

Write a detailed note/essay on the administrative structure of Sher Shah Suri. (CSS-2024)

Sher Shah, born Farid Khan was a visionary ruler of Indian subcontinent.

"Sher Shah Suri was an architect of a brilliant administrative system." Though his reign was short, spanned from 1540 to 1545 left an ever lasting impact on the administrative landscape of subcontinent. When Sher Shah overthrew Mughal King Humayun in 1540, he re-organised the conquered empire. His administrative structure was characterized by efficiency, centralization and far-reaching impacts. The historians praised him and talked of his short reign as the "golden period" of the Medieval India.

1 Centralized Administration:-

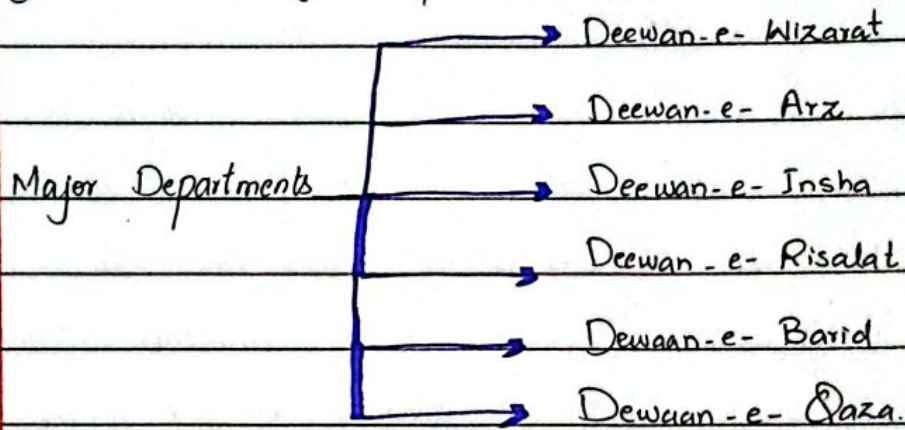
During his reign, Sher Shah set up a new civil and military administration

"His system of administration was undoubtedly; a model of efficiency and innovation."

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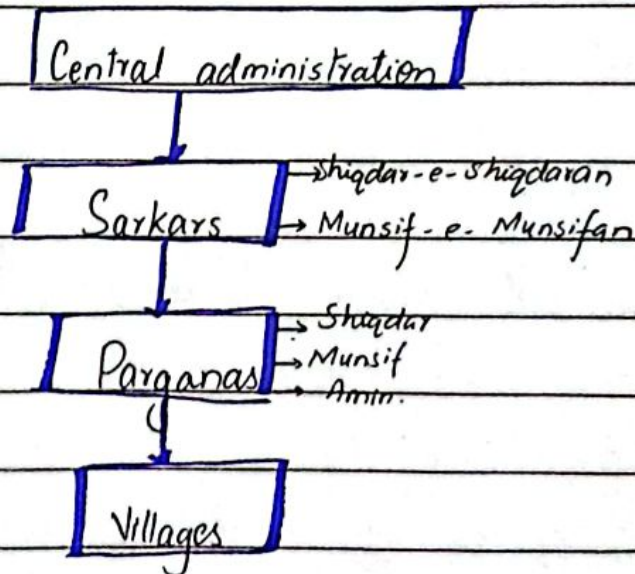
All civil and military powers were vested in his hands. His centralized administration proved to be efficient and effective. In his administrative structure, he divided the system into major departments:-



Deewan-e- Wizarat was an office like that of Inazir-e- Azam, it dealt with affairs of finance. Deewan-e- Arz dealt with affairs of military. Deewan-e- Insha kept the record of governmental affairs. Deewan-e- Risalat was meant to deal with the foreign and religious matters. Deewan-e- Qaza headed by chief Qazi took care of the matter related to judiciary and justice. Deewan-e- Barid was specifically made to manage the espionage system while dealing with postal system or Dak system.

2 Provincial Government =

Sher Shah Suri was a genius of an administrator. He divided the entire empire into 47 Sarkars (or Provinces). The rule of law in these Sarkars were exemplary. These Sarkars were well administered with Shiqdar - Shiqdaran as the head of the Sarkar. Munsif-e-Munsifan was the incharge of revenue collection.



R.1 Parganas =

For better administration, Sarkars were further divided into Parganas (modern day tehsils). Each Pargana was

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was managed by officials. Shiqdar was the military commander of Pargana who was responsible for law and order in the Pargana. Munsif (civil judge) in each Pargana dealt with cases according to criminal law of the state. Amin was responsible for the collection of revenue.

2.2 Villages:-

The administration and other affairs of villages were managed by Panchayat. Chaukidars and Patwaris were also the part of village administration.

3. Land And Revenue Administration

- Sher Shah introduced a system of land and revenue based on justice.
- The system of land of revenue was based on the division of land into three categories.
- Biga was basic unit of fixation of land revenue.
- Sher Shah gave two documents to the

farmer:

i) Patla: which was the title deed

ii) Kabuliyat: It was an agreement deed.

In the words of Ranungo:

"The land revenue administration of Sher Shah Suri was a valuable heritage of Mughals.

The British adopted this system too."

According to this system he collected the revenue of 52 crore Rupees.

4. Law and Order:-

The administrative structure of Sher Shah Suri ensured the enforcement of law and order in the country.

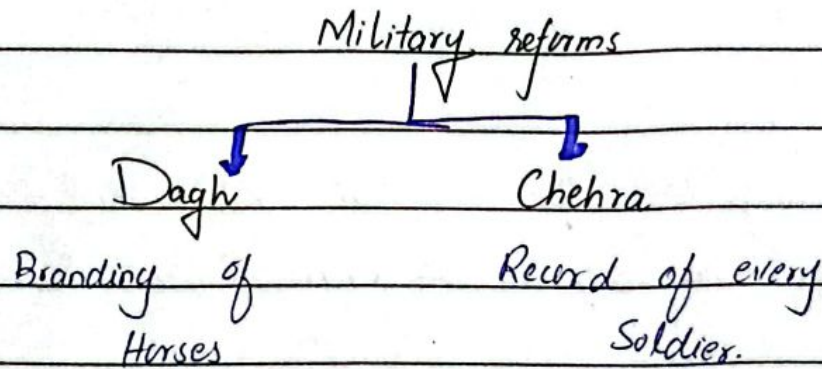
The Police department established by Sher Shah kept the crime rate in check.

In the words of Elliot:-

"In the time of Sher Shah, an old woman with a basket of ornaments on head can go on a journey without fear."

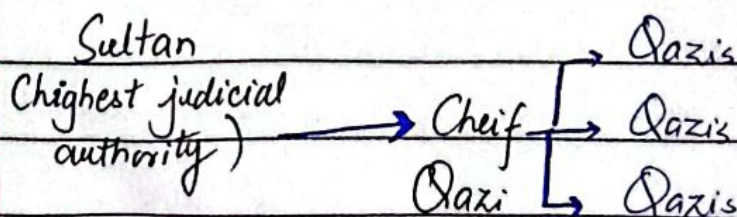
6. Military Administration:-

Impressed by Ala-ud-Din Khilji, Sher Shah Suri also centralized the whole military organization. Sher Shah kept close contacts with soldiers and paid them good salaries.



1) Fair Judicial System:-

In order to strengthen his administrative structure, he established a fair judicial system with himself being the highest judicial authority. Next to him was Chief Qazi.



8 → Infrastructure Building:-

Sher Shah was a man of vision. He built roads to promote efficient way of community and built forts for the security of empire. His infrastructure development helped to run the country's administration smoothly.

8.1 → Grand Trunk Road

From Peshawar to Kalcutta.

8.2 → Rohtas-i-Nao

A grant military fort.

8.3 → 1700 Sarais

Later worked as Dak-chowkies to consolidated the spy system by efficient postal service.

8.4 → Other Roads.

From Lahore to Multan.

Agga to Chittor

9 → Efficient Espionage System:-

In order to run administration effectively, he introduced a spy system. He used

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to keep a check on the activities of his administrators, governors and generals. It worked as a check and balance system over his state functionaries.

Conclusion:-

Critical analysis/Efficacy of the system?

Sher Shah Suri was undoubtedly a genius of an administration. His vision and policies were ahead of time. His administrative structure including centralized provincial, Revenue, judicial and military administration left an ever-lasting imprint on the history of subcontinent.

As the historian Lane-Poole noted.

"Sher Shah stands out as one of the great administrators of Indian history, whose reforms left a lasting legacy on the subcontinent."