

**Dr. ABIR BONDOPADHYAY
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
BEJOY NARAYAN MAHAVIDYALAYA**

Topic:- Akbar's Mansabdari system

Mansabdari System – Origins

1. The Mansabdar appears to be a Central Asian institution. There is a view that this institution came to India with Babur. However, during Babur's time, instead of the term of Mansabdar, the term Wajahdar was used.
2. Mansabdari was the administrative system implemented by Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1571. Akbar institutionalized and reformed it on the basis of military and civil administration.
3. The officers who joined the Mughal Administration were known as Mansabdars. Mansabdars could be transferred from one section of the administration to another section, for example from military to civil or vice versa.

Mansabdars – Recruitment

- The power to recruit and promote Mansabdars was in the hands of the Mughal Emperor. Usually, Mansabdars were also recruited on the basis of suggestions given by 'Mirbakshi.
- The Mughals enrolled people of all races and religions into government jobs.
- A person wishing to join the royal service had to petition through a noble, who presented a tajwiz to the emperor.
- Tajwiz was a petition presented by a nobleman to the emperor, recommending that an applicant be recruited as mansabdar.

Mansabdar – Ranking

- The word '**Mansab**' originates from the Arabic Language. It means position or rank. The hierarchy of the Mansabdars is mentioned below.
 1. Amir of Amirs – These Mansabdars were given the title of Amir-al-Umara, translated as Amir of Amirs. They were Mansabdaris whose rank was above 5000.
 2. Amir-al-Kabir (Great Amir) – These were Mansabdars whose ranks were above 1000.
 3. Amir – These were administrative officials whose rank was 1000 or below.

Mansabdari System – Structure

- There was a dual representation of Mansab:
 1. Zat – This indicated the Rank in the administration as well as the salary of the Mansabdar.
 2. Sawar – This represented the Cavalry Rank. It denotes the number of horses and cavalrymen maintained by Sawar.

Mansabdars – Salary (Cash & Land)

1. The salary of Mansabdars was commensurate with their ranks.
2. Mansabdars who received payments through the land was known as Jagirdars. Basically, Jagirdars were given the right to collect revenue from a piece of land.
3. Mansabdars who received payments through cash was known as Naqdi.
4. The post of Mansabdar was not hereditary.

Fall of Mansabdari System

1. Akbar maintained 1,803 Mansabdars, by the end of the reign of Aurangzeb, their number rose to 14,499.
2. In Akbar's reign, there were 29 mansabdars with a rank of 5,000 zat; by Aurangzeb's reign the number of mansabdars with a zat of 5000 had increased to 79.
3. The increase of the number of Mansabdars during the reign of Aurangzeb led to the Jagirdari and agrarian crisis which led to the collapse of the Mansabdari system.