



HISTORY OF SALT INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING IN BENGAL; DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

This project aims at presenting for the first time a detailed dispassionate and analytical account of the development and decline of the salt industry in Bengal Presidency and their impact on the economical condition of the people of the coastal Bengal Presidency. The different aspects of their subjects have been discussed both from the administrative and economic stand points. The overall purpose is to prepare a well documented profile of the growth and decline of the salt industry in British Bengal Presidency as the first exploration of its kind.

The present work is the first of its kind to make a comprehensive and critical study of the salt industry in Bengal Presidency during the colonial rule. The central concern is not only to examine the development and decline of the salt industry in Bengal Presidency but also their impact on the economic condition of the people. Salt manufacturing was an established industry in Bengal Presidency in the pre-British period. It was in the hand of coastal chiefs and 'Zamindars'. Sterling said that the first salt in the whole of India was manufactured in Bengal Presidency.

Keywords: development, economic, growth and decline, manufacturing,

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this work is to make a comprehensive and critical study of the different aspects of history of salt industry in Britain Bengal Presidency on a much generalized background of Britain salt policy.

1. To present an authentic and interesting accounts on the development of salt industry under the monopoly system.
- 2.To examine critically the declination and destruction of salt industries under the excise systems and factors responsible for this.
- 3.To study the socio-economic impact of the salt industry on the life of people.
- 4.To present a detailed account of this effort to revive salt industry and causes of their failure.

METHODOLOGY

The modern scientific historical methodology will be followed to carry on research on the history of salt industry in Bengal Presidency during the British Rule. All possible efforts will be made to collect as much materials as possible from various primary and secondary sources available in the Bengal Presidency State Archives Bhubaneswar, Orissa State Library Balasore and National Library Calcutta. After

consulting all available sources the collected materials will be critically examined to bring out relevant and significant facts. Then facts will be presented in a systematic and interesting manner to produce a good research paper. In the conclusion there will be an overall assessment of the development, decline and end of the salt industry in relation to the impact in each phase and course.

SOCIAL RELEVANCE

Once upon a time salt industry in Bengal Presidency was in a flourishing state. It provided livelihood to fifty thousand of people in coastal Bengal Presidency. Bengal Presidency was exporting large quantities of salt to outside after meeting the local requirements. The decline of the salt industry after 1863 and its destruction by the end of the 19th century brought untold sufferings to the people of this area. The various efforts were made to revive salt industry but it all was in vain. Today near 46% people in this area are living below the poverty line. Various schemes are implemented to eradicate their poverty. Study shows that there is necessity of reviving salt industries in Bengal Presidency to eradicate poverty from this area.

INTRODUCTION

Sea is the cradle of Salt and the Salty land at the side of the sea is the source of edible Salt. Salt was produced first at the pre-historic period. But in course of time it became an inevitable part of our domestic business at the sea side of Bengal in Midnapore and Orissa.

Salt was produced since prehistoric period. Some of the anthropologists think that the production of Salt is associated with the introduction of Salt is associated with the introduction of the Cultivation. At the vedic-era Salt was also offered along with lotus, sandal, wood-apple-leaves from Kautilya's Arthashastra it is known that manufacture of the salt was a Royal matter as Royal-business. It swelled the Royal exchequer. The famous poet Mukundaram Chakraborty in his 'CHANDI MONGAL', did not forget to offer Salt with other sub-stances, when marchent Svimanta sailed his merchant disc goods in Singhal.

Some of the Hindu Kings and later the Muslim-Badsha were also attached with the Salt business. But in the Mughal period it was handed over from Salt manufacture to Amin-Omrah and Minister too. In Muhammadan times the Zemindar to get of land for manufacture of Salt and sold for profit. Zemindar associate with the Salt manufacturing he was known as 'Kutkinadar'. This period the tax on Salt took the from of a share of the output of the Salt pans, of a rent for privilege of manufacture on of a transit duty on leaving the factory. The company establishes a 'monopoly'. Manufacture and sale were placed under the direction of a General Agent, working under the Board of Revenue, but the immediate management was in the hand of Collectors.

Actual manufacture was conducted by persons having a customary right to make Salt their interests in the output being converted into cash payments at that time the company servants and other British subjects claimed and exercised the privilege of trading. But salt was considered so for an exceptional article, a Duty was paid to the Native Govt. even by these privileged traders.

In the year 1765, the East India Company got dewani and Lord Clive's Government formed an "Exclusive Company" for Inland trade in Salt and other. The open and free system ordered by the Court was introduced in 1768 to till 1772. Mr. Hasting Government to assume the management of the manufacture of Salt. After this 1772-80, in 1780 the Agency system was introduced. During mid-nineteenth century, Salt Agent stationed at Tamlook, Notes on the Manufacture of salt was published in 1852 by C. Hamilton, which remained mostly hidden in the office-files of the Government, little known or discussed of the later researches in the field of Salt Industry. He appears to have seen deeply into the process the massive human force behind it the hard-working people called Malangis, the Salt workers and other native people associated with the Industry. During the Company period the Salt workers (Malangis) condition deteriorated.

After 1863 the salt manufacture was left to the private enterprise under the system of excise. The salt manufactured under the excise system could not be cheaper than British salt of superior quality. The salt producers of Bengal Presidency suffered badly and were driven out of the market gradually. The salt industry of Bengal Presidency entered into crisis and began to decline. The cheapness of the Liverpool salt and Madras salt told heavily upon the prospect of the salt manufactures in Bengal Presidency under the Excise system. Within a few years of the abolition of the salt monopoly, it was found that not only Britain salt but also Madras salt was sold in large quantities everywhere in Bengal Presidency. By the end of the nineteenth century salt industry of Bengal Presidency became extinct in several factors account for this. Since the closure of the salt-industry towards the end of the 19th century, efforts at different times had been made to revive it but each of them met with failure. The necessity for the revival of the salt industry was keenly felt by many British Officers in order to provide labour to thousands of poverty stricken from Bengal Presidency.

The agitation continued for the revival of salt industry but without success the decision of Mahatma Gandhi to break the salt law was received with much enthusiasm by the Congress leaders on Bengal Presidency who made significant contribution to the 'salt satyagraha' under Gandhi's leadership. The destruction of salt industry affected the interest of the people of coastal Bengal Presidency. It increased their suffering. The famine like condition in some parts of coastal Bengal Presidency. Many left their houses and went outside in search of livelihood.

: *SALT INDUSTRY, MANUFACTURING AND SALE* :

1. *HIJLEE (INGELEEE) IN BENGAL*

The Ingelee reign, during 'Nawabi' of the Bengal the zimen got in n1765 after getting, Dewari status company not only took control over Ingelee, but also influenced the Salt trade of that locality. Among the divisions of Orrissa into 'Five Sarkar's' Jaleswar was one of them. This 'Jalesuear' Sarkar was divided into 20th 'Mahals' and Inglee was situated within Mahals' of Maljhita. It was spread from 'Holdai River' to Contain P.S. at present time.

During the era of 'Sahajahan' the Bengal was under the rule of Sahasuja. In this reign Fouzdari was formed to protect the coast of Bay of Bengal. And the region of Murshid Kulikhan. There were 35 Parganas under the Ingelee. In 1728, the revenue list of Grant Ingelee had 38 Parganas. Even though company against the Dewani in 1765, but the collecting revenue was under the hand of employees of Nawab Dewan of Murshidabad. At that time Tamlook and Mysaudul were among the 32 Parganas under Ingelee.¹ Several times Midnapore was compounded with Bengal Presidency and separated too. Once this incident happened in 1751. At that time, Alibardi was the Nawab, who was an independent Nawab during Mughal. He signed a treaty with Bhasla of Nagpur in 1751, according to which Pataspur, Kamarda chaura, Bhograi etc. are 'Nimak' Mahal (salt producing areas) were included into Bengal Presidency.² In 1803, when East India Company took control over Bengal Presidency, according to the Condition of Deo gnao treaty, these areas were again included into Medinipur.³ In 1769, the responsibility of collecting tax in every 'Chakla' was on a supervisor, who was under the direct supervisor of Murshidabad Revenue Council.

In 1772, Hastings Governor of Bengal changed the name of supervisory as collector. Ingelee was then under Hooghly collector.⁴ On 16th March, 1773 Ingelee (along with Tamlook and Mysaudul Nimak Mahal) was isolated from Hooghly Collector and a new collector office was established.⁵

In the same year, it was thought as the tax collecting was becoming a difficult; in a conference five regional revenue divisions under the provincial council of revenue were formed in place of all the districts. Ingelee was then under the Calcutta Division. In 1777, the post of the collector was again created and of the collecting of revenue was bestowed upon them. In 1780 two Salt agents were appointed in Tamlook and Ingelee to collect tax under Ingelee Collector. In 1781, 'Five Provincial Board of Revenue Executive, were dismissed and the responsibility of collecting tax was conferred upon the "Calcutta Board of Revenue"⁵

In 1793, during the time of permanent settlement of Cornwallis the Salt agents of Tamlook and Ingelee got the right to collect tax and after a some days Ingelee came under Medinipur. Malangees surname were Patra, Dinda, Khatua etc. They were 'Kaubarta' class, and 'Karanik' class of Bengal Presidency too, and other were schedule cast. Some was 'Adhibasi' In 1800, Ingelee's Revenue was collected by the Hooghale collector. In 1836, the Ingelee province came under the Midnapore Collectors. In 1862-63 Lord Bidden cancelled this monopoly on Salt trade. But the import of cheap Liverpool Salt' severally affected the native Salt trade. But the local traders did not stop running their business. But as a result of superiority of foreign Salt, they could not stand up to the challenge and stopped their Salt business.

2. TAMLUK UNDER AGENT

'In Tamluk and the province of Cuttack, the preventive Agency should be separated from and made independent of the Agency employed in the manufacture of salt on account of Govt. and the whole preventive force in those tracts should be placed under the authority of the controller of salt chokies in accordance with the system which prevails in all the other salt producing localities'.⁷

The station of Tamlok, where the head quarters of the Agency are fixed. It is 45 miles south-west from Calcutta and from Midnapore about 40 miles. The five Aurungs are noted on the margin. The three letter were in 1848-49 transferred to the from the Hidgolle Agence. The salt manufacture is carred on the west bank of the river Hooghly'.⁸These five Aurungs in favourable seasons are capable of yielding during one seasons from 9 to 10 lakhs of manuals of salt. 'The largest quality over manufactured was in 1851 corresponding with 1258. When it reached 921, 835 maunds. The "taidad" is regulated according to the probable demand of the Calcutta Market, with reference to the stock in hand and the quantity expected from Liverpool'.⁹

Pargunnaha	Distribution of Taidad or the Sowdah fixed in			Actual Manufacture in		
	1850	1851	1852	1850	1851	1852
Tamlook	185,000	250,000	250,000	255,714	285,134	209,752
Mysaudul	185,000	275,000	250,000	267,000	265,172	203,454
Jollamoottah	65,000	150,000	120,000	123,000	147,142	112,605
Aurunganugur	65,000	150,000	100,000	122,208	121,300	100,175
Goomghur	50,000	75,000	80,000	74,138	102,996	80.736

In 1852-53, the tradal has been fixed at only seven lakhs of maunds. It is probable that the manufacture will be increased to a much larger extent. There is a very ready sale for the salt of this Agency.

Tamlook	210,000
Mysaudul	210,000
Jellamoottah	100,000
Aurunganugur	100,000
Gopomghur	80,000
Total Mounds -	700,000

For the salt manufactured Molunghies has been fixed at 7 annas per maund. It has been reduced to 6 and 6½ annas the maund of 80 tola weight, in Aurungs Tamlook and Mysaudul, and to 6 annas in the three other Aurungs which are situated on the south bank of river Huldee and Tengreekhally. It has been started above that the Govt. give 6 annas in the three other Aurungs which are situated on the south bank of the rivers Haldee and Tengrakhally. It has been started above that the Govt. give 6 and 6½ annas permaund for every maund of salt which is delivered to our officers in the Aurungs.¹⁰ Molunghis may supply themselves with fuel from the jungle, grass and low brush-wood, which grow spontaneously upon it, in some places close to their khullaries, compeensation and Moushyra allowance granted to zeminders of the perganas. Myusaudal and Tamlook for the abolition of their salt manufacture, for certain Jungle lands appropriated by Govt. This lands are now known as "Julpye". The extent of Julpye land at present claimed on the part Govt. in the several pargunnahs and Aurungs, is represented to be:

		Bgs.	C.	P.
In Pargunnahs	Tumlook	16,867	1	0
In ”	Mysudul	29,787	10	0 ¾
In ”	Jellamoottah	10,178	0	0
In “	Aurunganugur	6,699	14	0 ¾
In “	Goomghur	17,646	10	0 ¼
Total		81,178	16	0 ¾

The amount of Mooshyera “or Compensation annually paid to the zemindars of pergunnah Tumlook for the julpye situated in the Aurung is Rs.15,671 and to the Raja of Mysaudul for those comprised in pergunnah Mysaudul, Aurunganugur and Goomghur Rs.22,121.¹¹ through cause of dispute between the Agency Officers and the zemindars. The concentration of khullaries on the bank of large rivers and the ‘Doolye’ or transport operation, may be facilitated and expedited. No great dependence can it is feared, be placed on this letter calculation. The average; however in five Aurungs appears to be beegahs 42-14-3 per Khullaree¹².

Specification of jalpye lands:

Pargunnahs	Distributed among Mulunghios			Cultivation and otherwise appropriated			Putent and wise			Total Jalpye		
	Bgs.	C.	P.	Bgs.	C.	P.	Bgs.	C.	P.	Bgs.	C.	P.
Tumlook	11,207	10	0	330	9	0	2,230	2	0	10,867	1	0
Myasaudul	19,809	11	0	0	0	0	9,977	10	12	29,787	10	12
Jolloamoottah	6,628	0	0	870	4	0	2,670	16	0	10,178	0	0
Aurunganugur	6,385	17	10	227	7	10	80	9	2	6,699	14	6
Goomghur	7,012	0	0	8	14	12	9,725	15	5	17,646	10	1

Pargunnah Tumlook:	Number	Total salary		
Designation of officers Employed	Employed	For	period	
		Rs.	a.	p.
Julpye Mohurir	1	60	0	0
Arye pyke or Shikaree	1	36	0	0
Dwak Chaprasase	1	30	0	0

Dwak Chaprasase	1	22	8	0
Mohurir	1	72	0	0
Zilladar	10	400	0	0
Churprassios	4	90	0	0
Churprassios	6	105	0	0
Pyko	14	196	0	0
Sirdar	7	122	8	0
Aduldar	32	646	0	0
Bhanga Mohurir	8	240	0	0
Kylo	8	160	0	0
Chapadars	48	500	0	0
Barbudary Mohurir	1	60	0	0
Naib Mohurir	1	30	0	0
Churrundars	9	112	8	0
Roojoonovoosh	3			
Auxiliary Chowkey Officers	1	89	0	0
To watch suspicious places Head Chapters				
Total	163	3152	8	0

The operation of the sensor commence usually with the first advance of cash to the Molughies, manufacture of lown in December. The Taidad is completed. The advances are calculated either upon the number of men each Molunghee engages to exist him in carrying on his manufacture. Or on the quality of salt he construct for. In Aurung Tumlook and Mysaudul the Molunghee receive their advance at the rate of rupees three for each cooly and are rupee percollah. In Aurungs Goomghur, Jellamooth and Aurunganugur the other system prevails, the advance being calculated at the rate of seven rupees per one hundred maunds contracted for by each Molunghee.¹³

The first advance takes place during the last week in Nov. or early in December. The second is called the ghas or fuel dudun (Payment) and is made in January or February. The third advance is usually applied for in April.¹⁴ When an advance is to be made, the pokhtan darogabs, with a portion of their establishment, come into the sudden office in divisions, together with the Molanghees of their respective aurungs. These are collected in a large verandah, where each Mollunghee delivers up his hathchitta, the Treasurer, who examines and entres it his accounts.¹⁵

The manufacture is commonly called the Molunghee, but the tremms Eitimemder, chooleah and Muzzor or coolie are also applied to the manufacturers. The records shown that employment is daily, in the manufacture to no less than 2,303

Molunghees 14,407 coolies.¹⁶ In transporting the salt from the mofussil to the golahs or storm at Ghaut Narainpore, upwards of 500 boats. And many bullocks are engaged.¹⁷ About Boats and Bullocks employed in our transports as follow:

Molunghees	-	2,303
Coolies	-	14,307
Boatpoo plo	-	2,500
Bulleck drivers	-	100
Temporary establishment	-	575
Purtal or ewightment establishment		340
Fixed establishment at Golahs		100
Total	-	20,325

The tools have of late fallen considerably. Owing to the salt goalhs at Ghaut Terropy keash and other places formerly attached to widgellee having been abolished to as formerly, when those stores were open to the salt merchants and public¹⁸.

Year	Amount of Tolls collected from salt			Amount of Tolls collected from other boats			Total collections		
	Boats passings through the Khaul								
1847-48	7,827	6	0	844	10	5	867	0	5
1848-49	5,469	8	6	1,259	13	6	6,729	6	0
1849-50	626	11	6	1,919	1	6	2,545	13	0
1850-51	206	13	0	1,654	1	9	1,800	14	9
1851-52	41	10	6	1,676	1	3	1,717	11	9
Total	14,172	1	6	7,353	12	5	21,525	13	11

Independent of the aforementioned two canals, the pertaubkhally and Bankah Nullah the Goomghar Darogah transports to Ghaut Narainpore some portion of the Goomghur salt by the Hooghly, round by Diamond Harbour and up the River Roopnarain. If the Southerly breezes are not very violent and the river is not very rough. This passage is available during the latter part of January and through February.¹⁹

‘Experience has shown that seven full or new moon spring tides are required to collect at Ghaut Narainpore the season’s produce without reference to the quantity about 30,000 maunds which may be brought there by the Hooghly route. As much as 175,000 maunds have been conveyed by one tide, but the following table shews how the transport has been managed during the two part seasons²⁰:

1850-51	Number of tider	Salt	boats
First tide ending 25 th march 1850 including Goomghur salt		112,243	493

Second tide ending 7 th April 1850 including Goomghar salt	149,984	725
Third tide ending 21 st April 1850 including Goomghar salt	122,561	581
Fourth tide ending 8 th May 1850 including Goomghar salt	161,808	789
Fifth tide ending 20 th May 1850 including Goomghar salt	117,567	646
Sixth tide ending 6 th June 1850 including Goomghar salt	126,107	646
Seventh tide ending 30 th June 1850 including Goomghar salt	122,619	608

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The salt of the past season was Transported to the Ghaut by the undermentioned routes :

	Salt maunds	Number of
Boats		
By the Hooghly and Roopnarain Riversrouts	27,690	70
Up the Huldee and through the Pertabkhally Riversroots	590,558	3,333
Up the Huldee and through the bankah Nullah Rivers routs	83,339	266

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The charges vary from Rs.4-8 to Rs.1-4 for the transport of 100 maunds of salt from the hoodhs in which it is manufactured to Ghaut Narainpore, the labour of loading the boats in the Aurungs uninoding them thatching and collecting the salt in heaps at Ghaut Narainpore, being included in these rates and arrangements are made for the contract during each season of about 500 boats as per particulars given below²¹.

Porgunnah	1850 Number of boats employed	1851 Number of boats employed	1852 Number of boats employed
Tumlook	115	134	131
Mysaudul	119	119	123
Jellamottah	52	83	85
Aurunganuggur	62	74	81
Goomghur	66	60	80
	-----	-----	-----
Total	408	470	500

The salt already collected in the khuttes being sufficiently dry and another felt of boats being expected at Ghaut Narainpore the process called the Pural weightments and the storing of the salt in the golahs commence.²²

The scale of the salt depends, chiefly upon its good quality and colour. Every Endeavour is made to keep it as clean as possible and it only twice comes in contract with the ground or mud floor. As soon as any golah is filled, the mass of salt is a dulled or stamped all over with the intendant's audul, after which the Agents check adul is affixed there upon. The golah is then closed in the presence of the Agent or his Assistant No. salt is sold by the Agent, but for the supply of this district under the retail system, which is in force, and with the exception of about 20,000 maunds, which are required for this purpose, the whole stack is advertized for sale in the Calcutta.

'The rate at present is fixed at Rs.318.00 per 100 maunds. It is disposed of at the office of the Board of revenue in the following manner.'²³ When any merchant is desirous of purchasing salt, he pays into the General Treasury the amount of his contemplated purchase at the above rate, in return, he obtains a receipt which he present with a written application at the office of Board of Revenue. In exchange, he receives a document called a 'char' tunkha a delivery order on the salt Agent of Tamlook, to deliver over to the merchant the quantity of salt he has purchased and paid for a 'rowannah' a pass to protect the salt in transit through the salt chowkies or preventive limits being simultaneously granted to the purchaser by the board of Revenue. 'Merchants are allowed to keep their salt, purchased from the golahs, unclaimed and undelivered for ninety days, after which period, they are obliged to pay golah rent to Govt. at the rate of 4 rupees per mensom for every 100 maunds. Thunkhas and now annals issued by the Board of Revenue, are purchased and sold in the Calcutta market like any other Govt. acknowledgement and no small profit is obtained by these transections'.²⁴ The charges of boats leaden at Ghaut Narainpore are stamped over by the Nazir of this Agency with an audul of the device given on the margin and seals are affixed to all bags of salt transported by land on carts or by bullocks.

NARAINPORE

In 1835-36, the Govt. agreed to assist and support an experiment proposed by Mr. George Prinsep, to make for sale to Govt. salt by the English process. Accordingly, Mr. Prinsep established salt works, at Narainpore a place 20 miles N.N.F. from Kolkata, where from the year 1837, salt has been made and still continues to be made by the English process. The quantity made at these works has never been considerable between March 1837 and June 1840. 1,26,159 maunds of salt were produced, being an annual average of 31,539 mands. The experiment promised well at first and the advance of company's Rs.32,000 has been all re-paid evenly but in 1842 the Board reported that the experiment had been too little successful to warrant the establishment of similar works on account of Govt.²⁵

The salt made at Narainpore was decidedly better than the salt made by Molunghees and sold for more than common Agency salt. And it seems probable that at the high price of 12 as a maund, there must have been at least some small profit on the manufacture, although, the manufacture derived no advantage from the superior quality of his salt for after the death of the original speculator, his executors asked for and obtained an extension of the original term of agreement for five years from 1841, which additional term was afterwards again extended at their request for two years more.

In December 1838, Mr. George Prinsep the proprietor of the above mention Narainpore works proposed to set up another salt work on the same system at Goordah, another place in the same Agency to be conducted either by himself or by a company. But the company he had contemplated was formed under the designation of the "Bengal salt company" and set up works at Goordah. Then capital was intended to have been 30 lakhs of Rupees and their design was to manufacture by the English process and if possible under an Excise system a large proportion of the salt consumed in Bengal²⁶. The senior Member of the salt Board, Mr. H.M. Parker, who had ever been the most prominent oppose of all projects for imposing a system of excise upon manufacture of salt according to the Native process in substitution of the Monopoly, strongly supported this scheme which he thought would, if it succeeded be a great benefit both to the people and to the Govt. The Govt. of that day went fully into the question.

Their design of manufacturing salt, by the English process, under an Excise system favored by Parker, the Senior Member of the salt Board and the Govt. In 1844, the Bengal salt company, together with the proprietors of the Narainpore works petitioned to be allowed to have the benefit of all extends in the sale price of their salt beyond the Govt. Duty an imported salt, but this was refused and soon wards after the Bengal salt company dissolved itself and its works at a heavy loss to a Dr. Mitchell, who carried them on for 2 few years until his death, when they were closed.²⁷

In 1847, the Proprietors of the Narainpore and Goorah works petitioned to be allowed to sell their salt under an Excise system. The Board supported the petition for regulating the storing and sale of the salt under an Excise, the whole means was

sanctioned by the Deputy govt. of Bengal, on the 25th of August 1847 and the workers are still open under this system.²⁸ There is still one smaller source of supply in the private works of Narainpore and Goordah Pungah or boiled Salt is made by the English method. These workers have never produced more than small quantity of salt. At the Narainpore Works manufacturing under the Excise system was commenced in 1848-49, when 16,450 maunds were produced. The average annual production of the last three years at both works was 27,250 maunds.

THE MALANGEE (MALONGI) :: Their Problems

The hard working people was called Malangis, the salt workers and other native people associated with the salt industry. Which where salt was manufactured that place was known as 'Nimkin' or "char" This was divided into different divisions/kinds, which was known as 'khallaris'. During Nawabi period, these was approximately four thousand "khallaris". Every khallari to produce a salt, seven workers were engaged to this purpose. From September to May who produced salt were called 'Malangis'. That time, they got Rs.22 by producing 100 maunds salt.

Post Pallasi, the servant of East India company forced Nawab of Bengal to impose special regulation on the tradeoff salt, Tobacco and Bettlenut trade was regulated. The rule was that :

i) From Malangis Salt was purchased @ Rs.75 per 100 maunds. But the market value was Rs.500/-.

ii) The indigenious merchants could not purchase the salt from their producers.

'Keltas has shown, how this type of salt business brought economic crisis on the people of our country. But according to Verelos this business had not created any change in salt rate in the rural areas. It should be mentioned that behind this decision there was a clash of interests'.²⁹

In 1768, Court of directors ordered that no British employee should be allowed to have any concern in the manufacture of any more than in the trade in salt, only the Indians to do. They only had to pay 30% tax.³⁰ But 1772 in order to restore the Revenue, the company entered into the field of salt production and Salt trade. In "Five years plan." The rich class of Calcutta and other town and also 'Kut Kinadar who was the old Zemindar got lease. In this two classes appeared disharmony as harmful to the malangis. To solve that problem, an agent was appointed by the company. 'It was decided that traders and 'Mahajan' would lent money through the agent and he would be engaged for tax collection. According to N.K. Shinha – the agency system was started in Sep., 1780, but we know from revenue records of Midnapore that in 1773. Robert Ride was the first, was appointed as salt Agent'.³¹ Therefore it seems, that N.K. Shinha's decision was not appropriate. In 1777 the five years plan was abolished. Without the 'lyaradar' and 'Kutkinadar', the old zemindar was settled the land by the Govt. on 16 July, 1777, it was said to Mr. Higinson – "to let the salt mahals in like manner or the most advantageous terms to the formers, who previously formed them even if their term; were considerably lower", to restored the advance and beside revenue, zemindar was forced to give 30% tax as salt manufacture duty.³² The two salt Agents were appointed at Inghlee and Tamlook. It

was also decided that they would work under the collector of Medinipore. In 1781, during ten years, the power of agent was not changed. The number of private khalaris decreased but the no. of Govt. khalasis remained constant.³³

After 1780, the condition of Malangi was deteriorated, because the expect Govt.'s Khalasis was deteriorated. But Chapman, the agent of Inghlee was agreed to improve the condition of by increasing their labour cost. In 1802, they were fully requavared by Farkunherson. In 1805 this class was abolished and with the name of Hooddar was not to see in the Government Record. The labour class were divided into two step. One was Ajoora who was salt worker cum raiyat and other was contract labour who produced salt on daily payment but the contactlabour produced a fixed amount of salt on a fixed amount of payment. Naturally a contract money labour got more money than Ajoora got. They had no salvation. Who once became a Ajoora Malungi they got a salvation either after death or by escaping into the neighbouring Maratha state in the darkness of the night.³⁴ But in this case the group was responsible to find his replace of Malungi, otherwise the group was subjected to severe punishment. From 1772-1780, the Agents paid attention to the interests of the Ajoora. But after 1780, their condition deteriorated gradually. In 1792, Maloungis refused to supply a sub-stitute after the death of labour or if a labour became 'fagititue' in 1795.

In 1780 the revenue of Govt. was increased to 655 fugitive 646 pounds from 229 l& 192 pounds. As the miserable condition of common people increased the oppression on Malungi was intensified. The miserable condition has been recorded in Select Committee Report of Parliament. In initeial stage, Malangese, leaving their soft stance (agitation), led their perturbation into strike. Govt. servants with their kyal etc. usually cheated these Malangi. This tyranny continue even they gave petition to the salt agents. Jaganath Pradhan, Narrottam Pradhan, Benu Das, Radhu Das, Murari Das, Saloo Mondol, Ram Mondol, Kisen Mondol Kinu Pramanik of Mayna Chour Pargana (we can still find Arong kiyaarna village in the Moyna P.S.) and other Malangis complained in 1786 on 20th January³⁵. Not only they paid no level to their complain, but also on 3 June, 1789 by a order they forced ordinary people and Malangi to receive advance 'dadan' for manufacture salt. To prevent this, Lord Cornawallis (1786-93) gave orders to take some steps. Butinsatiable Cust of the local agents upset the whole system. Governor General Verelost stated that company workers ran their salt trade individually by the native trader.

Warrem Jastomg's (1-85) was the inventor of Agency system in salt trade. The two officers, who were a salt Agent, were appointed in Tamlook and Inglee. They were (i) Thomas Karlvert in Inglee and a (ii) Arcdecon in Tamlook. Among the six agency, only the two of Ingelee and Tamlook were the most important Agency in Bengal.³⁶ Ingelee was constitute of this Aurungs – Jellamoottah, and Tamlook was comprised Myasaudal, and Mondol Ghat Aurungs. In this new system price of salt was increased by many times, Dr. Narendra Krishna Sinha in this "Midnapur salt papers" (1954) gave a tally of increased price rate of 100 maunds Salt³⁷.

Year	Rupees
1773	170
1778	212 (Dhaka Town)
1790	234-314
1796-97	308
1798	306-380
1803	342

In 1793, in salt producing areas of Tamlook and Ingelee, which were part of ten years plan of Cornawallis, the Company associates with police and zeminder began to oppress these Malangis to the extreme. They took shelter at Muragha in 24 Parganas. About the effect of the settlement over the Malangi, we know about this from the “Samahar Darpan” 1829, P.19.³⁸

Their perturbations accumulated over long period of time exploded when Farquarson was the salt agent of Ingelee of Course before this during the period of precious salt agents of Ingelee (1780-1789). W.N.N. Wheat (1789-1794), Charles Chapman (1795-1800) the perturbations were gaining ground gradually and rose to extreme during the period of Farkuharson. Malangie, expressed their agitation in some written complaints to the company. Malangis of Birkul, Mirgoda, Balisai, Karchora and Nousari gave petition to the company in 1794, 12th Sept. In 1798, Sept. 13th Chapman admitted the truth about the complaint in a letter to Mr. Piter Spek and acknowledged him.

POST SCRIPT: THE SALT INDUSTRY IN EXISTENCE,

The British earned a lot of money from the trade on salt about one hundred year since 1765 to 1861. In 1862-63, Loard Bidon forbed the monopoly trade on salt. In spite of being cheap in the prices of salt imported from Liverpool Salt. This incurred loss in provincial trade on salt.

Though the indigenious traders kept the business in current, they had to stop their business subject to the foreign trade in respect of quality of salt. Though Gandhiji tried to receive the then indigenious salt industry through his disobedience movement, but the whole mass did not involve them.

Then the India became Independent. It was taken to build up many industries in the free India by entrepreneurs. By the by, the Salt Industries in Ingelee also was built up. Mr. Shyamal Kr. Giri, the Chairman of Contai Salt Manufacturers ‘Association’, informed that at least from fifty years ago the salt manufacturing industries were set up in different places in Contai. Now the salt was not produced by burning fuel like before. Though it was seen that some families in poor and lower middle class produced their demand themselves through fuel. For this, they had to labour hard.

The salted soil beside the canals and paths (road) were stretched on with ester shell and those are poured into a big earthen hole based with straws, later part of the hole was filed with the salty-water of the canal and also there was an arrangement to drop water by soaking under the big hole beside it, there was also a small pit to gather

the soaked water. This salty water was dried by boiling to a get Salt. Comparatively now-a-days, the salt is being produced profitably through solar vaporization system.

Now there is running on many Saltproducing centers in Contai. Among them some are – Great Bengal. Salt, Contai Salt, Modern Salt, International Salt, Solar Salt, Chandee Salt works, Bnaichpunia-pathar mua, United Salt, Highlee Salt, Ramnagar Salt, Machandi Salt-Industry, Mahamay-Salt-Industry, Sona Mukhee Deshapran Salt Manufacturer, Ma-Shitala Salt-Firm, Ma-basanti Salt Factory, Nuniaburi salt Factory, Sri-ram Srima Salt Factory, Satyanarayan Salt-Factory, Chandee-Salt Producer, Kalinde Development Society etc.

10-12 tones Salt produced in these centers. This Salt above all, the Ingell-Salt Industry is sold as edible salt in Mufaissil regions so there is also a process of lodisation. Expect consuming, it also is used in different industries, as ice factory, and thermo-power-plant etc. there is a office under salt Department, in Contai to conduct different matters regarding trade-communication and agreement, collection of taxes as and health-meet in Salt Industries.

Contextually, who asked Mr. Shyamal Kr. Giri the Chairman of Contai salt manufacturers' Association about the problem of the Salt Industry he informed.

(1) Firstly there is a hazard in power; there is no connection of electricity to any salt producing center. Power is generated from Generator”.

(2) ‘There is no such road competent to transport salt.

(3) So this salt is transported through boats. As a result the quality of the goods is damaged.

(4) The salt producing areas are alternatively used for sericulture by the influence of the local leader. The Production remains stop, in that period, the salt labours leaves the place, except only some employees for vigilance. But the local people use that land for fishing without obeying the employees' obligation. So the weeds and garbage block this land and the soil of this place becomes unfavorable due to walking on it, so that land is to be made usable for salt producing. In this way money tries lose and untreated trouble is to be incurred.” It is acknowledged from the Contain Salt Department that the installation of deep-tube well and maintenance of roads are entrepreneurs by the Govt. In respect of Govt. help, only Central Govt. help, only Central Govt. grants some money dietary contributions in the period when the flood victims as are announced by Govt. apply for helpings. The labourers in salt industries are mainly unorganized. So there is no labour – Union in these Industries. Only a centre Mould Bengal was locked out due to union – agitation.

CONCLUSION

Under a system of private manufacture, the supply of salt in the interior of the country would not be deranged; a few capitalists would not obtain a monopoly of the supply. Nor need there be move evasion of the tax and under a regulated Excise need not be more expensive to Government, or more vexation to the Molunghees, than the present plan of Government manufacture. This is not practicable to render the manufacture and sale of salt in Bengal absolutely free. A system of modified Excise is perfectly feasible.

When the Government stocks are replenished, private manufacture may safely be encouraged further, by gradually giving up to speculators portion of the best Salt Districts, such as Tumluk and Hijlee (Ingelee). But at the present moment the Government has done all that can be done, without incurring the risk of a dearth of Salt. A general Revision of the Agency Establishment, with a view to increasing the pay of the Native Officers employed by the Govt. to superintend the manufacture, is a measure, which should receive early consideration, as the manufacture on account of Govt. is likely to be continued for some time.

In Tamluk (Tumlook), the preventive Agency should be separated from and made independent of the Agency employed in the manufacture of the Salt on Account of Govt. and the whole preventive force in those tracts should be plucked under the authority of the controller of Salt Chokies, in accountancy with the system which prevails in all the other Salt producing localities. The preventive Agency should be concentrated in the neighborhood of actual Govt. manufacture and should be distributed. The River Hooghly and the channels of the Sunder bunds require to be closely watched and the guarded tract might be still further limited. The gratis of endorsing rowannahs might be entirely abandoned.

The Molunthees are subject to the last degree of the coercion or that their condition is in any respect worse than that of any class of labours in Bengal. The Salt Tax is the only tax, direct or indirect of any description, which labours and other people in India are obliged to pay. The argument is that Salt is the only condiment as Indian labours consumers with his food, which is of such a nature that without Salt it would be intolerably insipid, is a mistake of fact.

These old industries not only contributed for the economic development of our country but it also helped towards the formation of new cities. The cities like Bombay, Madrash were developed immensely on the one hand and other Midnapur under Bengal presidency were also developed. In the Mughal period the local Zeminder were engaged in producing Salt. At the outset of British Empire in India the Salt traders of Europe trader salt without payment of excise duty. After the battle at Plassey the company gained the monopoly business upon Salt without tax. But in 1870 to salt agents were engaged under Hijlee & Tamluk. This ushered in a new era in the history of Salt production and trading.

Above all the Angle Salt Industry is bearing the heritage of the past. It also has kept financial foundation. The Salt Industrial Development could be come about if our Govt. takes some preventive measures to solve its problems and obstacles. After all it would pay a vital role the livelihood of the people.

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