



Dogra Rule and Socio Economic Condition of Kashmir

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ABSTRACT: The economic situation of Kashmir's was highly pathetic. Muslims were discriminated not only on economic front but also the rulers interfered with their religious liberties. The feudal character of the state was evident in the claim of its ruler that all lands in Kashmir belonged to him. However, workers have learnt the art of different crafts that have helped a lot to raise their standard of life under highly pathetic conditions. The paper will highlight various issues and concerns that people of Kashmir went through during Dogra rule.

Keywords: Conditions, Dogra rule, Kashmir, Economy.

I. INTRODUCTION

The territory of Jammu and Kashmir with its current limits was established by Maharaja Gulab Singh, through a different understanding by the East India Company with Raja Gulab Singh at Amritsar on the sixteenth of March 1846. This understanding is prominently known in the historical backdrop of Jammu and Kashmir state as the treaty of Amritsar. By this settlement Kashmir was offered to Gulab Singh for money installment of 75 lakhs of rupees. A similar arrangement perceived Gulab Singh as the Maharaja of the Jammu and Kashmir state. Along these lines was established the territory of Jammu and Kashmir [1].

Socio- Economic conditions under the Dogras:

During the period of the Dogras the people of the state suffered miserably. There is no doubt that the British gave the state a semblance of peace and to some extent ameliorated the conditions of the people but actually their policies at best helped the "the upper class of the Hindus in particular to consolidate and build up themselves at the expenses of the masses. The masses remained in abject poverty [2].

The reasons for economic backwardness of the masses were due to the very character of the state, its institutions of the Jagirdari system of revenue taxation and corrupt administration. Jammu and Kashmir was a feudal state with some variations. The feudal character of the state was evident in the claim of its ruler that all lands in Kashmir belonged to him. The Maharaja was thus the biggest Jagirdar at the apex of a chain of Jagirdaris subordinate to him [3-4].

Administration: The Dogra rulers in order to have a class loyal to the state filled the state administration with the Punjabis and dogras and also Kashmiri Pandits but not Kashmiri Muslims. Though the Muslims constituted the majority of the state population and the major tax payers of the state but they were not considered fit for the state business and very few (Muslims) were employed on high positions. In 1930 in the bureaucracy, Hindus and Sikhs held 78% of the gazetted appointments compared to the administrative jobs, it gave them political power and authority [2].

The Rajputs who being the brethren of the Maharaja, were appointed on high posts in administration, although, they were mostly illiterate. Although there were many Muslims from Punjab in the administration. They either were too much loyal to represent Muslim grievances or were not enjoying actual power. In 1930, a civil service recruitment board was formed for the recruitment of the candidates in the state. It laid down that only those would be recruited who belonged to a notable family and were not above 20 years of age [5].

It was against the Muslims because majority of them came from poor family and middle class, not notable family and they because of illiteracy would start education late of their age. The government had also power to reject an appointment of any candidate. Moreover, the recruitment board could appoint only 40% positions while as 60% was

the monopoly of the government. Also in place of Persian and Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit with which Muslims were not familiar, were introduced as optional languages [6].
Even then the working of the recruitment board was not satisfactory.

Table 1.

Department Executive	Non Muslim	Muslims
Public works	183	54
Electrical and Mechanical	47	03
Revenue		
– (wazirs – Tehsildars)	67	22
– (Girdawaris and Patwaris) Mirpur	131	31
– Reasi	85	09
(Clerical)		
– Finance	368	29
– Public work	194	03
– Judicial	162	21
(Menials)		
–Public works	120	23
–Customs	314	108
–Forest	784	278
–Stationary\ printing press	66	05

II. EDUCATION

Politically suppressed and economically downtrodden, the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir state were also educationally backward. In the rural areas where they constituted more than 80% of the total population, their illiteracy was almost 100%. The causes of their backwardness in education were manifold, their own ignorance, the conservative outlook of their religious leaders, and the unsympathetic attitude of non Muslims towards the Muslim students in the government schools and the discriminatory policies of the Dogra administration. When the western system of education was introduced in the state during the eighties of the 19th century, the Muslims did not respond [1].

They were in those days under the influence of their religious leaders. These religious leaders set great store by religious education to the exclusion of other fields of education .They exerted their co- religionists that so long as they truly followed the Quran and Hadith the Muslim community would make great progress. So the Hindus made tremendous progress by providing education to their children. They entered in government services and took monopoly in different departments of the state. This proved an eye- opener for men of wisdom and foresight among a section of Muslim community. Having realized the advantages of western learning these men began to approach, the Government to grant them some facilities enabling them to make rapid advance in the sphere of education [7].

But they received no encouragement, moreover, the atmosphere in the government schools was not suitable for them, for they found that the “educational advance of their community was impossible in the government schools which were staffed entirely by Hindu teachers and officers. These Hindu teachers did not take sufficient interest in the education of Mohammadans.

Due to the unsympathetic attitude of the Hindu teachers a sufficient number of Muslim teachers was thought necessary to be appointed, so that the Muslim children were encouraged and drawn in bulk to these government schools. There were 718 Muslim teachers out of the total number of 2201 and out of 49 headmasters of middle schools only 3 were Muslims, one out of 14 headmasters of high schools was a Muslim. Another reason for Muslim's backwardness in training was their unfriendly financial conditions. The Muslim guardians were not in a situation to pay the school charges for teaching their young men. Neediness as a factor in the method of their training was not a reason, however a genuine obstacle. The most significant reason for the instructive backwardness of Muslims was the counter Muslim mentality of the Dogra organization. In 1909, Maharaja Pratap Singh had guided his instruction clergyman to draw up a plan for making essential training mandatory all through the state, yet the priest was not pleasing to this. The idea of free and mandatory instruction was dismissed by the priest was dismissed on the ground that the measure would be viewed as Zooloom and would subsequently be feared by the uneducated guardians as opposed to be invited as an aid. The priest argued that if the working class offspring of Muslim guardians were meddled with, the guardians would not take it merciful, that without open lively men the advantages of the measure would not be comprehended by the individuals and so on [8].

The indifference of the Maharajas organization towards the Muslim instruction had persuaded his Muslim subjects that nothing could spare them aside from their own endeavors. Since the start of the current century the Muslims

had been squeezing their entitlement to training. They had additionally settled, in 1905, their very own school under the aegis of the Anjuman – I-Nusratul – Islam which following a couple of years was raised to secondary school. In any case, one single school couldn't take care of the general issue of their instruction. They proceeded with their endeavors for getting an ever increasing number of instructive offices. In any case, shockingly their requests and petitions went unnoticed and they started to contact the persuasive Muslims outside the state and familiarize them with their abhorrent conditions. Because of this contact, The All India Mohammadean Conference sent in 1913 a nomination headed by Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan. The delegation introduced a notice to the Maharaja mentioning him to give his Muslim subjects offices for training [7].

Last the Government sent their own training official, Mr Sharp to explore and guidance the Darbar on instructive plans in the state. He started his visit to the instructive organizations in Kashmir and met the authorities, educationists and different other open men. At long last Mr Sharp conceded that the Muslims of Kashmir had been experiencing instructive inabilities and that the need of great importance was to improve their conditions.

Mr Sharp made the different proposals to the Kashmir Durbar. Initially, to build the quantity of elementary schools with the goal that every town having in excess of 500 individuals, living in it ought to have one school. Furthermore, to offer preparing to the understudies in government schools in an average type of calligraphy known as Shikasta Navisi and to town young men in learning the patwar that is town bookkeeping. Thirdly, to expand the quantity of Arabic educators by one hundred. Fourthly, to concede unique grant for Muslim educators for their expert preparing with the goal that they were altogether populated by Muslims and so forth.

The proposals of Mr Sharp were "authorized by his Excellency yet were delicately treated by his priests and guidelines gave by him were only here and there followed by those incharge of Education Department who were perpetually (non – Muslim) non Kashmir's. Not just this, there was a horrifying victimization Muslims was clear in the Medical Department . The posts of menials, for example, khidmatgaris and cooks, didn't require any capability [3]. mir. In fact, non Muslims predominated as cooks, compounders, and khidmatgaris The relative strength of Hindus and Muslims in the posts is clear from the Table 2.

Table 2.

		Muslims	Non Muslims	Total
1.	Khidmatgars	12	38	50
2.	Cooks	9	29	38
3.	Compounders	4	55	59
	Total	25	122	147

As per the posts of officers and clerks in other Departments these were invariably manned by member of the pandit community. In the forest department, for example, the strength of the official establishment was 213. Out of this, the number of Muslims was only two _ clerks of the lowest rank. Out of a total strength of 184 officials in Accounts Department, only 13 were Muslims - 10 clerks, one examiner, one superintendent and one assistant accounts officer. In the Medical Department not a single Muslim was on the staff of its office establishment and same was the case in all other departments [8-9].

III CONCLUSIONS

The economic liberation of people of Kashmir was the most fundamental feature of the programmes and activities of the Muslim Conference and later on of National Conference. It also worked for the social upliftment of Kashmir people during Dogra rule. The causes of their backwardness in education were manifold, their own unawareness, the traditional outlook of their religious leaders, and the unsympathetic approach of non Muslims towards the Muslim students in the government schools and the prejudiced policies of the Dogra management.

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