsed under the regime of his successors.

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**THANK YOU**

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