



Mains Practice Question

Q. The Mauryan Empire's administrative structure has a significant and lasting impact on Indian governance. Comment. **(150 words)**

03 Jun, 2024 GS Paper 1 History

Approach

- Introduce the answer with mentioning the time period of Mauryan Empire
- Mention significance of the mauryan empire's administrative structure
- Conclude positively.

Introduction

The **Mauryan Empire**, which ruled over a vast territory in the Indian subcontinent from **322 BCE to 185 BCE**, had a highly organized and efficient administrative structure that left a lasting impact on Indian governance.

Body

Significance of the Mauryan Empire's Administrative Structure:

- **Central Administration of the Maurya Empire:** The Mauryan Empire had a highly centralized administration with the king as the supreme leader, assisted by a council of ministers called '**Mantriparishad**'. **(Resembles Prime Minister and Cabinet)**
- **Provincial Administration:** The empire was divided into provinces like **Uttarapatha, Dakshinapatha etc.**, each with a capital city. (Like states/UTs)
 - Provinces were further split into **districts** (Ahara, Janapada) administered by **Rajukas** with Yuktas. (Like districts)
 - Districts comprised villages overseen by village heads and city superintendents for law & order. **(Like panchayats, municipal bodies)**
- **Military Administration:** The Mauryas maintained a vast, well-equipped professional army with infantry, cavalry, elephants, chariots and navy divisions. (Like Indian Armed Forces)
 - Senapati was the overall commander-in-chief of the military. **(Like Chief of Defence Staff)**
- **Economic Administration:** The **Samharta** was the **chief revenue collector** and Sannidhata the treasurer.
 - Taxes were levied on various sources like land, customs, irrigation, mines etc. (Like current tax system)
- **Espionage System:** They are credited with establishing an elaborate espionage system to maintain law and order and gather intelligence.
 - Special officers, known as "**Gudhapurushas**" or **secret agents**, were employed to monitor the activities of officials and the general public.
 - The **R&AW Wing** traces its origin to this.

Conclusion

The **Mauryan Empire's administrative structure** left an indelible mark on Indian governance and administration, serving as a blueprint for subsequent empires and kingdoms. Its legacy continues to resonate in modern India, shaping the country's **governance philosophy and practices**.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/mains-practice-question/question-8313/pnt>

