Q)Compare Barani’s and Fazl’s perspectives on monarchy.

Ans: In Islamic thought the Shariat based on the Koran is considered as the final authority and the purpose of the state is to serve the Shariat. In matters of governance, the Muslim elite were influenced by political ideas in Islam. Based on two authoritative texts written during the Muslim rule in India- Fatwa-i-Jahandari and Ain-i-Akbari dealing with the differences of governance- we can formulate our ideas about the dominant trend of the political thought of medieval India. Fatwa-i-Jahandari was written by Khwaja Ziauddin Barani. In this book Barani summarizes and further elaborates the political philosophy of the Sultanate on the basis of his earlier narrative, Tarikh-i-Firozeshahi. Some scholars are of opinion that Barani's ideas carry a sense of religious fanaticism. Keeping in mind the fact that Barani belonged to a period when Islam was just making its ground in India, we may overlook this limitation in Barani's ideas.Apart from this limitation, Barani's ideas related to kingship in medieval period are of immense importance.

In the political field, Abul Fazl can be compared with Barani of Delhi Sultanate. While both of them were concerned with social stability, Abul Fazl’s method of handling this concept was different. Fazl’s political thought is based upon two theories of kingship : one is the social contract theory and another is Divine origin theory of Badshah.

**Divine Theory of Padshahat(Badshahat)**

According to Abul Fazl, the term **Padshahat (Badshahat) meant ‘an established owner’** where **Pad stands for stability and shah stands for owner**. **Padshah therefore, means powerful, established owner who cannot be eliminated by anyone.** The Badshah had a superior place in the Mughal Empire as compared to Sultan in Delhi Sultanate.

According to Barani,Sultan only had temporal sovereignty that means he is supreme in administrative,economic and social affairs.But he does not have the supremacy in religious matters.Therefore Barani considered Sultan as ‘’Zil -i-Ilahi’’ i.e the shadow of God (Allah),however,Sultan do not possess absolute sovereignty. Barani acknowleged the supremacy of Caliph or Ulema (priest) above Sultan.

On the other hand Abul Fazl considered the king as the sovereign power by considering himself an agent of god and used his absolute powers according to the rule of controller, guide and state. Abul Fazl considered Badshah as the father of his people so it was the duty of people to respect him and obey his orders. But if the Badshah discriminated on the basis of caste, religion and class, then he could not be considered a good king.The Badshah can command the religious laws.There is no agent between Allah and Badshah. Thus he is above Ulema.

Abul Fazl termed **Badshah as ‘’Farr-i-izadi’’,that means Badshah is the light derived from Allah.**He is sent by Allah himself.Allah threw the light of kindness upon Badshah and he directly works as an agent of Allah.

**Barani on monarchy**:

The king as the representative of God on earth is considered as the source of all powers and functions of the state. Barani is of the opinion that whatever means the king adopts to discharge his duties is justified so long as his aim is the service of religion. Barani's opinion was that the king should devote himself to governance of his state in such a way that helps him in reaching nearer to God. Welfare of the religion and the state should be the ideal of a good state. A king should be guided by wise men. Bureaucracy is required to run the administration and Barani is an advocate of noble birth aristocracy.

**Administration of the king**:

A king should be guided by wise men. Bureaucracy is required to run the administration and Barani is an advocate of noble birth aristocracy.

He talks about the necessity of hierarchy in administration and points out the composition, classification, nature and relation of bureaucracy with the Sultan and the people of the state. He is emphatically against the promotion of low-born men.He says that kingship is based on two pillars administration and conquest and it is on the army that both the pillars depend. He also emphasises on king's concern regarding internal security and foreign relations.

**Justice**:

Alongwith the enforcement of the Shariat, to Barani, dispensing of justice is an essential function of a sovereign. Implementation of law and obedience to law should be the primary concern of a king. Barani refers to four sources of law: a) the Koran b) the Hadish (traditions of prophet) c) the Ijma (opinions and rulings of the majority of Muslim theologians and d)Qiyas (speculative method of deduction). To this he added Zawabit or state law as an important source of law in administering the state. With the changing complexion of society and the growing complexities of administration in addition to the accepted principles of traditional Islamic law, Barani advocated for Zawabit or the state laws whose foundation is non-religious. State laws cannot be contradictory to the orders of the Shariat and its primary objective is to regulate the works of various governmental departments and to foster loyalty.

**Recognition of individual rights:**

Barani also talks about the recognition of individual rights, i.e. the rights of wife, children, old servants, slaves, etc. and he considers the recognition of people's rights as the basis of the state. Punishment was considered as an essential means to maintain discipline in the state. Barani refers to various circumstances of the punishments, particularly the death punishment to be awarded by the king.

**Abul Fazl on monarchy:**

The other valuable text on statecraft explaining the dominant trend of political ideas during the Mughal rule in India is Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari. Abul Fazl was one of the most important thinkers of the sixteenth century India. Being a great scholar having sound knowledge of different fields of learning in the Muslim and the Hindu traditions, he had contributed in formulating many of Akbar's political ideas. Abul Fazl was influenced by the idea of the divine nature of royal power.

**An ideal king**:

He made a distinction between a true king and a selfish ruler. A true king should not be concerned much about himself and power, rather people's well being should be his prime concern. To him, an ideal sovereign is like a father who rules for I the common welfare and is guided by the law of God. Though Abul Fazl believed in 'the divine light of royalty', he did not envisage any role for the intermediaries to communicate the divine order. Abul Fazl says, 'Royalty is a light emanating from God, and a ray from the sun.Modern language calls this light farr-i -izidi (the divine light) and the tongue of antiquity called it kiyan khwarah (the sublime halo). It is communicated by God to kings without the intermediate assistance of any one'.

The Ulemas and the Mujtahids, acted as authority and interpreter of customary laws to king. the king himself is expected to judge and interpret holy law.

**Duties of king**:

At the core of his political ideas was the belief that the king should be guided by the principles of universal good and to fulfill his royal duty, he could go beyond the holy law. This was a significant shift in matters of governance compared to earlier political thinking. The reforms introduced by Akbar through the abolition of jizya collected from the non-Muslims or a ban on cow slaughter reflected the spirit of new political theory articulated in Ain-i-Akbari.

**Administration:**

In his administrative views Abul Fazl gave supreme place to advocates among all the officers. According to him, advocates should have those qualities which could solve both private and social problems of the king. As we see in Kautilya’s Arthashashtra, we can find the same concept of state being divided into many levels with many officers at each level in the Ain-i-Akbari. Akbar divided his empire into Subas, Sarkars and Mahalls.

Abul Fazl had a strong belief in hierarchy, but he was more concerned about the need of talent for the kingdom. He did not bother about the social background of a talented person.Abul Fazl was a believer in strong centralised monarchical government and for better governance he advocated the distribution of works among various departments. It was with the help of a highly centralised bureaucracy that the Mughal sovereign ruled over the empire.

**Classification of society:**

Abul Fazl's classified society into a four tier system, where rulers and warriors occupied the first position. Learned people were placed in the second category, artisans and merchants in the third and the labourers belonged to the fourth category. Although this was not based on an, egalitarian philosophy he talked about the importance of each category for the welfare of the state. Thus the picture of political authority that emerges from the study of Ain-i-Akbari was of a centralised monarchy and the governing principle of the state was the well being of its people.