

## Coinage and Taxation in ‘Tughlaq’

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### ABSTRACT

Tughlaq is a well known king in Indian history, who ruled India in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Karnad's Tughlaq is known in the Indian history for his wickedness and insane policies than anything else. He has immortalized this character in the play *Tughlaq*. Tughlaq has the extraordinary character to come on the throne of Delhi. In religion, in philosophy, even in calligraphy, in battle, in war field, in anything we talk about, he seems to have anyone who came before him or after him. Muhammad was, without any doubt, the most educated of all Muslim rulers who ruled in Delhi. Muhammad was actually a brilliant man, with great vision and surprising insight. In fact many historical writers are of the view that he was far ahead of his time, though Barani seems to suggest that Muhammad was not so much ahead of time. Muhammad was a deeply religious man and had learnt *Holy Quran* by heart. He used to quote verse of the *Quran* during his conversation. Tughlaq is known for his active interest in experimenting with the coinage. An experiment with his forced currency placed him in the rank of one of the greatest moneyed kings in Indian history though it wasn't successful in India. Muhammad introduced token currency for the first time in India, modeled after the Chinese example, using brass or copper coin backed by gold or silver coin kept in the treasury is resembled to the present India government. The prime Minister of India band old currency and introduce new currency. Tughlaq, very early in his regime, began to show an interest in the matter of taxation. He exempted the Jiziya tax, a religious tax, Hindu had to pay. Because he wanted to build a powerful nation and without Hindu-Muslim unity it couldn't have been possible. The Koran sanctions only four taxes. Any tax

imposed today is direct tax like water, house tax, electric tax, wealth tax or income tax etc.

**Key words:-** Jiziya, Kalima, *Holy koran*, Dinar, famine.

### INTRODUCTION

Tughlaq is a well known king in Indian history, who ruled India in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He is known in the Indian history for his wickedness and insane policies than anything else. Karnad's has immortalized this character in the play *Tughlaq*. Tughlaq has the extraordinary character to come on the throne of Delhi. In religion, in philosophy, even in calligraphy, in battle, in war field, in anything we talk about, he seems to have anyone who came before him or after him. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq after the tragic death of his father Ghias-ud-din, in 1325, soon declares himself as a sultan of Delhi under the title of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq originally named Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Junna Khan. He was second and most remarkable ruler of Tughlaq dynasty. He was the first Sultan to have the vision to see India as a whole country, and not just as a sort of cake for every ambitious aspiration to carve a kingdom out of it. He was also relatively liberal and he permitted Hindus and Jains to settle in Delhi. Tughlaq was born in 1300 in well-to-do family of Tughlaq nobles. He received the best education available. An experiment with his forced currency placed him in the rank of one of the greatest moneyed kings in Indian history though it wasn't successful in India. Muhammad introduced token currency for

the first time in India, modelled after the Chinese example, using brass or copper coin backed by gold or silver coin kept in the treasury. Tughlaq, very early in his regime, began to show an interest in the matter of taxation. He exempted the Jiziya tax, a religious tax, Hindu had to pay. The Koran sanctions only four taxes. These four taxes are Khiraj, Zakat, Jiziya and Khamas. The fourteenth century Tughlaq is very much resembled to twenty first century India Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

### **Coinage:**

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq is known for his active interest in experimenting with the coinage. He implanted his characters and activities on his coinage and produced abundant gold coins compared to any of his predecessors. He overtook them by executing a fine calligraphy and by issuing number of fractional denomination. An experiment with his forced currency placed him in the rank of one of the greatest moneyed kings in Indian history though it wasn't successful in India. The large influx of gold due to his southern Indian campaign made to adjust the weight and standard of coinage, which was in usage all the while. He added the gold dinar of weight 202 grains compared to the other standard weight of 172 grains. The silver dinar weight 144 grains was his innovation aiming to adjust the commercial value of the metal with respect to gold.

Seven years later, he discontinued it due to lack of popularity and acceptance among his subject. All his coins struck at both Delhi and Daulatabad, and were curious and were issued in memory of his late father. The Kalima appeared in most of his coinage, the titles engraved were the warrior in the cause of God, the trustier in support of the four Khalifs Abubakkar, Umar, Usman and Ali. He minted coin in several places such as Delhi, Lakhnauti, Salgaun, Dorul-I-Islam, Sultanpur (Warrangal), Tughlaqpur (Terhut), Daulatabad (Devagiri), Malik-I-Telang etc. More than thirty varieties of billion coins

are known so far, and the types show his humanistic interest. The copper coins were not fascinating compared to the billion and his gold coinage, but were minted in varieties of fabric. Muhammad introduced token currency for the first time in India, modeled after the Chinese example, using brass or copper coin backed by gold or silver coin kept in the treasury. Muhammad says it's getting late and I must tell you the more important news. From next year, we shall have copper currency in our empire along with the silver dinar. It's a question of confidence. A question of trust! The other day I heard that in China they have paper currency- paper, mind you- and yet it works because the people accept it. They have faith in the Emperor's seal on the pieces of paper. Sultan compelled Amirs to think that sultan was mad. Amirs told him that people won't accept copper currency. But Sultan says to exchange it for a silver coin. A copper coin will have the same value as silver. Shahib-ud-din says to Sultan, how one can expect a copper coin to have the same value. Amir I also says, people here won't accept copper currency too.

On the first day of his order five hundred carts full of counterfeit coins reach the palace to exchange with silver dinar. However, very few people exchange their gold and silver coins for the new copper ones that the token were to ford, which leads to heavy lost. Step-mother says to Sultan, five hundred carts on the first day! And what's about tomorrow and the days after? You are just legalizing robbery. And how is a treasury full of counterfeit to help them? Will that revive your economy? What's wrong with you? You spent years planning the rose garden.

Sultan can't go against his order. It was Sultan's fault. If he doesn't withdraw the coin now the entire economy will be shattered and it will collapse. It is clear robbery. The economy had already been collapsed. Sultan says only one industry flourishes in his kingdom. Only one and that's making counterfeit copper coins. Every Hindu home has become a domestic

mint; the traders are just waiting for me to close my eyes.

Most wonderful of his coinage is the forced currency. He had two scalable versions, issued in Delhi and Daulatabad. They obeyed two different standards, that probably to satisfy the local standard pre-existed in north and the south. Sultan's skill in forcing the currency is remarkable. He engraved; who obeys the Sultan obeys the compassionate to fascinate people to accept the new media. Inscription was even engraved in Nagari Ugend, but because of the metal, which is made, the coinage doomed. The easily forgeable copper and brass coinage turned every Hindu house into a mint and soon Sultan withdrew forged currency by paying in billion of gold.

#### **Taxation:**

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, very early in his regime, began to show an interest in the matter of taxation. He ordered the compliant of the revenue and expenditure of all the province of his kingdom. This meant that the Governor of the province was required to send to Delhi all relevant documents for the record. The result was the revenue department in Delhi came to know the exact income and expenses of each province. Consequently the whole revenue system worked pretty smoothly. But in the later years he exempted the Jiziya tax, a religious tax, Hindu had to pay. Because he wanted to build a powerful nation and without Hindu-Muslim unity it couldn't have been possible. A Muslim by the name Aziz, a dhobi, appeared disguised as a Brahmin called Vishnu Prasad who has filed a suit against the Sultan that his land has been seized illegally by the officer of the state and that he should be given just compensation for the loss of the land and the privation resulting therefore. Just the Kazi considers the Brahmin's claim. Kazi says the Sultan is guilty of illegal appropriation of land. The kazi-i-Mumalik was further declared that in return for the land and in compensation of the privation resulting from its lost, the said Vishnu

Prasad should receive a grant of five hundred silver dinars from the state treasury and in addition to this grant a post in civil service to ensure him a regular and adequate income. The irony is masked and later unmasked when the Brahmin turns out to be a Muslim called Aziz. The people in general, yet, do not know the truth about Aziz as a Brahmin and Aazam joining the civil service under the Sultan to materialize his dream of Hindu-Muslim unity and equality.

He declared openly that both Hindu and Muslim would be treated impartially and would be equal in the eyes of the laws. The Hindu, as the Islam says must pay the Jiziya tax. This was the Muslim law. He did it against the Koran. The Koran sanctions only four taxes. These four taxes are Khiraj, Zakat, Jiziya and Khamas. Sultan levied a large number of taxes out of which about twenty-five were abolished by his successors, who followed the *Holy Koran* both in letter and spirit. In the matters of taxation, the Sultan deviated from Koran and incurred the wrath of the orthodox Muslims. He did not impose Jiziya on Hindu. Hindu doesn't believe a word of it. There's something more in this, that much is obvious. Because they were afraid of Sultan's hypocrisy. Sultan wanted to treat Hindus as equal with Muslims. The young Muslim reacted sharply and violently to this statement of the Hindu and calls him an 'Ungrateful wretch'. The old Muslim warned the young Muslim becoming a friend of the Hindu. Old man says: this wretch is our best friend, Jamal. Beware of the Hindu who embraced you. Before you know what, he'll turn Islam into another caste and call the prophet an incarnation of his god.

With his very next idea the Sultan displayed the lack of balanced judgments that he soon came to be associated with. The Doab region between the Ganga and the Jamuna rivers was, and still is, a very fertile plain. So Sultan Muhammad quite fairly concluded that since the farmers of this region were rich they could afford to pay

more tax than those of less fertile region. The idea itself was sound but the execution was not. Taxes were increased as much as twenty fold and what's more, the Sultan also insisted on reviving old forgotten taxes and levying those too in this region. Worse, the measure was adopted at time the area was in the grip of a severe famine. Consequently thousands perished and the peasantry started fluxing their homes.

Any tax imposed today is resented. Direct tax- may be house tax, water tax, wealth tax, or income tax-is most vehemently criticized. They hardly realize that taxes thus collected can be utilized for the building of roads and roadways for providing more and more convenience and comforts to the people. Their only aim is to make the best use of for rousing the people against the government.

## CONCLUSION

Tughlaq very much resembles to the politician of today. The craftiness of Tughlaq did parallel in the arch-trickery and meanness adopted by those in power to wipe out the opposition and also that of the opposition to throw out the rules in India after independence and also in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Tughlaq forceful introduce coinage place him in the rank of one the greatest moneyed king in India history. Tughlaq introduced of copper coinage against silver is very much resembled to present day Modi government. Today in India, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi band the old currency of Rs. 500 and 1000 on November 8<sup>th</sup> at 8.p.m night 2016 and introduced new 2000 rupees note. Modi also place him in the rank of one of the greatest moneyed in the world and in India after Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. It also resemble in the exchange duration. In Tughlaq not mention the time duration for exchange of coinage but in Modi government gave three months durations for the exchange of old currency with new currency. The reason behind is to demolished fake currency and black money.

Karnad makes use of some actions of Tughlaq. Tughlaq lifted the Jiziya and imposed taxes impartially on the Hindu. Because he wanted to build powerful India as a whole. He thinks without Hindu-Muslim unity it impossible. So he exempted jiziya tax. Any tax imposed today is direct tax like water, house tax, electric tax, wealth tax or income tax etc. Theses collected taxes utilized for the construction of road, building houses, salary etc.

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