

Q Evaluate Sher Shah Suri's administrative and revenue reforms. To what extent did these reforms serve as the foundation for Akbar's administration system?

### • Introduction

Sher Shah Suri's was a man of humble origin. His original name was Farid.

Sher Shah Suri was a great administrator and took many administrative and revenue reforms. While after Sher Shah the Akbar ascended the throne and Akbar administration is more advanced in terms of Sher Shah Suri's administration.

The Sher Shah Suri's administration help Akbar to do administrative reforms.

However, both kings were able to administer the empire.

### • Administration of Sher Shah:

Sher Shah was the architect of a brilliant administrative system. He was the first Muslim ruler who had the genius to see that the government must be popularised. King must rule for

the good of his people.

### a. Civil and Military Reforms:

All civil and military powers were concentrated in his hands and he exercised them in the interest of the people rather than for himself.

### b. Administrative Reforms:

In Sher Shah Suri's time the whole empire was divided into 47 Sarkars or divisions. The administrative of a Sarkar was divided and carried by two officers, Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran or chief Shiqdar and Munsif-i-Munsifan or chief Munsif.

### c. Duties of Chief Shiqdar:

The chief Shiqdar was to maintain law and order within Sarkar or district and to put down those who dared to revolt.

### d. Duties of chief Munsif:

The chief was the chief <sup>civil</sup> officer whose chief functions were to supervise the work of Amins, to settle disputes regarding boundaries of the parganahs and to

to act as a judge for trying civil cases.

### E. Village Administration:

The village administration, in every village there used to be a panchayat, a council consisting of the influence men of the village.

### F. Military Reform:

Sher Shah was much impressed by the military system of Alauddin Khalji like him, he centralised the military organisation. enforced strict discipline in army. Step taken to prevent corruption.

### G. Land Revenue Reforms:

The land was measured by rope. Sher Shah made it optional for the cultivators to pay the state demand or either in cash or in kind. Agriculture was encouraged and loans were advanced to the agriculturists to make improvement on their lands.

### H. Currency and Tariff Reforms:

Sher Shah introduced a large number of new copper coins. He also introduced silver coins in 8<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. According to

V.A. Smith, System of currency which lasts throughout Mughal era till the British are arrived.

### • Administration of Akbar:

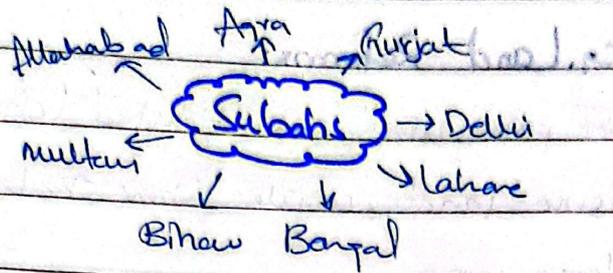
Akbar was a great conqueror and administrator. The emperor himself was the head of the administration, both in civil as well as military. He was the commander of the forces. The wakil whose position in the state was next to that of the emperor.

### a. Departments of the Mughal:

- Finance
- Military, pay and Accounts office.
- The imperial household.
- Judicial
- Religious and charitable grants
- censorship of public morals
- Artillery
- Intelligence and Post

### B. Provincial Administration:

Akbar divided the empire into Subahs or provinces.



### G. Head of Subahs:

Subahdar was officially known as Sipahsalar or Nazim. Enjoyed unlimited power as long as he was in office. He was the head of civil as well as military department.

### D. District Administration:

Each Subah was sub-divided into several Sarkars and each Sarkar into a number of parganas or Mahals. The Sarkar corresponds to our modern district, and head of the district administration was the Faujdar.

### E. Army Administration:

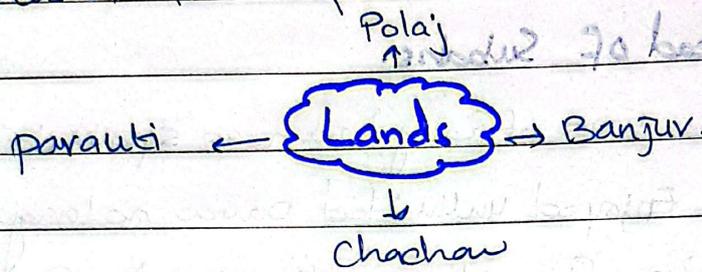
The imperial Army had four important divisions, namely, (1) Infantry (2) artillery (3) cavalry (4) Navy.

### F. Revenue System:

Major source of finance were, land-revenue, customs, mint, inheritance, plunder and indemnities, presents and poll-tax.

### G. Land Reforms:

A stiff pole was substituted (changed) to measure lands, while Sher Shah used loose rope.



### H. Tax Reforms:

Taxes levied only on cultivated/ cultivation and not on land occupied, which is paid in cash or in kind. However, in 1584, emperor abolished the jizya or poll-tax through out his dominion.

### • Conclusion

Sher Shah Suri started the administrative reforms and revenue reforms which are further completed by the Akbar the great. As Akbar established many new departments and new reforms in place while Sher Shah focused on architecture, Army, and public welfare infrastructure while Akbar focused on more reforms in systematic way and uphold social welfare.