

25th SEPT

1) Analyse the Merits & Demerits of the Mansabdar system. How did it work under Akbar's successors? (20M).

Ans) Mansabdar system was the system of administration under Mughal rule. It had the elements of Persian, Mongol and Indian system of administration and gave a highly institutional character to Mughal polity. It was introduced under Akbar in 1567 and gradually evolved under successive Emperors.

MERITS: - Meritorious: Mir Bakshi screened the Mansabdars on basis of merit, who were appointed by Mughal emperor.

- Not hereditary and transferable which prevented accumulation of power in hands of Mansabdars. Followed law of rotation.

- Hierarchical: Divided on basis of Zat and Sawar ranks, which also fixed duties and responsibilities.

- Checks and balances: Jagirdars checked the responsibilities of Zamindars. Mir Bakshi was checked by Wazir.

- Emergency Ranks: Mashrut ranks were given for temporary periods to handle any issue, at a short period.

- Gave secular character to administration: Rajputs countered influence of Iranian and Turan nobles.

- Institutional character helped even comparatively weak rulers like Jahangir to rule effectively.

- DEMERITS: - Top-heavy: Everything depended on Emperor.
- Excessively high rankings of Zaf and Sawar emerged during successive rulers leading to expose of fault lines.
 - Difference between Jama and Hasil for land revenue collection created factions among Mansabdars, for getting good jagirs.
 - Aurangzeb gave Faujdarī powers to Jagirdars resulting in more exploitation of peasants.
 - As it was transferable, Jagirdars did not give more attention to development of Agriculture and irrigation system.
 - Divided loyalty of soldiers between the Mansabdars, who recruited, trained and paid him, and the Emperor.
 - Heterogeneity increased under Aurangzeb with induction of Deccani nobles, further dividing system into factions.
 - All these limitations resulted in Jagirdari crisis, which played a crucial role in downfall of Mughal empire.

Akbar had introduced Mansabdarī system with Dual rankings of Zaf and Sawar, based on Dah-Bisbi or 10-20 Model of maintaining horses.

Jahangir: To reduce the corruption and inefficiency of Mansabdarī system, he replaced Dah-bisbi with Dua-Aspa-Si-Aspa system, where a part of Sawar rank had to maintain 2 horses each.

Shahjahan: He introduced Monthly rankings on basis of Jama and Hasil to reduce incongruences, ~~Parti~~ such as 10 Monthly, 4 Monthly etc. as per the 'Hasil' land revenue. Partial rankings such as $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, $\frac{1}{4}$ th, $\frac{1}{5}$ th Zat ranks were also introduced for different areas of the empire.

Aurangzeb: Gave Faujdar powers, inducted more nobles from Deccan.

In later Mughals period, fault lines of Mansabdar system came to the forefront and took form of Jagirdari crisis. Some nobles even started to enjoy more influence than emperor.

However, the Mansabdar served the Mughal Empire well for maintaining territorial integrity and looking after administration during the times of strong Mughal Emperors.

2) Highlight the catholicity of Akbar's regime with suitable examples. (20 M).

Ans) Catholicity can be described as the universality or the inclusiveness of any process. Thus, Akbar's catholicity was his liberal principles which resulted in his acceptance of diverse ideas and different people against the conservative class based mindset of the time period. His inclusiveness was witnessed in several aspects of his rule, such as:

RELIGIOUS POLICY: - He had a curious mindset and used to hold personal discussions with religious scholars to know about the truths of life.

- His religious policies evolved in phases, leading to Ibadat Khana discussions with religious scholars of different religions as well, such as Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity, Islam etc.
- He gave a liberal set of conducts with his Din-i-Ilahi concept and also accepted universal tolerance with the Sulh-i-Kul policy.
- He issued Mahzar to reduce influence of orthodox Ulemas to enable him to become Mujtahid Imam-i-Adil (final interpreter of Islamic law) and Mujtahid Imam-i-Adil (supreme priest of Islam).

RAJPUT POLICY: - Gradually, the Rajputs emerged as the most trusted and loyal groups under Akbar's regime.

- Rajputs were employed during critical battles. Eg: Man Singh fought Battle of Haldighati with Maharana Pratap.
- Rajputs were even posted at strategic frontier areas and were also given high Mansab ranks. Eg: they were posted at North-west, Agra etc.
- Rajputs ~~are~~ were also used as 'Makewights' to reduce the

influence of Irani and Turani nobles in administration.

ARCHITECTURE: - Akbar freely incorporated Rajput and Gujarati style of architecture in his buildings constructed at Fatehpur Sikri. Use of Chajja, Chatei (canopy) and Jali were taken from provincial styles only.

- His buildings also show influence of Hindu, Jain and Buddhist elements. Eg: Jodha Bai's Palace, Birbal's palace etc.

CULTURE: - Paintings under Akbar got influenced by not only Persian style, but also Indian and European elements. Book illustrations, portrait paintings etc. were started by Akbar despite being un-Islamic in nature.

- He got many Sanskrit works on Arithmetic, Geometry, Philosophy etc. translated into Persian. Faizi translated many works including Uttaravali (Bhaskaracharya).

- His educational policy was also based on modern scientific lines and included measurement, reasoning, arithmetic etc. He introduced a new syllabus under Pathullah Siraji.

Thus, the liberal upbringing of Akbar under Rajput, Bhakti and Sufi environments influenced his policies as well, giving it a secular and all-inclusive character, making him Akbar the Great.