



ECONOMIC CONDITIONS UNDER NORTHERN CIRCARS

History

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ABSTRACT

This piece of paper exhibits how far the economic conditions should be helpful and uplift the agriculturists, Zamindars and poor people in the Northern Circars under the administration of East India Company, afterwards the entire administration came into the hands of British Crown. It is unfortunate that nobody could help them as they expected deeply in the period of the then rulers. The East India Company did not see even the welfare of the people who were lying under the poverty line. At the time all classes of the people were ignored and witnessed the miserable life. In addition to that the permanent settlement was very useful to the Zamindars. It did not safe guard the interests of the ryots sufficiently. Besides modes of revenue settlement, revenue system in Haveli lands, agriculture of the ryots, famines and unfavourable seasons, transport, and communication and condition of the ports were the main cause of the people in the Northern Circars, who had been suffering from economical and financial conditions from the very beginning. No government, No ruler looked after the welfare of the victims of famines and disasters. The cultivation had become an unfavourable occupation. Irrigation works were looked down The real cause of the famines in India is not the failure of rains or the increase of population, but the negligence of the British authorities and the heavy taxation imposed on the people, according to 1813 charter's act, every citizen of England could do his business in British India. This also influenced greatly the agriculture conditions. During the period the rulers were being mental giants but moral dwarfs in the administration. So they turned a deaf ear to the needs and the problems of the people. The whole wealth belonging to India had been looting frequently to their country. In this way the poor became poorer and the Zamindars became richer by means of illegal and over assessments.

KEYWORDS:

Amildars, Agriculture, Asara, Visabad, Amils.

Introduction:

Under East India Company even all classes of people were unable to uplift the nation. The ending stage of Government factories in 1829 and the consequent migration of weavers and a reduction of demand for the agricultural consumer goods had not only the reason, the decline in land revenue, but also accentuated miseries of the agricultural community. So they had neither invest capital nor given sufficient encouragement for their own products. The commercial profits of the Circars, and the ports like Cocand and Masulipatnam were the main attraction for the English East India Company. The Court of Directors¹ decided that there was need to look into the political and financial problems of the Circars. Soon after that the revived committee submitted five reports, two on Chicacole dated 13th September, 1784, and 11th October, 1784, two on Masulipatnam dated 9th February, 1786 and 15th February, 1787 and one on Ganjam dated 25th April, 1788. But the committee succeed in getting much reasonable information, as the Zamindars² and their assistants were not only misguided it but even given wrong information. In the words of James Grant, "the Zamindars had usurped almost independent power by exploiting the political anarchy³ that prevailed before the transfer of power from the Mughals to the English⁴. Infact, Zamindars were not given land and protection, but only the agents of the Company who permitted to get their estates at the pleasure of the Company's Government. They were punished by dismissal for acts of violence.

Regarding the permanent settlement, in 17985 the Governor General Lord Wellesly put another step towards it in the Circars. An Enquiry Committee came into force to submit a report. Basing with the previous policy, the new system was came into force in Northern Circars from 1802-18046. Ganjam and Vizagpatnam were the strong holds of unruly Zamindars. 16 Zamindars⁷ were there at the time of the act. The Web and Alexander committee submitted a report on the implementation of permanent settlement in Vizag, Palakonda Saluru, Toda, Bobbili, Golkonda, Jaipure and Aska etc., by a 18058. Zamindars preferred to live in cities so that they were absentee landlords far away from the lands and in their absence farmers could not get their fairness and deceived them easily.

Thus this became worse due to dishonest administration, unfavorable seasons like floods & famines, lack of transport and neglect of irrigation works. The remaining detailed Economic Conditions under the Northern Circars should be presented scrupulously.

The Circars left an unpleasant picture of economic stagnation and agricultural depression. The permanent settlement act in 1802 was a major problem which ignored the agricultural field completely. The conditions of the craftsmen were pitiable. The implementation of the missionary was the main cause for the fall of handicrafts as they could not compete with machine-made cloths. As a result they kept under agricultural labour. The native industry lost its rich organisations by the useless influence of Zamindars⁹. As a matter of fact cultivation had become an unfavourable profession during the middle of the nineteenth century. The ignorance of irrigation works during the period of East India Company was the main reason which affected the fortunes of the agricultural sector¹⁰.

So the Economic conditions were very poor with all the problems cited already. The East India Company became the master in the Northern Circars. It invested huge money on their business activities at the same time the Company did not spend minimum money for the people of Northern Circars, even after the establishment of its direct authority over the Circars. The company was not in a position to undertake any reform of the revenue administration. So it allowed the big renters and Zamindars to collect the revenue on the condition that they had to pay a fixed amount to the Government. Landlords became independents under another empire, the renters, owners and amildars changed conditions with their inferior officers by agreement of rumsoms or early receipts to reveal the recorded value and the present revenue of lands¹¹. The zamindar had an hereditary interest in the states under their control. The condition of their existence was "eat or be eaten". It caused economic imbalance. The Zamindars were real proprietors of the land. The Company wished to interacting with ryots. The ryots had no relations directly with the Company. The duty of a Zamindar was to look after the location of land kept under his charge, supplying suitable advances to the ryots render justice and collect Government rent from them. He was permitted to enjoy certain loan amount as rent like rumsoms or fees.

Basing on modes of revenue settlement, three types of revenue settlements were being practiced i.e., 1. Asara 2. Visabad¹² 3. Renting system.

The Haveli established a large part of the Northern Circars since formation of the British Government. According to the Circuit Committee reports out of it aumany settlement had long been unpleasant to the Circars both in Zamindaris and Havelis¹³, under this organization the 'Amils' i.e., officials of the Government the revenue

department used to visit the villagers and audit the karnams accounts. The share of the farmer accepted from onehalf to one third(14). The second method of planning of rents by districts only. The Government share was accepted with reference to market rate for the grain.

Especially famines and droughts were an immortal problems in Circars. The serious drought was witnessed in 1790 in the Circars. According to Holmeý "the permanent settlement was a sorrowful mistake.... The poor tenants emerged from it no useful whatever. So the Zamindars unable to pay their rents regularly¹⁵, and their estates were merely sold for the beneficial of the Government. The Haveli lands which were kept under the direct supervision of the Company officials were parceled out into mootas of a convenient size, producing yearly revenue ranging from 1000 to 5000 stag pagodas and sold in public auction to the highest bidders subject to the terms of permanent Zamindari period. The revenue collected by Zamindars (Peshcush) was fixed at 2/3 of the average gross collection of relevant years, varying from eight to thirteen years¹⁶. The Zamindars were permitted 1/3rd of revenue to meet the fees of management of the estates for their own maintenance.

Mr. Elliot, a member of the Board of the Revenue was appointed to look in to the state affairs. He found that the revenue system was failure and illegal collections had been made inhumanly. The Russel Commission was introduced in the year 1836, under sir George Russel, sir Fredric Adams. The Commission toured the Circars to find out the remedies. Some of the estates suffered deeply as permanent tax was heavy and unbearable. There were two reasons for the failure of the permanent settlement. First the inherent defects of the system and second there was not enough capacity and voices of the parties on which the administration system was passed. Sir Thomas Munro after a tour of Northern Circars in 1822 quoted that this system helped to the downfall position of the ryot¹⁷. Dr. Roxburg quoted that, "the Rajahmundry Circar contained some of the finest lands in India which were suitable for the cultivation of a big number of products from sugar-cane to mulberry trees. Though agriculture was in rich condition, the position of the ryots in Northern Circars were very poor. They used to continued only the old methods, out dated instruments in agriculture".

Hughes, Sadler recommended the abolition of the system¹⁸, owing to the under developed state of communications and the lack of irrigation facilities. Sir Arthur Cotton, in one of his memorable packages to the Board of Revenue in 1852, while giving special impotence in order to help the farmers, improved irrigation facilities by giving employment for the labour. In this way out of total period nearly 27 years, climate and seasons were favourable only for 7 years and the rest were either bad or years of famine and floods. There were only 89.5 miles of arranged made-roads available for bullock carts in 1846. There was no betterment in the picture of ports. Regarding to it there was no attempt made during the pre-anicut period to develop any of the harbours and ports in the Northern Circars. Hence the East India Company had been targetted the ports and harbours as their commercial organizations. Thus the transport and communications either by land or by water entirely undeveloped. So the economic conditions were not satisfactory prior to the construction of anicuts over the rivers Godavari and Krishna.

Conclusion :

Though India is one of the richest countries in the world, the people of India are very poor. Of course it had plenty of rich resources, the British government took away the entire prosperity leaving nothing in India, under East India Company i.e., by British rule. At the time their mastership, they treated Indians as their slaves. They appointed some officials to help the British Crown. They never saw the welfare of our country. Economical status became weak. The Circars left economic stagnation and agricultural depression. The conditions of the craftsmen were helpless, because the implementation of machinery. Agriculture had become a curse during the middle of the nineteenth century. The inefficient Zamindars, the implementation of the permanent settlement act in 1802, nothing improvement in irrigation works were the major reasons which destroy the economic conditions. The English Company got the power on the Northern Circars simultaneously, they invest money for their own business activities. The Zamindars used to collect over taxes according to their own interests. Besides all the critical problems, famines, floods and droughts were another cause in the Northern Circars. The so called investigators submitted their report to look in to the welfare of the

farmers, craftsmen and the victims who suffered from disasters. Marshman, Holems, sir Henry Montgomery Bart, Mr. Elliot, Sir George Russel, Sir Fredric Adams, Henry Moris, Thomas Munro, Dr. Roxburgh, Sir Arthur Cotton, Captain Walter Campbell, Dr. Sarada Raju were the great personalities who quoted their reports individually. The permanent settlement was very useful to the Zamindars. This left sad condition which ignored the ryots of small owners whose earnings became the property of Zamindars. The major problem was that the British government never see favourable administration to develop our country. They were selfish; they did not invest a little bit of money for the purpose of the development of our needs. If they might extend their co-operation and humanity, our country should be at somewhat better not only in the economic field but also in all development activities such as agriculture, irrigation, industry and so on.

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