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Impact of British Colonial Administration on Agriculture and Irrigation in Sri Lanka

Dr. J.K.A. Kanthi*

Senior Lecturer, Department of History and Archaeology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka

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Abstract: 1796 AD, the coastal areas of Sri Lanka came under British rule. After the conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815, Sri Lanka became a British colony. The British realized that European nations could easily use Sri Lanka to produce the crops they needed. Accordingly, they focused on expanding plantations in Sri Lanka. As the local land policy was geared towards a self-sufficient economy, they concentrated on formulating a policy that would allow the British imperialists to use the land as they wished. The research problem of this study was the impact of the British rulers on the traditional agriculture and irrigation industry in Sri Lanka. The research aimed to study the issues that have arisen due to conventional agriculture and irrigation. The study was conducted based on quality data collection methods using primary and secondary sources. Using primary sources such as Land Ordinances, Dispatches, Administration Reports, Hansards, Blue Books, and Census Reports. The British rulers, who focused only on commercial crops, ignored local agriculture and irrigation. As a result, by the end of the 19th century, many problems had arisen.

Keywords: British Administration, Plantation, Indigenous Agriculture, Irrigation, Development.

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INTRODUCTION

The 19th century was a time of marked change in the Sri Lankan economy. During this period, the British who ruled Sri Lanka completely changed the land tenure system in the country and formulated a policy of their choice. The Colebrook Commission's proposals were the most potent factor in changing the course of domestic economic policy. The Commission recommended that the compulsory service duty system in operation in the country be removed as it impeded labor mobility. The British rulers wanted to change the traditional land tenure system, which was a significant obstacle in implementing their economic policy and introducing a plantation-based land tenure system. A substantial change in British land policy was abolishing the free land grab system and introducing a cash land sale system. Following Sri Lanka's land policy change, the British rulers turned their attention to large-scale plantation cultivation. With the expansion of plantations, they paid no attention to the upliftment of local agriculture. The subject area is the study of how they have handled the Sri Lankan economy during the British rule and the neglect of local agriculture and irrigation and the consequences. Very little research has been done on the economic policy implemented by the British rulers in Sri Lanka. Colonialism in Sri Lanka - The Political Economy of the Kandyan Highlands 1833-1886 Asoka Bandara's 1950 book is essential to information on plantation expansion, taxation, and land tenure during the British rule. Jayawardena's (1972)

book, *The Rise of the Labor Movement in Ceylon*, is an essential source of insight into the study of British land policy in Sri Lanka. The changes that have taken place in the economic, social, political, and religious spheres due to the establishment of the plantation-based capitalist economy in the country are very well described here. The social injustices and class inequalities caused by plantations can be seen as the starting point for the labor movement's growth in Sri Lanka. It is clear from this book that the land policy adopted by the British was a decisive factor in influencing such disparities in society. Tissa Iriyagama, in his book *Modern Economic History*, discusses several land laws introduced by the British. No research impact of the expansion of plantations on the local economy has not yet been widely discussed. The effect of neglecting irrigation, which has made a significant contribution to agriculture, has gone unnoticed. Therefore, this research can be described as an introductory study on British colonial rule in Sri Lanka.

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION/ MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study did base on collecting data through a qualitative research methodology. Library surveys used primary and secondary sources such as Land Ordinances, Dispatches, Administration Reports, Hansards Records, Sessional Papers, Blue Books, Ceylon Census Reports, Ferguson's Directory, and News Papers. These primary sources were instrumental

in studying the impact of British rule on plantations, local agriculture, and irrigation in Sri Lanka.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All expenses were borne by the English East India Company When the British conquered the coastal areas of Sri Lanka in 1796. Aiming to maximize their profits as a trading company, they did not pursue any wealth-making measures other than exploiting the wealth of Sri Lanka. The company's governance soon became chaotic due to a lack of focus on systematic management. In such a situation, Britain had to maintain Sri Lanka not as a profitable colony but as a loss-making colony at a higher cost than income.

The primary purpose of making the British a colony of Sri Lanka was its importance as a security center. However, with the end of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, French power in the Indian Ocean weakened, and British power stabilized. Therefore, Britain's importance to Sri Lanka as a security center for a long time was gradually diminishing.

The course of action they followed in implementing British colonial policy was to distribute the money spent on the defense of the British Government between the colonies under British rule. However, it wasn't easy to implement their policy on Sri Lanka, and the cost of Sri Lanka had to be borne by the British Treasury. In this context, protests arose in the British Parliament against maintaining Sri Lanka as a loss-making colony. Therefore, the new policy introduced by the British Government, which reconsidered the course of action to be talking about Sri Lanka, helped to bring about several changes in the Sri Lankan economy.

This new economic policy had a significant impact on land ownership and ownership in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, based on the land policy followed by the British, the system of local land ownership and occupation that had been in operation in Sri Lanka up to that time was changed entirely. The self-sufficient economic system based on the critical service duty system in Sri Lanka was a powerful obstacle to creating a capitalist financial system similar to the one in Britain. There was no room for free labor in subsistence agriculture in Sri Lanka. They used work and the territory of Sri Lanka, using under the tradition based on the system of duties. There was no entrepreneurship under this system and no currency or free-market function. The British, who had set out to establish a capitalist economic system, soon realized the need to create a background in Sri Lanka that would suit their needs, as this traditional land tenure system was unsuitable. The British Government conceded that to reduce spending in Sri Lanka and maintain it as a profitable colony. They achieved economic development using capitalist entrepreneurs as much as

possible. Realizing that the required entrepreneurs were not available locally and that it was essential to bring European entrepreneurs to Sri Lanka, the British took the necessary steps to reform the Sri Lankan economy to provide the necessary background. Accordingly, the British took extensive measures to implement their policies through the 1833 Reforms (Mendis, 1956), implementing the recommendations. Local leaders have also been commenting on these issues. Accordingly, the Commission appointed in 1929 to find a solution to this situation put forward ideas on the policy of village expansion and the improvement of colonial lands. It was a decision made by the British rulers on the difficulty of maintaining the status quo, even though it was not a voluntary movement for the welfare of the people. Of the Colebrook-Cameron Commission, but since 1810 several initial steps have been taken to achieve that goal. Before the arrival of the Colebrook Commission in Sri Lanka, the British rulers in Sri Lanka had taken steps to make some changes in the land tenure system.

The Land Acts of 1840 to 1927, introduced by the British rule, were entirely in favor of European planters. However, by the early 20th century, the British had to make some changes. The problems faced by the people of this country due to the implementation of the British land policy could not be ignored.

The Land Acts introduced from time to time by the British rulers to create a capitalist economy in Sri Lanka brought about a significant change in the political, economic, and social spheres of the country. Economically, the self-sufficient economic system that was in place during the period of local Government has completely disappeared by this time. In the policy of selling land for money, which was started based on the British land policy, the society based on the system of mutual exchange became a society that depended on money, and everything was determined by money. Under the self-sufficient economic system, all the people's daily needs could be met in their own country or beyond. However, this changed with the adoption of the import-export pattern under the capitalist economic system. Many items, including essential food items, were imported. As a result of the development activities carried out by the British rulers to develop the plantations, the improvement of the country's roads, railways, transport facilities to some extent, and the improvement of telecommunication facilities can be pointed out as positive features. However, the result of all these developments was that by the 19th century, Sri Lanka had become an importer of all other commercial crops only.

The country's lifeblood during the local kingdoms was the irrigation system and the associated subsistence agriculture. Therefore, every ruler who came to power took steps to uplift this irrigation and agriculture. Sri Lanka was able to become the granary

of the East with the generous patronage of the rulers. Due to this, the county was able to produce the food and drink it needed. In addition, successful Chena cultivation was carried out based on the dry zone.

There was systematic water management to distribute water from the tanks for agricultural purposes, and there was a bureaucracy associated with it. But during the British rule, irrigation was neglected and was not adequately maintained. With this erosion, the tanks were threatened with flooding. The depletion of water capacity was severely inconvenienced the farming community due to the inability to retain enough water in the tanks to engage in agriculture promptly.

At the end of the 19th century, people of this country were faced a severe food crisis due to neglect of rural agriculture. Although the income from export crops increased with the gradual growth of the plantation business, the Government had to pay more for imports than for export crops as the dry zone became undeveloped due to a lack of focus on balancing the economy. Although paddy and other food crops could be grown in the dry zone, large sums were spent on importing food and beverages. AD This degenerate situation can be better understood from the information contained in the Ceylon Blue Books published from 1840-1900.

Foreign Trade in Sri Lanka (Value in Tens of Thousands of Rupees)

| <u>Year limit</u> | <u>Export earnings</u> | <u>Import cost</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1840 - 1844 | 438 .08 | 922. 04 |
| 1845 - 1849 | 975 .06 | 1374 .06 |
| 1850 - 1854 | 1982. 02 | 2250.06 |
| 1855 - 1859 | 2370. 06 | 2825.08 |
| 1860 - 1864 | 2890. 0 | 4483.08 |
| 1865 - 1869 | 3620. 0 | 4705.08 |
| 1870 - 1874 | 4082. 04 | 5102.06 |
| 1875 - 1879 | 5002. 08 | 5364.0 |
| 1880 - 1884 | 3607. 08 | 4628.04 |
| 1885 - 1889 | 3042. 06 | 4040.02 |
| 1890 - 1894 | 4204. 06 | 4820.06 |
| 1895 - 1899 | 5774. 02 | 6601.02 |

Ceylon Blue Books 1840 – 1900

Although the upliftment of local agriculture was not the economic policy of the British, some governors who ruled the country were keen to reform local irrigation to some extent and develop subsistence agriculture. The rulers could not ignore the local agriculture as the cost of food and drink increased in the face of the growing population. However, the British did not consider it their responsibility to promote agriculture in Sri Lanka. These policies were implemented without success as each of the governors followed a policy in that area. The success or failure of agriculture depended on the attitude of the Governor.

Governor Sir Henry Ward (1855-1860) was the first British ruler to overhaul the irrigation system. He was an experienced person who visited the areas where irrigation was widespread in Sri Lanka and gained experience (Hulugalle, 1965). Governor Henry Ward also focused on revamping the Kirama and Urubokka watershed projects to alleviate the water shortage to expand paddy cultivation in the Southern Province (Ceylon Blue Book, 1896). The Irrigation Ordinance No. 9 of 1856 was enacted for uplifting agriculture. (9 of 1856 Customs Regarding the Irrigation and Cultivation of Paddy Lands).

The Act's purpose was to address the problems caused by the neglect of irrigation and paddy cultivation practices, prevent delays and high costs in water

distribution, and address the injustices faced by ordinary court farmers. In 1857 and 1861, the Irrigation Act was Amended. Accordingly, attempts were made to control irrigation through the Kachcheri.

Governors Hercules Robinson (1865-1872) and William Gregory (1872-1877) focused on irrigation reform. Governor Gregory, who was most concerned with agriculture in districts such as Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, where spread most of Sri Lanka's agriculture, turned his attention to restoring old tanks (Hulugalle, HAJ 1965). Accordingly, he was able to complete the work of 900 tanks in the first year. Much of the giant canal, deserted for many years, was restored by Governor Gregory in 1873-1877 (Hulugalle, 1965). By 1873, about 1700 tanks in the North Central Province alone were extinct (Bastiyapillai, 1967). In 1873, Governor Gregory enacted another bill, following the failure of the Irrigation Act during Governor Robinson's tenure. According to the Act, the farmers themselves had to choose the easiest way to rehabilitate the tanks. Under this, provided an opportunity to pay an installment not exceeding one rupee per acre. Another advantage of the bill was the ability to pay in cash as well. Successfully implemented this system in Matara and Hambantota in the Southern Province and the Eastern Province.

However, the British did not consider it their responsibility to promote agriculture in Sri Lanka.

These policies were implemented without success as each of the governors followed a policy in that area. Accordingly, the success or failure of agriculture depended on the attitude of the Governor. Even these measures taken by them to uplift subsistence agriculture were by no means sufficient to meet the country's food needs. The decline of traditional agriculture was inevitable as most of the country's rulers focused on improving plantations.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGLECT OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka Becoming Dependent on the World Market

All land laws introduced by the British rulers from 1840 to 1935 focused on maximizing the facilities needed to create a capitalist economic pattern in Ceylon. These Acts utilized all benefits provided for the development of wet zone areas. These included improving the infrastructure required for upcountry plantations, building construction, factories, and roads. As a result of this upliftment of plantations, a uniform export economy developed based on expanding plantations in the highlands and lowlands of the wet zone (Tilakarathna, W. M. 1963). The emergence of a plantation-based import-export economy instead of the previous self-sufficient economy can be described as a significant change in the Sri Lankan economy due to the implementation of the British land policy. In the early days of British rule, they did not feel the risk of neglecting subsistence agriculture as the amount of food produced locally was sufficient for local consumption. However, Sri Lanka felt the effects of the global economic downturn as it had to rely on an import-export economy.

Around the beginning of the 20th century, at the outbreak of World War I, Sri Lanka began to feel the effects of global economic poverty. By the 1920s, export earnings from plantations had also declined (Ceylon Blue Books, 1913-1916), and rice had to be imported due to neglect of the agricultural sector. At that time, the price of imported rice had also gone up. During this period, the country's population was also growing, and the country suffered a significant economic downturn due to the lack of adequate food production (Ferguson Directory, 1939).

Even after gaining independence, the Sri Lankan rulers could not overcome their dependence on the world market as they did not want to seek redressal of their grievances during British rule. That is why its consequences are still a problem today. The debt burden of the farming community.

As a result of Sri Lanka having to face the same situation in the face of world economic poverty, the majority of the people living in agriculture in this country became increasingly helpless. In addition, food

prices rose. Even for small landowners who grew export crops such as tea and rubber, their income was insufficient to sustain their livelihoods. Accordingly, the farming community and small landowners became accustomed to looking for other employees to find additional sources of revenue. Also, small landowners used to mortgage or sell their land as an easy way to increase their income when their income decreased.

The number of landless people in Sri Lanka had grown enormously was introduced. By the time of the Land Settlement Act of 1931 Under these circumstances, many people raised their grievances and acquired lands (Land Settlement Ordinance No.20 of 1931), there was no inquiry as to whether the land acquired was cultivable or not. After the lands were given under this Act. In addition, the owner could sell or lease his land. However, there have been instances where problems have arisen due to the lack of analysis after the lease. Wealthy people, such as businessmen, outnumbered the middle peasantry, who had a real need for cultivation, especially when leasing, selling, and transferring land. In this situation, the price of land was higher than they expected. Due to the increase in land prices, ordinary people suffering from financial difficulties lost the opportunity to buy land for their needs. Also, as the Government did not impose any restrictions on the purchaser of land, they could purchase as much land as they wanted. Individuals who could spend more money were tempted to buy land from smaller landowners based on the lax policy on purchasing land and the freedom to sell land. Initially, the condition was seen only in the wet zone but later spread to the dry zone. A more crisis arose in the dry zone as landowners were allowed to sell their land.

Colonization

The Land Settlement Act of 1931 proposed the establishment of colonies by the An Ordinance to Amend and Consolidate the Law Relating to Land. Moved them to consider the country's economic problems due to the empowerment of local representatives in agriculture under the 1931 Donoughmore Constitution. They turned their attention to resolving these issues through a land policy that changed the British land policy under their powers and reshaped it into a local pig. His Excellency DS Senanayake, the then Minister of Agriculture in the State Council, took the lead in this regard. Should establish a colonial system to address these issues were His view (Ceylon Hansard, 1932a).

However, even though this system, the Government could not achieve the development it had hoped for. Although people were given land and money, they failed to take their cultivation beyond the level of subsistence. On the other hand, these farmers were tempted to take loans by mortgaging their small plots of land. By this time, a bourgeoisie mortgaging land was also growing. The farmer had to repay the loan

with cash or cash after cultivation. If the harvest failed in any way, they would have to repay the loan by next season.

On the other hand, the farmer did not receive a fair price for the grain he borrowed. The Government now realized that the temporary measures taken for food production had failed. Therefore, the Government realized the importance of focusing on long-term agricultural development. The British rulers' neglect of rural agriculture in the land policy made it challenging to increase the country's food production and could not do so immediately (Ceylon Hansard, 1932b). Since the best solution for this was to develop the dry zone, the Government took the necessary steps.

After implementing the Land Settlement Act 1931, which expedited the distribution of lands to the people, they encouraged landless farmers to cultivate food crops by giving those lands. Further strengthened the farmer ownership system was to provide them with clear ownership of those lands. In the distribution of lands, the forest expansion movement was started by first separating the forests and grasslands. Subsequently, a landless surplus population settlement campaign was launched. Launched under the Land Settlement Act of 1931, this road was the starting point for the colonization movement implemented by the Land Development Act of 1935.

Thus from 1931 to 1935, the Government failed to provide land for colonization and could not achieve the desired results. Commenting on this, the then Minister of Agriculture, D. The. Mr. Senanayake said that this first colonization program was only an experiment. Accordingly, as a solution to this, the Minister suggested that the lands acquired without transferring all the lands at once should be examined for the successful use of the lands for cultivation. The remaining lands should be handed over. If land use failed, redistribution would not take place. But injustice has taken place in this system as well. Because even if he fails to provide the land irrespective of the interest or inclination of the person receiving the land, it is not possible to look at the person who should own the land with the same attitude. In this system, a more productive land waste was incurred for experimentation. When land grabbing was suspended, more hardline farmers lost their lands. Accordingly, the wealthy had the potential to come forward to acquire land rather than the needy poor peasants who reaped the most benefits from the allotment of land. Due to this, allocating lands as required was not carried out successfully, and the people took action to transfer their land as the lease.

The Land Settlement Act of 1931 allowed the lease of land. However, there was no answer to the problems that arose after the lease. In addition, another section of the Land Act of 1931 conferred the right to sell land (Land Settlement Ordinance No.20 of 1931).

Wealthy business people with financial ability offered to buy land from these ordinary people as the relevant conditions were not set inland sale. It was challenging for ordinary people to purchase land as there was a competitive price for the land. A poor person with a real need for cultivation had to buy land at a higher interest rate as he did not have enough income to purchase land. Real farmers could not buy land as they had to pay 18% to 30% interest. Accordingly, most of the land in the colonies belonged to a wealthy business community that had no interest in agriculture.

From the enactment of the Land Settlement Act of 1931 to the enactment of the Land Development Act of 1935, the extent of land sold by farmers was over 10,500 acres. As a result of the sale, they lost about 20 percent of their land (Sessional Paper No. IV of 1935). The Land Settlement Ordinance No.20 of 1931 did not specify the amount of land that an individual should own, so the Government could not take legal action to take over most of the land acquired. It can be mentioned as a result of the land policy itself.

The failure of colonization weakened the Government's economic power and pushed the peasantry to the brink of poverty. When the goal of protecting the colonies could not be achieved, the Government focused on evicting people from those lands and resettling other farmers. But in that situation, the problem only got worse. That Accordingly, the D.C. The Senanayake's attention was drawn. He believed that it was not enough to assist the peasants who had been resettled in the colonies and that all facilities should be provided to them.

The Government's only hope was that the people would turn to manufacture by providing these welfare facilities. But not only did the attitude spread among the people that the Government in this facility should provide all facilities but the lazy zeal to get everything done by the Government without taking advantage of their labor could not be avoided. In this situation, the Government had to bear the cost of the work done by the farmers using their delivery so far. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in the Puttalam area in 1936 revealed that the villagers could not get any assistance from the Government for the renovation work done after 1935 (MIC, 1936).

Even under the new economic policy of 1939, the Government had to bear a high cost to uplift the colonies. To set up a settlement and provide irrigation facilities to it, it spent Rs. 12750 (Parmer, 1957). It is clear from the growing poverty in the rural sector that the Government hoped to provide a better living standard for the people, but it did not succeed. Accordingly, the Government concluded that it should reduce assistance for the development of colonial lands. Nevertheless, financial aid continued to be provided under village expansion and colonization. Despite the

growth of villages in the arid zone, the country's economy has changed with traditional agriculture and cultivation methods.

The expansion of the colonies also changed the customs of the farming villages. Cultivation was done under the Yaya system. It could easily maintain the old villages and the cultivation due to the proximity of Gamgoda to the Yaya. They could repel wild animals from nearby forests and use the water for cultivation without wasting it. Paddy cultivation took place on time after a collective discussion of the farmers. Also, the farmers were well aware of the number of bushels of paddy to be cultivated for their own needs. They also selected the cultivable lands and the method of cultivation according to the required quantity. With the expansion of the colonies, this traditional knowledge of the peasants was given no value and was ignored. Instead, officials were left to decide all matters relating to cultivation. As a result, the farmers had to face more problems in cultivating the land, and the officials had to face more problems in distributing the land. Lands developed at great expense became barren lands due to insufficient consideration given to the cultivator's ability to cultivate, climate, water supply, nature of waterlogged slopes, etc., inland distribution. Also, in the distribution of lands, the suitable person did not suitably own the land. It was challenging to get the real benefits from land distribution due to the emergence of political considerations and allies over the cultivable ability and fairness of the person receiving the land.

Although the land was given to poor people who did not have the skills and sufficient capital, they did not show any interest in cultivating it and transferred the land to someone else to make quick money. Did not legal matters relating to the sale of land were not taken into consideration. On the other hand, since acquired the land could for a minimal amount of money, the person who received the land did not care much about the legitimacy. However, the result was only the disappointment of the Government in the development of land-sharing agriculture and the further decline of the economy.

Food Shortages and Poverty

The decline in conventional agriculture resulted in food shortages. In that situation, the Government faced a lack of food with meeting even such a high demand. As a quick solution to this problem, private entrepreneurs could acquire land and produce rice as they wished. But that method did not work. Although he started a cultivation business on the 5000-acre land given to Lanka Rice Company under Kalawewa Colony in 1920, it failed in less than two years.

The 9000-acre business given by the Minneriya Farmers' Colony in 1919 also failed in a short time. Although the Ceylon Manufacturing

Company took the necessary steps to cultivate paddy under the Kiridi Oya project, it too fell. The failure of these experiments was due to the lack of experience in cultivation and the strategy of making maximum use of potential resources in cultivating paddy over a large area. Wet zone planters and growers, on the other hand, came forward for the business. The traditional farmers' opposition to these businessmen who came from outside on this occasion also contributed to the failure of this business. Food shortages and poverty can be described as an unfavorable situation in the economy due to the unplanned land policy implemented by the British rulers.

CONCLUSION

The Land Acts introduced from time to time by the British rulers to create a capitalist economy in Sri Lanka brought about a significant change in the political, economic, and social spheres of the country. Economically, the self-sufficient economic system that was in place during the period of local Government has completely disappeared by this time.

In the policy of selling land for money, which was started based on the British land policy, the society based on the system of mutual exchange became a society that depended on money, and everything was determined by money. Under the self-sufficient economic system, all the people's daily needs could be met in their own country or beyond. However, this changed with the adoption of the import-export pattern under the capitalist economic system. Many items, including essential food items, were imported. As a result of the development activities carried out by the British rulers to develop the plantations, the improvement of the country's roads, railways, and transport facilities to some extent and the improvement of telecommunication facilities can be pointed out as positive features. However, the result of all these developments was that by the 19th century, Sri Lanka had become an importer of all other commercial crops only.

This broad change in the economy also led to a vast difference in the country's social order. Money came to creating a society in which everything depended on money, and social coexistence became a mere concept in the past. People tended to be more individualistic than they needed to be, so they inevitably became strangers in society. People who do not have mutual trust, love, affection, and attachment joined the Sri Lankan society.

This society was divided into the bourgeoisie, the middle class, and the working class due to British land policy. However, the emergence of a group of highly educated Sri Lankans can be seen as a positive feature of society. These people were also directed for administrative work because it was profitable for them

to manipulate the intelligence of the natives as the British wanted.

Let's look at the economic development in the country during the colonial period from a financial point of view. We can conclude that there was development there. The plantation business in Sri Lanka has been able to earn a high income by exporting commercial crops required for the international market. Not only then but also today, the country reaches the highest revenue from tea-related products. Also, unprecedented development of highways and transportation, expansion of school system, construction of hospitals, development of communication network, the establishment of the banking system, and bakeries and allied products took place in Sri Lanka during the colonial period. Therefore, that physical development cannot be denied. But the problem is how the group of social, political, and environmental issues that arose with it can be traced back to this development process.

Import-export trade is not unfamiliar to Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka, which was at the center of both the East and the East, engaged in an import-export interpretation system in the prehistoric period and more widely in the historical period. Sri Lankan elephants, ivory, pearls, gems, and spices were exported, and there was a good demand for them. Despite being involved in the import-export trade, Sri Lanka did not become dependent on the world market. The existence of a self-sufficient economic system in the country contributed to this. But the British destroyed this economic system to achieve their commercial goals. Agricultural areas such as Wellassa were destroyed, destroying the country's harvest. It was a travesty of fate that they had to experience the consequences of this destruction during their reign.

The inevitable result of the development that Sri Lanka has brought to a commercial crop economy is that Sri Lanka, formerly known as the granary of the East, has become accustomed to a world market-based import-export market. At the same time, price fluctuations in the world market also affected the Sri Lankan economy. Especially in a recession, it was difficult for a country like Sri Lanka, accustomed to a self-sufficient economic pattern, to cope with the corresponding economic poverty. This situation arose due to the results of the British land policy.

Even after independence, the rulers ignored the change in the economic pattern of plantation-based during the colonial rule. Therefore, its consequences

have become an issue that affects not only the present but also the future. The people of this country, who are tempted to accept plantation and large-scale estate ownership as a cause for their respect, are somewhat reluctant to call themselves farmers. Thus, it is clear that many Sri Lankans have not yet recovered from the colonial mentality, even after a long period of independence. To uplift agriculture in this country, a fundamental change in the attitude of the people is required.

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