

# Mughal administration

## **Principles or characteristics of administration during Mughal period**

- Bengal became a part or a province of the centralized Mughal Empire under-
  - one administration,
  - one law,
  - one official language,
  - uniform official cadre and
  - uniform currency.

## The Subah:

Emperor Akbar divided the empire into several provinces called Subah.

### ➤ **The capitals:**

The capitals of the Subah were situated on the banks of the rivers. The capitals were not only the administrative headquarters but also military cantonments and trade centres.

Bengal subah- Jahangirnagar (at present Dhaka)

### ➤ **Province Head or Subahdar:**

The head of the province was the governor, Subahdar under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and Nazim under Aurangzeb and his successors.

**Responsible for-**  
executive matters,  
defense,  
criminal justice and  
general supervision of the province.

## **The Diwan:**

Below the Subahdar, but not subordinate to him, was the Diwan appointed by the central government.

**Responsible for-**  
revenue administration and civil justice.

## **Other officers:**

Subahdar and Diwan were assisted by other provincial officers. There were:

- Bakshi (Pay master of the army)
- Sadr (Head of religious department, charity and grant)
- Qazi (Judge)
- Kotwal (Superintendent of police)
- Mir-bahr (Admiral)
- Waqianavis (News reporter)

## 2. The Sarkar:

The Sarkar was both an administrative and revenue unit.

## The Parganah or Mahal:

In the Parganah or Mahal, Shiqdar was the executive officer and Amin was responsible for collection of revenues.

The above basic principles of administration continued throughout the Mughal period

For proper administration, Bengal (Subah Bangla) was divided into 19 Sarkars and 682 Parganas or Mahals. Land-revenue was the main source of income, so the Mughals first paid attention to the reform of the revenue administration.

# The revenue system

## (was reformed in the reign of Akbar)

### **. Division of revenues:**

The revenues were divided into Mal and Sayer. Mal was the name given to the land-revenue. Sayer included all kinds of revenue like customs duties and other sundry duties except the land revenues

### **Division of lands:**

Lands were divided into Khalsa and Jagirs for the purpose of revenue collection.

Khalsa lands- were those which were directly administrated by the government through Diwan and his staff.

The Jagir lands- were those which were assigned to the officers, civil and military for their services.

### **3. Assignment of lands:**

In the later period lands were also assigned to establishments, like Nawwara (Navy), Kheda (Catching elephants), and Amlah-I-Islam (Military establishment for guarding the frontier).

Lands were also granted to religious persons and learned men.

### **4. Existence of Zamindars:**

An important feature of the revenue administration was the existence of the Zamindars. They acted as middlemen between Ryot and the Government.

## **The objectives:**

- The Mughal revenue system was, therefore, designed to achieve the object of collecting as much revenue as possible. Besides, the objective also was keeping the ryot happy and content, so that they might prosper and bring more and more land under plough.
- The Mughal revenue system was so well thought out and well planned that the system, with no great change continued through the British period.



Thank you!