

THE COMPANY SARKAR'S EXPERIMENTATION WITH LAND TENURE AND LAND REVENUE SYSTEMS RESULTING IN THE INDIAN REBELLION OF 1857

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Abstract

This article examines the historical context of British East India Company's (commonly known as Company *Sarkar*) introduced land tenure and revenue systems in British India. In addition, it also unpacks the background of each tenure and revenue systems. Apart from it, the article shows the effects upon the stakeholders – the Company or Company *Sarkar*, Landlords, and Peasants. This article assesses land tenure systems such as Permanent Settlement, *Ryotwari* Settlement, and the *Mahalwari* Settlement. The article also exposes how the Company over the period through these settlement-controlled politics secured its economic interests in the form of revenues and taxes. It also spotlights how these tenures passed the phases of trial and error and caused major social and economic upheavals in the subcontinent. The Permanent Settlement created a new class of landlords to replace the old class with the assumption that investment in the land has to take place. However, *Ryotwari* Settlement enhanced the British officers' interaction with the rural population. The *Mahalwari* Settlement caused the peasants to mortgage their lands to moneylenders, and the Company confiscated their lands due to perpetual failure in paying the rent and arrears. This situation was one of the push factors for the peasants to join the 1857 rebellion.

Keywords: The East India Company, Company *Sarkar*, Land Tenure, Permanent Settlement, *Ryotwari* Settlement, *Mahalwari* Settlement, Land Revenue, Taxes, 1857 Rebellion

Introduction

In the history of Indian Land Settlement, Lord Robert Clive (1725-1774) played an important role. It was enforced with the Allahabad Treaty. The treaty opened a new revenue channel for the Company. It systematically drained the Indian wealth, and the treaty helped the Company to exploit the raw materials and pushed the peasants to cultivate cash crops, which had demand in Europe (Wallerstein, 1988). Furthermore, Warren Hastings (1732- 1818) played an important role in consolidating the British reign in India through the introduction of civil and criminal courts and improved land revenue collection (Weitzman, 1929). In addition, it allowed the revenue collection rights to bidders for a short time. Phillip Francis (1740-1818) argued that farming rights for a short period would not encourage the cultivators to develop the land. Later, Lord Cornwallis (1738- 1805) succeeded Warren Hastings who established the Permanent Settlement to collect the revenue. Phillips Francis and Cornwallis believed that the Permanent Settlement was the only way to develop Indian agriculture. Thus tax collection rights and the property were assigned to *Zamindars* (land lords) (Gidwani, 1992). *Zamindars* were recognized as owners of the land. *Zamindars* were given the rights to

collect the rent from the peasants. Later, Arthur Wellesley (1769-1852) encouraged young officers of the Company to come forward and play an instrumental role in designing the land revenue system of the newly inducted areas. One of them was Thomas Munro (1761-1827) who supported the *Ryotwari* Settlement. Thomas Munro and the young officers were supporters of the Scottish Enlightenment and English Enlightenment. Thomas Munro had proposed the *Ryotwari* Settlement, which addressed the economic as well as political interests of the Company. He was of the view that widening the base of the *Ryot* (individual cultivator) through *Ryotwari* Settlement would enhance agricultural productivity and halt the corruption of *Zamindars*. In *Ryotwari* System, the ownership rights were handed over to the peasants. British Government collected taxes directly from the peasants. Later, the government made some amendments to frame it according to the political and economic interest of the Company. The *Mahalwari* Settlement was the last land tenure system introduced by the Company, and its features were Record of Rights and Record of Assets. The revenue departments' *Tapedars* / *Patwaris* – ledger keepers or village accountants, prepared the records of rights. The settlement's implementation happened through two types of land cultivations, one was the Residential Cultivators, and another was Non-Residential Cultivators. However, the *Mahals* (each *Mahal* comprises one or more villages by extension it is a district) were either heritable or transferable and ownership rights were vested with the peasants subject to their defined arbitrary rules. In this system, the land was divided into *Mahals*. The village committee was held responsible for collection of the taxes. The *Mahals* were under the supervision of *Lamberdar*- the head of the village.

The Company Sarkar's Control and Annexation of Land

There are diversified opinions about the status of land ownership patterns in ancient India (1500 BCE continued to 500 BCE). Land ownership belonged to the kingdom or state during that period. However, private ownership also existed, and its mode was tenurial. Although ancient texts suggest the existence of private ownership of land in the crown land system, Ranajit Guha (1982), inferred that private possession was not natural in ancient India. In addition, land was given higher value in early India and was referred to as '*Dharti Mata*,' '*Bhumi Mata*,' or '*Bhumi Devi*' indicating its sacredness. In the Vedic Age, land was treated as collective property, although individual rights were also established (Singh and Singh, 1977). In those times, land was part of social life, and it contributed to the village-based economy. However, generally, it was accepted that the king had the right to take away the property of the criminals. On the other hand, there was consensus that the king has a responsibility to protect the property of *bona fide* people. The Vedic rules instructed that one must be vigilant about the maintenance of land irrespective of its ownership (Gopal, 1961). Later, in the post-Vedic era, the king was not the owner of the land. However, he had the right to take a share of the produce.

The Muslim era came with a more systematic assessment of land; evaluation of the revenue was also standardized. Sher Shah Suri started the systematic land revenue system, which was later developed by King Akbar (Shariff, 1987). Meanwhile, *Zamindars* emerged as the rural elite and acted as intermediary between the tenants and the state.

The British entered India as traders, while in 1613, the Company got a permit from the Mughal Emperor Jahangir to open a factory at Surat (Rothermund, 2002). In 1757, the fall of Plassey opened the Indian doors for the company. In 1765, the company controlled Bengal and Bihar, when it got the *Diwani* rights from the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II, which was granted to British East India Company to collect revenues. Various parts of undivided India became the subjects of the Company at different times, and the nature of annexing was different. The first one was the Bengal Presidency (Philips, 2013). However, later, the Company conquered or annexed other parts of India. The present day Orissa state came under the control of the Company in 1803. Likewise, in 1824, the British because of the 'First Anglo-Burmese War' occupied Assam (later in 1826, the same was ceded to Britain by Burma). Prior to it in 1765, South India's four districts – Kistna, Godavari, Vizagapatam, Ganjam, and a part of Nellore were possessed as a grant from the emperor (Banerjee and Iyer, 2005). However, its adjacent regions were conquered and made part of Madras Presidency in 1792 and 1801. In addition, in 1803, some areas of Gujarat (the western parts) were conquered, and Mahrattas defeated in 1817-1818 (Wilson, 2015). Resultantly, major areas came under the Bombay Presidency. Furthermore, the Company annexed some of the areas in the Central Provinces and the consolidation continued until 1860. Correspondingly, in 1801-1803, significant parts of the North-West Provinces were gained from Nawab of Oudh.

However, Oudh retained its independence until 1856 (Mishra, 2016). Soon after the defeat of Marathas in 1818, the Company became a significant political power in India (Bowen, 2005). The British agents were empowered to set the political agenda of the princely states, although the princes were at ease to manage the administration of their states (Ramusack, 2004). The Company attempted to align it with British traditions and laws. Thus, it became imperative for the Company to implement changes in land tenure, agrarian policies, and land allocation schemes. These policies and practices brought significant changes in the agrarian relationship (Bayly, 2016). However, initially, a traditional land assessment mechanism was carried out. Later, it was gradually modified with a design to collect maximum land revenue to address the colonial expenditure. The first experiment was of the auction, and it happened in 1772, where land revenue rights were allowed on a contractual basis. Over the period, the Company evolved these three land tenure systems in various parts of India 1) Permanent Settlement, 2) *Ryotwari* Settlement, and 3) *Mahalwari* Settlement.

Discussion

The discussion on the Company *Sarkar's* evolved land tenure systems was the British Empire's major challenge in the first quarter of the 19th century. These were 1) territorial expansion through war, 2) scaled expedition, 3) economic crisis, and 4) loss in the opium trade. Therefore, all tenures and revenue collection oscillated in between the above realities. Besides that, the Company officers' role was also to do the topography mapping of the area and timing of annexation was dependent on this too. Therefore, for more clarity and understanding the discussion in the article is sub-headed as Permanent Settlement, *Royatwari* Settlement and *Mahalwari* Settlement.

Permanent Settlement

In the Mughal Empire of India, *Zamindars* collected the land revenue and taxes from the peasants. Out of the collected revenue, the Nawab, as the representative of the emperor, kept 90%. The Company replaced the Nawab's position, especially of collecting the revenue; it happened due to *Diwani* rights (the rights to collect tax). The Company, in its duration, tried various revenue collection methods and land tenure systems until the formation of the Amini Commission in 1776. However, one of the commission's recommendations was in favor of Permanent Settlement. Prior to Alexander Dow and Henry Pattullo, Warren Hastings and Philip Francis also provided ideas and plans for the tenure systems. Warren Hastings proposed that taxes on agricultural lands should be auctioned and allotted to the top bidder. He fixed the auction period for five years (Travers, 2004) and changed the old system with a new tax collection model. He replaced hundreds of small revenue collection officials, and it included *Zamindars* and company servants with the centrally appointed officials. Resultantly, this attempt ended the *Zamindars'* relationship with the peasants and negatively affected their functions. The most critical functions were keeping order in the villages, mediating disputes, gathering revenue collections, and extending money at the time of sowing and other social needs. The erosion of the traditional support base caused the peasants to abandon farming and roam around for their livelihood. This situation brought negative consequences. People started migrating in search of livelihoods, which reduced agricultural production, and it limited the Company's tax collection.

Cornwallis landed at Madras on 22 August 1786. He soon noticed corruption and inefficiency among the Company staff. Therefore, he set a priority to stop the inefficiency, reduce the cost, and eradicate the corruption. However, his most debated contribution is the code and settlement, which is called the Cornwallis Code and the Permanent Settlement. He was of the view that the Company's trade is associated with flourishing agriculture (Bayly, 2016). The code had roots in the British Enlightenment that promoted contractual governance. The Permanent Settlement replaced the traditional connection between *Zamindars* and *Ryots* into a contractual relationship.

Consequently, *Zamindars* became a hereditary landed class, and the Company law protected the *Ryots* from *Zamindars'* exploitation. *Zamindars* continued to pay 90% taxes to the Company, and the remaining portion was meager to sustain them. Over the period, the people who were able to pay the fixed amount joined the system. However, the ground realities were rather different and not conducive to Permanent Settlement. Therefore, no investment was made in land development, and the reality proved against the envisioned plan. The bidders' interest remained focused on protecting their investments instead of investing in the development of the land. Thus, revenue declined, which the revenue collectors did not expect. However, Philip Francis had objected to the non-political role

of *Zamindars*. Because of that internal discussion among the Company officials, a changed version of Permanent Settlement came into effect in 1775. It was an attempt to keep the balance between the interests of the Company and *Zamindars*.

Interestingly, Alexander Dow and Henry Pattullo had claimed that the Permanent Settlement idea also came into their minds, while they experienced the erratic climate conditions (Guha, 1982). Alexander Dow was critical of *Diwani*. He was of the view that it has taken property rights from *Zamindars*. Therefore, *Zamindars* are not motivated to invest in the land. Although the expectation was that Permanent Settlement has to shape traditional *Zamindari* into 'Improving Landlords'- at that time, there was no standard definition of the improved landlords. However, the Company also assumed that *Zamindars* had to improve the land and cultivate more land. Resultantly, the investment in land has to generate capital (Guha, 1982). Surprisingly, Permanent Settlement disappointed the officials in its inability in creating a political group and a secure revenue line (Islam, 1979). Resultantly, three types of people took up *Zamindari* Institution, 1) people engaged in trade and commerce, 2) the government officials, and 3) dependents or associates of the *Zamindari* Institution. However, Calcutta's *Bania* took up the significant chunks of lands. They were financiers or moneylenders of the *Zamindari* Institutions. The Permanent Settlement also introduced the absentee landlords, where *Zamindars* delegated some of their responsibilities to other persons, and in return, they could keep a fixed percentage as the commission. This arrangement also damaged the original idea of the Permanent Settlement.

The immediate impact of Permanent Settlement proved drastic. One of the lead factors was the inflexibility of the officers to grant relaxation in taxes at times of natural disasters. Thus, many *Zamindars* became indebted, and it caused auctioning of their lands. The Company officers, who understood that these lands are under-valued and may be profitable, purchased most of the land. Ranajit Guna (Guha, 1982) argue that Permanent Settlement caused: 1) the lands' commercialization, 2) a new class of *Zamindari* emerged. The main features of the *Zamindari* Settlement were a) alienable, b) rentable, and c) heritable land. In addition, the Permanent Settlement created two types of tenants a) Tenants at will, and b) Occupancy Tenants. The Company thought that the new *Zamindari* class would be helpful to generate revenue and act as a mediator between the Company and *Ryots*. However, *Zamindars* failed to meet the pressure to grow more cash crops. Hence, peasant revolts occurred, and less revenue was generated. Therefore, the government stopped the replication of the Permanent Settlement system to other areas.

Ryotwari System

The Treaty of Seringapatam signed on 17th March 1792 (Galbraith, 1960), at the end of the 'Third Anglo-Mysore War,' resulted in the Company getting some territories. However, the company immediately resolved that Salem and Baramahal would be priority areas. Captain Alexander Read was made responsible for these areas. He chose Captain Thomas Munro, Graham, and Macleod to assist him in the Central District (Dharmapuri), Northern Division (Krishnagiri), and Southern Division (Salem). Captain Alexander Read and his team carried out a detailed study of the land tenures of the new areas. Their systemic observations of the field led to the development of the *Ryotwari* Settlement system. The team went through a tiring process of inquiry about local types of tenures and methods of cultivation and postulated on different revenue collection methods, which have to be beneficial for the *Royts* (ordinary people) and the Company. However, the officials of the Company resolved that Settlement should be suitable to both parties and concluded that more division of land into small- portions would be beneficial (Frew, 2017). The *Ryotwari* Settlement changed the position of the Company. It became the proprietor and ascertained the rights of the individual who had paid even a single penny (Siddiqui, 2015). The *Ryotwari* Settlement calculated the revenue through the following steps: 1) the average produce of a single field in a moderate season, 2) average produce in bad, and average seasons, 3) converted the average into money, and 4) divided the money in agreed proportions. However, in 1802, through Regulation Number 25, the Revenue Board proposed the *Zamindari* type Permanent Settlement in Salem and Baramahal (Islam, 1979). Afterward, in a short period of two years, the southern part of Baramahal was sold out. Alexander Read resigned after the 4th War of Mysore, and Thomas Munro was made in charge of Canara and the later ceded districts. The Canara was a vast area with rugged and wild terrain located at the western coastal line of India. In addition to that, most challenging was its steamy and damp climate and extended rainy season. However, Munro found that the native's revenue system was like the *Ryotwari* System. He examined it and found that there was no fixed revenue collection system in the natives' system; instead, it was based on different calculations and estimations. He concluded from the earlier records that the *Ryotwari* Settlement was the original method of South India. However, the weather and non-cooperation of *Ryot* and limited authority was the hurdles in implementing this revenue

collection system. He requested a transfer. Finally, it happened on the 12th October 1800, Nizam of Hyderabad signed a treaty with the Company about the Tungabhadra river and the ceded district (Briggs, 1861). Thomas Munro was selected for the new task; thus, his joining gave a new life to the *Ryotwari* Settlement. He took these initial steps: 1) village assessment, 2) estimation of the production, and 3) cultivators' agreement to pay the amount. This system known as the *Mouzawar* system was experimented in 1800. The system took the following steps 1) calculate the total sum based on the estimated revenue of the ceded Districts, 2) allocate the first sum to each division/area, 3) distribute the received amount among the villages, 4) all cultivators were made responsible for paying the fixed amount. However, the revenue collectors marked the year 1788-89 as the standard for the calculation of the revenue amount although, this happened in situations of fraud or calamity. They revised the rent below the standard, and the year 1799-1800 was made the standard.

Thomas Munro carried out his *Ryotwari* survey until 1806. He came across two million farmers and collected considerable revenue (Habib, 1975). Revenue collection during this time stabilized (Washbrook, 2004). In addition, timely rains also supported good yields. Still, *Ryotwari* Settlement was meandering an order that came from the 'Supreme Government of India' to the Madras government to introduce the 'Triennial Village Lease,' it was an initial version of Permanent Settlement (Raju, 1941). Although, Munro pleaded that the poverty, non-existence of wealthy farmers, thin and scattered population, and low volume of trade were adverse factors for the introduction of this system. He added that the low number of coins, frequent mobility of the people from one village to another village were not supportive factors for the introduction of the 'Triennial Village Lease.' Lord William Bentinck fully understood the case pleaded by Munro, and he supported the idea. Lord William Bentinck went back to England in 1807, and in the same year, Thomas Munro also traveled to England. George Barlow replaced William Bentinck, and the later had a particular bias for Permanent Settlement. On the other hand, England was demanding to collect the funds to invest in the Company.

At that time, Cornwallis' introduced a judicial system that was already in practice in Madras, and it supported Permanent Settlement. Consequently, Munro's *Ryotwari* Settlement got less importance (Raju, 1941). *Ryotwari* Settlement was in trial phases in between 1799 and 1809 years, and it was considered successful (Seshan, 1988). However, the Hodgson report convinced the authorities in Madras and England to prefer the 'Periodic Village Lease System' instead of Munro's introduced system. It is a fact that *Ryotwari* Settlement's success needed specific qualifications of the officers, such as active, superintendence authority, and individual contacts with the locals. All these tasks needed knowledge of the local language, considerate personality, and distilled understanding of the environment. *Ryotwari* Settlement became successful because it suited the general conditions of the Presidency, and Munro's role, to some extent, was responsible for its success (Seshan, 1991). One must also look at how Munro's personality and ideological beliefs played a role in the success of *Ryotwari* Settlement. However, Munro's work style was the outcome of Victorian ethics, and he believed in peoples' welfare. There were views that the *Ryotwari* Settlement partially succeeded (Washbrook, 2004). Although, there was a consensus that the *Ryotwari* Settlement was beneficial for the *Zamindars* as well for the Company.

The *Ryotwari* Settlement enabled the collectors to gather revenue directly from *Ryots*. Under the system, the collection of land taxes and rents happened at the same time. However, land revenue was imposed directly on the *Ryot*. However, the *Zamindars* from Madras, Bombay and Assam, did not have a position to act as an intermediary between the farmers and the government. *Ryotwari* Settlement had four points. The first one was that each landholder was accepted as a proprietor until he paid the rent. The second point stated he had the authority to sublet the property, sell it, mortgage it, or transfer it. The third aspect was that there would be no rejection for the above if he had paid the taxes/rent.

However, the fourth point stated that he had the option to increase or reduce the holding or abandon it (Metcalf, 1962). Furthermore, there was also an option of total or partial granting of remission in the unforeseen and unfavorable years. Later, this system reached Mumbai, under the direction of Thomas Reid. In fact, Munro gradually lowered the rent from half to one third of the total produce. The *Ryotwari* Settlement provided an opportunity for British officers to establish contact with the individuals. Generally, features of this settlement refer to David Ricardo's practical ideas (Rothermund, 1969), who suggested that there should be a systematic foundation for the land revenue system. One of the drastic features of this system was the strictness regarding the revenue collection, and it was collected even in

times of famine and drought (Rao, 2000). In addition to that, the government insisted that cultivators must pay the revenue in cash. Therefore, farmers switched from food crops to cash crops like cotton. Lastly, at the end of the American civil war, cotton export declined, but the government retained the same revenue rates. Thus, the situation pushed the farmers to get loans from the moneylenders and became perpetual defaulters, and it caused the transfers of their lands to the moneylenders (Hebert, 1987).

Mahalwari Settlement

In the *Mahalwari* Settlement, the 'Mahals' or 'villages' where the community jointly owned the villages or groups of villages. Thus, villages became the collective farmers or co-sharers. Thus, all of them collectively were bound to pay land revenue. The Company introduced *Mahalwari* Settlement in vast areas of North-Western Provinces (NWP), where traditional *Bhai Chara* (fraternity) assisted the government in implementing this revenue collection mechanism and they were the government representatives known as the Settlement Officers, and they were made responsible for calculating the rent while discussing it with the *Lambardar* (village heads). This system had different names in various provinces. It was called *Mauzawari* in Uttar Pradesh (UP), *Malguzari* in the Central Province (CP), and *Mahali* in undivided Punjab. The significant characteristics of *Mahalwari* Settlement, irrespective of its operative areas, were: 1) periodical revision of the rent, 2) *Khasra Girdwari* (legal revenue department) and *Shijra* (family tree of owners) became the assessment tools and standards. The government introduced *Mahalwari* Settlement in the fertile pockets of British India. Until 1857, and the *Mahalwari* Settlement extended to the North-Western Provinces. The topography of the area included some of the tallest mountains, separated by a range of valleys having alluvial plains. The consolidation of Company rules in these areas, assured regular revenue, because most of the tracks were far away from the threats of famines, due to irrigation works – tanks, ponds, and canals.

Holt Mackenzie was the one who initiated the idea of *Mahalwari* Settlement in the Minutes of 1st July 1819 (in Stokes, 1975). His suggestions became part of the Regulation VII (of 1822). Based on those suggestions, the cultivator had to pay 90% of the rental value (Mann, 1995). The settlement gained maturity through Regulation IX (of 1833), and in 1844 James Thomason made it fully-fledged. It was revised and fixed to 66%. The settlement duration extended to 20 or 30 years. Later, the 66% rent was lowered to 50%, and it happened under Saharanpur rules (of 1855) by the then Governor-General Lord Dalhousie. However, the settlement did not make any progress, due to two factors: 1) the revenue demand was excessive; 2) revenue collection method was rigid.

In addition to that, one disadvantage was the collective engagement rather than individuals' association with the Company or Government. Later, William Bentinck concluded that the Regulation, 1822 pushed the cultivators into misery. However, after some deliberations, the Regulation IX of 1833 was passed with some flexible terms and conditions. The *Mahalwari* Settlement stated that the basic unit was a village. The villages were equally responsible for the tax. The other points were that each farmer was the taxpayer as well as the guarantor of the other villagers. The right to mortgage or sell his property was with the villager. The *Lambardar* had to collect the tax and hand it over to the British officials. Besides that, periodical revision of the tax rates might take place. However, the ownership nature, especially the transfer of ownership, caused a shift in the land ownership from father to sons, which led to the productive pieces of land being fragmented. Thus, the system led to the land becoming less productive.

On the other hand, the cash nature of the revenue pushed the cultivators to borrow money from the moneylenders. The cultivator's situation became worst due to the failure of the crops and natural calamities. Thus, the permanent feature that supported this system was loans. Resultantly, the moneylenders took over more land compared to the *Zamindars*. Consequently, the Company became attentive to assure fixed and regular revenue.

The *Mahalwari* Settlement made the Indian land revenue system as a technical subject. The promoters of this settlement claimed that it is one of the best land revenue systems. They argued that it contains some of the best features of the *Ryotwari* Settlement and *Zamindari* Settlement systems. However, at the village level, it reduced the living standard of the peasants. *Mahalwari* Settlement strengthened proprietary rights and supported the claims of *Taluqdars* in the area (Ray, 1996). The induction of *Lambardari* paved the way for corruption. It pushed the peasants into economic slavery. On the other hand, *Mahalwari* Settlement failed to prove as a universal system to replace all land settlements in India. Its operation was dependent on the knowledge of *Patwaris* (a government official who keeps records

regarding the ownership of land), who always aligned the facts according to their priorities. However, the *Mahalwari* Settlement enhanced the commercialization of agriculture, and finally, the Indian trade ratio improved. The *Mahalwari* Settlement also caused female infanticide to increase in the North-Western Provinces. At that time, the revenue collectors applied coercive methods to collect revenue (Marx, 1857). The majority of the collectors became corrupt. Thus, the economic burden doubled on the peasants (Ray, 1996).

The British officials managed these land tenures. However, the sole purpose of all these tenure systems was to generate and collect revenues, even around 1852 British India gained 19,800,000 pounds from tax revenues. In 1858-59, British India's land tax collection was Rs 18.12 corers. The harsh and fixed revenue methods led to the peasant rebellion of 1857 (Habib, 1998). Other factors for the rebellion also known as the 1857 mutiny were the fluctuating food prices and the confiscation of lands. Thus, *Mahalwari's* way of revenue collection played the catalytic role in the 1857 rebellion, and the most volatile areas were the areas where *Mahalwari* Settlement was in operation.

Interestingly, popular leadership also came from the regions of *Mahalwari* Settlement. Mukherjee (2002) called the rebellion of 1857 as a popular resistance in peasant clothes. In addition, it is also known as a collective response against collective suffering (Roy, 1994). The rebellion of 1857 failed in its primary objective. However, it set a movement initiated by the natives and conditioned the British Empire to look at the Indian matters differently. Therefore, the British Empire felt the shock and decided to take responsibility for some of its initiatives in revenue collection that led to the misery of the peasants. Consequently, in the passing of the Government of India Act of 1858, the Company lost all its administrative powers, possessions, and army. Thus, all of these powers came under the Crown.

Conclusion

The Company Sarkar's introduced land revenue systems were not similarly applied throughout India, nor were standard and unified procedures followed. However, the motive behind all land tenure system was to ensure a secure and sustained collection of revenue. In all areas and in all conditions, consistent efforts improved the land revenue collection and the administration of land for the Company. More than one land revenue system was experimented with. However, any land tenure model at the initial stage needed ideologues and supporters in England as well as in Calcutta, Madras, and Delhi. Apart from it, there were some common factors associated with these land tenure systems. The commonalities among them were that each land tenure had an association with expansion of British area (through either annexeure, or war or treaty with the native states). The success of all land tenure systems had a reciprocal link with the efficiency of the British revenue collectors. However, the topography played an important role in revenue generation, because each region had its own climate zone, especially the monsoon cycle. The uneven development in British-controlled areas also played a part in the failure of the implementation of the varied land revenue systems. In terms of culture, these areas were not monolithic; each land tenure was not disaster-prone. However, all land tenures were dependent on the intermediate groups of locals. Furthermore, support from England-Delhi-Presidencies was crucial for success. Thus, many paper-pushing efforts consumed much time to complete the triangulation. The most urgent demand was that the tenures have to be compatible with economic interests and political expectations of the Company, and the Crown, Landlords, Peasantry, and the need for Indian agriculture to meet the expectation of Industrial England. However, the primary motive of all these land tenure models was to secure regular revenue for the Company. The revenue collected from the land tax contributed to the British economy in the following ways: formed the primary capital base, and acted as a mover of wealth. However, the Company's leading source of revenue was trade, which was the primary source that drained the wealth of India to England. These land tenure systems created massive stratification, which led to the contradictions observed in the social, political, and cultural lives of the people. Finally, the failure of the land tenure systems, and the tax collection methods, which was discriminately implemented, led to the peasant rebellion of 1857. Because of the Company's failure India became the subject of the Crown and all rights of the Company *Sarkar* was removed. It also led to the introduction of a series of reforms in agriculture and land administration. However, until now the land-related legislation practiced in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are refined versions of The East India Company's land legislation introduced in the undivided India.

Endnotes

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