



Sambhav

Day 44

Question 1. Administration of the Akbar was unique among other Mughal rulers. Discuss the reasons for the Akbar's style of administration and the unique aspect of his administration. (250 Words)

Question 2. The period 8th to 17th Century was marked by a drastic change in the political, cultural and economic life but there was a little change in the social life. Discuss. (150 words)

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Approach / Explanation / Answer

Answer 1

Approach

- Introduce briefly about Mughal rule in medieval India in general and rule of Akbar in particular.
- Discuss the unique aspect of Akbar's administration with the reasons for such style of administration.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

The period of the Mughals, which began in 1526 with Babur's accession to the throne, ended with the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. Among the various Mughal rulers, the administration of Akbar was different from others on the ground of his policies towards religion, non-Mughals, non-Muslims and other economic and strategic matters.

Body

The style of Akbar's administration was shaped by the need of time and weakness of the Mughal empire during that time. There were various reasons that had shaped such style of Akbar's Administration:

- Akbar had several close advisers to guide him during each and every situation. Like Bairam Khan, the tutor of the prince and a loyal of Humayun; Akbar's foster mother Maham Anaga; and later on, brilliant like Birbal and Mulla Do Piyaza.
 - Akbar succeeded to gaddi, during a difficult condition and at very young age of thirteen years.
 - The Afghans were still strong beyond Agra and were regrouping their forces under the

- leadership of Hemu for a final showdown.
- Kabul had been attacked and besieged.
- Sikandar Sur, the defeated Afghan ruler, was loitering in the Siwalik Hills.
- Tolerant and accommodative policies of matrimonial alliance with Rajputs, other Hindus and other non-Mughals to prevent rebellion, factionalism in the regions of the empire and factionalism among the Nobels.
 - Multi-racial and ethnic assembly of Nobels not only accommodated various groups in power-sharing but also prevented the ethnic and racial mindset among them and motivate them to act only in the empire's interest.
 - His matrimonial alliance and allotting higher Mansabdar to Rajput not only prevented rebellions but also integrated the estates of Rajputana into Mughal and exploited the military and fighting zeal of Rajput in expansion of the empire in western and southern India.
- Mansabdari system and to increase the size of mighty army of Mughals which had strength like Uzbeks army of central Asia.
 - It enables him decentralized army establishment across his empire without the burden on the royal exchequer like Britishers' subsidiary alliance.
 - It also brings a sense of royalty to non-Mughal mansabdars who were under the suzerainty of Mughals.
- Land revenue systems of Akbar like Dahsala, Zabti or Ghalla-Bakhshi and Kankut or Nasaq.
 - It had not only provided the plenty of revenue to the royal treasury but also provided liberty to the peasant to pay either in the cash or kind.
 - Multiple revenue system was adopted as a result of tested revenue methods by earlier rulers like Sher Shah.
- His religious policies like Shul-e-Kul, Din-e-Ilahi, and Ibadat Khana.
 - It was his contribution to the spiritual development in his reign and facilitated the biggest socio-religious reform like Bhakti and Sufi movement.
 - It prevented the cultivation of extreme thought about religion among the masses and provided liberal ground for spiritual and liberal policies.
- His policy of suzerainty in Deccan: It was a compulsion on Mughals to adopt such policies because of unviability of Mughals and earlier rulers (Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq) to directly rule & control Deccan in south from Delhi.
 - Bringing the rulers from neighboring territory under area of influence and prevent wastage of resources in war and direct rule.
 - The adventure of Aurangzeb in the south and the wastage of resources, consequently the decline of the Mughal empire and increased enmity between the Marathas and Mughals were the violation of these policies.
- His strong presence at the western front of Kabul-Qandahar-Ghazni, as a natural barrier to the external invaders like Turks, Uzbeks and Afghans.
 - Mughals established India's relations with neighbouring Asian Powers like Iran, Uzbeks & Ottoman to broaden foreign Trade & security.
 - In 1602 Qandahar was occupied by the Persian and failure of Jahangir and his successors to regain it, leads to compromise of security from the western border.

Conclusion

Akbar's policies were modified and framed based on the need and demands of the empire and not on per like or dislike of the individuals. Consequently, these policies let the empire thrive for centuries and eventually due to compromise with these policies and involvement of unreasonable discretion based on the religious and orthodox views led to the decline of then mighty Mughal empire.

Answer 2

Approach

- Introduce briefly about general conditions prevailed just before 8th century.
- Discuss the changes in the political, cultural and economic life between 8th to 17th Century and also mention about change in the social life of that period.

- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

- During 7th century (at the twilight of ancient India and Dawn of Medieval India), there was an era of invasion, wars, and territorial conquest the political power decided by the physical strength of the rulers and his Army.
- The ancient tribal politico-economic system was come to replace by the feudal-territorial empire based on territorial conquest. Though there was frequent change in political system which led to change in the economy of the region but the change in the social condition of the masses demanded were seldom in that time period.

Body

- The thousand years from the beginning of the eighth century to the end of the seventeenth century saw important changes in the political, economic and cultural life of the country and also, to a smaller extent, in its social life.

Changes in the political, economic and cultural life:

- In the political and economic fields, the political and administrative integration of the country brought about by the Turks and later consolidated by the Mughals.
 - Although the Turkish and Mughal system of administration confined to northern India, indirectly it affected other parts of India too.
- The institution of a well-minted currency based on silver, the development of roads and sarais and the preference for city life had a direct effect on the growth of trade and handicrafts which reached its climax during the seventeenth century.
- Under the Mughals, political integration was accompanied by a deliberate effort to create a unified ruling class consisting of Muslims and Hindus.
 - However, the ruling class remained aristocratic, with only limited opportunities of career being open to the people of talent from lower classes.
- The Mughal nobility was organised as a bureaucracy dependent on the monarch.
 - However, it derived its income mainly from lands cultivated by peasant proprietors and the state in medieval India remained essentially feudal.
 - A significant contribution of the Turks was the defence of the country from Mongol onslaughts during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries later by Mughals by fixing on the Kabul-Ghazni line with the Hindukush mountains to the north.
- India's reputation as a land of spices, and its position as the textile manufactory of the eastern world including East Africa, led the European nations to try to establish direct trade relations with India.
- The decline of the Mughal empire and other political events, such as the entry of Nadir Shah and Afghans, as well as the rapid economic development of the European nations enabled them to establish their dominations in India as also in many other Asian countries.
- The Mughal ruling classes had no traditions of connection with the sea.
- While the Mughal rulers were quick to recognize the importance of foreign trade and gave patronage and support to the European trading companies.
 - But they were lacking in understanding of the importance of naval power in the economic development of a nation.
- There was too much emphasis on past learning from the repositories of this knowledge-the Brahmans and the mullahs.
 - Akbar's efforts to modernize the syllabus by introducing more science subjects of secular interest were defeated due to the pressure of these elements.
- The very skill of the Indian artisans and their availability in large number inhibited the efforts to develop and apply machine power to productive enterprises.
 - The effect of the caste system in breeding an attitude of insularity and conservatism.
- The growth of political integration was paralleled by cultural integration. Indian society developed a unified culture despite differences in race, religion and language which makes the seventeenth century a second classical age.
- The period was also marked by economic development and growth. Trade and manufactures

expanded and there was expansion and improvement of cultivation also.

- However, the growth was uneven in different areas. Apart from the Ganga valley, Gujarat, the Coromandel coast and Bengal were developed rapidly during the seventeenth century.
- The skilful a craftsman might be, his productivity and efficiency remained low. Nor could the artisans develop into traders and entrepreneurs as in the West, both because of caste and because most artisans had little by way of capital.
 - This was a reflection of the extremely uneven distribution of money and resulted in the domestic market being limited.

Changes in the social life:

- In the field of social life, the caste system continued to dominate, despite the challenge posed to it by Islam and loss of political power by the Rajput rulers who were duty bound to protect dharma, the upholding of the four-fold division of society.
- Although the Nath Panthi Jogis and the Bhakti saints vehemently criticised the caste system, they could hardly make a dent in it.
- The criticism of the caste system by saints did not, extend to day-to-day or secular life.
- Many women saints, such as Mira, and others such as Surdas opened the way of bhakti for women also, and their rising above the task of service and duty to a husband.
- However, the Brahmans continued to claim a privileged position for themselves, including the exclusive right to preach and educate.
- The Bhakti and Sufi saints gradually brought about a better understanding of the fundamental tenets of Hinduism and Islam, and sometimes influenced state policies.
 - They also contributed to the growth of regional languages and literature. But the excessive concern with religious and spiritual affairs resulted in a setback to the growth of rational sciences, especially to the cultivation of science and technology on balance, the position of women worsened.
- Seclusion of women or purdah became more widespread, while Hindu women were not able to claim the right of remarriage or a share in their father's property which Muslim women had. In fact, these rights tended to be denied more and more even to Muslim women.

Conclusion

- It was in these circumstances that the British were able to conquer India and convert it into a colony, supplying raw materials in place of being the manufactory of the east as it was earlier. It is this ebb and flow which makes the study of history both interesting and rewarding.

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