



THE JIZYA POLICY OF AURANGZEB

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OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH PAPER :

1. To understand the meaning and terminology of Jizya
2. To facilitate a peaceful solution to hostility
3. To review the background and nature of Jizya
4. To review the effects of Jizya on Indian territory



INTRODUCTION:-

Jizya is a religiously tax (Poll Tax) imposed on non-Muslims (Zimmis and Idol worshipper-Hindu) under Islamic law, lived in Islamic state. Jizya tax was not paid by Muslims, who however paid zakat tax. Jizya is an example of taxes that depended on the religion of the individual person. Non-Muslims stated that Jizya as a discriminatory tax. But in Islamic state of view the Jizya tax has been rationalized in Islam as a fee in return for Muslim protection and the privilege of living in Muslim territory. The tax which was imposed on non-Muslims referred in the Quran and the Hadiths. The Jizya tax was historically imposed on Jews and Christians (Zimmi) in Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, and Spain during the era of Prophet Muhammad and caliph rulers who spread the Islam in above region and latter on Hindus (Idol Worshipper) in Indian continental in 11th century. The Zimmis and Hindus hated and evaded jizya. Because they were not free to practice their religion freely and those who did were persecuted and killed. So, there is a bitter relation in the Islamic ruler and the non-Muslim. Akbar was a genius at cultural blending. In 1564 He abolished both the tax on Hindu pilgrims and the Jizya on non Muslims. Latter on Aurangzeb imposed this tax on Zimmis and Hindus in late 17th century. But it was a disastrous decision for both Aurangzeb and Mughal Empire. Jizya was the basic tax revenue income. It was used to build mosques, buy freedom for Muslim prisoners of war in non-Muslim states, fund Islamic charities meant to help Muslims, fund enlargement of armies, and pay for the wars of expansion.¹

Jizya Terminology:-

In Arabic Jizya means the amount of money or reward which is taken from the Zimmis and a contract that gives the non-Muslim the status of Zimmi.

Quran render Jizya as a “tax or tribute.”

According to Dictionary.com, “Jizya means the poll tax formerly paid by minority religious groups within the Muslim empire. There is a contradiction on the origin of the concept of Jizya.”

According to Bhartiya Samaj Vidnyan Kosh Jizya means, “A specific obligatory tax which was recovered by Muslim rulers in their state from non Muslim in order to protect their life and wealth.”²

The rationalist’s view on Jizya is that it is a poll tax for the Zimmi in return for Muslim protection, as well as for being exempt from military service. They did not enjoy certain political rights reserved for Muslims, but were otherwise equal under the laws of property, contract, and obligation. They were also exempted from the zakat tax paid by Muslims. Jizya is sanctioned by Quran and frequently mentioned in Hadiths.³

Jizya and Indian territory :-

As Muslim army commanders expanded their Islamic empire and attacked countries in Asia, Africa and southern Europe for the propaganda of Islam, the Arabic invasion on Sindh province (Indian territory) commanded by Muhammad bin Qasim in 712 A.D. succeeded in third attempt. Islamic rulers would offer three conditions to their enemies. Convert to Islam, or pay Jizya every year or face war to death. Those who refused war and refused to convert were deemed to have agreed to pay Jizya. When Muhammad bin Qasim took control of Sindh, he adopted a conciliatory policy, asking for acceptance of Muslim rule by the natives in return for non-interference in their religious practices and beliefs, if the natives paid their taxes.⁴ He established Islamic Sharia law over the people of the region, however, Hindus were allowed to rule their villages and settle their disputes according to their own laws and traditional hierarchical institutions, including the Village Headmen and Chieftain were maintained. He imposed the Jizya and Kharaj on non-Muslims. This was the first introduction of Jizya to the Zimmis and the Hindu People.⁵

Delhi Sultanate expanded the area of Jizya and the vast area of this tax was enlarged during the Mughal Empire rule. The tax rates and amounts were fixed and strictly implemented. Jizya is obligatory on non-Muslims regardless of income or wealth; no minimum (Nisab) to determine Jizya. It is payable on all assets and income, paid yearly or quarterly regardless to Nisab. The rate of Jizya and Kharaj tax, exceeded 20%. The highest rates ranged from 33% to 80% of all annual farm produce on land inside the Islamic empire. Alauddin Khilji legalized the enslavement of the Jizya and kharaj taxes. Alauddin Khilji believes that Islam requires imposition of Jizya on Hindus, to show contempt and to humiliate the Hindus and imposing Jizya is a religious duty of the Sultan. The predecessors of Khilji and Tughlaq dynasty rulers exempted all Hindu Brahmins from Jizya.⁶ But Firoz Shah Tughlaq imposed the Jizya on Brahmins too.⁷ This tax discrimination was continued till the period of Mughal emperor Humayun. Akbar adopted a more liberal policy of religious tolerance, attempting to foster communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims.⁸ He introduced the teachings of Guru Nanak, Kabir and Chaitanya, the verses of the Persian poet Hafez which advocated human sympathy and a liberal outlook towards the other religious people. Towards his sympathy to non-Muslims Akbar temporarily abolished Jizya tax in 1564.⁹ This was later reintroduced by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in April 1679. Jizyah was imposed both on the Zimmis (the people of the Book) and the Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhist.

Aurangzeb's Fatwa on Jizya and its nature :

Aurangzeb put forth a Fatwa on Jizya. The nature of the Jizya is as above. It is obligatory upon 1.the free.2. adult members of those who are generally fought.3. who are fully in possession of their mental faculties and4. gainfully employed. There are two types of Jizya.¹⁰ The first is imposed by treaty or consent, such that it is established in accordance with mutual agreement, according to al-Kafi. The amount does not go above or below the stipulated amount, as is stated in al-Nahr al-Faiq. The second type is the Jizya that the leader imposes when he conquers the unbelievers (kuffar) and whose amount he imposes upon the populace in accordance with the amount of property they own, as in al-Kafi. This is an amount that is pre-established, regardless of whether they agree or disagree, consent to it or not. The amount paid was not specified by Sharia. Aurangzeb was a fanatic follower of Sunni sect Islam. The Jizya was a part of the anti-Hindu policy of Aurangzeb. He made Elaborate arrangements for the assessment and collection of Jizya. There were three following grades of assessment.

1. A Hindu whose property was worth 200 Dirhams paid 12 Dirhams as Jizya. It was about 6 per cent of the property.
 2. Persons whose property varied from 200 Dirhams or Rs. 52 to Rs. 2,500 paid 24 Dirhams.
 3. Persons whose property was worth more than 10,000 Dirhams, paid a lump sum of 48 Dirhams.
- It is evident that the incidence of the Jizya was less in the case of the rich. However, the rich paid the whole amount in a lump sum and the others could pay in installments. There were certain exemptions from the Jizya. Minors, women, beggars, slaves, the blind, the crippled, the mentally deficient and the unemployed were not required to pay. In very exceptional cases, Jizya was also remitted by the state.¹¹

Khafi Khan stated that thousands of Hindus gathered together to protest against the imposition of Jizya. Refusal and failure to pay Jizya by any non-Muslim subject in a Muslim state was a capital crime, punished by his family's arrest and enslavement. The women and girls of an enslaved family would become property of a Muslim master and serve as house workers and slaves. In some cases, the family could escape this punishment by converting to Islam.

As Aurangzeb could not tolerate the agitation by the Hindus, elephants were deployed to crush the resistance by non Muslims who refused to submit to Jizya collectors. Thus it is clear that its object was to have converts to Islam by harassing the Hindu. Any Hindu could escape from the Jizya by becoming a Muslim. No wonder, a large number of Hindus were converted to Islam in this way.¹²

CONCLUSION:

Scholars critics Jizya as a form of discrimination, persecution and oppression in Islamic law. Though the supporters says Jizya as a form of protection money and a religious requirement against non-believers in Islam per Sharia, the non-Muslims could not oblige it and often resist this illegal tax. Aurangzeb strictly collect this tax and those who cannot pay this tax, their families must be enslaved by him. The historian John F. Richards stated that, "Aurangzeb's ultimate aim was conversion of non-Muslims to Islam. Whenever possible the emperor gave out robes of honor, cash gifts, and promotions to converts. It quickly became known that conversion was a sure way to the emperor's favor." According to Sir Wolseley Haig, "The religious policy of Aurangzeb was disastrous. His great-grandfather had striven to remove the religious and social barriers which divided the various classes of his subjects, and, though exception can be taken to his methods, none can be

taken to the end which he had in view. His grandfather, the son of a Hindu mother, held liberal, even lax views on religion. His father was a better Muslim than either Akbar or Jahangir, but, except in the case of political offenders, bridled his zeal. But Aurangzeb was a bigot to whom the religion of the great majority of his subjects was anathema, mischief, idolatry, which it was his duty before heaven to persecute, and if possible to stamp out. His method was iconoclasm, sacrilege, economic repression, bribery, forced conversion and restriction of worship.”

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