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Q. Discuss the role of Zakat in promoting social justice within a society. Explain how structured distribution can alleviate poverty and contribute to economic stability.

### 1. Introduction:

Zakat is one of the pillars of Islamic worship and focuses on the redistribution of wealth. It helps achieve Islam's goal of a welfare society. Zakat is an important tool in achieving social justice. The impact of Zakat on society shows itself in the form of poverty alleviation and economic stability.

### 2. The concept of Zakat:

Zakat was made obligatory on Allah.

#### a. Literal meaning of Zakat:

It means to "purify" or to "grow".

#### b. Contextual meaning of Zakat:

Zakat is the contribution given by Muslims, from their wealth, annually.

### 3. Zakat in the light of Quran and Sunnah:

The importance of Zakat has been highlighted by the Quran and by the Holy Prophet (SAW)

a. Zakat in light of Quranic verse:

In the Quran Allah tells Muslims to pay Zakat.

"Offer prayer and pay alms."  
Al-Quran

b. Zakat in light of Hadith:

when sending Muad to Yemen the Prophet (Saw) told him to teach the people of Yemen about Zakat.

"Teach them that Allah has made it obligatory for them to pay Zakat from their property and it is to be taken from ~~those~~ wealthy among them and given to the poor."

Al-Hadith

4. The concept of social justice and welfare society in Islam:

Islam acknowledges that social differences are inevitable however it also recognizes that basic necessities should be provided to the poor, needy and all those who are in need of financial help.

## 5. Zakat as a tool for social justice:

Zakat allows an opportunity to offer greater rights to the lesser privileged. Zakat funds help the government budget and hence the government will have more means to start social projects focused on sustainable development and economic stability. Zakat discourages hoarding and encourages introduction of wealth back into society, this helps in uplifting society. Zakat also helps sustain Islamic societies as it reduces social discriminations.

## 6. a. wealth redistribution.

The rich have a tendency to hoard wealth but Zakat obliges them to give a portion of it to the poor, ensuring wealth redistribution.

## b. Poverty alleviation:

Zakat is an effective way of tackling the crisis of poverty. In the era of Prophet (SAW) there were no longer any people who could receive Zakat.

## i. Zakat encourages self reliance and discourages begging

Individuals who receive Zakat

will be less likely to beg others for financial aid and are more likely to focus on making do with what they receive.

ii- Zakat allows opportunities for permanent escape from poverty

Zakat can be invested in social projects meant to build intellectual capacity and financial literacy of the lesser privileged offering them an escape from the clutches of poverty.

iii- "From the wealthy to the poor."

Zakat ensures that all members of the society are financially capable of surviving society and it achieves this by providing the poor with means to meet their basic needs via the charity given by the wealthy.

c. Economic Stability:

The greatest asset of muslim nations for achieving economic stability is Zakat

i- Inflation control:

Giving all members purchasing and spending power controls inflation and keeps prices at bay.

ii- Investment in society rather than hoarding wealth:

When the wealthy are forced to let go of some portion of their wealth, this is much more likely to introduce productive investment in social projects in the form of Zakat funds.

iii- Pakistan as an example:

The majority of population in Pakistan consists of Muslims. It is estimated that the equivalent of 4% of GDP is at least donated as Zakat every where. This is not the full potential of the Zakat collection in Pakistan. By ensuring proper Zakat collection and usage of Zakat funds, Pakistan can reduce poverty and take steps towards economic stability.

6. Conclusion:

For any society to ensure that people are having their needs met it is essential for it to ensure the practice of Zakat. It is an act favoured by God and offered by Islam for Muslims to follow to ensure financial and economic stability. Indeed by ensuring implementation of Zakat, Muslims can tackle

a wide range of problems.

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