Q) Examine Zia-ud-Din Barani’s concept of Ideal Polity/Theory of Kingship.

Ans: Zia-uddin-Barani (1285-1360), a South Asian scholar, mostly known for his writings on the “history and politics of the Delhi Sultanate”. The major book on the political philosophy of the Delhi Sultanate is the principle of government in his book ‘’ Fatwa-i-Jahandari’’.He used the Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni as his spokesman through his book. According to Barani, the king should apply Islamic Shari'at in all aspects of life fairly and objectively”.

Barani wanted the Shari'at must be adapted to the specific circumstances of each community without compromising the essential principles of Islam. To this end, Barani encouraged the monarchy to live “a pretentious life and to behave as individuals with distinct personalities.”

**Theory and nature of kingship:**

Like a practical philosopher, Barani lays down guidelines that would serve as a basis on which a king could evolve various institutions such as the judiciary, army, welfare state, etc.

As explained in Advice II, the king should be very particular in preparing a schedule for his duties. Once he prepares such a schedule the same must be strictly observed by himself and his state officers. While preparing his schedule the king should remember that most of his time should go in the service of the people and conducting state matters.

To rule successfully, the king must keep up good intentions in the way of God and Shari‟at, as explained in Advice 1 and 2. The king needs constant advice from scholars, experts, and intellectuals. As Barani says in Advice 3 even the Prophet of Islam despite being the Messenger of God used to consult his companions regularly. The king should follow the same way.

**NOBILITY**

The nobility was the second component of the monarchy. The nobles were the chosen individuals whom the Sultan assigned „the right to levy the revenue in particular territories‟ which was known as Iqta.

It was the basic unit of landed property whose holders formed the main class of landed proprietors.

The iqtas were frequently transferred from one person to another, which made them non-hereditary.

The selection of such people by the Sultan, therefore, was crucial for which Barani set certain guidelines, and advised the king to be careful. The king is suggested to appoint good persons as commanders, administrators, and other officers of state. Along with this, Holy Prophet‟s sayings should also be well remembered. Every one of you is a responsible person and he/she is accountable to God about his/her responsibility”. Due to the importance of their functions, the king should be very careful in selecting and appointing his officers of the state. Sincere, God-fearing, and devoted persons should be appointed. Persons of low birth, bad habits, irreligion, and short sightedness should not be appointed.

Advice 12 outlines the Adoption of Certain Principles necessary for successful administration and expeditions. The king should not only establish effective administration in the state but rather he should also endeavour to cultivate in himself all the features of Godhood. His real purpose in establishing order and discipline in the state should be to establish truth in every walk of life. His state should give Islamic Shari‟ah and the Islamic Millat a high position of honour and respect. **IDEAL POLITY** :

**Laws and General Administration**:

Barani categorized laws into two kinds, the Shariat and the Zawabit. While the Shariat meant the teachings and practices of the Prophet and the pious Caliphs, the Zawabit was the state laws formulated by the monarch in consultation with the nobility in the changed circumstances to cater to the new requirements which the Shariat was unable to fulfill. It was ideal for the king, nobility, and the personnel of administration to follow the Shariat, both in the personal domain and in public policies. The state laws, however, were also to be formulated in case of the inability to follow/apply the Shariat. But he cautioned simultaneously that the lawmakers must take into account the practices of the past and contemporary socio-political conditions while formulating the laws.

**Justice:**

According to Barani, the fundamental justification for kings' supremacy and for exercising their power and dignity is the necessity of **imposing justice (Advice V).** While dispensing justice, "the king should be aware of the appropriate occasions for both pardon and punishment," according to the Bible (Advice XII). Those who were rebellious, cruel, mischievous, and so on had to be punished, but pity and forgiveness had to be shown to those who confessed their sins and sought forgiveness (Advice XIII). However, one aspect of justice was conspicuously absent from all of Barani's deliberations: the delivery of justice was to be based on the religious practises of the subjects, even though he made no mention of different sorts of justice for Hindus and Muslims in his writings.

**Army**:

Another fundamental component of a good government or king is **maintaining a well-organized and disciplined armed forces force**. Out of the three main pillars of the administration, the army was the preeminent one that was organized on the decimal system and based on the Turkish-Mongol model. It was divided into four parts, viz., infantry (foot soldiers or payaks), cavalry (horsemen), war-elephants and auxiliary, viz., boats, engineers, transporters, scouts, spies, etc. The cavalry was further divided into three wings, viz., murattab, sawar, and do-aspah, which respectively meant a soldier without a horse, a soldier with a single horse, and a soldier with two horses. The rank and file such as khan, malik, amir, sipahsalar, etc. (Advice VII) which were composed of Turks, Tartars, Rajputs, and others were paid either in cash or were assigned the revenues of different villages as per their grades. He should devote a significant amount of time and resources to recruiting and retaining such a group. The army's requirements and provisions should be satisfied to the extent possible so that troops and other dedicated employees can become self-sufficient in terms of their material requirements. This will allow them to dedicate all of their energies to advancing the state and the kingship. The commanders of such an army and the leaders of such a dedicated workforce should be nice and compassionate individuals. They should be well-versed in the subject matter.

**Bureaucracy :**

The bureaucracy was another necessary component of the Sultanate whose basic function was to measure the land and fix and collect the taxes for its disbursement among its beneficiaries. In its absence, the very existence of the ruling class would have become redundant and neither would have the army sustained itself. It operated at three levels, viz., center, province, and village. The Diwan-i -Wazarat is headed by a wazir (the head of revenue and finance, also known as the prime minister) and assisted by a naib, Musharif-i-Mamalik, Mustawfi-i-Mamalik, and dabirs, was at the apex of the revenue department. Corresponding to it at the provincial level, the administration was headed by muqtis or walls. Below him was the Diwan (ministry of revenue) provincial wazir, the counterpart of the central wazir, but more or less with independent charge, who was accountable to the central wazir.

**Welfare and Economic Prosperity** :

The king will be unable to maintain a large army and run an efficient administration unless he takes great care to ensure that the people's financial requirements are met at a low cost. This will also enable him to provide the troops with equipment, transportation, food, and clothing with relative ease. Therefore, as described in Advice 10, he should make a concerted effort to raise people's economic standing and well-being from both the upper and lower socio-economic classes. He should do so while keeping in mind that the future of kingship/government is inextricably related to the well-being of the array and the welfare of the people. To retain the commodities of everyday use at low rates, his primary focus should be to do so. It is also vital for the monarch to ensure that daily necessities are available from government stores and reserves during times of crisis and natural tragedy caused by a lack of rainfall or other circumstances and during times of war. As part of this, he should waive the taxes that farmers are obligated to pay in the event of crop failure.

Strict restrictions should be implemented to create an environment of fair dealing. To be deemed wise, the king must take all feasible and cost-effective measures to keep the pricing of commodities reasonable and affordable while also ensuring that they are available consistently. Therefore, the king should be vigilant, cautious, and inquisitive, and he should put in significant effort to achieve these goals.Furthermore, the king must use sufficient caution to ensure that he does not engage in any activity that conflicts with Islamic beliefs and values.

**Theory of Justice** :

Advice 5 emphasises that fairness is a critical component of Din-i-Islam, which the king should keep in mind at all times. There can be no concept of Din if justice is not present. It is only through applying justice that a sense of balance may be restored in human society. Din and justice are inextricably interwoven, as though they were identical twins. All criminals are brought to justice, and the administration of justice makes order and harmony in society possible. As long as we do not achieve this ideal of justice, the principles of Islam will not be accepted by the majority of the population. The king's justice fosters a pleasant attitude in the community.

At the very least, Barani proposed, “the king should refund or decrease taxes and provide monetary assistance from the treasury until the situation permitted and was essential”. In reality, none of these proposed actions resulted from any charitable reasoning; instead, they were the recommendations of a realist who was concerned with the state's security. As a result, the king should make “a concerted effort to achieve justice in the two ways described above. But, on the other hand, suppose he is unable to live a humble life like the Holy Prophet and the Pious Caliphs”. In that case, he should repent to God Almighty and never hesitate in upholding first equality, which is a matter of utmost importance for his spirit of justice and should never be compromised.

**Conclusion:**

For most of his life, Barani was known for his historical theory, which he repeatedly used in many sectors of society, culminating in an original philosophy of statecraft that distinguished him as both mysterious and distinctive at the same time. His belief in the hereditary status of the nobility, his support for political expediency on the part of the king and nobles, and his contempt for the disadvantaged and underprivileged were some of the most significant aspects of his ideology.He was not anti-Hindu in the traditional sense, as has been alleged, but rather anti-Hindu elites, whom he viewed as a potential threat to the Sultanate's long-term survival. Barani writes after his Fatawa-i-Jahandari that he attained success via a combination of hard work and extensive reading of older works on the system of governance and administration.