**WEEK 3: GOVERNMENT IN THE HAUSA STATES**

The Hausas were originally pagans or Idol worshippers. But in the 14th century, during the reign of **Sarki Yaji Ali (1349-1385),** Muslim Missionaries from Mali came to Kano. Yaji and many of his subjects accepted Islam and a mosque were built in Kano. From Kano, Islam spread to other Hausa states.

1. Each state of the Hausa states was governed by the Sarki, or King, with the help of a council of ministers and territorial officials drawn from the hereditary aristocracy.

2. The Galadima was a high official of the Royal council. He looked after the town when the king and other chiefs went to war.

3. The Madawaki or Commander in Chief of the army, was next in importance to the king. He advised the king on the appointment or dismissal of the title holders. In some states, the Waziri or chief minister performed the same functions.

4. There were also the Magaji, or Lord of the Treasury, the Yari or head, gaoler, the Sarkin Dogarai, or Head of the king’s Bodyguard; and the Sarkin Yari Daka, or chief of the police, who took charge of prisoners charged with serious offences, inflicted corporal punishment and acted as the town crier and watchman.

5. Each state was divided into villages and districts for purposes of Local Government. Local administration was carried out through village and district heads appointed by the king, usually from the traditional rulers of the area, or sometimes from members of his own or other important families. They enforced the orders of the king in their locality and collected taxes.

**ECONOMY OF THE HAUSA STATES**

1. Agriculture was the main occupation of the peasant class in most of the Hausa states, and a high degree of agricultural skill was attained.

2. Taxation; originally, taxation was in the form of tribute in grain and other Local products. But with the adoption of Islam, the Muslim tax system was introduced. The chief taxes under this system consisted of a tax on income; a tax on livestock; a land tax; and a capitation usually paid in slaves.

3. Trade flourished between the Hausa states and other most African states as well as across the Sahara to North Africa. The main exports to North Africa were cloth, iron work, wood work and slaves, and in return such articles as arms and books works imported.

4. The introduction of the camel into Hausa land in about 1440 encouraged Trans Saharan trade.

**ASSIGNMENT**

Examine the administrative structure of the Hausa states.