The *Mantri Parṣad* is considered to be an important institution by almost all the authorities in ancient Indian Polity. The *Mahābhārata* lays down that the king is vitally dependent upon the ministers as animals are upon clouds, Brāhmaṇas on the Vedas and women upon their husbands. *Manu* says that even an ordinary work appears difficult if one is to do it single handed, why then made efforts to administer the government without the assistance of ministers.

*Kauṭiliya* lays down that the king can succeed only in the task of administration if he is assisted by a wise council of ministers; one wheel alone does not move the carriage. *Yājñavalkya* is also of the same opinion.

*Sukra* asserts that the matters of the state should never be considered by the king alone, he be an expert in all the sciences and fully versed in polity. A wise king must always follow the opinion of the members of Council of Ministers. He should never follow his own opinion when the king becomes independent, he plans for ruin in time he loses the state and also the subjects.

The Vedic literature does not refer to the *Mantri Parṣad* in it. But the terms indicating the
existence viz Sabha, Samiti, Vidatha, Parisad and Sanāgati are found in abundance. 'The Hindu Council of Ministers was a body and an organism which had branched off from the old National Assembly of Vedic times'.

In the Samhīta of the Yajurveda and Brāhmaṇical literature we find a new class of officers known as the Ratnīna who played an important role in the Ratnavimāṇi ceremony. In the Atharvaveda also Rājakrtah find their mention who invest the king with sovereignty. During the later vedic age these Ratnīna comprised the advisory body of the king.

Pañini refers to the Parisad in his Aṣṭādhyāyī and informs us that the king was advised on all important matters by his ministers. Pañini categorises the Parisade in three different ways viz social, literary and political. The third type of Parisad has been linked with the king and his ministers.

The Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata also allude to the existence of ministers along with the Mantri Parisad. The council of Ministers is called Parisa in the Jātakas, Mahāvastu and Asokan inscriptions. The early historical dynasty of
Magadha also indicate the existence of Mantri Parisad. We find that Vasaśākara has been styled a premier of Ajātasatru. Prasūnajit is said to have carried out the important matters of the administration with the help of his ministers.

The Council of Ministers played an important role in the times of the Mauryas and Śuṅgas and finds its mention in the inscriptions as well as in the literature. The Junāgad inscription of Rudradāman informs us that he ruled with the assistance of a council of Matisachiya and Karvasachiya. The Council of Ministers is called Mahapradhana by Kāmandaka. In the Gupta inscriptions the term (Pā)raveda manitēna is found. The existence of the Council of Ministers in the times of Vardhanas is established by the fact that it was the Council of Ministers who have offered the vacant throne of Kanauj to Harṣa and the latter accepted it.

The Council of Ministers continued even in the post Harṣa period. The Nālanda Inscription speaks of Vaśovarman and his minister Mārgapati Purusottamadaya is described as the Mahāpradhana in the records of the Parārā king Vaśovarman. The records of Chandellas of Mahoba also mention certain ministerial families. Even some of the crown prices
and viceroys had their own Council of Ministers.
The viceroy under Mauryas had his own Council of Ministers at Taxila. Similarly, Agnimitra, the crown prince and viceroy under Puṣyamitra had his own Council of Ministers. Jaitugi, the crown prince of the Yādava ruler Bhīllamāya is said to have his own Council of Ministers.\(^\text{21}\)

Thus, we may say that the Mantri Parīṣad was considered to be of immense importance and was highly esteemed off. The king could not run the administration without the assistance of Mantri Parīṣad. However, the functions of the Mantri Parīṣad were performed by a number of other bodies as well in different periods. Of these bodies, the Vidatha, the Sabhā and the Sāṅkhyā of the Vedic period in particular and the Pauruṣa Jānapada of the later period (according to Jayaswal) merit special consideration.

**VIDATHA**

The term Vidatha occurs as many as one hundred and twenty two times in the Rāṣṭrapāla and twenty two times in the Atharvaveda. The Vājasāṅgī Śāṃhitā contains ten references to the Vidatha. The Brāhmaṇas refer
to it twenty one times and Tāttvīrīya Aranyaka only one time. 22 Though the term occurs many times in the Vedic literature, the exact nature, composition and functions of it are unknown to the modern scholars. They differ in their opinions regarding its nature and functioning.

Bloomfield 23 holds that the term Vidatha primarily means a 'house' (from vid to acquire) and secondarily the sacrifice connected with the house. The author of the Vedic Index 24 state that 'Vidatha' is a word of obscure sense confined mainly to the Rāyveda'. They seem to agree with the theory of Bloomfield when they say 'this interpretation at any rate appears to suit all the passages. The occurrence of the term Vidathya 25 which has been applied to the king goes against this theory but it may refer to his being 'rich in the house steads'. The connection of women with the Vidalathya favours Bloomfield's interpretations.

But the theory propounded by Bloomfield has altogether been refuted by Salestore. 26 He is of the opinion that the house in ancient India was known by the following names: Aśāra, Āvasathā, Gaya, Orha, Durupa, Dhāni, Mivasana, Ptināmasadas, Pautra, Parāsad, Śalā and Haraya. 27 Moreover, the presence
of the women connected with the house is not acceptable on the basis of a passage occurring in the \textit{Rgveda} which indicates a desire in the marriage ceremony, that the bride may not only prove to be a house wife but having control he may speak to the Vidatha. In another reference of the \textit{Atharvaveda} it has been stated that she may speak to the Vidatha even in her advanced age. Therefore, the interpretations of Bloomfield supported by the authors of the vedic index cannot be accepted.

According to Zimmer, Vidatha was an assembly and was smaller than \textit{Sabha}.

Ludwig maintains that Vidatha was an assembly of Br\&hmanas and M\&shavanas. He further adds that Vidatha also meant an asylum like the house of a Br\&hmana.

Whitney was of the opinion that Vidatha was a council. According to Geldner the term Vidatha primarily means 'knowledge', 'priestly lore', 'sacrifice', 'spiritual authority' and 'wisdom'. Oldenburg interprets it as an 'act of disposition of any business, distribution and ordinance'.

\textit{Rgveda} \textit{Atharvaveda} \textit{Sabha} \textit{Br\&hmanas} \textit{M\&shavanas}
Roth holds that the term primarily means a body which gives orders in the assembly for secular or religious purpose or for war. To quote R.S. Sharma, Vidatha was the earliest folk assembly of the Indo Aryans attended both by men and women performing all kinds of economical, military, religious, and social functions.

Jayaswal states that Vidatha was a parent folk assembly and adds that religious functions were performed there. Ghoshal opposes Jayaswal by saying that the latter seems to follow Roth and does not speak on the other meanings of the term and further adds that 'in view of the difference of opinion it seems impossible to predicate any definite attributes to the Vedic Vidatha'.

Altekar is of the opinion that Vidatha probably indicates a religious or sacrificial gathering. But his view does not hold good because he simply repeats the theory already laid down by the earlier scholars.

In the light of the above mentioned interpretation we may say that the opinion of Roth
appears to be quite appropriate, because he considers almost all the aspects of the Vedic. But regarding the functions of the Vidatha nothing can be said with certainty. Even then we may say that all religious, political and military functions were performed there.

**SABBHĀ**

The Sabha literally meaning a body of men shining together occurs eight times in the Rgveda and in a variety of senses in the Vedic literature. But its nature, composition and functions are enveloped in obscurity. It refers to both people in conclave and a hall. The hall was used for dicing. The word Sabhaśāra is used in the sense of a judicial tribunal in the Vājasaneyi Sāhita; moreover, the occurrence of terms Sabhaśaḥ meaning a person eminent in the Sabha, Sabhayeśa worthy of attending the Sabha and Sujata create further confusion about the exact nature and functions. The scholars have divergence of opinion regarding the exact nature and composition of this term.

Ludwig holds that Sabha was an assembly of the Brāhmaṇas and the Nāgāvans who were of high rank. His theory is based on the passages occurring in the
Rgveda which refers to an assemblage of persons of noble birth. In another passage which refers to the votaries of Indra who are rich in horses and chariots and who receive wealth to go to Sabha.

According to the authors of the Vedic Index, the Sabha was an assembly of the Brahmans and other rich persons of the society. This view is supported by the occurrence of the term Sujātā applied to a Brahma.

Bloomfield is of the opinion that Sabha was a domestic institution. But this view cannot be accepted, because the references available in the vedic and the later vedic literature indicate it is to be an assembly or people in conclave.

Hillebrandt does not find any difference between the Sabha and the Samiti. But his supposition does not hold good and is refuted on the basis of a passage in the Atharvaveda which refers to the Sabha and the Samiti as the twin daughters of Prajāpati.

Zimmer opined that the Sabha was a village council and it was presided over by the Grāmiṇī.
The theory propounded by Zimmer does not hold good in the light of passages occurring in the *Satapatha Brahmana* and the *Chhandogya Upanisad* where in it is stated that the king goes to Sabhā just as he attends the *Samiti*.

Bandopadhaya does not agree with Zimmer and states that the Sabhā was an association of kinsfolk, but later on it became not only an association of kinsfolk but of men bound together by ties of blood or local contiguity and it was closely associated with the king.

Jayaswal states that probably Sabhā was a standing and select body of selected persons working under the authority of the *Samiti*... the Sabhā had its president. It seems that there were elders in the Sabhā.

Ghoshal criticises the theory of Jayaswal by saying how he could attribute sovereignty to the *Samiti* and says that the Sabhā was working under its authority. He did not advance any evidence from the early literature to establish his theory. Moreover, there is nothing in the vedic or later vedic literature to prove that Sabhā was a constitutional assembly. In the end he himself states that 'those entitled to a seat therein were invested, so to say, with lustre. They are pointedly
alluded to. They were worthy of special respect.*59
This explanation indicates that the Sabha was a body of select persons. His suppositions that it comprised elders is also without any solid evidence. There is no doubt about the fact that the Sabha had some judicial functions to perform as is evident from several references to this aspect in the later Vedic literature. But R.S. Sharma has rightly pointed out that Jayaswal's statement that the Sabha was a national Judicature is not a sound conclusion.60

According to Altaker,61 the Sabha 'was primarily a village social club but a few items of the simple village government of the age were also transacted there by its members'. But he himself concludes that the balance of available evidences tends to show that Sabha was usually the village assembly for social as well as political purposes.

Saletore62 states that if we exclude Grāhma from Altaker's theory, he simply improves upon the theory propounded by Zimmer. His supposition is based on a passage in the Atharvaveda which states how Sabhaśad of god Yama were royal in status and entitled to share the 16th part of the merits attributed to him.63 But in our opinion Altaker's view cannot be accepted. Since, the Sabha has been used in many senses in the Vedic and the later Vedic literature,
it is not possible for us to attribute any definite meaning to it.

On the basis of the above mentioned interpretations it is not possible for us to attach and precise meaning to the Sabha's exact nature. But we may say that Sabha was a select body of the Brāhmāṇas and other rich persons of the society who participated in entertainment and social affairs and sometimes functioned as judicial members and discussed the affairs of the public.

**SAMITI**

The Samiti literally meaning 'meeting together' occurs six times in the Rgveda and many more times in the Atharvaveda. Sometimes it has been used with Sabha and sometimes separately. Like Sabha its exact nature and functions are not known to the scholars. The scholars offer different views on its exact nature and functions.

According to Ludwig the Samiti includes all the Viṣahī Brāhmāṇas and Maṇḍhavas if they wished to attend it, Sabha being their special assembly.
In Hillebrandt's opinion that there was no difference between the Sabha and the Samiti is also untenable on the basis of a reference from the Atharvaveda which styles the Sabha and the Samiti as the two daughters of Prajāpati.

According to the authors of the Vedic Index, the Samiti was an assembly of the vedic tribe. Apte supports this theory by saying that Samiti in the sense of an assembly of the vedic tribe is mentioned in Rgveda.

Zimmer states that the Samiti was composed of viśah which was attended by the king. He adds that the Samiti had a right to elect or re-elect a king.

Jayaswal says 'Going back to the oldest literature of the race we find from the vedas that national life and activities in the earliest times on record were expressed through institution of this nature was the Samiti of our forefathers'. He adds that the Samiti was the national assembly of the whole people or viśah who elected and reelected the king. Jayaswal, by saying that the Samiti had a right to check and reelect the king, merely repeats the theory propounded by Zimmer. Moreover, Jayaswal's
supposition that Samiti was constitutionally a sovereign body is untenable, because it is not clear to us whether the idea of constitution of sovereignty existed in the Vedic age or not. Even in the Atharvaveda the Sabha and the Samiti have been described as the two daughters of Prajapati. From the Āstapatha Brāhmaṇa and Taittyiriya Brāhmaṇa we learn that the king draws his power from the god Prajapati. This indicates that these institutions have the same origin and it is not worth while to ascribe sovereign status to the Samiti.

On the basis of another passage from the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad which describes Svetaketu going to the Samiti of Panchalas Jayaswal says that it was a national academy. He himself on the one hand says that the whole people were supposed to be present in the assembly and on the other he says 'it would be hardly probable that the whole nation without any principle or representation would be actually present there'.

Altekar's supposition is based on a Vedic hymn as did Jayaswal. In his opinion
though the hymn refers to a monarchical state, it can well be supposed that the Samities were the same in monarchical states also, but he himself contradicts his statement by saying that 'the hymn by itself cannot conclusively prove the existence of a republican state. In the end he says that the literary information available about the Samiti is not sufficient to guide us regarding the constitution of the Samiti. He adds 'however, the central assemblies of republican states were aristocratic bodies, it may be permissible to suggest that the same was probably the case with Samities functions under the monarchies'. 76

Ghoshal's theory is based on a hymn 77 which relates to a curse by a Brāhmaṇa that the Samiti does not agree with a king who harasses the Brāhmaṇa. He agrees with Zimmer in saying that the Samiti had a right to elect and re-elect a king. He further adds that the Samiti was a popular assembly of the Vedic people and an important asset to the king.

In the light of above mentioned interpretations we can say that the Samiti was a popular assembly of the Vedic people. But due to inadequate data
available in the ancient literature its exact nature composition and functioning cannot be determined.

**PAURAJĀNAPA DA**

Jayaswal was of the opinion that the Sabhā and the Samiti were succeeded by two other assemblies, namely, the Paura assembly and the Jānapada assembly. These twin assemblies performed all the functions that were performed by the Sabhā and the Samiti in earlier periods. These assemblies, according to him, functioned as very powerful organs of the state from 600 B.C. to 600 A.D. In fact, all matters concerning the state policies, succession, dethronement, taxation, rewards and punishments, etc., were decided on the floor of these assemblies. They wielded real power so much so that even their exmembers could not be despised of by the people.

Jayaswal opined that Paura which is also designated as Pure and Nagar does not mean town but capital only. He bases his theory on a seal in Gupta character of the 5th or 6th century from Nalanda to show the corporate character of the Jānapada. He says that the seal is of the corporate body Janapada e.g. Purikāṣṭejanapadasya. He adds that
in the period of the seal the general Janapada of the whole country or province i.e. Deasaamgha had probably ceased to exist and the term used here is gramasamgha but the corporate character is still there. It is wrong to interpret the term Janapada a synonym of Rātra and Desa to mean 'the people of Janapada' or province but it denotes the whole area minus the capital constitutionally.

According to Jayaswal, the occurrence of the term in plural Janapadah may denote the Janapada institution as well as the people of the Janapada. He says that the institutional significance of Paura and Janapada is beyond doubt on the basis of a Kharavela inscription of Circa 170 B.C. The inscription has it that the king Kharavela bestows numerous privileges, hundreds and thousands, on the city corporation and realm corporation.79

Jayaswal lays down the following functions and powers of the Paura Janapada as a joint body. He says that all constitutional matters were conducted by Paura Janapada. These bodies in association with Brāhmaṇas and other leaders of the nation resolved upon the appointment of a Yuvarāja or crown prince and took part in the coronation ceremony as the people's
representative. The **Paura Janapada** discussed and decided upon the state policies. Jayaswal says that these bodies discussed the financial and military matters with the king. Asoka is said to have discussed his new 'Dhamma' with the **Janapada** body. He also assigns municipal administration to the **Paura** body. He maintains that the Sudras were to be honoured by the Brâhmaṇas if they were the members or ex-members of the **Paura** body. So much so they had the authority to present the king compensation bill in respect of all the losses caused due to the lawlessness in the kingdom. According to Jayaswal, the **Paura Janapada** were the central law making assembles. He is of the opinion that the resolutions of these bodies had the force of law and were called 'Samaya', *Sthitī* and 'Samvid'. He considers **Paura** assembly as the mother association out of which sprang the different Sāṃghas working of which was identical to the executive city magistrates as described by Magasthenes.

Describing the composition of the **Paura Janapada** Jayaswal states that members of these bodies according to Vedic evidence were of Grāmāṇi class i.e. Vaisvēṇas and according to Pali Tripitakas of the Kâhatrīya class.
Most of the modern scholars have criticised the theory propounded by Jayaswal. Here we shall discuss the arguments advanced by Jayaswal in favour of the theory and the views of other scholars who have tried to find out the real meaning of the term.

On the basis of a verse from the Ramayana, Jayaswal attributes institutional significance to Paura Jānapada which has been read by Law differently.

Jayaswal is of the opinion that verb upatisthāti (waiting) is in singular in the verse and refers to Paura Jānapada as one body waiting to take part in the consecration. In the same text Nigama is mentioned in plural while Jānapada is in singular. Law states that Jayaswal altered the verse to suit his connotation. He opined 'Assuming that the term Jānapada is in the singular is correct reading, it is not clear how it can have a meaning different from what is conveyed by the Paura Jānapadah; i.e. inhabitants of city and country respectively'. In support of his view Law quotes Pāṇini and the Arthasastra where these words have the same meaning as suggested by him.
Moreover, Patanjali, commenting upon Pāṇini says that Janapada in singular means the citizens,. The Arthasastra also lays down that a citizen can take his treasury trove after proving that it is his ancestral property. The Arthasastra imposes a fine of 12 Papanas on Jānapada leaving or entering the country without pass.  84

Altekar criticizes the theory of Jayaswal and says that the epic generally uses the term Paura Jānapada in the plural and it denotes the citizens in general and not any constitutional or representative body of theirs. He argues that grammar however, lays down no such rule; on the contrary, it states that even if each of the words joined by the particle cha is in the singular, the verb will be in the combined number, dual or plural. 85 In our opinion the theory propounded by Jayaswal that the Paura and Jānapada had institutional significance cannot be ignored as he advances another reference from the same text according to which the Brāhmaṇas and Bālamukhas were not the members of the Paura Jānapada. This may indicate that the Paura Jānapada were the corporate bodies of the lower classes.

Jayaswal, on the basis of the statement
in the Ṣāthigumpha inscription of king Kharavela, shows the corporate character of *Paura Jānapada*.

He says that these bodies are mentioned in singular, while receiving 'constitutional privileges' from the king. This supposition has been controverted by the scholars.

P.V. Kane is of the opinion that the evidence of Ṣāthigumpha inscription could not be relied upon to prove Jayaswal's theory. He says that 'Jayaswal himself has changed his views regarding the interpretation of this difficult record so many times'. Kane opined that one can never be certain even of its latest readings and translations. Barua has given altogether a different reading. According to him it is read as *Paura Jānapada* which means all inhabitants of the capital and country.

A.S. Altekar says that Jayaswal has translated *Ānugraha* as constitutional privileges numbering to hundreds and thousands. Even supposing that the *Paura Jānapada* constituted a legislated body, the privileges conferred upon a legislature by the king could not be described as amounting to hundreds and thousands. Such privileges were granted to the populace of the kingdom and not to a particular body. He adds that if a king orders several wells, roads,
hospitals and rest houses to be constructed out of the central revenues, or abolishes a number of taxes payable by the villagers and citizens to the exchequer, he can well be described as conferring several favours, amounting in value to hundreds and thousands. Altekar holds that an analysis of the Hathigumpha inscription will completely shatter the theory propounded by Jayaswal because the inscription does not refer to any constitutional body directing the king in matters relating to war and peace.

On the basis of the above discussion we think that the favours conferred by the king in hundreds and thousands were not conferred on these bodies but on the city and the country population as laid down by Altekar.

On the basis of a reference Jayaswal has interpreted Paura as body (Samūha) of citizens of the capital. But Law does not agree with Jayaswal and says that the Samūha here has the sense of a collection and here it means the collection of citizens and not a corporate body. Law quotes Patañjali who says that Samgha and Samūha are used in the sense of a more multitude like samudaya. He further adds that Jayaswal misinterprets
Mitraniśra's comment, "Milito Jñānasamghah" meaning associate body of men', but he does not refer to the other portion of the sentence to suit his purpose. Law states that a gathering of people to celebrate some functions cannot be called a corporate body.

Again on the basis of a reference from the Divyāvadāna Jayaswal says that Paura was a corporate body. But law refutes this theory as, it was all a bad dream about Kuṭāla dreamt by Aśoka and dreams cannot be treated as realities. All these incidents do not carry weight and the references to the representatives of the citizens of Taxila are quite relevant.

Though the term Paura and Nāgara and Rājadāni had the same meaning, it did not stand for capital. As in the Śukranītaśāra the king has been advised to inspect the towns (Purāṇi) in his kingdom. In another reference it is said that the duties of the government officials was to report the number of towns (Purāṇi) and villages of the kingdom.

Jayaswal on the basis of a reference from the Rāmāyana lays down that the Paura and Jānapada had the right to resolve upon the nomination of the
crown prince. Law does not agree with him and says that the verse shows the people of different classes were invited by the king and had not gathered on a notice issued by the convener of those bodies. In addition to it the Brāhmaṇas and the princes were given more importance than the Paūra Jānapadas while people in general were merely listened about the decisions.

But Aoltekar⁹² says that the theory that the Paūras were consulted is based upon wrong translation of the word Amantraya, which means 'to bid farewell and not 'to offer advice'. He further adds that 'the citizens went home after bidding farewell to the king and not after offering him advice'.

In our opinion the appointment of Rāma as heir apparent had already been decided by the king with the consultation of his ministers. There is reason to argue that the king Dasaratha asked for the consent of the Paūra Jānapada bodies. No doubt, in this gathering the decision was conveyed to the subjects for information only.

According to Jayaswal the Paūra Jānapada could interfere in the succession and check the
consecration of an unworthy prince. But this view is refuted by the scholars who are of the opinion that it was not the Paura Jānapada but the population of the kingdom who were concerned with the coronation and preventing the succession to throne.

On the basis of a reference from the Mrochhkatika, Jayaswal thinks that the Peura Jānapada could depose a king. But in this context we think that the people since the days of Raveda had a right to depose a king who does not perform his duties well and adopts unrighteous ways and this right was not ascribed to any particular body.

Jayaswal says that the Peura Jānapada assembly could sanction extra taxation at the time of crisis of the state. But we cannot agree with Jayaswal, because almost all the authorities sanction extra taxation during calamities. But we agree with Law and Salstore who suggest that the words 'Yacheta and Bhikseta' were merely polite expressions signifying the demand for money from the subjects.

Jayaswal lays down that the king was supposed to converse daily with the Jānapada body at the fixed
time. But the term *Paura Jānapada* in the passage simply refers to the inhabitants of the city and country and not any corporate body. By a fixed time for *Paura Jānapada*, Kauṭilya wanted the monarch to be constantly in touch with the people, lest dissatisfaction should prevail among the subjects. The Rock Edict VI of Asoka also conveys the same idea that the king should be informed about public affairs wherever he is.

According to Jayaswal the *Paura Jānapada* bodies had the authority to present compensation bill to the king for the losses sustained in the kingdom by theft, and dacoities. Altekar states that in ancient Indian Polity, the state was held responsible for such losses if the stolen property could be recovered and Yājñāvalkya calls upon the authorities to recompense the aggrieved citizen, \(^94\) (Jānapada). But if we compare the verse in Yājñāvalkya to the corresponding verse in Manu \(^95\) where it is stated that the compensation was to be given to members of all the castes by the authorities for the lost property clearly indicates that it does not refer to the realm assembly. The Jānapada in Manu refers to the citizen in general irrespective of his castes and not to any Jānapada assembly.
According to Jayaswal, Paura and Jahnapada were the central law making parliament. But it has been refuted by Law and Altekar. They say that there is nothing to suggest in a passage from Manu on the authority of which Jayaswal has based his theory. As it has already been stated earlier by us that the Paura and Jahnapada appear to be local bodies on the basis of many instances in our legal literature.

We may agree upto some extent with Jayaswal that the Paura and Jahnapada, though not central law making authority had the right to make laws having the force of local customs called samayaa. On the evidence of Megasthenes Jayaswal opined that administration of Pataliputra was carried on by an organisation of city magistrates of self governed cities. Who were not appointed by the king. Law does not agree with him. He says that the word magistrates of self governed cities used by Arrian in connection with the description of the seventh caste has evidently misled Jayaswal. The meaning of these becomes clear in a reference to the preceding paragraph describing the sixth caste that Arrian calls 'Suptds'. They used to spy out what goes on in the country and town reporting everything to the king, where people were self governed. The passage
does not at all refer to the city of Pataliputra
during Chandragupta's reign as the head of the
state was the monarch and not the magistrate. It
is evident from Macrindle's translation that
these magistrates were officers in charge of the
market, the city etc.
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