Mansabdari System - A Brief Overview

The Mansabdari system was a grading system used by the Mughal rulers to fix the rank and salary of a Mansabdar. They were nobles who occupied various positions in the administration of the Mughal Empire. They were appointed and dismissed by the Mughal Emperor.

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Mansabdari System - Origins

1. Mansabdari was the administrative system implemented by Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1571. Akbar institutionalized and reformed it on the basis of military and civil administration.
2. The officers who joined the Mughal Administration were known as Mansabdars. Mansabdars could be transferred from one section of the administration to another section, for example from military to civil or vice versa.

Mughal Rule - Number of Mansabdars

1. During Akbar's rule there were approximately 1,800 Mansabdars
2. During the rule of Aurangazeb there were approximately 14,500 Mansabdars.

Mansabdars - Recruitment

The power to recruit and promote Mansabdars were in the hands of the Mughal Emperor. Usually Mansabdars were also recruited on the basis of suggestions given by 'Mirbakshi.

Mansabdar - Ranking/Hierarchy of Administrative Officers

The word **'Mansab'** originates from the Arabic Language. It means position or rank. The hierarchy of the Mansabdars are mentioned below.

1. Amir of Amirs - These Mansabdars were given the title of Amir-al-Umara, translated as Amir of Amirs. They were Mansabdaris whose rank was above 5000.
2. Amir-al-Kabir (Great Amir) - These were Mansabdars whose ranks were above 1000.
3. Amir - These were administrative officials whose rank was 1000 or below.

The below table provides the details on Highest Ranked Mansab and Lowest Ranked Mansab during Mughal Emperor Akbar's rule.

Highest Ranked Mansab	10,000
Lowest Ranked Mansab	10

Mansabdari System - Structure

There was dual representation of Mansab:

1. Zat - This indicated the Rank in the administration as well as the salary of the Mansabdar.
2. Sawar - This represented the Cavalry Rank. It denotes the number of horses and cavalry men maintained by Sawar.

The position of Mansabdar in the hierarchy depended on the Zat. On the basis of Zat and Sawar, Mansabdars were classified as:

1. Third Class Mansabdar - Mansabdars were put in this classification when the number of sawar was less than half the number of Zat.
2. Second Class Mansabdar - Under this classification, the number of Sawar is equal to half the number of Zat.
3. First Class Mansabdar - Mansabdars who were classified as First Class had an equal number of Sawar and Zat.

Mansabdars - Salary (Cash & Land)

1. The salary of Mansabdars was commensurate with their ranks.
2. Mansabdars who received payments through land were known as Jagirdars. Basically, Jagirdars were given the right to collect revenue from a piece of land.
3. Mansabdars who received payments through cash were known as Naqdi.
4. The post of Mansabdar was not hereditary.

Mansabdars - Military Responsibilities

1. The Mansabdars had to bring their cavalrymen for review and get them registered.
2. The Mansabdars were responsible for maintaining a specified number of horses and cavalrymen.

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