91470 - They are owed something by the company and the judge ruled that they should be compensated – do they have to pay zakaah on it?

the question

I work for a petroleum company and they used to give us dinner, then they stopped doing so. A few years later we were given compensation through the courts for those meals, a cash payment between 5,000 and 20,000 dinars. Do we have to pay zakaah on this money? Does it come under the ruling on a debt that is unlikely to be paid or is it regarded like money that was taken from us and therefore is subject to zakaah?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Zakaah is not due on this money until one year has passed since you acquired it, because one of the conditions of zakaah being obligatory is that the wealth should be in one's full possession, and full possession of this money was not achieved until after you received it; before you received it, possession was not established, you might have received it and you might not have, based on the judge’s decision and whether the company was willing to pay.

The scholars of the Standing Committee were asked about a case where the government delayed paying money to those who were entitled to it for nine years – do they have to pay zakaah on it?

They replied:

If the matter is as described, they should wait for one year starting from the date when they receive it, then they should pay zakaah on it. There is no zakaah due for the past because they did not have full possession of it. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (9/284).

And Allaah knows best.