CHAPTER VI

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

Political Milieu:

In the Sixth Century B.C. there was no paramount power in India. It is most surprising that we find not only one or two more powerful monarchies and several kingdoms of lesser importance - like the German Duchies or the kingdoms of England at the time of Heptarchy - but also a number of republics; some with complete, some with more or less modified independence; and one or two of considerable power, which reminds us of the political situation at about the same period in Greece. In the Sixth Century B.C. the non-monarchical states were quite numerous and 'occupied the whole country east of Kosala between the mountains and the Ganges'. The political condition was surcharged with the spirit of jealousy and rivalry and, above all, imperialistic ambition on the part of some big states viz., the kingdom of Kosala and the kingdom of Magadha. The tendency towards concentration of political power was in offing. The oldest traditional

1. HI., p.1.
2. CHI., p.155.
3. Ibid., p.156.
kingdoms had begun to amalgamate by conquest and encroach-
ment. The small states were of no political importance in the atmosphere. Professor Rhys Davide has rightly observed that "the tendency towards the gradual absorption of these domains and also of the republics into the neighbouring kingdoms was already in full swing. Thus we find that there was no co-existence between the small and the big states, and between the republics and the monarchies. And this political climate reminds us of our present political situation wherein the small and the weak states are living under constant threat of danger from their big and powerful neighbours, and there is no love lost between the two diametrically opposite political systems, viz., free democracy and communism. This prevailing political atmosphere must have had a telling effect on the administration in these republics.

Republican Theory:

Whether there was a republican theory which guided the administration in these republics. It must be admitted that we do not find any systematic philosophy of republicanism in ancient India. It is, indeed, a matter of great surprise that, although some of the ancient Indian republics had a very long life, they failed to produce any significant political philosophy as was done by the republics in Greece.

5. EI., p. 1.
Its explanation may be found in the fact that when in about the fourth century B.C. political theorising began, republicanism as a polity was getting weaker and unimportant. However, the Buddhist Literature throws some interesting light on this subject. In the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the Dīgha-Nikāya Buddha is said to have prescribed seven conditions for the preservation of power and prosperity of the Lichānāvāsī. Among these he appears to have laid emphasis on their holding full and frequent public assemblies, meeting together, and taking decisions and carrying them out in concord and harmony, and acting in accordance with the ancient institution. These prescriptions imply some sort of a republican philosophy which might have guided the administration in the republics of North-Eastern India. This fact gets corroboration and

6. Dialogues, II, pp.80-81; SBE., XI, pp.3-4; Buddhacaryā, pp.495-96; Cf.HF., pp.40-41.

7. Cf.The Buddhist theory of the Great Elect or Mahāsammata (IN.,III.Sec.27-DIALOGUES III,pp.77-94). The text does not specify the nature of the Mahāsammata and consequently, as pointed out by V.P.Varma (Hindu political thought and its Metaphysical foundations,p.182) that it would stand either for a king or a republican head. It is not unlikely that it meant the latter. For the Buddha, who propounded the theory, himself came from the Śākyas who had a republican polity and his father was at one time the head of this state. Further, the

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confirmation from the evidence of the Brahmanical texts.

In the Mahābhārata we find a categorization of the techniques for the preservation of power in the republican states and also enumeration of fundamental principles of government for the allround prosperity of the Ganas (republic). Kautilya in his Arthasastra has devoted one chapter on the conduct of the republics.

Scanty Evidence:

The Early Buddhist Literature mentions a pretty large number of republics, but hardly offers any details about their organisation and administration. Of course, some information on this topic are available about the Śākyas and the Lichchhavis. Thus any attempt at a detailed and comprehensive treatment of the administration in the republics is handicapped by the absence of sufficient and direct evidence. In this circumstance we shall have to draw upon disconnected and dispersed facts, belonging to different states and different times, in the sacred texts of the Buddhist and the Jaina, and to piece them together into a general picture. At the outset, it may be noted that the administrative machineries in these republics

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Buddha founded his Church organisation on the model of the republican politics of his time. Thus I suggest that the 'Mahāsammata theory' implies a republican philosophy.

8. Mbh. Santi-Parva, Ch. 107, vrs. 6-32 and Ch. 81, vrs. 1-29.
must have differed from one another on the basis of the area, population, local traditions and needs. However, in spite of such differences which are natural and minor, the essential and the broad picture of the administrative systems in these republics was by and large the same.

Administrative Machinery:

Professor Rhys Davids, the foremost authority on the Buddhist Literature, has very nicely summed up the administrative procedure of the Śākyas in his famous book 'The Buddhist India.' K.P. Jayaswal has rightly considered this to be the typical of the administrative systems prevalent in the other republics. I have undertaken to give below a most comprehensive and analytical treatment, as far as possible, of the general administrative system in these republics.

Central Administration:

The Central Government in these republics consisted of the Head of the Executive (Rāja or the President), the Central Executive and the Central Assembly (Parishad). The Rāja, who was elected for a term of years, was the chief Executive Officer of the state. He presided over the

10. HI., pp.9-10; CHI., pp.155-56; Reproduced by Jayaswal in HP., pp.44-45.
11. HP., p.44.
12. 'The Age of Imperial Unity', pp.331-32; Cf. ibn. Sānti-Parva, Ch.81.vrs.25, refers to Krishna as elected president of the Subrahmanya Pulakesi.
assmnbly sessions, and if no sessions were sitting, over the state. Sometimes in some states the head of the state appears to have been the leader of the army and also the highest legal authority. It appears that in the beginning all administrative decrees were issued in the name of the Gana, but later there was a marked change when such decrees came to be promulgated jointly in the names of the Gana and the head of the state. This fact is clearly borne out by the story of Senāpati Khandā in whose time the official despatches of Vaiśālī commenced with the phrase: "Thus commands the Gana with Khandā as their head," The executive head of a confederation like that of the Lichāhivas, Mallās and other allied peoples was a Rāja-in-chief who was similar to the Sakyān Rājā in being elected and holding office for life and in often having passed on his office to his heir. The chief concern of the Rājā was most probably to ensure internal unity by promoting harmony and preventing quarrels, for internal dissension was the greatest weakness of the republican

13. BL., p.10.
17. A.L.Basham : Wonder ..., op.96-97; Cf. Mbh. Santi-Parva, Ch.81, vrs.25.
states which posed a grave threat to their existence.

Portfolios:

Besides the Rājā, who was the chief executive officer of the central executive, there must have been a number of other ministers of state who composed the executive. Unfortunately, only a few of them are known to us. Next to Rājā was the Uparājā who was the Vice-President of the republic and who used to deputise for the President in his absence. There was a Senāpati (Generalissimo) who was the Commander-in-Chief of the army. We know from the Gilgit Manuscripts that Senāpati Khaṇḍa was the head of the Lōkohbāvi state. This clearly indicates that a very great importance was attached to the office of Senāpati and that even an outsider could

18. It is implied in the seven-fold excellence of the Lōkohbāvis spoken of by the Buddha in the Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta (op.cit.) . . .; Cf. Mbh. Santi-Parva, Ch.107, vrs. 27-28.


20. ibid.

be appointed to it. The Jātaka mentions a fourth officer, Bhandāgārika, who has been interpreted to be the Chancellor of Exchequer, being in-charge of the state treasury. Dr. Altekar suggests that he must have been authorised to invest the state funds and also to realise the state debts. The office of the minister in charge of legal affairs (Vinīchchaya-Mahāmāttā) is clearly suggested by the story of the Magadhan statesman Vassakīra who was made the law minister of the Vajjīan Republic. Dr. Altekar rightly suggests that there must have been a minister for foreign affairs who used to receive the report from spies and members of the secret services. It appears that in some states the foreign and military affairs were in charge of a small committee of nine members who belonged to the supreme executive, and that justice was administered by a council of eight members (Aṣṭakulaka). Generally each minister was in-charge of a single portfolio. But sometimes in some states some ministers held multiple portfolios. For example in the Vajjīan state the Udā-Hāja or the Vice-President and the Senāpati held judicial

22. Jātaka No.143: See also Mallukālinga Jātaka No.301.
23. HP., p.45.
26. SGAI., p.154; Cf.Mbh. Sānti-Parva, Ch.81, vrs.28

... wherein the phrase यानविष्णु (Foreign Policy) may be taken to imply a separate External Affair Ministry.
27. Kalpa-Sūtra (128), p.65; SBE., LIII, p.266; Cf.PHAL., p.125.
authority also. We may note here that as the Gana states were famous for their military traditions, the members of the executive must have been usually the chieftains and dauntless leaders competent to guide the state on the occasion of emergency. Moreover, they were to be men of tact and experience, energetic in actions, firm in resolutions and well conversant with the laws, customs and traditions of the country. These ministers were probably the same as the Mahallakas of the Pāli Text and the Mahattaras of the Vāyu Purāṇa whom it was the duty of the citizens to respect and support. The Central Cabinet used to meet frequently and act in close co-operation and co-ordination in their task of carrying out the day to day administration of the state.

Central Assemblies:

The central assemblies, which were more or less like modern Parliaments, exercised sovereign power. These assemblies which were composed of the young and the old held their regular session in their common Mote-Hall

29. ibid.
30. Vide, Mbh. Śānti-Parva, Ch.107, vrs.20.

31. PHAL., p.195.
(Santhāgāra) at the capital cities and carried out their administrative and judicial business, and it was at such a parliament or palaver, that king Pasendi's proposal for the hand of a Sakyan princess was discussed. When Ambattha goes to Kapilavastu on a business, he goes to the Mote-Hall where the Sākyas were then in session. And it is to the Mote-Hall of the Mallas that Ānanda goes to announce the death of the Buddha, they being then in session there to consider that very matter. They elected and the president and appointed members of the executive/other functionaries of the state. They controlled foreign affairs, entertained ambassadors and foreign princes, considered their proposals and decided the momentous issues of peace and war. Dr. Altekar suggests that in some states the authority to decide on the momentous issues of war and peace was entrusted to the executive in order to ensure secrecy, so necessary for success in foreign policy. But we have no definite evidence on this point about the Buddhist Republics. On the other hand, the fact, as pointed out by ancient Indian Constitutional writers, that the greatest weakness of the Gana was its incapacity to preserve political secrets, obviously goes against such an assumption as made by Dr. Altekar. Moreover.

33. BI., pp.5-6. 34. Dialogues, I, p.113.
35. Mahāparinibbāna Sutta.
36. Vide, The Gilgit Manuscripts, op.cit.; Mbh. XIII. 81. 25:
   Cf. BI., p.10.
37. Jat.No.465; Rockhill : Life of the Buddha, pp.118-19:
a Buddhist text tells us that the Śākyas, on receipt of an ultimatum from the Kosalan king to surrender, met in their Assembly which decided in favour of capitulation. The Assembly despatched emissaries to deliver urgent and important state messages. A Buddhist text describes the Lichchhāvī Gāna in session appointing a Mahaṭṭaka or a distinguished member to be the envoy, charging him to deliver a message on behalf of the Lichchhāvīs of Vaisālī. We also know that an emergent session of the Lichchhāvī Assembly appointed Mahālī to request king Bimbisāra to persuade the Buddha, who was staying in his kingdom, to pay a visit to Vaisālī which was in grip of a virulent plague. The Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta refers to the despatch of emissaries by the republican assemblies to the Mallās to demand a share in the last remains of the Buddha. They also appointed small committees to be in charge of some important affairs. The Lichchhāvī Gāna appointed a committee of nine to associate with the Mallās and others in the act of illumination to mark the death of Mahāvīra.

38. SCAL., p. 127 (On the evidence of the Mahābhārata, XII, 107.24).
39. For example, See MBH. Sānti-Parva, Ch. 107, vrs. 3.
41. HP., p. 46 (On the evidence of Mahāvastu, I, 254.)
The Lichchhavi Assembly also appointed a committee of reference or a jury to settle controversial issues. They also enacted new laws and abrogated the old ones. They exercised complete control over the executive even in minutest details. Thus the Assemblies were the central organ of administration in these republics. They had sovereign administrative power and carried out all administrative business on behalf of the whole people. They met frequently and acted in full concord and unanimity for the welfare of the state.

44. Kalpa-Sutra (188); SBE., XXXI, p.266.
45. HP., p.93.
46. By implication of the point (in the seven-fold condition for the welfare of the Lichchhavis) that so long as they enact nothing not already established and abrogate nothing that has been already enacted - Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (Dialogues, II, pp.79-85): Cf. HP., p.102.
48. HP., p.48, f.n.19.
Local Administration:

We have scanty information about the local administration in these republics. A very hazy idea about it is suggested by the account of the Sakyan administration given by Professor Rhys Davids. The highly reputed Buddhist scholar writes as follows:

"Besides the Mote-Hall at the principal town, we hear of others at some of the other towns, referred above. And no doubt all the more important places had such a hall or pavillion, covered with no walls, in which to conduct their business. And the local affairs of each village were carried out in open assembly of the house-holders, held in the groves which then, as now, formed so distinctive a feature of each village in the long and level alluvial plain."

From the above statement we can sort out the following facts which very clearly stand out:

1. The town constituted a separate administrative unit. Its administrative and judicial business were carried out in the town-assembly meeting in the local Mote-Hall. And there must have been a single chief elected, as at the capital, to be the head of the town administration. I suggest that to be 'Pūgagāmanika' mentioned by the Buddha as one of the careers open to a

50. BI., p.10; GHI., p.157.
'kulaputta'. There must have been also a town council or board which looked after day to day administration, and the councillors must have been elected.

2. The phrase 'no doubt, all the more important places had such a hall or pavillion' suggests bigger administrative units than towns, which were, I think, districts: for a district containing more towns was obviously more important. We know from a Buddhist text that the City of Vaiśāli was divided into three districts. The executive head of the district administration was most probably 'Rāstrika' or 'Rāthhika,' for later on 'Rāstra' came to mean a district.

3. From the above point No.2, it naturally follows that the district must have been divided into subdivisions. The head of the subdivisional administration was very likely Pethanika, for Pethanika or Petha later meant a subdivision.

55. Vide Megasthenes' account of the city administration of Pātaliputra; though it pertains to a very late period it may be taken to reflect an early tradition in this matter: McCrindle: Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian, pp.36-93.
58. AN., III.76.
4. The village constituted the lowest and the basic administrative unit. Each village administered its local affairs in an open assembly of the house-holders which met in the nearby groves. The head of the village administration was Gāmagāmanika who was elected by the village assembly. There must have been also a village council. The Jataka stories speak of the financial, judicial and other administrative powers of the village head-man, thereby suggesting that he was the virtual and most effective head of the village government. It was through the village head-man that all government businesses were carried on and he had both opportunity and power to represent their (village) case to the higher officials. He had, no doubt, to prepare the road and provide food on the occasion of a royal person or high officials visiting the village. There was no corvee or forced labour. On the other hand, villagers used to unite of their own accord to build Mote-Hall and rest-houses and reservoirs, to mend the roads between their own and adjacent

62. Vide AN.,III.76; See also Rahula: Buddhaserwa, p.323, f.n.3. In the Jataka the village head-man is called 'Gāmagāmanika': Kharasara, Jat.,Vol.I, p.354; Pārīnva Jataka, Vol.IV, p.14; Ubhatobhatthe Jat.,Vol.I, p.482, etc.
63. Corporate . . . , p.137; BL., p.25.
64. Altekar: op.cit., p.228, 214.
65. The Jataka evidences are cited and discussed by H.C. Majumdar in Corporate... pp.135-39; Buddhist India, pp.19
villages, and even to lay out parks. It is interesting to find that women were proud to bear a part in such works of public utility. Thus the mass of the people living in the villages "were governed by head-men of their own class and village, very probably selected by themselves in accordance with their own customs and ideals." In fact each of the villages was a 'tiny self-governed republic.'

Subordinate Officials:

The Central Government in these republics exercised its control and authority over the whole state through a chain of subordinate officials. This fact is very clearly demonstrated by the story of the quarrel between the Śākyas and the Koliyas over the water of the Rohini river. When a quarrel arose between the farmers and the servants of the Koliyas and the Śākyas about the distribution of the water of the Rohini, they reported it to the officer of their own state, who in turn appraised their rajas about it, and it is the latter who decided to go on war with the opposing state. This clearly indicates the existence of a bureaucracy which carried the central

66. Vide HI., p.25.
67. ibid., p.25; See also Altekar : op.cit., p.124.
68. HI., p.11.
authority to every man and to every nook and corner of the state. Our knowledge of the subordinate officials is very limited. Such officials were the Purisasa of the Mallas, the Nayaka of the Lichshhavis and a special body of peons or police of the Koliyas, who were distinguished by a special head-dress forming their uniform and they had a bad reputation for extortion and violence. Professor Rhys Davids suggests that each of these republics had a somewhat similar set of subordinate servants or officials. And finally a Pali text gives us a list of high-ranking officials of the Lichshhavis which were elected from among the cadets of the ruling families, and the list may be taken to be suggestive and typical of the whole republican bureaucracy. The high efficiency of the Gana is indicated by Mahabharata.

Judicial Administration:

Administration of justice is one of the most important functions of the state according to the modern

71. Cf. ibid., p.124. 72. DN., II.159,161.
74. SN., IV.341; HI., p.11. 75. HI., p.11.
76. AN.,III.76. यदि क्षत्रिय महानाय, कुष्ठपवियः पविपण्यं सपिलान्ति, यदि वा रक्ष्य साधितस्य मुदामिशितस्य, यदि वा राज्युक्तस्य परविलक्तस्य, यदि वा सेनाय सेनापतियस्य, यदि वा गामामिशितस्य, यदि वा पुगामामिशितस्य, ये वा पन कुस्तु पविपक्षाकारभ बारेन्ति।

77. Mbh.,III.107,80.
notions. However, it did not form a part of the state's duties in early time both in Europe and in India. But in the early Indian republics the administration of justice was a very important business of the state. According to Prof. Rhys Davids, judicial business of the Śākyas was carried out in their popular assembly. By its implication we may assume, as the constitutions of these republics were more or less similar, that justice was administered in other republics by their Central Assemblies. The President or Rājā was also the head of the judicial administration. The administration of law and justice was set up as a separate department and there was a minister in charge of it. The cases were decided in accordance with the ancient custom and tradition of each individual state. The mention of 'Pravani-Kotthaka' of the Lichchhavis may be taken to suggest the existence of laws in these republics, which were passed by their assemblies. We possess some detailed information.

79. Cf. Mbh. XII.107.17
80. Hf., p.10.
82. ibid.
83. In the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (op.cit.) the Buddha speaks of the Lichchhavīs as acting in accordance with their established tradition and the ancient institution.
84. Atthakathā, op.cit.
85. Hf., p.102.
regarding the administration of justice in the Lichohhavi state. The text of the Pali commentary speaks of a seven-tier judiciary whose salient features were as follows:

1. The Court of Justice: This Court formed the base of the hierarchical judiciary. It was composed of the justices called 'Vinichohaya Mahamattas' who evidently formed the regular court for civil cases and ordinary offences. An accused was at first sent for trial to the Vinichohhaya Mahamatta who held preliminary inquiry into the case.

2. The Court of Appeal: It was the next higher court which was presided over by the 'Voharikas' or 'Lawyer Judges.'

3. The High Court: The High Court had its judges called the 'Sutradhara' or 'Doctors of Law.'

4. The Court of Final Appeal: It was known as 'Ashta-Kulaka' or the Court of Eight.


87. Jayaswal opines that 'Ashta-Kulaka' was presided over by Kulikas or aristocrats. In a mixed constitution of aristocracy and democracy we find a Kulika-Court (HP., p.101). But it is very likely that it was a federal court of the Vrijis, having representations from the constituent states, one member from the
5. The Court of Sanāpati:
6. The Court of Upārāja:
7. The Court of the Rājā:

These were the seven courts in hierarchical order. Each of the successive courts, beginning from the base formed by the Court of Justice, could acquit the accused if it found him innocent. But in case he was found guilty, each court was to send him up for trial to the next higher court. According to this procedure, the case finally reached the Court of the Rājā or President who was the highest judicial authority and who only had the power of conviction. If the Rājā found him guilty, he passed sentence on him according to the 'Paveni-Potthaka' which, according to Jayaswal, was the 'Book of Precedents' and in which the particulars of crime and punishment awarded to the citizens found guilty were entered. Thus the judicial system of the Vajjis was quite unique. It appears to have been based upon the principle that every man is innocent until he is adjudged guilty. The highly elaborate and complex mechanism of the system to prove the guilt of the accused, the power of conviction being vested only in the highest judicial authority and that the sentence could be passed only in accordance with the Book of Precedent, most impressively demonstrate the maximum concern for justice.

88. HP., pp.46-47; Cf. MBH. XII.107.17 (quoted ante)

Herein the phrase 'Shāstras' may be taken to be the equivalent of the Pāli phrase 'Paveni-Potthaka' indicating the highest Legal Code.
and the individual freedom and rights of the citizens on the part of the government of the Vajjian Republic. R.C. Majumdar has most aptly remarked that 'The right of the individual was thus safeguarded in a manner that has had probably few parallel in the world.'

By the implication of the Vajjian Judicial system, we may fairly assume that, if not the same elaborate mechanism, at least the similar principle and concern for justice might have been the guiding spirit of the administration of justice in the other republics about whom we have little information on the subject.

Fiscal Administration:

The legitimate functions of the government cannot be performed without incurring a considerable expense, and

89. The Mahābhārata also refers to equal concern for justice and fairness to one another in Gana (XII.107.17).

Also see Mahābh. XII.107.27.

90. Corporate . . , p.233. Cf. J.P. Sharma whose arguments against the existence of such a complex judiciary are simply flimsy (op.cit., pp.118 f.).
to meet this expense taxation is necessary. The writer
of the Mahābhārata and Kautilya also considered finance
as the basis of all activities of the state. Thus re-
venue and taxation were, as in the later time of Kautilya,
the mainstay of the early republican states. Unfortu-
nately, as Mrs. Rhys Davids remarks, "We have no direct
evidence of such a tithe or other tax being levied on the
Commonwealth by any of the republics or oligarchies men-
tioned in the Buddhist canon, such as the Śākyas, Koliyas,
Lichhāvīs, Mallas etc. The Jātakas, which preserve the
early Buddhist tradition and speak of the states ruled by
monarchs, refer to the collector of taxes called Balisad-
hakas or Balipatīgahakas and also to numerous kinds of

91. Fawcett: Political Economy, p.196.
92. Mbh.XII.119.16. कोसमूला हि राजाः कोसो दृष्टिर्मात्र भेत्:
93. Arthaśāstra, Eng. Tr. by Shamasāstry, Bk.II, Ch.VIII, p.65
कोसमूला: कोसपुन्या: सारारम्भ: तत्स्मात्तर्पण कोसस्मेवेत्
"All undertakings depend upon finance. Hence foremost
attention shall be paid to the treasury."
94. For example, the Mahābhārata refers to the Ganas
always attending to the collection of revenue to the
exchequer.

चारमन्त्रविशेषः कोषसत्त्वनिषेधः सः
नित्यपुक्ता पालबाहेर वर्धने सर्वतो गणा:ṃ (XII.107.19)
95. CHI., "Economic Condition According to Early Buddhist
Literature." p.177.
96. Jat., IV. (Faus.) p.399; V, pp.98-99, 101; II. p.17;
Cf. Altekar: SGAI., p.265; Pre-Buddhist India,
p.146.
taxes raised like land-tax, milk-money, tithe on raw produce, corvees (rajakāriya), reversion to the state of heirless property etc., thereby clearly suggesting the existence of a fiscal system. And by implication of the Jātakas' evidence, it is highly probable that these republican states must have had a fiscal system of their own. Mrs. Rhys Davids has made a similar observation. "The Śākyas and other republics are recorded as meeting for political business in their own Mote-Halls, and must inevitably have had a financial policy to discuss and carry out." The different sources of state revenue of these republics were as follows.

The land-tax was the major source of revenue of these states. Such a tax was called 'Bali'. The term 'Bali,' which has been the subject of acute controversies among eminent historians, is a Vedic word which later came to mean taxes offered to the king. As a general rule, the land-tax was assessed at the traditional rate of one-sixth of the land produce, which

97. Jātaka evidences are cited by Mrs. Rhys Davids in CHI., pp.176-177.
98. ibid., p.177; Cf. Mbh. op.cit.
99. R.L.Mehta has referred to all such controversies in a foot-note of his book 'Pre-Buddhist India,'p.141, f.n.1.
is also agreed to by the Buddhist text Mahavastu. However, the rate appears to have varied from one-sixth to one-twelfth, according to the decision of the ruling authority, or other circumstances. The ruling authority could also grant remission of the tithe to any person or any group.

All these facts are clearly attested in the case of the Śākyas by Asoka’s inscription on the Lumbini or Rummindē pillar. The inscriptions record that the great Buddhist king Asoka, on the occasion of his visit to the Lumbini village, reduced the royal share of the Bali to the one-eighth. Mrs. Rhys Davids has very correctly observed that "the tithe thus remitted on the occasion of Asoka’s visit to the birth place of the Buddha, must have been imposed by the Śākyas at a date prior to the Mauryan hegemony."

102. V.A.Smith : JRAS., 1897, p.618 f. See also Mrs. Rhys Davids : CHI., p.177.
104. DN., I, p.87; Jat., IV, p.169.
105. ibid.; Jat., I, p.200.
106. JRAS., 1898, pp.546f.; Dikshitar : Mauryan Polity, p.144
    R.K.Mookerji : Asoka (Rummindē Pillar Inscription), p.244.
107. CHI., p.177.
Further, from the fact that the land-tax was paid in kind, it is quite apparent that there must have been a set of officials in charge of the collection of land-revenue.

The Jātakas refer to such officials like the Rajjukas to measure the land, the Setthias to appraise the standing crops and the Dona Mahāmattas to weigh and measure the corns etc. It is quite probable that such officials were also in charge of the collection of land-tax in these republics also.

The Jātaka refers to the imposition of taxes on traders and merchants in monarchies. Such taxes must have been raised by these republican states also. For, we know that some trades of these republics had very flourishing trade and commerce, whose merchants engaged themselves in both inland and sea-borne trades, and some of them had even crossed the seas and established colonies in the far-off islands of the South-East Asia.

109. Dr. Fran Nath mentions 'Dasin,' 'Sastin,' 'Sahastrādhi-pati' and 'Maṇḍala' etc. meaning an officer over ten, one hundred and one thousand estates (grāma or village) respectively, to be in charge of collection of revenue (Economic Condition of Ancient India, pp.57-58).
110. Jat. (Cowell),IV, p.84.
Imposition of fines was another important source of the state revenue. We know from the Early Buddhist texts that the Mallas of Kuśinārā imposed

C. Fines: a fine of 500 pieces on every one who "went not forth to welcome the Blessed one" when he drew near on his tour to their town.

It was another important source of the state revenue, which is clear from the Mahāmāmagna Jātaka.

D. Gate-Dues: leaving a town or a city and which was collected on the gate. The Dhammapada Atṭhakathā tells us that the Līchchhavi chief Mahāli, who had taken to spread education among the Līchchhavis after his return from Taxila, where he had gone for higher education, lost his eye-sight and thereafter he was granted the revenue from the Gate which led from Sāvatthī into Vaiśāli. The revenue from the Gate amounted to one hundred thousand (pieces).

112. Vinaya, I, p. 247; Mahāvastu, VI, p. 36.
113. Jat., VI, p. 347.
114. Pre-Buddhist India, p. 147.
The right of the state to own the heirless property of its citizen was another important source of the state revenue. 

E. Confiscation of Buddhist text contains a very interesting dialogue between Sudina Kalandagutta, who had renounced the world soon after his marriage, and his mother, in which the latter begs Sudina to beget a son on his wife, lest his heirless property be taken away by the Lichanhavas. This clearly shows that the Lichanhavi republic confiscated the heirless property of its citizens.

The financial policies and measures appear to have been discussed and carried out in the Mote-Halls of these republics.

Military Administration:

According to Dr. K.P. Jayaswal, the ancient Indian republic was 'nation-in-arms.' The whole community was their army. They were a citizen army and therefore immeasurably superior to the hired levies of the monarchies.

118. Atthakathā, quoted by Rahula in Buddhacaryā, p. 295 f.n. 1
119. Vide Mrs. Rhys Davids : CHI., p. 177.
120. HP., p. 163.
It was true also with the republics of North-Eastern India. They appear to have had a martial tradition and possessed great military strength. The Buddha, while enumerating the seven conditions for the welfare of the Lichhavvis, indirectly emphasises internal disunity as their greatest weakness, and not the lack of military strength. We also know that the powerful Magadhan king Ajātasātru dared not attack the Lichhavvis until he was able to destroy, after a long manoeuvres, their internal unity. All these bear strong testimony to the existence of an efficient military system in these republics. Unfortunately, our informations on their military organisation are very scanty, and we are left to form an idea of it from stray references in the literature of the Buddhist and the Jainas.

The army in these republics must have been organised into the traditional four divisions—infantry, chariots, elephants, and horses. The republic being 'nation-in-arms', the whole community was their army. The Lichhavvis had reputed skill in training elephants, and their nearby great

121. The Mahāpratīkha Sutta, op.cit.
122. ibid.
123. Cf. Mahābhārata, which describes Ganas as heroic and accomplished in the art of weapons.

125. Psalms of the Brethrens, p.106.
forest like the Mahāvāna, the Gosinagālavana and the Avarapura-Vanasanda etc., must have offered a huge supply of them. In the famous story of the fight between the Mallian Bandhula and the Liohohhavis, we are told that the Liohohhavi chiefs went out riding on five hundred chariots (ratha) to chase Bandhula who had fled away after bathing his wife in the sacred Coronation Tank at Vaisāli. The various kinds of weapons used for offensive and defensive purposes were the bows and arrows, the sword and the shield (made of leather), javelin, trident etc. The army appears to have had a distinguishing uniform, which is suggested by the Koliya police wearing a head-dress which was their uniform. Construction of forts and fortifications of capital cities were an important part of the military organisation. The City of Vaisāli is described to have been surrounded by three walls, each at a distance of a gavuta (a quarter of a Yojana), and also being furnished with a number of watch-towers.

126. BU., III, pp.75-76; SN., V, pp.453 ff. These texts refer to the Liohohhavis having great fondness for skill in archery.
127. AN., III, pp.75-76; SN., V, pp.453 ff. These texts refer to the Liohohhavis having great fondness for skill in archery.
128. The Angulimālā Sutta (MN., II, 97ff.); Buddhacaryā, p.344.
129. Vide Jātaka evidences, See Pre-Buddhist India, pp.171-72.
130. KL., p.11.
The construction of the fort at Pātaligāma by Ajañātāstra as a preparatory measure to attack on the Līkhaṇhavīs may suggest similar activities on the part of the republicans.

The laying of siege round the forts and capital cities was an important part of the war strategy. We know that the Sakyan capital city Kapilavastu finally capitulated to the siege laid by the Kosalan invading army. An efficient espionage system was also a very important part of the military organisation. This is very clearly borne out by the famous story narrating the crooked role played by Vassakāra in bringing the downfall of the Līkhaṇhavīs, and by implication of this story we can fairly assume that these republics must have maintained a cadre of highly efficient spies. The system of military alliances for both offensive and defensive purposes was in practice.

We know for certainty that the Līkhaṇhavīs, the Mallas and the allied republican peoples of Kāśī–Kosala had formed a formidable league (obviously of defensive kind) against the kingdom of Magadha whose great military power must have posed a grave threat to their existence. The

135. Āṭṭhakathā, Turnour: op.cit.
136. Cf. Mbh., XII.107.19, it refers to the Ganas always attending to the working of the espionage service.
137. Kalpa-Sūtra; SBE., XXII, p.266 (Sūtra 129); Cf. Mbh. XII.107. which describes Ganas as aspiring to conquer enemies and gain allies.

बरोबर विज्ञानस्ते शुद्धः प्राप्तवस्ति च ॥
belief in a Palladium as a part of the military organisation is indicated in the case of the Lichshhavis who had a living Palladium in the famous ascetic Kūlavlāka or Kūlavlāka. We are told that the king Ajātaśatru lured away this ascetic with the help of a beautiful prostitute and thereafter the City of Vaisāli fell to the enemy.

The entire army organisation was headed by the Senāpati who was also a member of the central executive, and who resembles the present generalissimo. Sometimes Senāpati was the head of the state, which is evident from the story of Khandā in the Gilgit Manuscript. Senāpati was elected by the Gana Assembly and even an outsider could be elected to this office.

And finally, we may note here that warfare was very common and frequent. That even in the age of the Buddha, which was resounding with the compassionate doctrine of non-violence of the Master, war was generally accepted as a normal activity of the state. The naked barbarism seen in the indiscriminate killings of the Śakyas, men, women

139. Atthakathā, Tumour : op.cit.
140. op.cit.
141. ibid.
and the babes at the breasts, by the invading Kosalan army, clearly shows that warfare was bloody and barbarous, unmitigated by any rule of decency and humanitarian consideration, and the War Ethic, so much lauded by writers on the ancient Indian military system, was conspicuous by its absence.

Diplomatic System:

The ancient Indians realised the importance of maintaining diplomatic relations amongst themselves and rejected isolationism as an unsound political proposition. Diplomacy as an institution had been in existence since the days of the Vedas, and we have also plenty of instances in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata to show that diplomatic work formed a normal feature of inter-state relations. This was also true of these republican states. Unfortunately, we do not possess much information about their diplomatic system, and our knowledge of it is confined only to some stray references in the literature of the Buddhists and the Jaina. We know from the early Buddhist Literature

143. HIL., p.6; Dhammapad Atthakathā (HOS., Vol. XXIX, pp. 44 ff.) Buddhacarya, p. 444; Cf. Preamble to Bhaddasāla Jātaka.

144. For example, see Bimal Kanti Majumdar: The Military System in Ancient India, pp. 40-42; Hiralal Chatterjee: International Law and Inter-State Relations in Ancient India, pp. 86 ff.

145. Hiralal Chatterjee: op.cit., p. 50.
that once a number of Brāhmaṇa envoys (Dūta) of the kingdom of Kosala and Magadha were staying in the City of Vaiśālī for some business, and on hearing that the Buddha was staying in the nearby Kūtāgaraśālā in the Mahāvan, they tried to pay homage to him. The same source tells us that the Lichchhavis deputed one of their chiefs named Mahāḷi to approach king Bimbisāra of Magadha to exercise his good office in persuading the Buddha, who was then residing at Veluvana in his kingdom, to pay a visit to Vaiśālī and ward off plague and draught under which the city was terribly suffering. We are further told in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta that on getting the news of the death of the Buddha at Kusinārā, the Koliyas, the Bulis, the Mallas of Pāvā, and the Moriyas despatched their envoys (Dūtas) to the Mallas of Kusinārā to claim a share of the last remains of the exalted one. These few known facts will suffice to show that these republics maintained active diplomatic relations with the neighbouring states and did not live in isolation. We have little information about how their Diplomatic System was organised. In the

146. The Mahāḷi Sutta, Dialogues, I, p. 197; Buddhacaryā, pp. 229-29.


absence of sufficient evidence, it appears to be quite certain that it was not organised on the basis of permanent ambassadors (Dūta) deputed to the different capitals. What seems to be in actual practice was that they used to depute important persons to transact some important business with the other states whenever such needs arose. And such persons must have been of very high standing and of sufficient ability to exercise effective influence on the intended ruler or government in the assigned matter. This is clearly borne out by the instance of the deputation of Mahāli to the Magadhan king Bimbisāra who was not only a Lichchhavi chief (Rāja) but also a friend to the king, having studied together with him at Taxila. The envoy must have enjoyed certain special privileges and immunities like the inviolability of his persons etc., which we find enumerated in the ancient Brahmanical texts.

149. op. cit., See also Buddhacaryā, p. 440 f.n. p.
150. Such Diplomatic privileges and immunities are described by Hiralal Chatterjee in his book ‘International Law and Inter-State Relation in Ancient India, pp. 64 ff.