

Vol III Issue XI Aug 2014

ISSN No : 2249-894X

*Monthly Multidisciplinary
Research Journal*

*Review Of
Research Journal*

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Welcome to Review Of Research

RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2249-894X

Review Of Research Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial Board readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

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ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM UNDER DELHI SULTANATE

Sanjeevkumar T. Tandle¹ and K. Mahesh²

¹ASST. PROFESSOR & HOD OF HISTORY , Govt. First Grade College, MANHALLI.
Tq.and Dist.Bidar. Karnataka.

²ASST. PROFESSOR & HOD OF HISTORY , Govt. First Grade College, MARIYAMMANHALLI
Tq.Hospet Dist.Bellary. Karnataka.

Abstract:

The Administrative organization of the Delhi Sultanate was a Product of many factors. The sultans of Delhi had before themselves the model of the government of the Caliph. They had also inherited some of the practices and conventions of their race to which they belonged. They also found in India a well-established administrative system from which they could borrow. The result was that the sultans had to assimilate most of the machinery of Government already existing in the country thus, the Government of the Sultans of Delhi has rightly been described as a Turko- Persian system in an Indian setting. In this context the present article deals with the study of Administrative system under Delhi Sultanate.

KEY WORDS:

King, Minister, Amir-Munshi, Central, Provincial, Governor, Local Administration:

INTRODUCTION

The rules of Delhi Sultanate reigned for about three Centuries and five prominent dynasties ruled over Delhi during this period. As the Furk rules were foreigners, their administration was based on their own principles. Some of the rules were either disinterested in administrative routine or they could not get time enough to prove their worth in this field. Alauddin Khilji, Firoz Tughlaq and Sikander Lodi were great administration and they established a strong administrative system during their reigns. Their administration was based on shariat and Persian styles. It is really interesting as well as informative to have a broad knowledge of the administration of the Sultanate Period.

CENTRALADMINISTRATION.

King :

He dominated the central government. He was the legal head of the State and acted as the chief executive and the highest court of appeal. In the last capacity he sat in a secular court known as "Mazalim". According to Barani, Mohammed bin Tughluq founded a special court called diwan-i-siyasat. He was the chief of the armed forces and made appointments to all the higher civil and military posts. The entire bureaucracy acted under his control and supervision. He was assisted by a number of officials, chief. [1].

Title: "ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM UNDER DELHI SULTANATE" , Source: Review of Research [2249-894X]
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Ministers:

It is said that “The bravest of men requires arms and the wisest of kings needs ministers” Hence, for the smooth running of administration the king had some ministers who helped him from time to time in the efficient discharge of his duties. All executive financial and judicial matters were discussed among a body of ministers which was known as Majlis-i-Khas but the Sultan was forced to accept its advice, however, all the sultans except Firoz Tughluq had acted according to the advice of Majlis-i-Khas. There were four prominent Ministers in the Majlis-i-Khas, wazir Ariz-i-Mamalik, Diwan-i-Insha. They were appointed by the Sultan himself and the duration of their term, depended on the pleasure of the Sultan. [2]

Ariz-i-Mumalik:

He was the head of the Military department called diwan-i-arz and was next to the wazir in importance. But he has not the commander in chief of the army. Since the sultan himself commanded all the armed forces. The special responsibility of the arz's department was to recruit equip and pay the army. [3]

Amir-Munshi:

He was the head of the records department known as “diwan-i-insha”. The farmans of the Sultan were issued from his office, while all high level correspondence also passed through his hands [4].

Sadar-us-Sudur :

Very often, the offices of Sadar-us-Sudur and Diwan-i-Qaza were held by one person. The Sadar-us-Sudur was required to enforce Islamic rules and regulation. He was required to see that the Muslims observed those rules and regulation in their daily lives. He had in his charge a lot of money to give to Muslim divines. [5]

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION:

For the Smooth running of administration the Sultanate of Delhi was divided into Several provinces known as Iqtas. The administration of the provinces was controlled by the Governors, also known as Naib, wali or Mukti. As a result of expansion of Sultanate into south, the entire Sultanate was divided into eleven provinces. The number of provinces reached the figure of 23 during the reign of Muhammad bin-Tughluq. [6].

Governors :

About the appointment of a Governor Hasan Nizami says that “a famous and exalted servant was chosen so that he might look after the soldiers, servants, warriors and clerks and save them from the treachery of the unbelievers and the designs of the polytheists; he should take pains to fulfil the expectations of the people, he should exercise the greatest circumspection in military and revenue matters and he should maintain the traditions of benevolence and charity so as to leave a name for eternity” [7].

There were some other officials under the control of Governors who assisted their governor in the work of administration of the provinces. Some officials were appointed by the governor himself who maintained cavalry and infantry of their own these subordinate officials were responsible towards the governors. Thus, the administration of the Provinces was like that of the central government but the sultan did not interfere in it unless and until some intricate problem had come up [8]

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The provinces were divided into shiqs and below it into Paragans. The shiq was under the control of the shiqdar. The Paragana, comprising a number of villages was headed by the amil. [9]

The village remained the basic unit of administration and continued to enjoy a large measure of self-government. The most important official in the village was the headman known as Muqaddam or chaudhari [10].

CONCLUSION

A conclusion study of the administration of the Delhi Sultanate reveals that there were certain defects in the administration of Delhi Sultanate. The Sultans lacked in administration experience, ability and constitutive genius. Barring one or two Sultans. The others failed to introduce any reforms in the administrative field. The Hindus were deprived of Participation in the administration and the army of the Sultanate, hence there was no harmony between the Muslims and Hindus. The Sultans had in fact, no interest in the welfare of their Subject, their sole aim was to aggrandize themselves. Therefore such system could neither be popular nor stable for a long time.

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Sanjeevkumar T. Tandle

ASST. PROFESSOR & HOD OF HISTORY , Govt. First Grade College, MANHALLI.
Tq.and Dist.Bidar. Karnataka.



K. Mahesh

ASST. PROFESSOR & HOD OF HISTORY , Govt. First Grade College,
MARIYAMMANHALLI Tq.Hospet Dist.Bellary. Karnataka.

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