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Alauddin Khalji B.A. Part III

(Paper V)

The period which saw the rule of Khalji dynasty witnessed important changes in the socio-economic and administrative structure of the Delhi Sultanate. It also gave new orientation to the nature of the state policy and priority in India.

He ascended the throne in 1296 A.D. He didn't accept the liberal, humanitarian precepts of his uncle. He was more closer to the Balban's policy. He pursued the policy of FERA as a basis for his government.

Alauddin Khalji's agrarian and market reforms should be seen both in the context of the efforts at the internal reconstruction of the sultanate, as also the need to create a large army to meet the threat of recurrent Mongol invasion.

The essence of Alauddin Khalji's agrarian reforms was to bring the village in closer association with the government in the area extending from Dipalpur and Lahore to Kanva near modern Allahabad.

In this region, the villages were to be brought under KHALISA i.e. not assigned to any of the nobles as Iqta. Lands assigned in charitable grants were also confiscated and brought under Khalisa. Further, the land revenue (Kharaj) in this area was fixed at half of the produce and assessed on the basis of measurement.

Barani doesn't tell about the method and mode of the measurements of the fields. On the basis of his measurement of the area under cultivation at a standard of expected production per biswa, the share of

The state was determined. No extra
cesses were to be levied, except a
grazing tax on cattle and Chare on houses.
(Bolt) These taxes had been levied earlier
and were traditional. The land revenue was
calculated in kind but demanded in Cash.

Measurement was an old system but
was not in practice. Its system application
over a wide area was a significant consolidation
of Alauddin. The bringing of Dah under
Khalisa and establishing direct relation with the
cultivator didn't mean that all intermediaries
were wiped out from the system.

Since long there was a hierarchy of
intermediaries in the rural areas, with the
Rai, Rana, Raut standing at the top. These
were called chiefs. A chief controlled
considerable tract of land which was
divided among his clan and other supporters
for collecting land revenue.

At the village level, there was the
village head called CHAUDHARI or MUGADDAM.

As the Turkish Sultan consolidated itself
in the doabs, the power and authority
of the rais and ranas was eroded and
all some of them were displaced. In
the process, there was the rise of a
new set of intermediaries who operated
at the pargana or shiq level. These
apparently were the people whom
Barani called khuts and for whom
the word zamindar is used for
first time time by KHUSRAU.