CHAPTER-IV
Mechanism of Administration

[Civil Administration, Foreign Affairs,
Administration of Justice and Military Administration etc]

Before entering into the topic, the Mechanism of administration, to add a few words about the characteristics of the Mahābhārata may not be irrelevant. The Mahābhārata claims that “Everything in the world is contained in this work, and what is not found here will not be found anywhere else.” (Mbh.I.62.53). Out of the eighteen paravans, the Sāntiparva is the largest one. It deals with a wide range of subjects. It is divided into three sections, viz, Rājadharmānusāsana-parva, Āpaddharma-parva and Moksadharma-parva. In the Rājadharma section, the grandsire Bhīma deliberates on the duties of a king in dealing with internal and external administration along with duties in general. It is in the form of advice to Yudhisthira concerning administration. The term ‘Rājadharma’ implies the duties and functions of a king. While delineating all kinds of dharma, emphasize has been given
on the knowledge of ‘Polity’ or the science of Public administration. It is, thus, seen that, the word administration is one of the most important and inseparable part of ‘Rājadharma’.

The word’ Mechanism of Administration’ has very wide meaning. According to some modern writers, the term administration means ‘Public affairs or Government in power’, while ‘Mechanism’ implies the structure or limbs of the administrative machinery, meaning the different departments of the Government, the officials etc. Hence, the term altogether means organization and control of the state affairs.

In various parvans of the Mahābhārata mainly Sabhā-parvan, Sāntiparvan and Anusāsanaparvans are designed to deal with the administrative machinery. The Mahābhārata deals with three divisions of administration, viz., political, judicial and military.

The most important part of a state is the administration, consisting of different departments of the Government. Without a good administration a state cannot develop. A state’s survival rests on its administrative capacity. The political part concerns the
internal civil administration as well as external affairs i.e. the state’s relation with other neighboring states; the judicial section deals with administration of justice; the military section deals with all that concerns defense of the state from foreign aggression, weaponry and military adventures.

I. Civil Administration:

The civil administration is completely related to citizens of a state. It deals mainly with the non-military and non-judicial administration of a state.

In ancient India, king was the central figure of administration. He was the source of all authority and everything was conducted as his name. The king organized a bureaucracy based on a hierarchy of agents of different grades.

According to the Mahābhārata, the chief duty of a king was the selection of clergyman (Priest)\(^1\). In this context some ślokas recited by the sage Śukrāchārya, were explained to Yudhisthira by

\(^1\)Mbh. XII.73.29
Bhisma. Bhīśma says that, a king should select a priest who is born in a good naksatra and full of knowledge in rājaśāstra and superior to the king in this respect². As regards (the priest) the grandsire Bhīśma opines that, without a priest a king becomes unholy(ucchista),cf.,

ucchiniha sa bhabhed rājā yasya nāsti purohitah

Mbh.XII.73.2.ref.

Kautilya also recommends, a well regulated machinery and a vast organized bureaucracy based on a hierarchy of agents of different grades³.

In the Vedic and of the later Vedic periods, it is found that, the state was small and in tribal status; hence the system of administration was not large bared. The state was not more extensive than a modern district. Some famed traditional ancestors like Yadu, Puru etc. The Governing machinery consisted of patriarchs of different families.

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2. Ibid. XII.73
3. Vide, Choudhary, R., ‘Kautilya’s Political Ideas and Institutions’,p.100
For instance, a number of these families formed a ‘viś’ or ‘canon’, presided over by a ‘viśpati’; a number of ‘viśas’ formed a jana which was superintended by a janapati or a king.

At that period kingship had come of the joint family, and the headship was usually hereditary.

In the Rgveda there is no reference to the divinity of the king, and the king did not perform any sacrifice or ritual for the welfare of the state. The viśas elected the king⁴. There was no close relation between the king and the priesthood.

Need of the Administrative Body:

But with the progress of time, large states/kingdoms, even empires came into beings and with growth of such big states the need for large regulated administrative machinery because a sine-qua-non. Accordingly the authority on statecrafts recommended the organization of large administrative bodies. These administrative bodies are classified as:

1. The Central executive machinery.

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⁴ Rg. X.124.8
2. The Mantri-parishad and the Secretariat.

3. The Bureaucracy and departments of Central Government.

4. District and village administration.

The Central Executive Machinery:

The central executive is consisted of the king, his trusted advisers, and the head of different departments or offices in the capital. The chief officials are mantrins, the purohita, the senāpati as the commander-in-chief, Yuvarāja, Dvārapāla. Anaveśika, Kārāgārādhya, Kosādhya, Saciva (who can conserve wealth in proper place), Pradestā, Nagarādhy, Superintendant of artist, Dharmadhy, Sabhādhy, Dandapāla, Durgapāla, Rāstrasīmāpāla as well as foresters etc. In the Mahābhārata⁵, sage Nārada emphasized that, all these government servants are known as ‘tīrtha’. There are eighteen ‘tīrthas’ in opponent party, and except first three, the rest fifteen are in the ruling party⁶, also says that the list of officials are known as ‘eighteen tīrthas’.

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5. Mbh.II.5.38
6. As.I.12
Let us now analyses the officials one by one.

**Mantrin:**

It has already been mentioned that, the *mantrin* occupied a high position in the state administration. Among the officials he is the most trusted adviser of the king. In the *Mahābhārata* it is found that, a king should have selected a minimum of three qualified persons as ministers. They supervised the work of other officials. But Kautilya does not give any fixed number of mantrins. According to him, a king should select more than one mantrin as his advisers. Amātya is a very old term; it may be traced in the *Rgveda*. The term *amātya* is generally translated as ‘minister’. But we must keep in mind that in the time of the *Rgveda*, the ministers or the cabinet did not exercise such powers as in our times. In ancient times few ministers were deserved the royal authority by their individual powers or qualities.

In the *Mahābhārata*, Vidura was highly venerated, for his first wisdom. He too acted at the commands of his master, the

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7. *Mbh.*XII.83.47
king Dhrtarāstra yet he had to expulsion at last for some time at the hands of the king (Dhrtarāstra)\(^8\). According to the *Mahābhārata* the royal cabinet is consisted of eight ministers (XII.86.70). Though the selection of minister was open to all castes (XII.85), the king was advised to be very careful in the selection of ministers (XII.84). Bhīsma also recommends the constitution of a privy council of eight ministers (from among the 37 council of ministers) with whom he should hold secret consultations on state policy.

**Senāpati:**

‘Senāpati’ or the ‘Commander-in-chief’ was another important official of the state who held administrative control over the army. In the *Mahābhārata*\(^9\) the *senāpati* is called Paricchada also. He should be of high birth, born in the kingdom, have wisdom, beauty of form and features of great learning, and dignity of behaviour etc\(^{10}\).

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8. *ibid.*III.5.19
10. *kulīnā deśajāḥ prājnā rupavanto bahuśrutāḥ / pragalbhaśchānumuraktāścha te tava syuh paricchadāḥ // here ‘paricchada’ indicates ‘senāpati’. *Mbh.*XII.83.6
The king Yudhisthira appointed Nakula for keeping the register of the forces, to arrange for their food and pay and also for supervising other affairs of the army (Mbh.XII.41.12). Kautilya says that, a person of royal birth, should be considered for the post of senāpati. According to Kullukabhatta¹¹, the author of the Manvārtamuktāvalī, a commentary on the Manusmṛti, amātya means senāpati, who commands the four-fold army (caturanginīsenā), who can well defend their own kingdom. Both the military department as well as the internal peace of the kingdom also depend on the commander-in-chief.

Yuvarāja:

The heir-apparent or the crown prince was closely associated with the administrative work. After his coronation the king Yudhisthira appointed his brother Bhīmasena as Yuvarāja.cf.,

‘yauvarajyena kaunteyam bhimasenamayojayat’ //

Mbh.XII.41.9

¹¹. ‘amātye danda āyatto dande vainayikī kriyā’ / MS.VII.65.
**Puruhita (priest):**

The Priest holds a high and important position, only second to the *mantrin* in order of precedence. The Priest should protect the good and punish the wicked. In this regard, the grandsire Bhīśma told that, the king should appoint a person (*brāhmaṇa*) in the post of royal Priest, whose duty would be to protect the righteous and punish the wrong-doers. He should possess high learning and be of virtuous conduct, conversant with duties and observant of penances, and not covetous of wealth. Again, he should come of a noble Brāhmaṇa family, should have knowledge of the art of government etc. Thus it is found that, ‘Dhaumya’, the foremost of the priest, was appointed by king Yudhishthira, to attend the Brāhmaṇas and to perform the daily rites in honour of the gods, and all other acts of a religious sort. When both the priest and the king possessed the similar qualities, i.e., possessed of virtuous souls and conversant with secret policy,

12. *ya eva tu sato rakedasataśca nivartayet / sa eva rājah kartavyo rājan rājapurohitah // Mbh. XII.72.1*
13. *ibid. XII.72.1&13-14*
14. *ibid. XII.41.14*
then prosperity would sure come from every direction, cf.,

dharmātmā mantra vid yesām rājnaṇa rājan purohitah /

rājā caiva guno yesam kuśalam tesu sarvaḥaḥ //” Mbh.XII.73.2

The king was to regard him as his preceptor and to venerate him
as a son to his father. The priest should inform the king all about
the important tasks daily report), about dangerous situations,
rituals as well as the tidings (news) of the herem.15

**Dvārapāla:**

Door-keeper of the royal gates. In the *Arthaśāstra,*
‘Dvārapāla’ called as ‘Dauvārika’.

**Antarvamsika:**

President of the harem. He is the in charge of the royal
harem. Only responsible person like the ‘priest’ or the ‘noble
Brāhmaṇa’ could be appointed in this post.

**Kārāgārādhyaksa:**

Overseers of prisons.

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15. brāyāt kāryāni satatam mahotpātāni yanica /

istamangalayuktāni tathāa'ntahpurikāni call // Mbh. XII.72.ref
**Kosādhyakṣa:**

He is the superintendent of the treasury. Although the king is the chief observer of the *kosa* (treasury), he should appoint an honest and trustworthy person over his mines, salt, grain, ferries, and elephant crops.\(^{16}\)

**Saciva:**

The *saciva* holds an important position in the state administration. A king should set the *saciva* for distributing the wealth in proper places, i.e., *tīrthas*.

**Pradestā:**

Prasdestā performs both the executive and judicial functions. His duties were multifarious. For example, supervising the works of the Gopas, collection of Bali, administering criminal justice, inflicting punishment and assessing taxes etc. formed the part of duties of the Pradestā.

**Nagarādhyakṣa:**

Nagarādhyakṣa is the superintendent of the towns and cities;
for attending to every matter relating to his jurisdiction. Nagarādhyaṅka is a highly placed office in the administration, the officer (nagarādhyaṅka) was expected to move around and keep eye on the performance of the subordinate officers 17.

Superintendent of artist (śilpī, kāryanirmātā):

The superintendent of the artisans was to keep watch on the artisans and manufactures. The king should levy taxes upon the products of the artisans as well as on the merchants on their merchandise. Nobody would work or seek for out turns without sufficient profit. So, the kingshould impose taxes in such a way so that both he (the king) and the Kāryakartā (the artisans) are equally benefit 18.

Dharmādhyaṅka:

Chief of Dharma. Brāhmaṇa is the source of Dharma 19, so,

17. *Mbh.* XII.87.10-11
18. ibid.XII.87.17½
19. *dharmaṣya brāhmaṇo yonistasmāt tān pājayet sadā /*
    
    *brāhmaṇanāṁ ca māndhāṭah kuryāt kāmānamat sarī //*

    *Mbh.* XII.90.22
a king should always respect them and fulfill their wishes. Again, one may gain wealth and prosperity by worshiping the Brāhmanas. So, said by Utathya (son of Angirā) to Māndhātā (son of Yuvanāśva). On the other hand, who has no instructor in the ways of righteousness and who never asks others for counsels he never succeeds in enjoying happiness for longtime 20.

**Sabhādhyaaksa:**

He was the president of assembly.

**Dandapāla:**

He is the chief of military-cum-police.

**Durgapāla:**

He was the governor of the fort.

**Rāstrasīmāpāla:**

He was the governor of the frontier. According to Kautilya, the term ‘Rāstrasīmāpāla’ is known as ‘Antapāla’.

**Foresters:**

They were the controller of the forest and were probably

20. ibid. XII.92.18-19
recruited from the aboriginal forest chiefs. ‘Foresters’ is known as ‘Ātavikas’ also.

The sovereign occupies the central position in the administration. According to Kautilya, the king was the embodiment of an authority and the various dignitaries of the state were, but the deputies created and authorized by his will to carry on the administrative activities; to facilitate the governance of his state. In the Mahābhārata, sage Nārada states that, sovereignty is practicable only with the co-operation (united efforts) of all. cf.,

\[sarve vā punarutsrṣtāḥ sansrṣtāṃ cātra kāraṇam/\]

*Mahābhārata* II.5.32

Similar view is expressed by Kautilya\(^2^1\), when he says-

“Royal work is either visible, or invisible or inferential. What is specified by other is invisible and what is planned after the accomplishment of some work is inferential”

‘Karmānta’ is another term, which signifies ‘the employees’ in general \(^2^2\). But Kautilya interpreted it as, the ones ‘in charge of mines and industries’\(^2^3\). Sage Nārada advised Yudhisthira that, he

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22. *Mahābhārata* II.5.32
23. *Āṣṭādhyāyī* II.1;I.12
should pay prime attention to all concerns of the employees. In the *Mahābhārata* we notice another term, ‘Kāranika’\(^{24}\), which implies a class of high officials, learned or preceptor, who can impart training and education to the prince and the great warriors. Again, in modern sense, the term (*kāranika*) denotes the ‘directors’ of the concerned departments.

Sage Nārada says that, a king should classify their employees on the basis of their qualities or services into three grades, such as, senior, junior and lower\(^{25}\) and engage each according to one’s ability and qualification. A king should engage those persons in the post of ‘*amātya*’, who are reliable or trustworthy in a responsible position. And he should make payment, to their servants in time. A king should give award to well-doers, who can perform duties by their own efforts according to their capacities\(^{26}\).

\(^{24}\) *Mbh*.II.5.34

\(^{25}\) *kaccinmukhyā mahatasveva madhyamesu ca madhyamāh /

   *jaghanyāśca jaghanyesu bhṛtyāh karmasu yojitāḥ //

   *Mbh*. II.5.43&75

\(^{26}\) *ibid*.II.5.53
He should again make proper irrigation system by digging of big wells or tank. After all the king should pay attention to all and every direction for well protection of his kingdom. Generally, the key posts in the central administration were reserved for the close relations of the king. It is seen that, Yudhisthira appointed his four brothers the principal secretaries and the commanders.

**The Mantri Parisad (body of council of Ministers):**

The defense of forts, battle, administration of justice, consultations on questions relating to policy matters and keeping the subjects in happiness,- these five acts contributed to the extension of the dominions of a king. In the *Mahābhārata* it is stated that, the place/site where the head of the king was anointed with different kinds of liquids during the coronation rituals, is suitable for selection or organization of administrative machinery or the consultative body. The great sage Vaiśampāyana has

27. *ibid.* II.78
28. *ibid.* XII.41
29. *ibid.* XII.93.24
narrated that, after the coronation Yudhisthira appointed some qualified persons for observing the secrets of the council (gupta mantranā) regarding royal tasks. Only the intelligent persons should be selected for this departments. Vidura was appointed for dealing with secret policy matters, and looking after the six gunas (sādgunyam) of royal policy (nīti)\(^{30}\). Likewise, Sanjaya, who was considered an embodiment of all qualities (sarvagunasampanna), was appointed for observing implementation or otherwise the state’s schemes as well as income and expenditure of the state\(^ {31}\).

The military department was looked after by Nakula; Arjuna attacked the enemies and dominated the wrong doers. On the other hand, Sahadeva was always ready for the help and protection of the king (Yudhisthira)\(^ {32}\).

The *Manusmrti* states that a king should appoint ministers in secret council after examining their aptitude and quality. On the basis of their quality, they were to be engaged in

\(^{30}\) *Mbh.* XII.41.10

\(^{31}\) *ibid.* XII.41.11

\(^{32}\) *ibid.* XII.41.12-13&15
different branches of the administration. The king should discuss the secret policies, (paramam mantram) on the six fold policy with his senior intelligent Brāhmaṇa minister. And also, they (both the king and the intelligent Brāhmaṇa minister) should jointly select other qualified persons as minister, and put in charge of respective departments. The Mahābhārata prescribes that, the ministers should be selected from all castes; the only criteria should be their merits and fitness. The cabinet, generally should be consisted of eight members. cf.,

\[\text{astānām mantrinām madhye mantram rājopadhārayet}\]

\textit{Mbh. XII.85.11}

According to the grandsire Bhīṣma, a king should first form the ‘Mantrīmandala’ or committee of experts, consisting of thirty seven members; out of these thirty seven ministers, a secret council consisting of eight ministers, representing members of all castes should be constituted. The members of the ‘Mantrīmandala or the Mantrīparisad’ should include four Brāhmaṇas, who are learned in the Vedas, possessed of a sense of dignity, belonging to

\begin{itemize}
\item[33.] \textit{MS. VII.57-8}
\item[34.] \textit{ibid. VII.59-60}
\item[35.] \textit{ibid. XII.85}
\end{itemize}
the *snātaka* order, and of good behaviour; there should be eight Ksatriyas possessing physical strength and able to wielding weapons; twenty one Vaiśyas possessing wealth; and three Śūdras, who are humble and of good conduct; and one Sūta who possessed eight cardinal virtues and well learned in the Purānas.\(^{36}\)

Different works on polity recommend different number of Mantrīparisad. While Manu recommend twelve, Bṛhaspati sixteen and Śukra twenty, Kautilya says that, the number of members in the Mantrīparisad should be according to the practical needs of the time. In the Śūkranītisāra, members of the Mantrīparisad are called ‘Prakṛti’.\(^{37}\)

Śūkra \(^{38}\) puts great emphasis on the crown prince and the ministers who are like the most important limbs of the king’s person, such as the right and left arms, the eyes and the ears etc. A king becomes incomplete in the absence of the crown prince (Yuvarāja) and minister (*mantrī*).

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36. *ibid.* XII.85.6-11
37. ŚNS.II.69-71
38. *yuvarājomātyaganobhūvetaumahībhujah* /
   *Tāvevanayanekarnodaksasavyauktamātsmrtau* //
   *bāhukarnāksihīnhahsyādvinātābhīyāmatonṛpa* /
   *yojayeccitvātau mahānāścāyacānyathā* // ŚNS.2.12-13
Śūkra again says that a king should appoint the Puruhita, Pratinidhi, Pradhāna, Saciva, Mantrī, Prādvivāka, Pandita, Sumantra, Amātya and Duta in regular order

A king should select those persons for consulting the privy policy, who are endued with wisdom, intelligence and learning, born within the kingdom, pure and righteous in all tasks, who know the nature of friends and foes, who are modest and mild, competent to right and conversant with policy and the requirements of the time, who want to rule according to the dictates of the science of punishment (dandanītī). Growth of the kingdom is dependent upon the council’s policy, wherein the ministers give advice to the king. cf.,

‘mantrīnām mantramūlam hi rājno rāstram vivardhate’

*Mbh.* XII.83.48

The *Mahābhārata* states that, the counsels are armour of a king, and his subjects and officers are the limbs.

Spies and secret agents are also one of the most important part of the state administration. According to the master of

39. *ibid.*2.74-76
40. *Mbh.* XII. 83.50
statecraft, spy is the root of a kingdom and the secret policy is the
e nucleus of it. cf.,

\[ \text{rājyaṃ pranidhīmūlam hi mantrasāram pracaksate} \]

\[ Mbh. \text{ XII.83.51} \]

Thus, a king should appoint different types of spies in
different place. Over and above, for protection of a kingdom, a
king should appoint some qualified persons as ambassadors,
Pratihārī (dvārapāla), Siroraksaka or Angaraksaka (body guard)
etc. Noble birth, good conduct, sweet speech, intelligence, good
conversation as well as good memory are considered the
qualification of an ambassador. The same qualities should be
essential for the pratihārī and siroraksaka\textsuperscript{41}.

In this regard Kautilya says that- “Every act and venture
ought to be preceded by proper deliberation”.\textsuperscript{42}

**The secretariat:**

The term ‘secretariat’ also known as ‘\textit{sacivālaya},(the
house of the sacivas) in modern sense implies the seat of the state

\textsuperscript{41} ibid. XII.85.28-29
\textsuperscript{42} Chaudhary,R., ‘\textit{Kautilya’s political Ideas and Institutions}’ Vol. LXXIII. p.108
administration, wherein all matters relating to the state policy are and there execution are determined.

**The secretariat:**

The term ‘secretariat’ also known as ‘sacivālaya’, (the house of the sacivas) in modern sense implies the seat of the state administration, wherein all matters relating to the state policy are and there executions are determined.

According to Kautliya, the senior officers of the secretariat are known as Lekhaka (writer), whose status are that of the āmātyas and lower only to Mantrīs[^43], and there quality should be no less than that of the mantrins and the āmātyas. The salary of the officials are arranged on a graded basis. “In ancient as in modern times, ministerial appointments often went to senior and experienced secretaries of proved capacity. Government, therefore, used to take great care in the selection of the secretariat officers; they were required to possess almost as high qualifications as ministers, as far as education, ability and reliability were concerned.”[^44](a) Naturally the secretariat had a big record office.

[^43]: As.II.10
[^44](a): Altekar, A.S., ‘State and government in ancient India’. P.188
Duties of the secretariat officers:

The authorities on statecraft specify the duties of the secretariat officers as under:

The secretariat officers are expected to-

(i) Be experts in drafting letters and communiques;

(ii) They are to listen to the oral orders of the king or the ministers and to draft these properly and accurately in as short a time as possible;

(iii) While preparing or drafting the communiques, the officer concerned should look into the earlier record and assure themselves that there was no contradiction to earlier view;

(iv) They should frame the wording of the communique(s) which are to be characterized by relevancy, completeness, sweetness, dignity and lucidity;

(v) While drafting, care should be taken to avoid redundancy; facts should be stated in their chronological sequence or according to their importance;

(vi) The placement and description of the facts should be impressive, and cogent reasons should be adduced for taking particular decision for action by the governments.
(vii) When the communique is read, it is the duty of the officer concerned to show the same to the minister concerned or the head of the department for approval, and after being approved it should be submitted to the king for final approval.

(viii) On being approved finally by the king the communiques should sealed, kept record and finally dispatched to destination.

(ix) Ordinary or routine orders were not preserved for long time, but the granted land or assigned revenues were kept with very carefully for future reference.

(x) Ordinary individuals had to pay a fee registering transfers of property in the secretariat registers; king Yaśaskara of Kashmir could detect a fraudulent transaction on account of the unusually high fee paid when it was registered at the secretariat 44(b).

(xi) The supervision and control of the provincial, district and local administrations.

44. (b) Rājataranginī, VII.38 and quoted in Altekar.A.S., ‘State and government in ancient India’, p.190
(xii) For preparing a true decisions of the central government were communicated to the local authorities by the secretariat through some special messengers.

The Bureaucracy and the Administrative Departments:

It has already been mentioned that, a king should not run the administration successfully without the help of his ministers and officials. Hence, the king should appoint some dignified persons for take care of the government administration. In this respect, the organization of the Bureaucracy is responsible for the success of the administrative departments. Numerous āmātyas acted different types of work by their enormous power. Kautilya opines that, those persons who are born in responsible families, possessed of wisdom and of purity and virtuous. Only virtuous persons should be appointed as bureaucrats.

In the Mahābhārata 45, it is stated that, only one person should be appointed to one task, not two or three, because they may not endure each other; while several persons are appointed

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{naiva dvau na trayah kāryā na mṛṣyeraṇ parasparam} & / \\
\text{ekārthe hyeva bhūtānām bhede bhavanti sarvadā} & //
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{Mbh. XII.80.25}

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45. naiva dvau na trayah kāryā na mṛṣyeraṇ parasparam / 
   ekārthe hyeva bhūtānām bhede bhavanti sarvadā // 

\textit{Mbh.XII.80.25}
to particular task, they might disagree with one another, to the cost of the object. There were several grades of *amātyas*, where in the person of the highest grade officials/"amātyas" are called *mantrinah* (prime minister)\(^{46}\). The works of various departments of administrations were put in charge of responsible and capable *amātyas*. Every department is put under a head. The member of a council was assisted by two undersecretaries\(^ {47}\).

**Revenue Administration:**

The Revenue Administration is a very important department in the civil administration. In the early Vedic period, the king was assisted by the *sabhā* and the *samiti* in the matter of revenue collection. In ancient India, ‘revenue’ implying taxes on land or commerce, was called ‘*Bali*’, which was to be paid by the subjects to the king in lieu of service for protection of the life and property of the people. In early times the payment of revenue was voluntary, which, however developed a compulsory payment on later times. ‘Land and commerce’, both are the sources of revenue of a state. In early times the rate of revenue was one-sixteenth part

\(^{46}\) *ibid.* XII.80.26-27

\(^{47}\) Chaudhary, R. ‘*Kautilya’s Political Ideas and Institutions*’. Vol-73.p.114

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\(^{46}\) *ibid.* XII.80.26-27

\(^{47}\) Chaudhary, R. ‘*Kautilya’s Political Ideas and Institutions*’. Vol-73.p.114
of the produce besides a contribution in cattle from the villages. A king should levy taxes on artisans also. But he (king) should never trouble his subjects at the time of collection of taxes. It was necessary to explain on people that the taxes were taken for the purpose of maintaining order and the combating of the enemies who would otherwise harass the people. On the other hand, a king should specially collect some money from his subjects occurs. For collection of revenue, the king should use his royal agents and foot-soldiers.

A king converse with the people very softly, sweetly and with complimentary words. A king should again collect taxes from rich merchants for the maintenance of workers and combat the foes. If ever any collector of taxes by charging heavy taxes, the king should punish such persons. It is a fact that, each and every person cannot be an expert in all fields. Hence, a king should engage specially qualified persons in respective areas for specific purpose. A king should appoint some persons for looking after the various departments, such as, land, trade and

48. *Mbh.* XII.87.34

49. *ksigoraksyavāniyam yaccānyat kincidīṛṣam / purusah kārayet karma bahubhih karmabhedata // Mbh.* XII.88.27
commerce, cattle rearing, agriculture as well as matters relating to revenue etc.

**District and Village Administration:**

A district in the modern sense was variously called ‘visaya’ or ‘deśa’, ‘mandala’, ‘rāstra’ etc. in ancient India. However the implication of these administrative terms are not uniform. For instance, the term ‘visaya’ usually means a district in the modern sense. But it means a kingdom or a territory. Again sometime was included or formed part of a visaya; at times mandala and visaya were synonyms. Some thing may be said of in case of deśa, mandala, rāstra.

During the Mauryan administration, the head of the ‘visaya’ was naturally called ‘visayapati’ or ‘visayādhyaksa’. In the *Mahābhārata*, the district authorities were called ‘rāstrīya’. It was well organized in the Gupta period. In ancient India the administrative division of the kingdom was planned on ‘a decimal system’ implying a three fold division; the smallest part is called ghosa or palli, a collection of ghosas formed a grāma or kheta

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50. *ibid.* XII. 85.12
and the *nagara* or *pura* was an outgrowth of such villages\(^{51}\).

In the division of the units of administration, the pattern in the *Mahābhārata*\(^{52}\) fully corresponds to that of the *Manusmṛiti*\(^{53}\). The unit of administration in the villages helps the growth of a state. Hence, civil administration is very important for the growth and expansion of the state/kingdom.

It is necessary to divide the state into small divisions of units like, one village, ten villages, twenty villages, hundred villages as well as thousand villages etc. The village is the pivot of administration in India since earliest time. It is usually governed under the supervision and direction of the village headman, who is known as ‘Grāmādhipati’ (village authority). In the Vedic literature, the village headman is called ‘Grāmanī’, which is often used in the Buddhist ‘Jātakas’ also. According to the *Mahābhārata*, the village headman is known as ‘Grāmika’. He is the chief executive officer of the village administration.

\(^{51}\) Mishra, K.C. ‘*Tribes in the Mahābhārata a socio cultural study*’. p.268
\(^{52}\) *Mbh*. XII.87.3ff.
\(^{53}\) *MS*. VII.114ff.
Usually, a grāmika is nominated; but sometimes he elected; the grāmika administers with the help of the village elders.

The ‘grāmikas’ were the administrators of ten, twenty and hundred villages according to their ranks. The ‘rāstriya’ (district authority) is stated to have supervised a thousand villages and his headquarters was in a subordinate city (sākhānagara). cf.,

‘sākhānagaramarhastu sahasrapatiruttamah’

Mbh. XII.87.8

On the other hand the city was administrated by a special magistrate (or chief of the town), who is called ‘sarvārthacintaka’ cf.,

‘nagare nagare vā syādekah sarvārthacintakah’

Mbh. XII.87.10

Manu also holds a similar view. In case of any emergency or at the beating of war drum, the king should remove all the inhabitants of the small villages and the cattle to the ‘sākhānagara’ (subordinate city).

54. nagare nagare caikam kuryāt sarvārthacintakam / MS.VII.121
55. Mbh. XII.69.35
Duty of the headman was to observe all the activities of villagers, and report everything to the Dasa-grāmādhipati (in charge of ten villages) and he to his superior and so on. Every headman should contribute a share of the income of the village for maintaining the lord of ten villages, and the latter should do the same for supporting the lord of twenty villages. The Śatādhipati (i.e. the lord of hundred villages) should receive every honour from the king, and should have for his support a large village. The chief of thousand villages (Sahasrādhipati) can enjoy the income of a minor town and utilize these incomes (corn and gold) with his subjects.

To provide full security of life and property of the people is the primary responsibility of the king. To this end, the king should appoint officers to look after the interest of the people. In the same vein, for the protection of the villages as well as the cities, the king should appoint security forces, spices and ambassadors also. In different places of the kingdom, like- the fort, the boarders, city, village park etc., the king should appoint security personal. In the same way, the king should appoint special officers for the protection of big villages, cities and harems (antahpura).
‘Spy’ is one of the most important element of the state organization (saptāṅga-rājya), which is highlighted when the king is called ‘cāra-caksu’. i.e., having the spy as his eyes. They should observe secretly all the happenings in the countryside and report/inform the authorities concerned about these for necessary action. People, who are physically deformed, eg. lame, blind, seemingly abnormal, but hard-worker, may be employed as spy. The king should again engage secret agents to spy on the ministers, high officers of the administration, his own sons and daughters, the harem etc. to verify their loyalty and integrity. But there is no doubt that, every officer of the villages provides security to the people. To provide security of life and prosperity of the subjects it is a very difficult task. Hence the king should take such measures which may benefit both his people and his own self: He should run the administration with such care diligence so that his own kingdom develops into a welfare state.56

The grandsire Bhīṣma says that, a king should give

56. yathā tāsān ca manyeta śreya ātmana eva ca /

    tathā karmāṇi sarvāṇi rājā rāṣṭresu vartayet // Mbh. XII.88.3
permission for living in his kingdom, to those people who are carefully handling all cattle and always think of developing other inhabitants. Otherwise, they cannot live in his kingdom  

The *Arthaśāstra* states that, the village headman is the officer-in-charge of the militia and watch and ward; he should collect the government revenue for maintaining the village records, village council and to supervise the various works of the village life.

**Royal occupation:**

The *Mahābhārata* and other works on polity prescribe certain important rules and routines for the king to observe. A king ought to divide his time equally among Dharma, Artha, and Kāma. He again, should perform different types of diplomatic, civil and military affairs in a day  

A king should utilize his morning time for religious work, the afternoons for the concerns of the kingdom, and the evening for pleasure and entertainment.

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57. *ye bhūtānyanugrhnanti vardhayanti ca ye prajāh /
   te te rástrésu vartantān mā bhūtānmabhāvakāh // Mbh. XII.88.25*

58. *Mbh. II.5; XII.59; XV.5.10-20*
A king should never sleep the whole night; he is required to get up early in the morning, think over the means of protection and prosperity of his subjects.

In the ‘Ādiparva’ of the Mahābhārata, it is noticed that, a king sometimes go for picnicking on river sides, in hills and jungles. Sometimes went with his wives to jungles for amusement. They want to live in the top of the mountain and dark jungle, full of ‘śālatree’ (shorea robusta).  

Another most important function is the royal ceremony, i.e., the coronation of the king. All countrymen could attend the occasion of the royal ceremonies of ‘Aśvamedha’ and ‘Rājasūya’. The marriage ceremony is another important function, that is very attractive for the people. The Mahābhārata recommends that a king should perform the ceremonies of gestation (garbhadhāna), tonsure (cūdākarana) and investiture ceremony of the own son. These ceremonies were performed by king Pāṇḍu.  

59. ibid. I.1.13.7-8;I.218 (Raivataka girimālā)  
60. tatah pāṇduh kriyāh sarvāh pāṇḍavānāmakārayat /  
   garbhādhānādikṛtyāṁ caulopanayanāṁ ca // Mbh. I.123.31ff.
The Mahābhārata mentioned that, the function of cremation (pretakārya) is also equated with a royal ceremony. The king Dhṛtarāstra⁶¹, asked Vidura to perform the cremation of the great king Pāndu in his wife ‘Mādrī’, with royal paraphernalia. Perhaps the most solemn ceremony was performed at the time of a king abdicating the royal power and retire to the forest. The king should invite all people of the paura janapadas for announcing his renuncements.

Out of these ceremonial functions, the Mahābhārata, refers to games and amusement. As a ksatriya (king), hunting and the gambling were a common exercise as outdoor and an indoor game. Since the Vedic times, the gambling was a popular game of India. The profession of a gambler should be recognized as a nobler one and cultivated by both Brāhmanas and Ksatriyas. The Brāhma gamble was ‘Kanka’ and the Ksatriya gambler was ‘Śakuni’.

61. pāndorvidura sarvāni pretakāryāni kāraya /
    rājavad rājasinhasya mādryāścaiva viśesatah //

Mbh.I.126.1
II. Foreign Affairs:

‘Foreign affairs’ meaning ‘Inter-state-relation’ form a very important part of the state administration, and is one of the most important ‘element’ of ‘seven limbed’ state (*saptāṅga-rājya*).

Generally, a state’s relation, whether enimial or friendly with other states around to attain peace and prosperity, and help in war or calamity. It has already been mentioned that, a king is the protector of a state. Taking the help of various ministers and assistance, he can rule the whole kingdom. So, protection and the expansion of the kingdom king should make a good relation with other state also.

In foreign affairs, ‘*dūta’* (ambassador) and ‘spy’ are the most important office of the state. A king can gain all information both internal and external through the spy and the ambassador. On the other hand, twelve *rājāmandala*, six fold policy as well as fourfold *nīti* are also same important for the foreign affairs. The grandsire Bhīṣma, in the *Mahābhārata* explains to Yudhisthira about these policies (*nītis*) and how to make friendship with other
countries 62.

We have very little or no information on interstate relations of state of the Vedic times. The states then were of tribal nature, for a long time they combined to fight with Non-Aryan tribes around. In course of time the different tribal groups became envious of one another owing to the difference in success achieved by different tribal groups, which lead to inter-group fighting even with the help of Non-Aryan tribal groups 63. In subsequent time, the smaller tribal groups feud into larger territorial states; the process continued and we get the sixteen *mahājanapadas*.

The status and prestige of the different state was dependent on their resources and the rulers. According to the *Mahābhārata* 64, the rulers were designated by different names, viz., Bhoja, Virāt, Ksatriya, Bhūpati, Nrpa, etc. Many kings in different times had expanded their power and brought a new type of state into

62. *Mbh.* XII.57.16 and *ibid.* 69.67-68
63. Altekar, A. S. *‘State and government in ancient India’*. p.291
64. *Mbh.* XII.68.54
existence.

In early period it is seen that, some powerful ruler performed Asvamedha and Vajapeya sacrifices to mark their victories over a large number of states,-big or small. Such powerful king adopted the imperial title, samrāt, which symbolized the power and prestige of the king. Here in the beginning of the problem of inter-state-relation.

In the *Mahābhārata* the grandsire Bhīsma emphasized that, ‘Dūta’(ambassador) and ‘cāra’(spy) are the most important offices of the state administration. Absence of such personnel, a king cannot run the state smoothly. For making a good relation with other country ‘Dūta’ played an important role. The *Mahābhārata* holds that, the term ‘Pranidhi’ is used in the sense of ‘Dūta’. A king should appoint royal ambassador (*rājadūta*) as a viceroy or representative in other state (*s*)\(^4\). Thus a king should appoint a person in the office of ambassador or an envoy, who possess seven accomplishments. These are viz., high birth in a

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65. Chhangani, S.P. ‘*Inter state relation in ancient India*’.p.2
66. *Mbh.* XII.58.5 and *MS.* VII.153
good family, good conduct, eloquent, clever, sweet-speeches, faithful in delivering the message with which he is charged and endued with a good memory\textsuperscript{67}.

The ancient Indian Political thinkers accepted the fact that, the rule of the ambassador (\textit{dūta}) is that of an important diplomatic agent. According to them, conversation between two independent king make possible through the office of the ambassador. Therefore, ‘\textit{dūta}’ is said to be mouth of the king\textsuperscript{68}.

The \textit{Kāmandakīya Nītisāra} regards the ‘\textit{dūta}’ as a ‘spy’ and calls it a ‘\textit{prakāśacāra}’. On the other hand, some works on polity regarded the ‘\textit{dūta}’, it is a minister of external affairs\textsuperscript{69}. An ambassador is immunes to any civil or judicial obligation, he cannot be punished for any undesirable activities in the state where he is deputed\textsuperscript{70}. For the welfare of the people a king should fight against his enemies and spies for observing all the activities

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Mbh.} XII.85.28  
\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Aś.} I.16.13  
\textsuperscript{69} \textit{KNS}.12.32  
\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Mbh.} XII.85.26
of the enemy. The information on both internal and external matters of the cities (Paura-Jānapada) may be traced by the ambassadors.

In the Mahābhārata, it is stated that, for the protection of one’s own kingdom, a king should personally attend to certain tasks, such as, conversation with spies, make secret policy, observe the proper maintenance of the treasury as well as showing due respect to the pious, while imparting punishment to the evil doers etc. The king should appoint friendly ‘ascetics’ to look over in different places of his own kingdom, in the forests, in the subordinate states, in to enemy kingdom, and so on.

A king should again appoint as his assistants persons who are known for their loyalty and brevity; of high birth; free from diseases, gentle and respectful to others, well educated; of good conduct; and expert in observing the movement of the enemy etc, for obtaining information on the movement of the enemy.

71. ibid. XII.89.11
72. ibid. XII.86.20
73. ibid. XII.86.30
74. ibid. XII.57.23-25
Mandala Theory:

According to the Hindu Political thinkers, sovereignty is not complete, ‘unless it is external as well as internal’, i.e., ‘unless the state can exercise its internal authority unobstructed by and independent of other states’\(^75\).

In this context the Indian Political Philosophers evolved the peculiar concept of \(rāstramandala\). This concept of \(rāstramandala\) gives us an idea about why and how a state should frame a particular policy in the matter of relations with the neighbouring states around (inter-state-relation). Mandala, i.e. Rāstramandala, meaning a circle of kings (or states=\(rāstra\)) conceived as consisting of a group of twelve near or distant neighbouring centering round the aspiring king (\(vijigīsu\)). This theory is setout in relation to a ‘\(vijigīsu\)’, who according to Kāmandaka is-“a king who aspires to extend his territories, who is possessed of all the seven elements of sovereignty, who has great energy and who makes great efforts”\(^76\).

\(^75\) vide.Changani,S.P. ‘Inter-state relation in ancient India’. p.3
\(^76\) Kane,P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, Vol-III,P.218
Ancient India was infested with many kingdoms, big or smalls which were constantly at war with each other. This theory of circle of kings (rāstramandala) evolved by the Indian political philosopher highlights this fact. The authorities on statecraft speaks of ‘Rāstramandala’-'circle of kings’, where in a king finds his mitra, amongst twelve kings. According to the Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{77} these twelve kings are (dvādasa rājikā), viz., Ari, the first king; second is the Mitra king; next is Arimitra (enemy’s friend); fourth is Mitra-mitra king (friend of the friend); fifth is Ari- mitra-mitra (friend of the enemy’s friend). Besides these (five), there are others who either being invited or voluntarily offer to help either of the parties. Helper of the enemy king; invited for helping the mitra king; voluntarily offering to help the enemy king; voluntarily offering to the ruling king; the aspiring king, who desires of victory vijigīṣu; madhyaśtha king (mediator of two parties king’s and enemy); and Udāsina (a powerful king unattached either of the two parties).

\textsuperscript{77} raksanam caiva paurānām rāstrasya ca vivardhanam / 
mandalasthā ca yā cintā rājan dvādaśarājikā // Mbh. XII.59.70
Kautilya\textsuperscript{78}, in the *Arthaśāstra* systematically arranged these twelve kings of the *rājamandala*, as follows-

(i) The Vijigīsu, the aspiring king and desirous who is the centre stage encircled by others of victory.

(ii) The Ari (enemy) he is the immediate neighbour of *vijigīsu* and thus a natural enemy of the *vijigīsu*, since the nearest neighbour is always hostile.

(iii) The Mitra (the friend of the *vijigīsu*): He is the immediate neighbour of the Ari and the enemy’s enemy, is always a *mitra* (ally). According to the authorities on polity, ‘Mitra’ is regarded as an element of seven limbed state (*saptānga-rājya*), which basically denotes the foreign affairs of a state.

(iv) The Arimitra (the friend of the enemy): The one whose territory lies beyond that of the *mitra* (friend of the *vijigīsu*).

(v) The Mitra-\textit{mitra} (the ally friend ): He is beyond the ally of the enemy’s ally.

\textsuperscript{78} Aś.VI.2.13-22
(vi) The Arimitra-mitra (ally of the enemies ally): He is beyond the Mitra-mitra.

(vii) The Pārsnigrāha (the rear enemy): It is regarded as the friend of the Ari in the rear and helped the Ari by attacking the vijigīsu from behind.

(viii) The Ākranda (the rear friend of vijigīsu): Ākranda is regarded as a mitra in rear.

(ix) The Pārsnigrāhasāra (the ally of the rear enemy); and it is same as the arimitra.

(x) The Ākrandasāra (the mitra of the rear mitra) of the vijigīsu and it is the same as mitra-mitra.

(xi) The Madhyama (the middle king), it is stronger than the vijigīsu and the ally, who is capable of helping either the vijigīsu or the Ari at a time.

(xii) The Udāsina, the neutral king. He can helps the allied or the inimical kings or the middle kings, or of facing them individually.
The grandsire Bhīṣma observes that each man in the world have an *ari*, *mitra* and *madhyastha*; hence a king should always observe their movements secretly through the spies, the eye of the king (*cāra-caksu*), cf.,

“*udāsīnārimitrānām sarvameva cikīrsitam /
Pure janapade caiva jnātavyam cāracaksusā //*

*Mbh.* XII.86.21

Manu also recognizes that there are three kings each of both of the parties, viz., *madhyama*, *vijīgīṣu* and *udāsīna*.

Although, ‘Rājamandala’ is consisted of twelve kings but, the ‘*mula-prakṛti*’ (principal elements) is consisted of four king, viz., *vijīgīṣu, ari, madhyama* and *udāsīna*. Kāmandaka also holds the same view in his *Nītisara*. On the other hand, another ten king’s are recognized as ‘*sākhāprakṛti*’. In many works on state-craft, it is said that, of the seven elements (limbs) of the state, each twelve states has five constituent elements (*minister*,

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79. *MS*.7.155
80. *ibid*.7.156
81. *KNS*. 8.20
82. *MS*.7.157 and *KNS*. 8.22.41
rāstra, dūrga, treasury and danda); thus we get sixty elements. By adding to it the twelve of the circle we get seventy two elements (prakrti) altogether.

From the above discussion, it is seen that, a king has to face different problems in dealing with other states/countries. So, he should carefully maintain these prakrtis for acquiring prosperity and power for the protection and welfare of his subjects and the kingdom. Hence, one’s dealings with the ‘Rājamandala’ or the ‘circle of kings’ is very important for maintaining foreign affairs of a state.

A person of doubtful behaviour, even if he be a his own son, a brother or a close relative etc. should always be considered an enemy by the king (i.e., vijigīsu) 83. Likewise, a neighbouring state can never be happy to see the prosperity of the vijigīsu. Therefore a king should always be careful of such neighbouring states even if ruled by a relative of his. Otherwise, he may be destroyed by them. 84

83. Mbh. XII.80.13
84. ibid. XII.80.32
Sixfold Policy:

The term ‘sādgunyam’ (meaning six fold policy) implies the six measures of foreign policy. These are, sandhi, vigraha, yāna, āsana, dvaidhi and samśraya. 85

The Manusmrti also describes the ‘six guna’ or ‘sixfold foreign policy’. According to Manu, 86 the vijigīsu should frame his own policy (mantranā) in the matter of application of the six fold policy on appropriate occasion for his own prosperity and downfall of his opponents. These ‘six fold foreign policy’ are interpreted as follows-

(i) Sandhi: The term ‘sandhi’ implies treaty or alliance. Sandhi may be of two categories. When a king finds that his neighbour is stronger than him militarily as well as in terms of wealth and prosperity, he should make a friendship treaty with such a powerful king for long standing peace. Again, when a king finds that his enemy is more powerful than him, he should make alliance with a third country against the enemy so that they can

85. Āś.VII.1.2
86. MS.VII.160
fight unitedly against the prospective invader of either of them.

According to Manu\textsuperscript{87}, ‘sandhi’ is of two types- ‘samānayāna-karmā’ and ‘asamānayāna-karmā’. When two friendly kings unitedly march against an enemy with a common aim, it is called ‘samānayāna-karmā’. As against this, when the allies undertake to march against the enemy from two directions with a common aim, it is called ‘asamānayāna-karmā’ sandhi. Both the varieties of sandhi are for immediate benefit of both allied kings as also for future gains.

According to the Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{88} as explained by the grandsire Bhīsma, Sandhi is three fold-viz., Vittasandhi, Satkāryasandhi and Bhayasandhi; which are classified respectively as uttama, madhyama and adhama. The Vittasandhi is one which is made by transaction of money between the concerned parties. This sort of sandhi is called Uttamasandhi. Making alliance after getting help from others (satkāra), is known as ‘satkāra-sandhi’, which is termed ‘madhyamasandhi’.

\textsuperscript{87} ibid.VII.163
\textsuperscript{88} sandhiśca tribidhābhikhyo hīno madhyasthottamah / bhyasatkārvittākhyam kārtsnyena parivarnitam // Mbh. XII.59.37
When a king makes alliance, with other kings out of fear of an enemy that is called ‘bhaya-sandhi’. This type of sandhi (alliance) is called ‘adhama’ (or lower) type of sandhi. In the Arthaśāstra, Kautilya defines five types of sandhi, viz., mitra-sandhi (Agreement with an ally on definite terms), hiranya – sandhi (Agreement pertaining to wealth), bhūmi-sandhi (Pertaining to territory), karma-sandhi (use of army and treasury for common enterprise) and anavasita-sandhi (help in colonizing an unsettled land) etc.

(ii) Vigraha: Vigraha implies war or battle between two parties. According to the authorities of state-craft, vigraha may be of two types—willful and forceful. When the vijigīsu embarks on war with the intention of conquering an enemy, it is called ‘svayam-krta (willful war); when one is to go for war to protect the interest of one’s ally against a common enemy, it is called forceful war (mitrasyaapakrte).

89. quoted in Chhangani, S.P. “Inter state Relation in Ancient India”. p.19
90   (a) MS.VII.164
(iii) Yāna: Yāna means march militarily against an enemy. It is of two kinds- (i) when a powerful king march against his enemy single-handedly and (ii) when the king undertakes march militarily against his enemy in union with his friend (ally).

(iv) Āsana: Āsana is staying in shelter, i.e. holed in to remain calm, for either being afflicted by calamities (vyasana) due to varied reasons. It is a state of same sort of neutrality. It may be of two types- (i) when a king takes shelter in a fort, while observing the movements of the enemy through the spies and looking for a chance to making movement himself; (ii) as a strategic measure calmly ‘holding in a post against an enemy’ or an attitude of indifference.

(v) Dvaidhībhāva: It means the two-fold divisions of one’s army strategically. This implies that a king facing an enemy, whether stronger than him or otherwise, he should take resort to dvaidhībhāva, i.e., dividing his army into two divisions, - one stationed in the front to harass the enemy by different devises, while other division along with king shall take shelter in fort looking for chance to attack and defeat the enemy.
Dvaiddhībhāva is also interpreted as duplicity, i.e., double dealing. This implies while making peace with one king to increase his strength; while at the same time going for war with another. Kautilya discussed in detail the various aspects of dvaiddhībhāva in his Arthaśāstra\textsuperscript{91}.

(vi) Samśraya : The last of six fold foreign policy is called ‘samśraya’. A king should resort to samśraya i.e., taking shelter in a powerful king. It implies that when an afflicted king is facing an enemy more powerful to him, he should seek help or protection of a powerful ruler.

For the protection and increase of a kingdom, the king should again apply three ‘vargas’ (ksaya-sthāna-vrddhi) and three ‘paramavarga’ (dharma-artha-kāma).\textsuperscript{92}

**Four means of diplomacy (upāyas) :**

The instrument of diplomacy is termed ‘upāya’. The ancient Indian political thinker recommended four such upāyas, viz., sāma, dāna, bheda and danda. Of the four upāyas,

\textsuperscript{91} Aś.VII.7.1-13
\textsuperscript{92} Mbh. XII.69.69-70
the last one, i.e., danda (war) is considered as the last resort to be adopted when the preceding three upāyas fail. The ancient Indian political thinkers, as those of our time today, were very much aware of the horrors of war and the consequent disaster be fell on the people, which made even the great warmongers to be very concerned about. The aim of diplomacy is to avoid was as much as possible by negotiation, persuasion and conciliation. Diplomacy as defined by C.D.Burns, “is the negotiation, persuasion and conciliation for promoting the common interest of different nations and adjusting those interest…”\(^93\). This is what the ancient Indian political thinkers evolved long long back. These four expedients were the principal cardinal points of the ancient Indian diplomatic system. These four expedients are means for overcoming the opposition, implying the enemy and its allies.

The *Mahābhārata* states that, the king desirous of conquests (*vijigīsu*) should apply these fourfold expedients with the six measures of foreign policy either separately or conjointly.

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93. C.D.Burns: War, pp.81-83; quoted in: ‘Inter–state Relation in Ancient India’.p.28
Moreover, the *Mahābhārata*\(^{94}\), adds three more *upāyas* to the four mentioned above. These are viz., Upeksā, Māyā and Indrajāla. Here, it is mentioned that, ‘māyā’ and ‘Indrajāla’ are of the same nature.

The above three *upāyas* are found in the Purāna literature and later *nīti* works like, the *Kāmandakiya nītisāra*, the *Matsya purāna*, the *Agni purāna*, the *Bārhaspatya sūtra*, the *Visnudharmottara purāna*\(^{95}\) etc. By using of these *upāyas*, a king may extend /expand his kingdom and keep his people very safely\(^{96}\).

In different places of the *Mahābhārata*, it is emphasized that, the *vijigīsu* should apply the ‘*sāma-nīti*’ to the strong enemy. But when it is ignored by them, then the *vijigīsu* should apply ‘*dāna-nīti*’ i.e., making gift as far as possible. When this (*dāna-nīti*) fails the *vijigīsu* should apply ‘*bheda-nīti*’ i.e., trying to break-up the relation by fraudulent means between the respective enemy king(s) and his ministers and other officials, the army etc.

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94. *Mbh*. XII.59.35 and *ibid*.69.60
95. *KNS*.17.3-4; *Agni* p.226.5-6; *MP*. 222.2
96. *Rāmā*. Sundara *kānda*, 41.2-5; *MS*.7.109; *Yāj.S*.1.346 & 4.27
For the purpose, the vijigīsu king should engage his reliable persons to create discord between the enemies king(s) and his close persons. For these purpose the ‘dūta’ and the ‘spy’ are the best\textsuperscript{97}. If these three upāyas cannot bring change to the enemy king, the vijigīsu should to apply ‘danda’ as the last resort, i.e., wedging war and harassing them\textsuperscript{98}.

In the Mahābhārata the great sage Bṛhaspati says that, the sāma,dāna and bheda are the principal upāyas to increasing of the wealth. So, a king desiring the welfare and prosperity of his own kingdom should try to shun fighting (yuddha)\textsuperscript{99}.

On the other hand, the work on state-craft of Brahmādeva states that, sāma- dāna-bheda-danda-upeksā are the five upāyas of foreign policies of the state. A king should apply ‘danda’, when first three (sāma-dāna-bheda ) are ignored by the opposition (enemy). Again, it is found that, an intelligent king, who wants to extend his kingdom, should avoid war or fight. Because, a state become rich or prosperous by using only sāma-dāna and bheda.

\textsuperscript{97.} \textit{Mbh.} XII.102.27
\textsuperscript{98.} \textit{ibid.} XII.94.4ff
\textsuperscript{99.} \textit{ibid.} XII.69.23-4
In the Udyoga parva of the Mahābhārata, it is said that, a wise man should not resort to fighting and that danda is to be resorted to only when there is no other means left 100.

In another place of the Mahābhārata, it is stated that, a king should first apply ‘bheda’ expedient against the enemy only and then ‘danda’ expedient with due regard to place, time and resources101. When the strength of a king is less than that of the enemy king’s, he should apply ‘dāna’ expedient or conciliation with sweet words 102.

The Mahābhārata refers to a dialogue on the application of the four upāyas between Bṛhaspati and Indra (king of heaven). Here in the sage Bṛhaspati told Indra that, a king should first apply the ‘danda’ expedient instead of the ‘sāma’ implying there by that dandanīti is better than sāma-nīti. cf.,

\[ \text{na sāmadandopanisat praśasyate.} \]

\[ \text{Mbh.XII.103.40} \]

100. ibid.V.132.29-30
101. ibid. XII.103.28
102. ibid. XII.103.29-30
Another upāya is ‘māyā’, which is applied by both of the parties. The king might visit the enemy in the disguise of a women, of a devil etc., and slay him when he is at close quarters. The Mahābhārata\(^{103}\) cites the instance of Kicaka being killed by Bhīma in Draupadī’s disguise.

‘Upeksā’ another upāya which is not a separate policy, but only an aspect of the udāsina attitude. In the midst of superior powers, a lesser power one should pursue upeksā or indifference.

The last upāya, i.e., ‘Indrajāla’ is of the nature and character of Māyā. According to Kāmandaka, these three methods are only aspects of the four main upāyas- (sāma, dāna, bheda and danda). He says that, ‘māyā’ is an aspect of danda, while both ‘upeksā’ and ‘Indrajāla’ are included as aspects of ‘bheda’.

From the above discussion it is seen that, when a king desirous of victory employed the seven upāyas on six fold foreign policy, then he could earn all prosperity in the world.

\(^{103}\) ibid. VIII.18. 53-56
III. Administration of Justice:

Another very important and unavoidably necessary function of the state is the ‘administration of justice’. It is emphatically called *dharma*, i.e., “the only right path”, which obviously covers the whole nature of a man in the society. In the *Mahābhārata* ‘justice’ is chiefly signified by three terms, viz., *dharma*, *danda* and *vyavahāra*\(^{104}\). In the ‘judicial administration’ the king is regarded as the chief symbol of ‘justice’ and the defender of law.

Since the Vedic period, the king is the judge either civil or criminal law. Although criminal offences like murder, theft, adultery etc., are frequently mentioned in ancient texts, but there is no evidence to cite whether the criminals were appropriately tried either by the king himself, or by any official of the state. Based on the analogy of later times, it may be presumed that in the Vedic age, the king has functioned as a judge in private disputes. But in the later Vedic period, when the law books like the *Dharmasūtras* and the *Arthaśāstras* were composed (approximately c.400.B.C), different posts or departments were

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104. *ibid.* XII.121
created in the administration. At that time, the judicial system was more or less full-fledged and well developed. Normally it was the ‘sabhā’ the popular village assembly or the rural court of justice; wherein the king tried to arbitrate theory an arbitrate.

Although, the king acted as a judge, but ‘Madhyamasī’ was rather an arbitrator than a judge. On the other hand, it has been suggested that, ‘sabhāpati’ of village of the village assembly may be a judge.

**Judiciary in the Mahābhārata:**

The *Mahābhārata* as well as different works on polity, averse that the king is the head of the judicial system and his prime duty was to punish the wrong doers.

It has already been mentioned that, a king cannot run the administration properly without the help of his assistants. Hence, a king should appoint for secret consultations three qualified ministers. Who are free from five vyasanas (faults), viz., kāyika, vācika, mānasika, karmakṛta and samketa\(^\text{105}\). Before passing any

\(^{105}\) *sanvinīya madakrodhau mānamīṛṣyăn ca nivartāh / nityam pancopadhātūtairmantrayet saha mantribhih // Mbh. XII.83.52*
judgment on any particular case, a king should consult the three ministers referred to above individually and then with the three together; and finally taking the rājaguru (royal preceptor) into confidence he will finalize his policy decision (mantra)\textsuperscript{106}. When the rāja-guru gives his judgment, only the king should announce the same publicly over the country, so that the people all over the kingdom may accept/follow the same verdict.\textsuperscript{107} It is thus held that, justice of the king’s should always be used for the protection and the welfare of the people. A king at the time of consultation should always avoid those persons, who are dwarf, humpbacked of emaciated constitution, lame or blind, an idiot, women and eunuch\textsuperscript{108}. A king should at the proper time hold consultations with persons devoid of all faults of speech and gestures; again he should select for secret consultations such place where there is no grass or grassy bushes and where the surrounding area may be

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
105. sanvinīya madakrodhau mānāmīrsyān ca nivartāh / \\
\hspace{1cm} nityam pancopadhātūtairmantrayet saha mantribhih // Mbh. XII.83.52 \\
106. \textit{ibid.} XII.83.53 \\
107. dharmaṭhakāmajnamupetya pṛccched \\
\hspace{1cm} yukto gurum brāhmanamuttarārtham / \\
\hspace{1cm} nisthā kṛtā tena yadā sahah syāt \\
\hspace{1cm} tan mantramārgan pranayedasaktah // Mbh.XII.83.54 \\
108. \textit{ibid.} XII.83.56
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
clearly seen. When a king justly or righteously rule his people he is appreciated by his subjects and thus earn great fame. 

The king is ordained to be present in his court everyday for settling disputes and delivering judgment. Regarding justice to be delivered to person of different castes, Bhīṣma says that, a king should constitute a council of ministers including qualified persons from different castes, and hold discussion with eight of them. The king should announce the judgment as per the decision of the council of ministers, publicly for all subjects to know.

The king is ordained not to take secret money from his subjects, because such an action may lead to the destruction of the ‘nyāyadharma’ i.e., the administration of justice. The king ought always to give redress to the weak, and who comes crying for justice. A king should always give verdict in consultation with his ministers and royal princes; otherwise, all will go to hell along with the king.

109. *ibid.* XII.83.57
110. *vyavahārena sudhena prajāpālana tat parah / prāpya dharman ca kārtim ca lokānāpnotyobhau śucih // ibid.* XII.85.2
111. *Mbh.* XII.55.7-17
In the Śūkranītisāra of Uṣṭā, it is emphasized that, the most important feature of the judicial administration is the system of jury. Because the king and the chief justice alone cannot initiate the proceeding of a case without being assisted by a panel of three, five or seven jurors\textsuperscript{112}. The jurors should not only be impartial, but also well grounded in the law\textsuperscript{113}.

According to the Yājnavalkya smṛti\textsuperscript{114}, the members of the jury should be a Brāhmana, possessing deep knowledge of the popular usage as well as the sacred law for the proper discharge of the duty and function. The Mahābhārata states that, the juror should be a Brāhmana guru possessing knowledge of the three vargas (dharma-artha and kāma).

In the Manusmṛti it is stated that, the jurors should be from different varnas, otherwise it will be difficult to take a proper decision. In this respect Śūkra also states that, a king should

\textsuperscript{112} lokavedajnadharmajnāh sapta panca trayopi vā /

\textsuperscript{113} Yāj. S. II.2

\textsuperscript{114} ibid. II.1
appoint the sabhyas, i.e., the members of the jury from all varnas.

cf.,

\[ rājnā niyojitavyāste sabhyāh sarvāsu jātisu, \text{ ŚNS.IV.5.17} \]

**Judiciary in early Vedic Period:**

In the Vedic literature, there is no evidence is found in regard to the system of judicial administration. The *Rgveda*\(^{115}\) held that the king certainly was the leader in war and protector of the people at the time of distress. He had to give special protection to the Brāhmans\(^{116}\). He had to discharge the duties of a judge, and employ spies for the preservation of peace and order in the kingdom\(^{117}\). Obviously, the king appointed the spy due either to the frequent occurrences of crimes or to the insecurity of the royal power.

The king should adjudicate not only the private disputes and administer the criminal, but also other ancillary disputes, such

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115. *Rg.* III.43.5
116. *ibid.* IV.50.9
117. *ibid.* I.25.13;IV.4.3;VI.67.5
as regarding ownership of landed property of disputes over irrigations, survey of fields etc., which are included in the system of social justice. The ‘sabhā’ was the rural court of justice, wherein the king acted as a judge\textsuperscript{118}.

In Vedic literature, two kinds of law and procedure are mentioned. There was some concept of a court of justice, which was simple and very archaic. On the other hand, there is no mention of a separate body, called ‘the court’; the king himself was the court both of the criminal and the appellate jurisdiction. It is believed that, the king gave only a proper decision, i.e., king’s decision is considered the best decision for all. In this respect, sage Nārada wonders “How an appeal was possible to the city court against the village court decision, and how a litigant could appeal to the king against the decree of the city court. But whenever a king properly decides the case, there is no appeal against his decision.”\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{118} A.A.Macdonall, \textit{Vedic Index}. Vol.2.p.213.

\textsuperscript{119} grāme drṣṭah pure yāti pure drṣṭastu rājani /

All decisions taken by the king should be according to the prescription of the law (*dharma*). Otherwise he would be guilty.

According to Kautilya ¹²⁰, a king should spent a minimum two hours every day for adjudication, i.e., the settlement of disputes or appeal there on. He should again personally verify, directly or indirectly, the functioning of his courts and properly observe the working of persons, appointed in the courts¹²¹. Although, he could entertain any suit, but in actual practice he should look into only the important cases from the court. If a king finds no time to attend, he should delegate the work to the chief justice or to some royal officers. Another name of the chief justice is “Prādvivāka”, who is the master of sacred and the customary law.

**Concept of Dharma, Danda and Vyavahāra :**

It has already been mentioned that, the *Mahābhārata* denotes *dharma*, *danda* and *vyavahāra* by the term of ‘Justice’.

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¹²⁰. *ibid.* I.16

¹²¹. *pratyaksāśca paroksāśca sarvādhikaraneśvatha /

*pratybhārataśārdūla nityam caivānvaveksanam // Mbh. XII.59.68*
'Justice’ is an aspect of ‘dharma’ which is the pivot upon which the existence of the state as well as the people depend. Again, protection was impossible without the exercise of danda. Danda implied all other aspects of the polity and is identified with the supreme authority, i.e., the king himself.

About ‘danda’, Arjuna observed that, “Everything is ruled by the rod of chastisement”. This is embodiment of righteousness (dharma) itself. Everyone desists from sin for fear of danda from king, God or society. This is the natural course (sāmsiddhika) of the world where everything rests on the use of restraint…Indra’s sin (murder of Vṛtra) makes him ‘the great one’(Mahendra). The more a deity is harmful the more he gets adoration from people. Animals live upon animals and the stronger upon weaker (This is so because) all things, mobile or immobile, are food for ‘life’(Prāna)\textsuperscript{122}. This is how Arjuna argued against the decision of Yudhisthira to renounce under the ‘false notion’ of sin. In the Mahābhārata, it is indicated that, the term ‘danda’ is used in the sense of punishment.

\textsuperscript{122.} Mbh. XII.15.2-22 and Mishra, K. C. ‘Tribes in the Mahābhārata’ a socio-cultural study pp.273-74
According to the wise\textsuperscript{123}, the whole world depends upon \textit{danda} (punishment), because, only \textit{danda} can destroy all wrong doers. When a king righteously apply this \textit{danda} then, no sin, no fraud as well as selfishness will survive in the world.

In Vedic literature, the general law was recognized under the name \textit{ṛta} \textsuperscript{124}. Varna was the great upholder of this physical and moral law. He acted both as a king and a judge among Vedic deities.

On the other hand, the \textit{Mahābhārata} holds as pointed out by Mishra. K.C that, the concept of ‘\textit{danda}’ is inspired by three basic needs, viz., (i) prosperity of men by the fulfillment of moral and higher ideals (\textit{dharma}), (ii) preservation of social order (\textit{vyavahāra}) and (iii) a check upon undesirable instincts which are considered natural in man. Though, the terms ‘\textit{dharma}’ and ‘\textit{danda}’ are indicative of the idea of ‘law’, some later writers on jurisprudence used to term it as ‘\textit{vyavahāra}’ only. In the \textit{Mahābhārata}\textsuperscript{125}.

\textsuperscript{123}  \textit{dande sthitāh prajāh sarvāh bhayam dande vidurbudāh’ }\textit{Mbh. XII.15.43}
\textsuperscript{124}  Macdonell., \textit{History of Sanskrit literature}.p.55
\textsuperscript{125}  \textit{Mbh. XII.121} and vide K.C.Mishra, ‘\textit{Tribes in the Mahābhārata’},p.275
‘Vyavahāra’ is broadly illustrated by the grandsire Bhīsma. He says that ‘danda’ (chastisement) everything depends. Danda is righteousness itself, and it is sometimes called Vyavahāra. Danda illustrates a code of ‘conduct’ and hence is called Vyavahāra…¹²⁶. This Vyavahāra is manifold. The ‘law’ originally was universal and eternal. Later on, however, it is used for preservation of social order and a code (of conduct) was framed to solve the disputes of ownership (bhartṛ pratyaya), which is characterized by belief in either of two litigant parties, as interpreted by P.C.Roy. “Vedic code of conduct is based on the faith in the words of the Vedas. Thus, the chastisement (danda) inflicted on the basis of evidence is legal and is sacred (vyavahārātmaka=dharma) and also it is essentially related with the king. The vyavahāra (conduct, law or legal procedure) is incorporated in the Vedas and what comes of the Vedas is dharma itself”.¹²⁷

From the discussion above, it is seen that, dharma, danda and vyavahāra mean one and the same thing equally. These are

¹²⁶. vigatah avahārah dharmasya yena sah vyavahārah’ its derived by Kātyāyana as, ‘vi+ ava +hāra’. Mbh. XII.121.8
rooted in the Veda and they together constitute the salvation (right path) for mankind.

Out of this, there occurred some other necessary elements for the administration of justice. These are viz., court, judges (*madhyastha*) and the witness etc.

**Court:**

Since early times, it is found that, the ‘court’ is the most powerful and the majestic branch or institution for the performance of the administration of justice. All types of civil and criminal laws are to be administered in the courts. Generally, the court is held in the morning, which is constituted of six judges, who are specialists in law and there *amātyas* besides.

A king conducts both the civil and criminal functions in the court, while, the disputes are solved by the local bodies, like the *kula, śrenī* and *pu ga* etc.\(^{128}\) The ‘Sabhā’ or the popular village assembly was the same as the judicial assembly or court of justice.

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\(^{128}\) *ibid.* p.277
headed by the king, but when a king sits for the hearing of a case, it was called ‘dharmāsana or nyāyāsana’ (seat of righteousness). cf.,

dharmāsana saniyukto dharmamūle narasabha,

Mbh. XII.85.16

This was applied to law courts in later literature.\textsuperscript{129}

\textbf{Judes:}

The \textit{purohita} or family priest was an important part in the family life. He was also a local advisor of the king, though the final judgment is depended on the discretion of the monarch himself. In the \textit{Mahābhārata}, it is stated that, law is dependent on Brāhmaṇa. The law court is known as the ‘chamber of priest’ (\textit{purohita sansad}) and king is an executor of his ruling.\textsuperscript{130} The term ‘judge’ is known as ‘\textit{prādvivāka}’ or ‘chief justice’ in the list of the king’s staff\textsuperscript{131}.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{129} cf.,Sakuntala,V.3,VI.7; \textit{Uttara Rāmacarita}, i.7
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{Mbh.} XII.259
\textsuperscript{131} \textit{ibid.} XII 121.46
\end{flushright}
On the other hand, the term ‘pradvivāka’ is found in older Vedic texts\(^{132}\) and Sutra literature as ‘praśnavivāka’ or ‘pratipraśna’ which is called an ‘arbitrator’ in the purusamedha sacrifice. The literary meaning of this term is “one who puts questionnaire and analyzes (the evidence)”. It is evident from the phrase ‘grāmya –vādin’,\(^{133}\) meaning a village judge. This shows that in Vedic times every village has its own judge.

Different writers on polity say that, the term ‘judge’ is used in the sense of mediator i.e., madhyama-śī, (according to prof. Roth and Zimmer), (madhyama-sivam in Jain. Brāhmaṇa), but prof. Lanman says that this term implies ‘an adversary’ or ‘preventer’. On the other hand, Whitney suggests that it means ‘mid-most man’ or ‘chief’. In the later Samhitās, the term ‘madhyama-stha’ or ‘madhyamīstha’, is accepted as the chief of his followers\(^{134}\). In the Western Indian, the ‘madhyastha’ came to mean “a mediator”.

\(^{132}\) Yajurveda. VS., 30-10; Tai.Br. 3.4.61
\(^{133}\) TS.II.3.1.3 and Vedic Index, I.p.248.opcit.
Witness:

A ‘witness’ or ‘sāksī’ is very essential element for making an ultimate judgement in a case. According to the grandsire Bhīṣma\textsuperscript{135}, the judgment must be dispensed with on the evidence of witness. But, any of the litigant party has no witness or is helpless then the king should deliver judgment on his best consideration.

The term ‘sāksī’ is differently called by different authorities as, ‘jnātṛ’ and ‘a surety’\textsuperscript{136}. The Manusmrti\textsuperscript{137}, broadly discussed the term ‘sāksī’ and its importance in conducting a case on whose evidence a king should take decision. Both of the litigant party, who makes quarrel on the matter of the boundary line of the villages, firstly, king’s judgment depends on proper verification boundary marks or flow of water. If he cannot take a proper decision from such evidences then he should call witness(s) for taking a right decision.

\textsuperscript{135} . tataḥ sāksibalam sādhu dvādhavaḍakṛtam bhavet / asāksī kamanātham vā parīksyam tad viśesatam //
\textit{Mbh.XII.85.19}

\textsuperscript{136} . \textit{Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institution}.p.461

\textsuperscript{137} . \textit{MS.VIII.254-56}
However, a king should careful in selecting witness(s). In the Udyoga parva of the Mahābhārata, Vidura gives a list of seven professions who are unfit for witness in a law court. There are “seafarers (traders), those who might have been convicted (for theft) at any time, cheats or bird catchers, physicians, (intimate) friends and foes of the litigants and the mimes are, carefully, to be avoided”\(^{138}\).

The great grammarian Pāṇinī holds that, the term dharma indicates custom or usage and religious merit\(^{139}\). According to him, a ‘judge’ is a dharmapati, a plaintiff is Parivādi, or Parivādaka, a witness is Sāksi and an arbiter as stheya\(^{140}\). A crime was called ‘Sāhasikya’. Pāṇinī, like Manu, speaks of crimes, such as- theft, robbery, way laying, murder, infanticide, destroying an embryo, and killing a Brāhmaṇa. Likewise he speaks of punishment such as, fines, beating with clubs, mutilation of limbs and death\(^{141}\).

\(^{138}\) Mbh.V.36.37

\(^{139}\) Pāṇinī.VI.4.41

\(^{140}\) ibid.1.3.23; III.2.142&146; IV 1.84 and V.2.91

\(^{141}\) ibid.V.1.65-6;4.2; VI.1.64 and MS.8.310
Crime and Punishment:-

Crime cannot be controlled without inflicting punishment. When a king inflicts different types of punishment against varied crimes, that is called justice. The Mahābhārata, denotes that, a king should impart suitable punishment according to the type of crime. cf.,

*aparādhānurūpam ca dandam pāpesu dhārayet,*

*Mbh. XII.85.20*

In the *Mahābhārata*¹⁴² sage Vyāsa gives a list of crimes which can be convicted by atonement. According to him, crimes are classified as minor and major. ‘Minor crimes’ are such as a Brahmacārī getting up from the bed after the rising of the Sun or goes to bed while the Sun is yet settling; who has a rotten nail or keeping his teeth unclean, whose younger brother weds first before weds his elder weds etc. The ‘major crimes’ are the slaying of *dvija*, destroying the villages as well as burning other’s houses, slaying the animals and women, disrespect shown to one’s of preceptor, making of unworthy gift etc.

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¹⁴² *Mbh. XII.34.3-8*
In Early Brāhmana literature, it is stated that, the ‘major crimes’ are known as criminal case, which include treachery or deception, which is punishable with death sentence\textsuperscript{143}.

Again the Mahābhārata further states that, crimes such as, slaying of an embryo (bhrūna), the slaying of a man (vīra), as well as the slaying of a Brāhmana should met with similar punishment. There was not a separate judge for thieves. Because, the stealing act was considered a great sin. In case of thefts which were detected and proved, the punishment was death; and if stolen things were to be returned, it was binding on the thieves to part with the same\textsuperscript{144} under the order of the king. Such views are found in some of the Upanisadic literature also.

The Mahābhārata also prescribes similar punishment to those criminals as mentioned above, i.e., they should be punishable with death sentence. cf.,

\begin{quote}
\textit{rājno badham cikīrsed yastasya citro vadho bhavet} / \\
\textit{ādīpakasya stenasya varnasamkarīkasya ca} //
\end{quote}

\textit{Mbh. XII.85.22}

\textsuperscript{143}. \textit{Pancaviṃsa Brahmana}. 14.6.8

\textsuperscript{144}. \textit{Vedic Index}. I.p.392
The ‘minor crimes’ called civil cases including family quarrel, over the division of property, transfer of cattle, acquisition and sale of land, money landing (ṛna), labour questions etc 145.

The *Mahābhārata* 146 seems to prescribe punishment basing on cast (varna) when Arjuna states that a brāhmaṇa should be punished by publicly abusing him; likewise a ksatriya should be punished by pay-cuts, i.e., by providing him so much food provision as would be suffice for the support of his life, hand to mouth; similarly a Vaiśya should be punished by imposing times as well as by forfeitures of property. However, a Śūdra should be left free on the condition that he should always be hospitable to all.

On the other hand the *Mahābhārata* again states that, a king should appropriately punish the wrong doers according to the gravity of only crime. However, incase of the rich, the king should impose fines and forfeit his property, punish the poor by

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145. *Vedic Index.*I.p.392
146. vācādānāṃ brāhmaṇānāṃ ksatriyānāṃ bhujārpanam /
dānādānāḥ smṛtā vaiśyā nirdandāh śūdra ucyate // *Mbh.* XII.15.9
imprisonment, by beating the grave criminals. A wise person should be punished by sweet words and by making properties for his comfortable living 147.

Although, the punishment is given by the king as per gravity of the crime, but when a Brāhmaṇa taking arms in the battle field and try to attack king himself, he was looked upon the highest sinner and was liable to be killed 148 by the king then and there. In such cases the seen of Brahmahatya (i.e., sin arising out of killing a brāhmaṇa) does not affect the king, because such an action is considered justified.

In the Śūkranītisāra 149, it is said that, a king should inflict punishment to wrong doers, who over step the right path; however the king should take such steps so that they may correct themselves and take the right path. If a king does not inflict punishment to offenders, he should take fasting for a day and night 150. If the royal priest impart necessary instruction to the king

147. ibid. XII.85.20-21
148. pragrhyā śastramatāntamapi vedāntagam rane // jighāntam jighāntiyānna tena brahmahā bhavet // Mbh. XII.34.17
149. ŚNS. IV.106
150. Mbh. XII.36.17
then he (priest) should go for fast for three nights. The king should be impartial the delivering punishment when a royal officer or the preceptors also do unrighteous deeds, and they should be liable to harsh punishment\textsuperscript{151}, and without expiation of their crimes, the king should not talk with them.

Besides the sage Vyāsa held that, a king should slay a person, who is hostile to established religion i.e., ‘\textit{dharmadrohinam}’\textsuperscript{152}, in the same way as a furious demon was slain by the gods. In the Āpaddharma section\textsuperscript{153} of the \textit{Mahābhārata} severe punishment is recommended for crimes like raping of the wife of the preceptor etc. (\textit{gurutpalamadhisthāya}).

From the above discussion, it is seen that, both expiation (\textit{prāyacchitta}) and punishment (\textit{danda}) were strictly enforced against crime in the Vedic as well as early epic period. No one can get relief from punishment and expiation. What is most significant was the fact the even the king himself may not be free from

\textsuperscript{151} \textit{ibid. XII.165.40}
\textsuperscript{152} \textit{dharmavyucchittimicchanto yea’adharmasya pravartakāh / hantavyāste durātmāno devairdāityā ivolbanāḥ} // \textit{Mbh. XII.33.30}
\textsuperscript{153} \textit{ibid. XII.165.50 and 67.}
expiation, if he does not righteously deliver the judgment in a criminal case. In such cases he becomes ill-famed in this world and goes to hell after death.

IV. Department of Military Administration:

The first and foremost concern of the military administration is the ‘armed-forces’, consisting of a large number of personal and troops of strong army under the direct charge of the king or the Yuvarāja. The army has been used for both offence as well as defense purposes. Hence great importance is given on this department.

According to ancient Indian political thinkers, ‘Danda’ or ‘Bala’ constituted an important elements of the seven limbed state. Hence, in ancient India great important was given to the organization and maintenance of royal forces, the army, which is reflected in modern time also.

The armed force is classified as viz., four-fold, six-fold, eight-fold etc. The four-fold armed forces were under the immediate charge of aśvādhyakṣa, hastyadhyakṣa, rathādhyakṣa, pattyādhyakṣa etc. The Āyudhāgārika or Āyudhagārādhyakṣa was
the in charge of the magazine (i.e., the arms-depot/the store-house of the arms).\textsuperscript{154}.

\textbf{The Army and its division:}

In ancient India army was consisted of different categories. In Vedic times army consisted of two types, viz., foot-soldiers \textit{(patti)} and car-warriors \textit{(rathin)}. In course of time, the army was extended into four-fold divisions, such as, the \textit{elephantry}, \textit{cavalry}, \textit{chariot} divisions and \textit{infantry}.

These four divisions together constituted of the ‘\textit{caturangabala}’ (literally, the force consisting of four types of fighting units)\textsuperscript{155}.

According to Kautilya, each of these units is placed in the charge of an \textit{adhyaksa}, viz., \textit{hastyadhyaksa} (in charge of elephantry), \textit{aśvādhyaksa} (in charge of cavalry), \textit{rathādhyaksa} (in charge of chariots) and \textit{pattyādhyaksa} (in charge of the infantry). Each \textit{adhyaksa} was responsible for all round maintenance of the

\textsuperscript{154} vide. Chaudhary, R.K., ‘Kautilyas Political Ideas and Institutions’. p.146
\textsuperscript{155} Mbh. I.69.4; ibid. IV.68.13; ibid. V.5.17; Aś. II.33.9; ŚNS.2.149; the Jātaka, tr. by Cowell. II.66.153; III.6.298
unit in his charge including recruitment, special rules in detail were laid for the hastyadhyaksa and asvādhyaksa for the care and training of the respective units.

The Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{156} denotes that, the army is two types, viz., ‘prakata’ and ‘gupta’. The ‘prakata’ army consisted of eight limbs, viz., elephants, cavalry, chariots, infantry, load-carriers (visti), ships (naukā-rathi), spies (cāra) and local guildes (deśika). While the ‘gupta’ army consisted of many limbs.

In the Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{157} the grandsire Bhīṣma says that, the ‘bala’ (army) has two divisions, viz., Prākrta and Āhārya. Four limbs viz., race, great wealth, ministers and knowledge are included in ‘prākrtabala’, while eight limbs like, hasti, aśva, rathāh, patti, nāva, visti, deśikā and āvikā, are included in ‘Āhāryabala’.

The Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{158} again enumerates six limbs of an army; those are namely, elephants, cavalry, chariots, infantry, kosa and rich vaiśya (merchant).

\textsuperscript{156} Mbh. XII.59.40-41
\textsuperscript{157} ibid. XII.121.44
\textsuperscript{158} ibid. XII.103.38
Manu also says that\textsuperscript{159}, the army consisted of six-fold units, viz., Ratha (chariots), Hasti (elephants), Aśva (horse), Nausenā (admiralty), Patti (infantry) and Bhārabahakādī.

The \textit{Kāmandakiyanītisāra}\textsuperscript{160} says that, the army is divided into six-fold divisions, viz., infantry, cavalry, chariots, elephants, mantra (line of policy) and kosa (treasury).

From the above discussion on the different types of army, it appears that, the four-fold divisions of army become a convention as a common feature in ancient Indian literature.

Besides the four-fold divisions of army, the \textit{Mahābhārata}\textsuperscript{161} refers again to another tradition of six-fold (\textit{sadanga}) army, the six-divisions are viz., Maula (the hereditary/standing army), Bhṛtaka (paid or mercenary soldiers), Šrenī (defense core of the guilds), Mitra (army of ally nations), Amitra (army of a subjugated king), and Ātavika (bands of fierce jungle tribe).

\textsuperscript{159} MS.VII.185
\textsuperscript{160} KNS. 18.24
\textsuperscript{161} Mbh. II.5.53
In the Āśramavāsikaparva\textsuperscript{162} of the Mahābhārata, these balas are known differently such as, Sainika-bala, Dhana-bala, Mitra-bala, Aranya-bala, Bhṛtya-bala and Śrenī-bala. Among these six, Mitra-bala and Dhana-bala are considered superior. The same view is found in different works on state-craft, such as, the Rāmāyana\textsuperscript{163}, the Arthaśāstra\textsuperscript{164}, the Kāmandakīyanītisāra\textsuperscript{165}, the Mānasollāsa\textsuperscript{166} as well as some inscriptions of early medieval period (6\textsuperscript{th} cen-11\textsuperscript{th} cen).

In the Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{167}, wise Vidura states that, a man feels secure from the five types of bala (power) viz., (i) Bāhu-bala (the first and lowest kinds of physical and military strength), (ii) Amātya-bala (strength of assistants or aides), (iii) Dhana-bala (economic strength), (iv) Abhijāta-bala (hereditary or birth in a great powerful family), (v) Prajnā-bala (the highest strength of wits and wisdom).

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{162} \textit{ibid.} XV.7.7-9
\item \textsuperscript{163} Rāmā. Lankā kānda.17.24
\item \textsuperscript{164} Aś. IX.2
\item \textsuperscript{165} KNS. XIX.3
\item \textsuperscript{166} Mānasollāsa. I.p.79. śl,.557-61
\item \textsuperscript{167} Mbh. V.37.52-55
\end{itemize}
The *Arthaśāstra* (9.2.14) states that, Maula-*bala* is raised from families of hereditary soldiers loyal to the ruling dynasty. They are said to be inspired by the same feelings and interests as the king himself (*tadbhāvabhāvin*), hence most dependable of all. Bhṛta-*bala* (mercenaries) are also raised from the native of the land and hence are obedient to the king and thus dependable. But this force is not a standing force. They are quickly recruited (*ksiprotthāyim*) for specific/p particular occasion and dissolved. They are regards as inferior to the Maula, but superior to the guild levies (*śrenībala*).

From the above discussion it is clear that, for the well protection of a state, a king should appoint military forces in different branches. The great sage Śūkra\textsuperscript{168} compares the army and the state with the mind of a man. Because, without feelings a man cannot do any task; likewise, without an army a state cannot stand properly. Hence, Śūkra holds that, without an army, there is neither kingdom nor wealth and power. cf.,

\begin{quote}
*sainyādvina-naiva rājyam-na dhanam-na parākramah*,
\end{quote}

\textit{ŚNS. 4.66}

\textsuperscript{168. ŚNS. I.II.122-4}
Let us now hold a discussion on the various types of armed-forces to a certain detail.

**Infantry:**

Since early Vedic times Infantry called Patti formed the main fighting force. The Patti fought along with the car-warriors. In the *Mahābhārata*, it is stated that, ‘an army, wherein the infantry is numerically strong, is always victorious’\(^{169}\). The same statement is found in the *Agnipurāṇa*\(^{170}\) also.

On the other hand, Kautilya\(^{171}\) gives more importance to elephants and even to horses than to foot-soldiers. Kautilya simply opines that, the actual duty of the infantry is to carry weapons to all-places and at all times. cf.,

\[ \text{sarva-deśakāla-śastra-vahanam vyāyamaśca, iti.} \]

The *Nītiprakāśikā*\(^{172}\) stated that, the actual task of the foot-men is, “to protect the granaries, arsenals and treasuries, and to make entrenchments for the army. They have no capacity of horses,

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169. *padātibahulā senā dhrdā bhavatī bhārata*. *Mbh.* XII.100.24  
170. *Ag.* 288.7  
171. *Aś.* X.4  
172. *NP.* VI.57
elephants and chariots to defend against of enemy, when the
enemy was attacking at the gates of a fort, then only foot-men
were standing on the walls, in the towers, or behind the parapets,
and throw their weapons and missiles on the besiegers.

Though, the ‘bow’ was the principal weapon of the
infantry, they used both the ‘sword’ and ‘javelin’ also. The foot-
soldiers could fight in the presence of their king. The senāpatī and
the chief commanders were to stand in the midst of the battle.
While they were killed or severely injured by the enemy, the foot-
soldiers used to give up the fight and move from the battle field.
Otherwise they could again fight by some other senior
commander through persuasion and inspiration 173.

In the Mahābhārata174 the grandsire Bhīṣma describes the
best ground for the ‘infantry or foot-soldiers’ to work are “a
region, which is full of inaccessible spots and which is overgrown
with large trees and cane bushes, as also hilly or woody regions.”

173. Sensarma,P. ‘Kuruksetra war, a military study’.p.115
174. bahudurgā mahākaksā venuvetrasamākulā /
        padātinān ksamā bhūmih parvatopanāni ca //
        Mbh. XII.100.23
As regards the foot-soldiers, Kautilya opines that, they were capable of fighting in all countries and all types of enemies in all seasons. They can organize some of the ‘vyūhas’ with various arms and weapons. The foot-soldiers were employed to protect the flanks and rear of each superior commander and carriage, viz., chariots and elephants. In the war of Kuruksetra large number of foot-soldiers were employed. Although, the ‘foot-soldiers’ were considered to strong force, in the war of Kuruksetra, it is seen that, they could not prosper favourably than other armies. Therefore, thousands of foot-soldiers were killed by one charioteer.

Cavalry:

Cavalry constitutes another very important division of the armed forces. However, it is very difficult to determine the time when cavalry came to be employed as an armed-force of war in India.

Horse riding is an old practice and was known as early.

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175. VS. XXX.13; here mentioned ‘Aśva-sāda’ or ‘Horse-rider’
as in the early Vedic Period. But there is no convincing evidence to determine since when horse came to be used in war as a division of the fighting force. In the epic period, it is recognized as a separate unit of the arm, but it has no real value as it was wholly unorganized.

According to Hopkins, ‘Cavalry’ generally grouped with the ‘hastisādinah’ or elephant-riders. It is found in ancient India that, in the organization of army, ‘cavalry’ never came to occupy the front rank. It was the third in importance, in the battle of Kuruksetra\textsuperscript{176}. Sometimes as a chief warrior like Arjuna and Duryodhana fought from horse back\textsuperscript{177} on the eighteenth day of the war. Basically, it was used to occupy the front wings or the extremities of the wings.

**Duty of Cavalry:**

The chief duty of cavalry was to protect of the flanks and to chase the enemy after being disorganized by the chariots.

\textsuperscript{176} Mbh. XII.59.41
\textsuperscript{177} ibid. IX.27.32½ and 35½.
Kautilya in his *Arthaśāstra* (10.4.13) assigns some specific duties to the cavalry. He states, “Investigation of the ground, the halting place and forests, securing land without unevenness, water, ford, wind and Sun’s rays, destruction of supplies and reserve or their protection, cleansing and steadying the army, extension of raids, repelling as with arms, making the first attack, penetration, breaking through, comforting, capturing, setting free, causing a change in the path of pursuit, carrying off the treasury of the prince, assault on the rear and tips, pursuit of the weak, accompanying, and the work of rallying, these are the function of cavalry”.

Kautilya (10.6) further says that, Vyūha can be formed only with the horses.

In the *Mahābhārata* we frequently come across terms like Pīthaka\(^{178}\), Pīthamarda\(^{179}\), Khalīna\(^{180}\), Aśvīstra, Paristoma, Rānkava\(^{181}\) etc. These terms seem to imply some sort of coverings or saddles on horse’s back.

178. *ibid.* I.84.21
179. *ibid.* IV.21.33
180. *ibid.* VIII.54.59ff
181. *ibid.* VIII.96.74
Archaeological and other cognate evidence show that the horse-
riders in ancient India used some sort of saddles on the back of
their horse. AlBeruni (11th cen A.D) observed that the Indians did
not use saddle when riding their horses, and even if they did ever
use it, ‘they mount the horse from the right side’(sachau,i.p.181). Har-
monizing both the opposite views. Hopkins concludes with the
supposition “that though the use of the saddle was well –known in
the country, the mass of the people rode their horses without
one”(The Art of War in Ancient India.pp.39-40).

Horses were occasionally provided by a kind of armour. The Mānasollāsa\textsuperscript{182} speaks of horses, ‘well protected by means of
body armour’. The Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{183} also give similar view. The
weapons of the cavalry were, spears (śakti), lances (prāsa), and
short swords (ṛṣṭi)\textsuperscript{184}. In the Rāmāyana, besides the above, they
are assigned battle-axes (paraśvadha), maces (gadā) and hammers
(mudgara)\textsuperscript{185}.

\textsuperscript{182} Mānasollāsa.p.135,V.1187
\textsuperscript{183} ‘gātra-trāna suraksitaiḥ aśvaiḥ’ Mbh.X.24.63-64
\textsuperscript{184} ibid.VIII.57.11.19 and ibid.IX.165.21
\textsuperscript{185} Rāmā. Lankā Kānda.52.11
The Chariot:

Since the Vedic period, the chariots were used as an important element in warfare or military department\textsuperscript{186}. According to the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, chariot is the main power of the army and the most important arm. It was occupied by an officer, i.e., the senāpati and the other senior commanders of various ranks, who could fight from the chariots.

Each chariot was drawn by four-horses and two men to protect the wheels of the chariots, who were called the ‘cakraraksaka’. The driver of the chariot is called ‘sārathi’.

The chariots were decorated beautifully by different ensign and dhvajas (flags), which distinguished each warrior. The symbols of the dhvaja were either animals, birds, trees or flowers. Both sides of the chariots were open and the back along being completely covered.

The Mahābhārata holds that, various types of chariots were used in the war of Kuruksutra, e.g.,

\textsuperscript{186} Rg. I.20.3; III.15.5; IV.10 and AV.VI25
Arjuna and Karna had used soundless chariots.

Kautilya said that, for gaining peace and warlike purpose, different types of chariots were used. These are viz., the ‘samgrāmika’ (war-chariots), the ‘parpurābhiyānika’ (chariots used in assaulting the enemies power) and the ‘vainayika’ (training chariots).

The Mahābhārata states that a chariot usually carried many weapons of all types—both offensive and defensive. The chariots are generally kept in the centre of the front line or rank. Duty of the charioteers were to guiding and controlling the arms of its own army and prevented the car-warriors from direct attack. On the other hand, the charioteer should obey the warrior’s order.

In the Vedic period it is found that, the chariots were usually small-sized, two-wheeled vehicles. But in the Post-Vedic period, both the size and weight of the chariot developed. There are reference to four-wheeled and even eight-wheeled cars red in the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata.

187. *Mbh.* IX.112.48
188. *Chā. Up.* IV.16.5 and *Kausitaki Up.* I.4
189. ‘astacakrasamāyuḥto mahārathaḥ’. *Rāmā*. Lankā.44.27 and *Mbh.* IX.1 65.38;173.13
In the Udyogaparva of the *Mahābhārata*\(^{190}\) it is mentioned that, “all the cars were drawn by four horses (*catureuyj*) and equipped with arrows and spears, and a hundred bows apiece; for each car were two pole-horses, directed by one driver (*dhuryayor hayayor ekah... rathī*) and two outside horses fastened to the axle-end (*pārsni*) and driven by one driver apiece (*pārsnisārathī*)”.

The *Mahābhārata* again states that, the chariots were suitable on a plain, even ground; they could not be run in hilly tracts or morasses ,and it will be difficult in the rainy season\(^{191}\). Kautilya and some other ancient works on polity also acknowledge similar views\(^{192}\).

**The Elephantry:**

The ‘elephant’ is mentioned in several places of the Veda; but there is no reference to the training of the elephant, nor their use in war\(^{193}\).

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190. *Mbh. V.155.13ff* and Chakravarti, P.C. *‘The art of war in ancient India’*. p.29
191. *‘apankā gartarahitā rathabhūmiḥ praśasyate’. Mbh.XII.100.22*
192. *Aś.10.4;Ag.242.29-30;Yuktikalpataru. p.7.V.45*
193. Sensarma,P. *‘Kuruksetra war , a military study’* p.107
The Vedic army consists of two elements only, viz., the foot-soldiers and the chariots. In the Jātakas and the epics, the elephant occupies an honourable rank in the army. On the other hand, in the battle of Kuruksetra, many high class warriors like, Yudhisthira, Duryodhana, Bhagadatta etc. used different animals. The Mahābhārata describes different types of animals employed in war.

The elephant was used as a special arm of the Indian army. It was decorated by different plates, ornaments and belts. The war elephant used to bear special flag. Elephant was used an excellent transport also. According to the Agni Purāṇa\textsuperscript{194}, one elephant use to carry six warriors and many weapons at a time. Among the six warriors, two with maces on its neck, two archers on its back and two with sword behind them.

Three horsemen can defend one marching elephant. Duty of the elephantry was very high. They marched in front of the army clearing the way of trees and shrubs.

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\textsuperscript{194} Ag. 242.23
Protected the flanks of the army, helped the army to ford rivers, helped to fight in front, destroy the enemy, phalanx, routed the enemy’s army, rallied the soldiers of their side and safeguarded the treasure.\(^{195}\)

In the *Arthaśāstra*\(^{196}\), Kautilya states that, in a war seven types of trained elephants are used, viz., *upasthāna, samvartana, samyāna, vadhāvadha, hastiyuddha, nāgarāyana* and *sāmgrāmika*.

In the *Mahābhārata*\(^{197}\), it is stated that, the elephantry (*gajārohāh* or *hastisādinah*) fought with different short arms and weapons, such as, Knives, Daggers, post of oil, stones and other weapons and missiles.

**The Admiralty (Nausenā) :**

The term ‘nausenā’ or the ‘admiralty’ is also one of the most important elements of the army. The *Mahābhārata*\(^{198}\) also

\(^{195}\) ibid. 242.23

\(^{196}\) Aś. II.32.6

\(^{197}\) *Mbh.* IV.65.6 and *ibid.* VI.20.7; *ibid.* VII.26.19ff

\(^{198}\) *rathā nāgā hayāścaiva pādātāścaiva pāṇḍava / vistirnāvaścāraścaiva deśikā iti cāstaman // Mbh.* XII.59.41
holds the same view when it acknowledges ‘nāva’ as one of the important eight-fold parts of the army.

In the Sabhā Parva of the Mahābhārata it is stated that, Sahadeva the fifth pāndava, crossed different seas with the help of the ‘boat’(nāva) and brought many islands under his sway after destroying the mlecchas and other mixed tribes inhabiting those island 199.

On the other hand in the Rgveda 200, we have the term ‘Plava’ meaning a vessel used to cross water, viz., rivers, sea, lakes and such others. This shows that boats were used in the Vedic time. There is one superintendent for taking taxes from those, who is crossing a river by (their) own boats 201. According to Kautilya this superintendent is known as ‘Navādhyaksa’ 202.

The Mānavadharmasāstra stressed that; boats should be used for naval warfare 203(a).

199. ibid. II.31.7.9 and 12
200. Rg. I.17.1
201. Aś. II.28.1
202. ibid. II.28.5 and 7
203(a). MS.VII.192
The same authority also refers to *nau-vyavahāra-jīvin*; which may imply both the Kaibarttas who earn their livelihood by using boats as well as the merchants and the boat soldiers.  

**Visti:**

The term ‘visti’ implies ‘unpaid labour’. Visti forms another important part of the army. In the *Mahābhārata* it is stated that, in the war of the Kuruksetra, both the Kauravas and the Pāndavas brought different transports, cars, vehicles, the treasury, weapons, doctors, nurses along with some weak and powerless army as labours or porters, who gave free labour; they were fed but were paid no wages. On the other hand, skilled and experienced workers were paid salaries.

The *Mahābhārata* again elaborates that, all kinds of weapons, plenty of water, food and fodder, fire, honey, butter etc. and many essentials are found in the army camps. For maintaining these articles many workers were necessary.

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203(b). *ibid.* X.34

204. *Mbh.* V.151.58-59
The main duty ‘visti’ are to supplying clothes and arms to those, who had already lost them.

Dešika:

The term ‘dešika’ in modern sense implies ‘guides’ and ‘scouts’. The principal duty of the guilds and scouts to considered to provide guidelines for army, through, which the warriors could set out and attack the enemy. Again, they could help and bring the injured soldiers from one place to another for their proper treatment.

Cāra:

The term ‘cāra’ means ‘spy’, the most essential element in the military department. The ‘spy’ or ‘cāra’ is appointed by the king for collecting information, secretly both internal and external matters. Hence, different works on polity recognized that, spies were directly connected with the king and reported all secrets of different groups of his state.

205. ibid. XII.59.129
206. Aś. I.12.9; MS.VII.154 and 9.256; MP.222.145; Visnu.P.3.35
The king is called ‘cāra-caksu’, because the comes to know of the happenings in the kingdom through the eyes of the spies.

Generally, spies are employed for both civil and military purpose. Hence the grandsire Bhīṣma, said that, a king should appoint spies in all places of a state for searching the enemy spies\textsuperscript{207}. Again, different parvans of the Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{208}, refers that, the ‘spy’ is the eyes of the king, a king should learn all acts, intensions of his foes, friends and neutrals.

The same view is expressed by Kautilya and Kāmandaka\textsuperscript{209}.

**The structure of the Army:**

The *Mahābhārata* presents before us a very beautiful picture of the structure of army. The kings and the emperors maintained generally vast armies not only for defense of the realm but also for enhancing his prowess both territorially and prosperity. For the convenience of management and movement in battle the vast army is divided into different units, big or small.

\textsuperscript{207} *Mbh.* XII.69.9-12
\textsuperscript{208} *ibid.* I.139.76; *ibid.* V.33.34
\textsuperscript{209} *Aś.* I.12.6; *KNS.*13.31
Thus in the Udyoga Parva of the Mahābhārata we find such units, as- Patti, Senāmukha, Gulma, Ganavāhini, Pṛṭanā, Camu, Ānikini and Aksauhinī.

Fifty-five foot-soldiers constitutes a Patti; three patti constitute a Senāmukha; senāmukha again known as Gulma; and three such gulmas constitute one Gana. On the other hand, the unit of five hundred elephants, five hundred chariots, constitute or form one ‘Senā’. Ten such units of senā constitute a Pṛṭanā and ten units Pṛṭanā’s constitute a ‘Vāhaini’

The Mahābhārata states that, the two armies of the Pāndavas and the Kauravas together consisted of eighteen aksauhinīs, of while eleven aksauhinīs belonged to the Kauravas and seven aksauhinīs belonged to the Pāndavas. Each aksauhinī was placed under one commander-in-chief.

210. senā pancāśatana nāgā rathāstāvanta eva ca /  
daśa senā ca pṛṭanā pṛṭanā daśavāhinī //  
narānān pancapancāsadesā pattrīvīdhīyate /  
 senāmukhan ca tisrastā gulma ityabhiśabditam //  
 trayo gulmā ganastvāśiḥ ganāstvayutaśaṭa’bhavan /  
Mbh.V.155.24,28 and 28½

211. aksauhinīyastu saptaiwa pāndavānāmabhūd valam /  
 aksauhīṇyo daśaikā ca kauravānāmabhūd valam // Mbh.V.155.27
The Rāmāyana (VII.64.2-4) states that, when Satrughna fought against the demon Lavana, he had an army of 400 (four hundred) horses, 200 (two hundred) chariots and 100 (one hundred) elephants with him. The Āsvamedhika Parva (Mbh.60.14-20) mentions that, at the time when Dronācārya was selected for the post of commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army, had been reduced to nine aksauhinīs from the origin eleven; again at the from when Karna became commander-in-chief the Kaurava army was further reduce to five aksauhinī only. The total number of soldiers killed in the great war was computed to be 1,66,00,20,006 individual souls.

In the war of Kuruksetra²¹², the armies were arranged as follows: ‘the chariots’ occupied the first line; behind each chariot ten elephant; constitute the second line; similarly, ten horses behind each elephant and ten foot-man behind each horse constitute, respectively, the third and fourth lines. This is the first battle-array.

²¹². rathasyāsaṃ daśa gajā gajasāra daśā vājinaḥ / 
narā daśa hayasyāsāṃ pādaraksāh samantataḥ // 
rathasya nāgāḥ paṃcāsānāgasyāsāṃ śatam hayāḥ / 
hayasya purusāḥ sapta bhinnasandhānākārināḥ // Mbh. V.155.22-23
The *Mahābhārata* (V.155.23), presents before us another battle array in the same way as in the first above. As in the first battle array, the chariot is placed in the first line, which is followed by the elephants in the second, and so on. Here it is said that, fifty elephants should be placed behind every chariot. In a similar way one hundred horses should be placed behind every elephant. Every horse should be accompanied by seven foot-men.

**Historical Analysis:**

The Vedic testimony proves that, in the early period of History of India and in Greece, the chariots acknowledged as the most important arm. Knights and nobles drove in chariots to the front line and showered their missiles on the opponent knights and other followers. But from 4th century B.C. onwards, it is stated that, the elephant has taken the position of first line in the war, while the other two arms, i.e., ‘the infantry and the cavalry’ always remained in a subsidiary position in military system.  

From the above, it appeared that a systematic arrangement

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213. Chakravarti, P.C. ‘*The art of War in ancient India*’. p.2
of an army in war is very essential to repel an enemy.

**Army Officers:**

A strong, well-organized army is the first requisite of a state. It is equally applicable in respect of the state organization in all times and climes. Because, the existence, progress and prosperity of a state largely depends on the strength of an well-knitted army. In view of this ancient Indian Political thinkers put more emphasis on the organization and control of the army in different branches.

In ancient India, as also the modern times, the king or the head of the states is the supreme commander of the army. But the army affairs being very elaborate one, it requires experts in various fields for the management of the particular affairs.

The royal army in ancient India was consisted of four wings (*caturanga-vala*) viz., foot-soldiers, chariots, cavalry and elephantry each of which was placed under one superintendent (*adhyaksa*). The military forces are organized by a large numbers of commanders of varied ranks and positions, working under the king, and they were employed in different areas of the kingdom.
The military department was headed by the *senāpati* (commander-in-chief), who in rank was next to the king. The *senāpati* is expected to be expert in both the control and conduct of war strategically. Under the *senāpati*, also called Mahāsenāpati, there were a number of commanders of varied ranks to lead the various units of the army. Next in rank to Senāpati (*mahādandanāyaka*) was the equal to Lieutenant General of modern times, ‘Senānāyaka’ (a general), Senānī (a leader of an army) etc. Besides these, there are different quarter masters such as *ranābhāndāgārikas* etc.

According to the epic traditions, the post of ‘Senāpati’ was not a permanent one. But the appointment of ‘Senāpati’ was very important at the time of war, because, without a Senāpati, no army could fight or stay in front of an enemy \(^{214}\). Hence, the *Mahābhārata* \(^{215}\) states that, the army offices were differentiated on three ranks, such as, *rathī, atirathī* and *mahārathī*, on the basis of superiority in succeeding order. These are very broadly described in the *Mahābhārata*.

\(^{214}\) *Mbh.* VII.5.8
\(^{215}\) *ibid.* V.162.163
The *Mahābhārata* states that, both of the Pāndava and the Kaurava kings consulted the other sovereign kings participating in their respective armies before any selection or election of the ‘Senāpatis’ was made. As for example, in the ‘Udyoga Parva’ of the *Mahābhārata*, Yudhisthira declared that, the chief *senāpati* called ‘Sarvasenāpati’ was selected by Lord Kṛṣna; thus, it is seen that, at the times of the *Mahābhārata*, the *senāpati* was selected also. The *senāpati* was usually a member of the ministry. His principal duty was to organizing the fighting forces and to keep them at maximum efficiency. cf.,

*yathābalam yathotsāhan rathinah samupādiśat*

*Mbh*.V.164.5

The ‘Senāpati’ or ‘commander-in-chief’ was known by different designations under different stages. According to Vedic literature, it was almost equal to the rank of the king and his title was ‘*senānī’*. He could lead the host in person to the battle-field.

216. *ibid*. V.151
217. *ibid*. V.151.34
At that time, there was another military official, called ‘grāmani’, who was supposed to be in-charge of a small portion of the host. The ‘senānī’ came to be known in later Vedic times as, ‘ratnins’ or recipients of ‘ratnahavis’\textsuperscript{218}. The ‘grāmani’ was perhaps a civil man than a military officer. Because, ‘grāmani’ indicates ‘village together’ (sangrāma), i.e., the key-stone of the village constitution\textsuperscript{219}.

In the Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{220}, we come across the title ‘senāpati’ in place of ‘senānī’. Next to the rank of senāpati was the ‘senāpranetāras’\textsuperscript{221}. In the Kuruksetra war, we notice seven ‘senāpranetāras’ in the Pāndavas army. They were Draupada, Virāta, Dhṛstadyumna (king of Pāncāla), Sīkhanadī, Sātyaki, Cekitāna and Bhumasena. Each of them were senāpati of one aksauhinī. Dhṛstadyumna was appointed the ‘Sarvasenāpati’, among the seven senāpatī\textsuperscript{222}. His chief duty was to organize the fighting forces and to keep them at maximum efficiency.

\textsuperscript{218} Chhangani. S. P., ‘Inter State Relation in ancient India’, pp.69-70
\textsuperscript{219} Jayaswal. K. P., ‘Hindu Polity’. p.16
\textsuperscript{220} Mbh. XII.85.31
\textsuperscript{221} \textit{Ibid}. V.151.5
\textsuperscript{222} \textit{Ibid}. V.151.49
The army officials of the Pāndavas were arranged as follows\textsuperscript{223}

Yudhisthira----the king, the supreme commander.

Arjuna-----Senāpatipati.

Kṛṣna----controller and adviser of Arjuna.

Dhṛstadyumna-----Sarvasenāpati.

On the other hand, the Kaurava’s had eleven aksauhinī of soldiers besides many kings and feudal lords. However, Karna refused to take the battle field under Bhīsma\textsuperscript{224}. Some king taking part in the war were appointed commanders of other aksauhinīs. They were viz., Saibya, Ashwatthāmā, Srutayudha, Chitrasenā, Purumitra, Bibingshati, Śalya, Bhurisrabā, Bikarna and Dronācārya. Bhīsma was the commander- in- chief of Kaurava army. As a senāpati, he was fighting from the first (1) day to the tenth (10) day. Dronācārya\textsuperscript{225} who succeeded Bhīsma as commander-in- chief from 11th to 15th day; Karna\textsuperscript{226} was commander-in –chief for 16th and 17th day;

\textsuperscript{223} ibid. V.157.13-15
\textsuperscript{224} ibid. V.168.29
\textsuperscript{225} ibid. VII.9&7
\textsuperscript{226} ibid. VIII.1
Śalya\textsuperscript{227} and Ashwatthāmā\textsuperscript{228} both were only for 18\textsuperscript{th} day of the Kuruksetra war.

**Qualities of Senāpati:**

In some parvans of the *Mahābhārata*, the essential qualities of a person for appointing as Senāpati are described. Accordingly a person, who is of high birth and a native, dignified in behaviour and devoted\textsuperscript{229}, expert in all Nīti, i.e., Vedas, Sutra, Vratah, Dhanurveda and foreign policy, who can use perfectly all kinds of weapons, having strength of the body and mind, power of command, brave as lion, good looking, quick movement of hands etc., are fit for appointing as commander-in-chief. On the other hand, he should well-versed in all aspects of ‘sādgunya’;\textsuperscript{230} he should be generally a ksatriya, and devoted to his dharma, ready to give up his life in battle for the protection of countrymen. Sometimes, a Brāhmaṇa is also appointed ‘Senāpati’.

\textsuperscript{227} *ibid.* IX.1. \& *ibid.* IX.66
\textsuperscript{228} *kulīna deśajāh prājnā rupavanto bahuśrutāḥ /
pragalbhāśćānraktāśca te tava syuh paricchadāḥ // *Mbh.* XII.83.6
\textsuperscript{229} *Mbh.* V.151.28 and *ibid.* VI.4
\textsuperscript{230} *ibid.* XII. 31-32
According to Śūkra, the officers of the army should be selected from all varnas, if the person concerned has full knowledge of war-fare. The Kāmandakīya nūtisāra\textsuperscript{231} states that, senāpati should be a diplomat, invoking confidence of his own army; able to detect fraud and disguises of spies and ambassadors and above all over loyal to his country.

In the Mahābhārata the grandsire Bhīsmā\textsuperscript{232} advised Yudhishthira in the following words: “The warriors, who break the ranks of enemies, of assembling / regrouping the soldiers, should have their pay doubled and honored by you with food, drink and equal status”.

The king should, from among the nāyakas (daśādhipati) of ten soldiers who are more heroic in battle, should select the leader of hundred soldiers (satādhipati), likewise, from among the satādhipatis, one who are more up and doing, should be selected leader of a thousand soldiers\textsuperscript{233}.

\textsuperscript{231} KNS.18.16-42 and 19.31-40

\textsuperscript{232} anikan ye vibhandanti bhinnan sansthāpayanti ca /
    samānāsanapānāste kāryāh dvīgūnāvetanāh // Mbh. XII.100.30

\textsuperscript{233} daśādhipatayah kāryāh satādhipatayastathā /
tatah sahasrādhipatin kuryācchūramatandritam // Mbh. XII.100.31
The *Mahābhārata*\(^{234}\) states that, the king should appoint such Saciva as commander-in-chief who are extremely loyal and devoted to the king, who are well-trained (educated); arms, intelligent, who are well-versed in the sastras, self-restrained, courageous heroes, more practical and up and doing. The *Rāmāyana* also holds similar views. According to the *Rāmāyana*\(^ {235}\), a number of ministers (*sacivas*) formed the war-council of a commander-in-chief. Some other important ranks in the army are Pattipāla, Gulmika, Vāhinī- *pati* etc., are already mentioned.

From the above discussion, it seems that, ‘Senāpati’ plays the vital part in warfare. Even a large number of army cannot fight properly without a good leader (*senāpati*), i.e., because a leaderless army may be destroyed like the line of ant\(^ {236}\).

**Other momentous of Army:**

It has already been mentioned that, military department is very large. It is consisted of different elements, such as, arms and

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234. *ibid.* XII.68.56-57
235. *Rāmā.* Yuddhakānda.57.31
236. \( \text{ṛte senāpratetāram pṛtanā sumahatyapi /} \\
\text{dīryate yuddhamāsādyya pipīlikaputan yathā} // Mbh.V.156.2 \)
weapons, armour, cart, war-music, doctors and nurses, astrologer, availability of wood-food-water, artist (silpi) as well as dresses etc.

After the appointment of the Senāpati, the king should anoint (adhihvāsana) the arm, ceremonial wearing armour (kavaca) and auspicious festivity like svasti-vāsana etc.

In the battle-field, the warriors should use different kinds of weapons\(^{237}\), viz., iron clubs (gadā), spits (sūla), swords, knives, darts (śanku), arrows, wheels, axes, iron balls, staves (phalaka), cow horns, mortars (mūsala), lances and even uprooted tree. The texts state that all these along with the food materials should be stored in the war camps. Though ‘bow and arrow’ was the weapon of antiquity, in the Mahābhārata war, it was considered as an important instrument of war.

The Mahābhārata\(^{238}\) states that, Nakula discussed the importance of sword and bow, wherein the sword is said to very important. The Mahābhārata again mentions an enormous variety of arrows, viz., nārāca, vastadanta, bhalla, etc\(^{239}\).

\(^{237}\). *Mbh.* V.152.1ff; VII.153.21ff and 24.55 ff
\(^{238}\). *ibid.* XII.1.66
\(^{239}\). *ibid.* VII.91.23ff
The term ‘sword’ is one of the uncommon weapons even among the foot-soldiers. On the other hand, they had used different weapons like, bow, *nakhar*, *prāsa* and *carma*, *bhindipāla*, *parasu*, *tomara*,\(^{240}\) etc.

The *Arthaśāstra*\(^{241}\) refers to different types of weapons, including the movable engines and twenty-six varieties arms which could destroy buildings, forts and citadels. Five kinds of arrows and four kinds of bows, three kinds of swords, seven kinds of razor like weapon, four or five kinds of stones etc.

‘Armour’ also are very important for animals, like elephants and bulls and soldiers as well. Hence a king should manufacture of different types of armour for gaining victory. According to the grandsire Bhīṣma, the armour must be made of leather (cow, bull and snake) for protection the body of elephants and soldiers.

The ‘Sārathi’\(^{242}\) also another important part of war. He should be expert in all types of weapons, born in a high family,

\(^{240}\) *ibid*. VI.57
\(^{241}\) *Aś.2.18.8 and 13 and 15-16
\(^{242}\) *Mbh*.V.155.11
jockey and put on an armour. In the war of Kuruksetra, Lord Kṛṣṇa was the sārathi of Arjuna, who played the principal role in the war.

The term ‘Dhvaja’ means ‘Banners’ are used for identification of each soldiers. These are used particularly for the warriors mentioned on elephants and chariots. Each Senāpati and Feudal lord had their own banners, distinct from others. It should be place in the army camp also.

The principal musical instrument used in place of war is the ‘Sankhas’. In the war of Kuruksetra, it is found that, different types of ‘Sankhas’ were used by different senāpati. In the Bhīṣmaparva\textsuperscript{244} of the Mahābhārata, we find sankhas of different types bearing different names for each of them, these are as follows: Lord Kṛṣṇa’s sankha is called ‘Pāncajanya’; Yudhisthira’s sankha is called ‘Anantavijaya’; Arjuna’s sankha is ‘Devadatta’; Nakula’s sankha is ‘Sughosha’ and Sahadeva’s sankha is ‘Manipuspaka’.

\textsuperscript{243} ibid. V.153.16
\textsuperscript{244} ibid. VI.25
In the epic period ‘Music’ occupied an important place in the military department. When the days of battle comes to an end in evening, the soldiers were entertained by playing music. In the battle-field different types of musical instruments are used such as, sankha, bherī, mṛdanga, drum etc. According to the early Vedic literature, the music is employed to invoke the spirit of fighting.

Ornaments and dress are also important for decoration of animals, i.e., horses, elephants, the chariots and other warriors. The king, the Senāpati and the soldiers wear put on Sirastrāna, Dhotī, Uttarīya (wrapper) and different types of necklace and other ornaments.

The king should again keep ready every kind of drugs, root and fruits, the four types of physicians, actors, dancers, athletes and māyāvina(a person, who is able to assume diverse disguises).

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245. *bherimṛdangapanavān nādayeyuh, purāścarān* // Mbh. XII.100.50 and *ibid.* V.153.25

246. *usnīsāni niyacchantah pundarīkanībhaiḥ karaḥ // antarīyatāriyāni bhūsanāni ca sarvaḥ // Mbh.* V.153.20

247. *ausadhāni ca sarvāni mūlāni ca phalāni ca // caturvidhānāṃ vaidyān vai sangrhrīyād viśesataḥ // natānśca nartakānīścavā mallaṇ māyāvinastathā // śobhayeyuh puravaran modayeyusca sarvarśah // Mbh.* XII.69.59-60
Causes of War:

The ‘War’ has been always considered the most contemptible, yet unavoidable concomitment. It is recognized as the chief of the military department. The war concerns, the act of violence, which cause the destruction of a large number of men, animals, wealth etc.

Since ancient times ‘war’ were fought for different reasons as dispute land and property, political and social etc.

The Mahābhārata states that the great war of Kuruksetra took place for the reason of ‘land and property’. The king Duryodhan declared that, he would not give without war even a pinch of send (sucyagra medini) to the Pāndavas, who deserve at least half of the kingdom (if not the whole) by way of their hereditary right.

Though different reasons live behind the occurrence of war, it is classify the causes of war mainly into four\textsuperscript{248} categories,

\textsuperscript{248} Sensarma,P. “Kuruksetra War a military study” p.15
viz., (i) Political (ii) Ideological (iii) Emotional and (iv) Socio-economic.

Sometimes the ‘war’ occurs for the reason of religion (*dharma*) and wealth (*dhana*) 249. Again in the *Mahābhārata* it is said that, war was fought for establishing one’s political leadership or gaining socio-economic superiority, Asvamedha sacrifice, Rājasūya sacrifice etc.

Though the *Mahābhārata* emphasizes on the fighting as the chief duty of Ksatriya, but wise man always advises the people avoiding war.

In the Bhīṣma Parva(VI.3.81) of the *Mahābhārata* before the start of the war, the great sage Vyāsa told Dhṛtarāstra that victory achieved through the means (*upāya*) of Sāma, Dāna and Bheda is considered the best than what is achieved through the violent means of war. Of the threes what is achieved by means of *bheda* i.e. creating dissension in the enemy camp is of the lowest grade. Yet what achieved through violence i.e. war is the worst of all. Hence one should take resort to war when all sorts of

249. *Mbh.* XII.57
negotiations and diplomacy fail 250.

The grandsire Bhīṣma also held a similar view. He told Yudhisthira that victory achieved by means of war is the most inferior one (*jaghanya*), because war involves violence resulting in death and destruction of life and property; victory in battle depend on caprice and destiny. Before starting the war one cannot be sure of his victory; it depends totally on destiny 251. In same of the Šāntiparva, it is said that victory comes only through the dedication and sacrifice of the soldiers 252.

When a *ksatriya* do their duty righteously, they get help from all sides; God will be always in their side and provide all types of war materials 253 for defeating the enemy.

In the *Mahābhārata* we notice two types of war, *dharmayuddha* (*nyāya*) and Kūtayuddha (*adharma*). In a war, where the warriors, fight honestly and try to maintain the ethics of war, when no soldier attempt to resort to any cunning means, that

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250. *sāmnaivavartayeh pūrvam prayatethāstato yudhi*, *Mbh.* XII.102.16
251. *ibid.* XII.102.17
252. *tyāgamūlam hi śūrānām svargadvāramanuttamam* // *ibid.* XII.99.7
253. *ibid.* XII.98
is called ‘NyāyaYddha’. On the other hand when the warriors resort to unfair, knave, inhuman methods, duplicity, falsehood, even killing a person only for shelter and wealth, such a battle is regarded as Kūta-Yuddha.

**Principles of War:**

In the *Mahābhārata* the grandsire Bhīṣma lays down certain general principles of war, which are necessary to be followed by all king’s and warriors in a war.

The king and the army should set out to battle on the day of full moon in the month of Caitra or Agrhāyana (Mārgasīrsa) \(^{254}\). They should attack the enemy, when the weather is neither too hot nor too cold, where there is plenty of drinking water and food-stuff available; when the enemy is in deep troubles, a Vijigīṣu king can attack at any time of the year \(^{255}\). Manu \(^{256}\) also gives a similar opinion as regards the principles of war.

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254. *ibid.* XII.100.10
255. *ibid.* XII.100.11-12
256. *MS.* VII.181-83
The fort:

‘Fort’ is another most important shelter for the king and soldiers for protection against the enemies. Thus, a king should build different types of forts, for the protection of kings and soldiers. In preceding chapter, we have discussed in detail about the varieties of fortress.

On the other hand, Pitāmaha Bhīṣma says that, a king should fight with the one of same rank i.e. a king should fight with a (qualified) king only or the prince, and the other warriors should have to follow this rule. Moreover, while in the battle-field, a king\(^{257}\) should rely on astronomy, superstition etc., by which they can gain victory.

Battle formation or Vyūha:

According to the rules and orders of the Senāpati, different types of ‘Vyūhas’ are applied for organizing or formatting of soldiers in battle-field. The term ‘Vyūha’ is a very important strategy for defeating the enemy.

\(^{257}\) \textit{Mbh. XII.100.20 and \textit{ibid. XII.102.10}}
The *Mahābhārata* mentions different types of ‘Vyūhas’ as follows:-

(i) Sarbatomukha Vyūha: This Vyūha afforded visibility on all sides, enabled control and had sufficient depth. This formation could properly handle enemy attack from all sides.

(ii) AchalaVyūha:

(iii) BajraVyūha: This Vyūha was like a ‘Bajra’ in outline. Originally this Vyūha was designed by Indra, the king of gods.

(iv) KrauncaVyūha: ‘Kraunca’ is the name of a heron-like bird. This Vyūha was originally designed by Bṛhaspati, when the gods were fighting against the Asuras (demons). This formation is very aggressive, having most of the soldiers in the front.

(v) GarudaVyūha: Garuda was the king of birds. This formation is also very aggressive. According to Manu, this formation should be employed when attacks from both front and rear were apprehended.

(vi) ArdhachandraVyūha: In this formation the soldiers of the front line, or coming through the front line, could fight.
(vii) MakaraVyūha: This formation is used by the Pāndavas against the KrauncaVyūha of the Kauravas. According to the Mahābhārata the formation had small frontage though strongly built, and vertically elongated well-guarded flanks.

(viii) SyenaVyūha: This formation is basically similar of Kraunca though slight modification of Kraunca.

(ix) ŚūcīVyūha: The needle shaped Vyūha. It is made of an elongated column and a small pointed head.

(x) MandalaVyūha: It is a circular formation adopted to encircle the enemy.

(xi) SṛngataVyūha: This is generally ‘T’ shaped formation, where the arms are presumably projected at acute angles like horns from the small head.

(xii) SarbatobhadraVyūha: This is a type of MandalaVyūha.

(xiii) SakataVyūha: This is a ‘T’ shaped formation consisted of mainly two wings-right and left and two columns at right angles of the wings forming the central axis.
(xiv) CakraVyūha: In the Mahābhārata, it appears to be a type of MandalaVyūha, where the fighting troops of the own army, where protected by an impenetrable outer mantle of great defenders.

(xv) MahāVyūha: In the Mahābhārata it is stated that, the SarvatobhadraVyūha has been described as a ‘Mahā-Vyūha’, meaning a great and dangerous formation. (vide P.Sensarma, ‘Kuruksetra War a Military study’.P.87 ff).

These Vyūhas were formed to co-ordinate action of all arms. Arrangement of the soldiers in battle array is also mentioned by Pitāmaha Bhīṣma as follows-The rathīs should stand between the Elephantry and the Cavalry; behind the Cavalry, powerful Infantry may stand, who were put on armour.  

From the above discussion, it appears that, the Senāpati should systematically made the Vyūhas for protecting his own soldiers from the enemy, i.e., ‘Vyūha’ is considered as the safeguard of each soldiers.

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258. gajānām rathino madhye rathānāmanu sādinah /
śādīnāmantare sthāpyam pādātamapi danṣitam // Mbh. XII.99.9