

Allauddin Khelji's Agrarian Reforms

The word zamindar began to be used widely later on for all types of intermediaries. Allauddin's agrarian reforms implied pulling greater pressure for the displacement of the raiis and rajas. However, we know that many of the chiefs who paid lump sum of money to the state as land revenue received into the 16th and 17th centuries. In other words, the land dominated by such chiefs were not brought under Khelji's

In the area brought under KHALISA, Allauddin tried to curb the privilege of the Kheljis, muqaddams and Chaudhans. These sections from the rural aristocracy and according to Barani were rich enough to ride Arabi and Iraqi horses wear weapons and fine clothes and indulge in wine drinking and hold convivial parties.

Their wealth was based on their holding the best lands in the village. Also, in a system where the village was assessed as a whole (called group assessment), they often passed on the burden of their share of the land revenue on the shoulder of the weak.

Allauddin not only forced the Kheljis, muqaddams and Chaudhans to pay the grazing and house tax like the others and though the system of measurement ensured that they could not pass on their burden of land revenue on to the shoulder of the others.

They were also deprived of the khata charges for the collecting land revenue. Thus, in the language of Baranis, they were reduced to the level of the BAJATHA. They could not afford to ride horses, wear fine cloths or eat fat, and the women were forced to go and work in the house of muslims for wages.

Since it was hardly possible for Alauddin to effect the redistribution of lands in the village and these seelars generally held the best land. They must have consented to remain a privilege seelars in village society. However, we may accept Baranis' account for the fear of punishment, these seelars become obedient and would go to the collector's office for payment of land revenue even at the behest of Da'ud.

It seems that the cultivators lost on the other hand what they had gained from the other side. The market reform of Alauddin's affected them adversely for the policy was to leave the cultivator with small little to live. The fear of the government was such that the cultivators would sell even their wives and cattle to pay land revenue.

Alauddin tried to ensure the efficient and honest working of the revenue machinery. This was not easy since with the extension of the khata language of account that was required.