



Agricultural Development In Frontier Districts During (1880-1901)

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ABSTRACT

The North West Frontier districts were economically at par with other districts of West Punjab in the pre-British era. The base of the economy particularly agriculture sector left weak in these districts during the British period. As irrigation projects on large scale were carried out in the Indus basin (Punjab and Sind) from 1880 onward and the world largest canal system 'Indus basin' was developed. The Indus basin canal system contributed tremendously to progress of agriculture in Punjab and Sind. The frontier districts and adjacent tribal areas could not share equally the irrigation developments and left weak consequently. The question arises why equal heed was not paid to these border districts? There are two possibilities; either mountainous landscape in the North West was thought misfit for profitable agricultural development or because of strong attachment of masses of these regions to religion and to their pristine cultural values offered anti-British stiff resistance, which hindered the government efforts for their development. So the people inhabiting the land missed the chance to avail the development taken place during this period. As the Government remained engage in restoring law and order in the region and guarding the northwestern border of Indo-Pak, it could not find enough time to focus on the economic development of the region and consequently the agricultural sector in Frontier districts remained lagged.

INTRODUCTION

The frontier districts have three main geographical divisions namely (i) Cis-Indus division of Hazara (ii) The comparative narrow strip between Indus and the hills, constituting the settled divisions of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan. (iii) The rugged mountainous region located between these divisions and the border with Afghanistan (Durand line) known as tribal belt. (Baha: 1978). The cradle of Gandahara and Hindushahi civilization, these districts remained a corridor for countless invaders. Conquerors like Cyprus, Alexander the great; Tamerlain, Mahmood of Ghazni, Babur, Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali crossed the famous Khyber Pass. Several Muslim Pakhtun families like Lodhis and Duranis ruled over Indo-Pak Subcontinent. It remained a part of the Punjab during the British rule. The frontier districts were upgraded to a status of separate province of NWFP in 1901.

The main cities in the districts include Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Mansehra, Swabi, Charsada, Ayubia, Nathia Gali, Abbottabad, Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan. The Peshawar,

Mardan, Charsadda and Swabi have fertile lands surrounded by hills, while as one moves further south to Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan, one can see expanses of barren areas. The most valuable asset of the districts is their unique cultural heritage that is thousands of years old. These districts have number of historical buildings, archeological monuments and cultural history that is enhanced by natural beauty of their varied landscape. The varied geology endows the districts with enormous mineral wealth. The districts were backward due to narrow base of agriculture as well as industry.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

While writing this paper historical as well as descriptive method of research were used, which involved studying and understanding of the past events and to arrive at conclusion concerning causes, effects or trends of past occurrences that may be helpful to explain the present events and anticipate the future events. As in historical method of research data is not administered by instruments or individuals but already available data is sought out. A major problem with historical research is excessive reliance on secondary data. In case of a descriptive study the things are reported as they are. Most of the sources used include record of archives; government published or released reports, statistics, surveys, gazetteers, books, magazines, newspapers and periodicals.

Historical Perspective of Agricultural Development

The word agriculture is composed of two words “ager” (the soil) and “culture” (the tilling of). Actually agriculture is not mere the tilling of soil but it is a profession for getting livelihood by exploiting natural resources e.g. land and water etc. History of agriculture is as old as the art and practice of cultivation. It is traced back to the development of domestication of plants and animals about 10,000 years ago in the Neolithic period. Subcontinent has been a world granary since time immemorial. About 5000 years ago there were farming communities in the north west of the Subcontinent. The farmers of this area used to grow wheat and keep sheep, goats and cattle. They used to build dams across seasonal streams with stonewalls to irrigate their crops. (Husain: 1994) Remains of wheat, barley and paddy and the tillage tools found in the Sanghove cave are considered by archeologists to be 4000 years old. (Mian: 1979) Aryan tribes who occupied riverine areas of the Indus and its tributaries such as the Swat and Kabul etc. became more and more adapted to agriculture with the passage of time.

The archaeological wealth and the chain of civil canals found from the excavations of Sheikhan Dheri, the Kashmir Smuss, the Palo Dheri cave, the Takhtbai, Jamal Garhi, the Jui Sheikh ruins are all testimony to the fact that agriculture had been the centuries's old occupation of the inhabitants of north western parts of Subcontinent. There were canals to irrigate the lands and the use of manure was known. (Mian: 1979). At the time of arrival of the Muslims in subcontinent in 711 A.D, the indigenous agrarian system of subcontinent was based on the Hindu sacred law of Manu. “There was the king, having

no property right in land except the right to a share of the produce, below the king was the cultivators (khudkasht owner, cultivator raiyat or members of joint village community), having the actual ownership of the land. The king customary share was equal to 1/6th or ¼th of the produce” (Mamoria:1966). The officials of the state collected Land revenue. The king’s paramount duty was to give protection to his subjects.

Muslims brought with them the systems of Kharaj-i-Muqasama (rent of land proportionate to gross yield) and Khiraj-i-Muwazzaf (a fixed demand irrespective of the actual yield). These were identical with the system already in operation in Subcontinent. Muslims gave some Arabic and Persian names to the then existing institutions through minor modifications. Hindu revenue officers were kept intact to operate the system in occupied territory of Sindh and part of Punjab, and the rest of India free from Muslim’s influence remained unaltered. In the former areas, those who accepted Islam were have to pay only usher (the tithe levied under Islam) on their produce of land and non-converts were have to pay kharaj (tax) equivalent to 1/6th of the gross produce (Khalid: 1998). The medieval Muslim Salateen of Ghaznavides, Ghorides and Qutbi dynasties followed the land system introduced by the Arabs in the Sindh. The peasantry comprised mostly of Hindu, who were regarded as dhimis and were allowed to work on their holdings.

Ala-ud-Din Khilji introduced tremendous changes in the land administration of sultanate. He brought drastic changes in agrarian policy. He ordered the resumption of all land grants, which the nobility, government officials and other individuals held as gifts, grant or reward from the state. He deprived Muqaddams and khuts (Hindu chiefs and zamindars) of a large part of their lands and enhanced the revenue demands of the state from 1/6th to one half of the produce. The methods of assessment were reformed and state’s demands were calculated on the basis of standard yield per unit area. The collection of demand was to be made partly in cash and partly in grain. In addition, a grazing tax was imposed. To remove the mal-administration large area was converted to khalisa (Crown land) and was directly managed by Diwan-i-Vizarat over Amils and Karkuns (collectors of reserved revenue). For eradicating corruption, a separate department of Diwan-i-Mustakhraj was created and entrusted with the duties of inquiring into arrears and misuse of land revenue.

Moreover, strict vigilance of king over the conduct of patwaris and the inspection of revenue books by superior officers and king him self became routine matters. Severe punishments were meted out to those who were found responsible for taking bribes and falsifying accounts. (Khalid: 1998). Ghyas-ud-Din Tughluq took keen interest in agrarian matters. He re-organized the revenue administration. He discarded measurement in favor of batai (sharing) thus allowing concession to the peasants for partial failure of crops or unexpected low yield. The standard demand was reduced

from one half to one fifth of the produce. Moreover, the chiefs were allowed to regain their position snatched from them by Ala-ud- Din. (Khalid: 1998). Firoz Shah Tughlaq gave impetus to the extension and improvement of agriculture by excavation and construction of new canal and added four new canals to irrigate the region of the Indus basin. Peoples were encouraged to build private canals with their own resources.

“Some of the private canals like chasna and kachkot in Bannu district of North West Frontier region have been built by the Mengal and Huns tribes” (Baha:1978). During the period of Mughuls, Sher Shah Suri was the first who made a systematic land survey and laid down the main principles of revenue administration, which were followed during the later kings. He fixed the state demand at one third of the produce and introduced regular administration hierarchy of mauza, pargana, sarkar and iqta. Pargana was adopted as essentially a revenue unit. In each paragana, sikdar was responsible for keeping record of the revenue collection and sending it to the center. At village level, the village headman collected the land revenue. He introduced a Jarib (zabt) system. The land was categorized into good, middling and bad, and was measured by rope. Moreover, he introduced the raiyatwari system under which raiyat having secured proprietary interest in the soil and motivated them to bring abundant wastelands under the plough. (Saqib: 1992)

Akbar corrected what Sher Shah had already founded. He evolved an integrated system for the collection of land revenue. It not only pleased the peasantry but benefited the state also. He introduced the Mansabdari system, which became a permanent feature of the agrarian system of the later Mughul empires and continued up to the seventeenth century. The system implied that the holders of the Mansabs were in service of the state and were bound to render service military or otherwise when they were called upon. By evolving the methods of land survey he introduced Jarib of bomburs joined together with iron rings for the measurement of land; the land was classified into polaj, prauti, chacher and banjar. The polaj and prauti lands were divided into good, middling and bad. The one third of average produce of these three grades of land was taken as the share of the state. The annual settlement was replaced by decinel settlement. A number of taxes were abolished. Taqavi loans were issued to the peasants that were recovered in installments. Three systems of revenue, the Ghalla bakhti, Zabti and Nasaq were adopted in the empire.

The American crops quickly spread with in the Mughul Empire during the period 1600-1650. Corn or maize may have been introduced as a food crop in the Peshawar valley during this period. (Khalid: 1998) The Northwest frontier regions saw many Pashtun or Afghan tribes steadily shifting eastward from Afghanistan and constantly exerting pressure upon the earlier inhabitants during these early centuries. Most of the Pashtun tribes of the Frontier came here as conqueror between 1000 and 1500 AD,” before 1526 the Peshawar valley served as settler’s frontier for pastoral clans from Afghan tribal confederacies migrating from the west. These clans occupied the region between

Khyber Pass and the Indus River by displacing or dominating local rulers and agriculturists. The Afghan styling themselves as Pashtun, divided the plain and highland valley north of the Peshawar valley among their families and confederate allies". (Nichols: 2001).

During Akbar's attempt to subordinate the Afghans living Peshawar valley, the local record of this period is full of the burning, expulsions and massacres by the Mughuls, amongst the tribes occupying the plains which they compelled to pay tribute. Major part of the revenue collected may have been redistributed to allied Maliks, some of whom traded degrees of subordination. It appears that much or most of the Peshawar valley may have never been subjected to any systematic cropland or harvests measurement, and may not have delivered any direct payment to Mughul officials. (Nichols: 2001) The Peshawar ruler Sheikh Usman constructed Joe Sheikh or "Sheikh ka Katha" canal in 1694 under instruction of Mughal king Aurangzeb. Emperor Aurangzeb also built a series of canals in Multan.

The Land Distribution System (Vesh) in Frontier Districts

Mughul authority was challenged again and again in this part of the country. In 1586, Mohmand and others revolted under Jalala, the Roshnia heretic. The Yousafzai and Mandour Afghan had also fallen under the spell of the Roshnia heresy. (Nichols: 2001). In the last decade of the sixteenth century, When Malik Ahmed a Yousafzai chief, faced the dilemma of how to balance various Yousafzia claims on the new territories around Peshawar, he turned to a religious figure, Akhund Derveza to arrange possible solution. Akhund Dervaza Baba had credited Sheikh Mali with carrying out census of Yousafzia area and accomplishing equitable land distribution. The land was distributed according to the rules laid down in the Daftar of Sheikh Mali. Sheikh Mali not only allocated share to each clan but decreed that at the set period of time not less than 4 years and not more than 10 years, neighboring related clans would mutually exchange lands and villages so that to guarantee that no group would gain any undue to better soil, climate and excess to water.

This custom is locally known, as vesh or khasanri. Casting lots decided the question which land should go to whom. Main objective of vesh system was to maintain justice and equality among the tribesmen. These redistribution policies were legitimized by religious authority of Sheikh Mali and also by his social role as neutral, consensus building figure out side the controversial political sphere of Maliks. (Douie: 1981). In early eighteenth century, imperial structured agrarian relation near Peshawar challenged and reshaped local Pakhtun society. The Durani Kardar (Governor) constructed several canals in North West Frontier region, most important of which are the Jui Zardad, the Jui Mamun and Shah canal. The last named Canal used to irrigate the villages forming the Privy Purse estates of Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Shah Canals was bringing water from the Kabul River to the fields around Peshawar including a new

branch constructed by Taimur Shah supplying water to Chamkani and its suburbs. (Baha: 1978).

The Sikh system of taxation in trans-Indus area of Bannu and Tank was absolutely irregular and extremely harsh backed by military force and it always deeply provoked the Afghan tribes with their peculiar sensitive idea of freedom. "Sikh coercion had raised the Peshawar valley revenue from the nine or ten lakh rupees of the time of the Duranis to thirteen lakh rupees for 1836. In May 1837, twelve hundred Sikh troops sent to Isafzai, were a contributory cause of the agrarian disruptions that led in January 1838, to a Peshawar grain shortage or famine". (Nichols: 2001). The British overthrew the Sikhs and by the proclamation of March 29, 1849 annexed Punjab and Frontier territory was made a part of Punjab. For a short time the districts of Peshawar, Kohat and Hazara were under the direct control of the Board of Administration at Lahore but after about 1850 they formed a separate division. Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu formed part of the Liah Division until 1861; thereafter both districts were included in the Dera Jat Division.

Economic Development in Frontier Districts During 1849-1901

The British administrators introduced reforms in all branches of administration including land revenue, public works and education of the province. Attention was also focused on development of rural institutions, irrigation, transport and building of strategic roads and railway which would serve the dual purpose of increasing output and revenue on one hand and creating a rural power structure which will ensure loyal support to the colonial rulers on the other. The British government was attracted by agriculture as it was able to enhance revenue and revenue was the major source of national income. The Land Improvement Loan Act 1883 and Agricultural Loan Act 1884 were enacted to encourage work of land improvement and to relieve the distress of the poor farmers. The central and provincial departments of agriculture were set up in 1884.

So far as Punjab is concerned, it succumbed to the British rule. According to Imran Ali British rule brought stability to the Punjab. The influential and ruling class if had remained away from provocation against British interests were not replaced but confirmed as useful intermediaries between the state and the people. The partnership was consolidated after the Punjabis vital intervention on the side of the British in the armed struggle of 1857-58. They went on to contribute manpower and logistic support for imperialism's conflict on the northwest frontier, and also helped the British to conquer and police far-flung areas. Such cooperation continued throughout the period of imperialist rule, and the military became an important source of employment for Punjabis. About half of the British Indian army came to be recruited from the Punjab. The British were fond of calling the people of Punjab as "The Martial Races of India." (Ali: 1989)

The terrains of the North West Frontier inhabited by the Pakhtuns were known for their devotion to Islam. They zealously guard their religion and culture and the way of life that they have been following for centuries. They looked upon arrival as well as rule of British as a curse and getting rid of them was considered a sacred duty of every individual. Their war like temperament and religiosity all contributed to their stiff resistance to British. They were engaged in their efforts to expel the British from their motherland. They resorted to armed resistance particularly in the tribal areas and to some extent succeeded in inflicting losses on the British in their region. The British government of India believed in using force to correct, what they considered to be tribal intransigence. During the over half of a century rule of the Punjab, the trans-Indus frontier districts made slow progress and were less developed in various sectors of economy than the Cis-Indus districts of the Punjab. Their somewhat neglected condition might be attributed to the Punjab Government greater preoccupation with the problem of security and maintenance of law and order in the trans-Indus districts than with socio-political development of the area. (Baha:1978).

The British Government of Punjab followed the policy what came to be known as the “close border policy”. The main feature of this policy was to guard the border closely with a view to keep raids and consequent reprisal by military expeditions to the minimum, still the government undertook as many as 62 expeditions against Frontier tribes between 1849 and 1899. (Baha: 1978). The government was contented with the maintaining of law and order. It had neither the time nor any plan to pay proper attention to improve the economic conditions the people of these areas. On-official public opinions have clearly perceived that the tribal disturbance was very largely hunger created. The tribesmen were mostly unemployed. There was no industry worth the name. Large areas of fertile land were lying barren in the province. The digging of canals to irrigate these waste areas was a better recipe to curb the disease of lawlessness. As the adages go “an empty mind is a devil workshop” and “the fire of stomach can lead a person to commit any crime in the calendar”. Those responsible for running the provincial administration have thought that matters like the excavation of canals and the development of cottage and large-scale industries has no truck with them. It was left to private enterprise and there was no private enterprise at all. (Qayyum; 1947).

Agricultural Development in Frontier Districts During (1880-1901)

In its simplest form agriculture development means raising production of crops, fruits, vegetables and the number of animals reared. At the time under discussion, land management and irrigation development were synonymous with agricultural development and the main determinants of agricultural progress were land tenure, irrigation facilities, research and extension services. The British government was attracted by agriculture as it enhanced revenue, which was the major source of income.

At that time Irrigation is the artificial application of water to soil for crop production. In case of land management, British besides the systematization of land revenue encouraged individual property rights in land, which was a marked shift from the collective ownership by village community and other complex form of property that had existed in the pre-British period.

There existed few inundation canals like Upper and Lower Sutleg canal, Shahpur canal, Chenab Canal and Indus Canal in Punjab and State of Bahawalpur in the pre-British period. With regard to land and water, most of the attention was lavished on the Punjab and Sind and other regions constituting present Pakistan like Baluchistan and NWFP lagged behind. Punjab with its ample agricultural potentialities like the fertile thirsty plains, under utilized rivers and hardworking peasantry, was regarded by its British conquerors as more valuable than the discovery of richest mines. From 1885 onward, the economy of Punjab began to be reshaped by the unprecedented extension in the agricultural production brought about by canal colonization. In the western Punjab, the emergence of a hydraulic society combined with extensive irrigation schemes in the neighboring province of Sindh led to the establishment of the Indus Basin, one of the largest irrigation systems in the world. It composed of 43 main canals, which serve as large distributary canals and feed minor canals (Habib, Shah and Bhutta: 1992).

British constructed Central Bari Doab Canal on the Ravi in 1859, Sindhai Canal by diversion from Ravi in 1886, Lower Chenab on River Chenab in 1892 and Lower Jhelum on River Jhelum in 1901 (Chaudhary and Ashraf:1981). The Triple Canal Project (irrigating upper part of Chaj and Rechna Doabs) consisting of Upper Chenab Canal Lower Chenab Canal and a Barrage on the Ravi to divert the transferred water into the new Lower Bari Doab Canal was sanctioned in 1905 (Chaudhary and Ashraf :1981). In the western Punjab, the emergence of a hydraulic society combined with extensive irrigation schemes in the neighboring province of Sindh had led to the establishment of the Indus Basin, one of the largest irrigation systems in the world. It composed of 43 main canals, which serve as large distributary's canals and feed minor canals. (Habib, Shah and Bhutta: 1992).

Irrigation Developments in Frontier Districts

In Frontier districts, canal system utilized the water of Kabul, Swat, and Bara River in Peshawar district, Kohat Toi in Kokat district and the Kurram and Touchi Rivers in Bannu district. In Hazara perennial streams, the Kunar, Siran, Daur and Harroh irrigated the land. In the pre-British era 57 percent of the total area of the upper trans-Indus belt of Peshawar division and 16.6% of lower trans-Indus belt of Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ismail Khan was under cultivation (Singh: 1980). Canals constructed by different rulers from time to time irrigated hundred thousand acres out of this cultivated land. There were four categories of canals in the frontier districts. The first category, "the private canals" or "unscheduled canals", existed in all districts except Peshawar. These

communal canals were the property of the people and were managed by the representatives of the government of the day. No canal tax beyond a small cess to cover the expenses of establishment of Mirab (supervisors of irrigation) was levied on these canals. The users of the canal water jointly furnished free labor for the construction of bunds (dams) and for silt clearance.

When water users of a village failed to furnish its quota of laborers, the manager levied a fine called nagha (Absentee fines). The second category of canals was scheduled canals of the Peshawar district managed by Deputy Commissioner under the Peshawar Canal regulation 1895. Mirabi cess (supervisory tax) was levied on these canals also. The water users of these canals were obliged to furnish unpaid labor for affecting the annual silt clearance and maintenance of watercourses. The third category was of those canals, which were constructed with District Board loans. The Michni canal taken off from the left bank of River Kabul near Michni fort in 1896 and Shab Kadar Branch taken off from the Right Bank of Swat River in the Peshawar district was constructed in 1898. The former irrigated 3,600 areas and the latter 1,800 acres respectively. A water rate was to be paid by the users of both these canals. Finally, in the fourth category a very few canals built in Peshawar district like the Upper Swat Canal in 1874, the Kabul River Canal in 1885 and the Bara River canals in 1897 that were managed by the Punjab government. (Baha: 1978).

Lower Swat Canal

Kabul River divides into 3 branches after entering Peshawar valley, River Shah Alam, River Naguman and River Serederyab. All these three branches after traversing 20 miles meet with River Swat and Forms River Lunda which Joins River Indus at Attock. The Swat River that enters the Peshawar valley at Abazai, where the 'Lower Swat canal' project was started in 1874, to irrigate an area of 126 thousand acres in the north east of the Peshawar valley. (Baha: 1978) It supplies water to the fertile lands of Charsada and Mardan. Its construction was also prompted by political consideration. As in this way the Mohmand and other tribes could be induced to settle peacefully in the British territory by the promise of good crops. The construction of the Swat Canal posed a formidable problem for the government. The tribesmen from beyond the border raided the work sites and killed number of laborers. Consequently, armed guards were employed to protect the working parties thus at a considerable cost. The work also suffered during the second Afghan War (1878-80). Therefore, the total cost reached at Rs.3.45 million and was completed in 1885. It proved a great success, as waste and deserted land were brought under cultivation. The total area irrigated by the canal was 162 thousand acres. The tribes derived economic benefits from canal and they changed their earlier hostile attitude. (Government of India: 1989)

Kabul River Canal

The Kabul River Canal Project started in 1885 and took five years in completion. The canal was taken out from the right bank of the Kabul River at Warsak and proved highly remunerative. The total area irrigated by the canal was 45,773 acres. (Government of India: 1989).

Bara River Canal

The Bara River Canal was already supplying water for drinking and irrigation purposes to the Mohmand and Khalil villages as well as Cantonment and city of Peshawar. The supply of water often ran short in summer; therefore, Punjab irrigation department constructed the weirs and upper distributaries of the canal from the Bara River in 1897. (Baha: 1978). At the end of 18th century frontier districts and adjacent tribal belt possess only 0.74 million acres (28 percent) irrigated land out of its gross cultivated area of 2.64 million acres. Out of the total cultivated area, 72 percent was dependent on the rain fall, 25 percent was irrigated by canals and 2 percent was irrigated by perennial streams or inundated by river floods and one percent by wells. (Baha: 1978) Though the Indus River forms the eastern boundary of the Frontier Districts for about 200 miles yet the British Government of Punjab had done nothing to utilize the water of Indus for irrigating the frontier districts. Sind and Punjab could make admirable use of the Indus water. There is no other reason why a more effective use of Indus water was not made for irrigating trans-Indus southern districts.

Land settlements, revenue and tenure (1848-1901)

When the British took over the frontier tracks from the Sikh, vesh was recognized in the early settlement. Through the settlement, British laid down the rules concerning land ownership, rents and payment of revenue. They regularized extraction from agriculture, which was by far the most important source of income for state. In the peculiar circumstances of the frontier districts, questions of tenure and agricultural usage were not raised for some considerable time; the immediate problems were those of assessment and collection. Therefore, Frontier districts were first put under "Summary Settlements". The revenue was fixed at low rate because the villagers were reported to be refractory, and if pressed they will live and took themselves to the hills. (Baha: 1978). The British undertook first revenue settlements in each district of Frontier between 1868 and 1880. The term of first regular settlement was twenty-five years for Peshawar, Kohat and Dera Ismail Khan and thirty years for Bannu and Hazara. The vesh or Khasanri system was still found during the first regular settlement in Tehsil Tank of District Dera Ismail Khan, the upper Miranzai of Kohat district, in the Marwat Tehsil of Bannu and in some villages of Peshawar though in languishing form. (Government of India: 1989).

The system of vesh gradually disappeared in the settled districts, because it was opposed to the spirit of British revenue procedure and the Pashtun began to realize the advantages of fixity of tenure particularly in irrigated Tappas. British encouraged

individualization in property rights, which was a marked shift from the collective ownership by village community and other complex form of property that had existed in the pre-British period. In the remote, inaccessible and barren areas, the tribal structure has not changed, while in the easily accessible fertile plane it soon underwent fundamental change and a feudal society began to emerge. According to tribal customs, some portion of land was always set a part for the purpose of common grazing or Shamialat. The individual share of the Shamialat was called Inam. The tribal land was called Daftar and the individual having a share in the daftar was called daftari. A man who ceased to be a daftari was no longer entitled to be a Pakhtun and was dubbed as a fakir, without having any voice in village or tribal council. Also village servants, menials and artisans held land rent-free in return for services to the tribe in peace and war. There were also hemsayas who were dependent cultivators occupying bandas on the out skirts of the Tappa. These men held lands on condition that they would assist the khel to whom the land belonged in repelling raids of rival khels. The priestly classes, Mullahs and Sayyeds were allowed no share in the tribal daftar.

Tribal customs do not allow Khans and Maliks, as a rule, to claim more land than their fellow tribesmen do. However, since their services were considered indispensable to the community, some portion of common land called Seri were assigned to them. Some time such allocations were also made to important khan to enable them to meet the expenses, which their position warranted. It no doubt reflected the democratically individualist nature of the Pashtuns. The owners of the land Khan and Malik did not cultivate their lands, but handed over it to tenants such as fakir and hemsaya, on condition of the latter's pledge of assistance against rival Khan and Malik and of course payment of revenue. Khan no longer remained tribal chief but assumed the status of landlord. The influential classes were granted special concessions. They enacted upon an indirect system of administration. A large numbers of the landed elite were employed to secure political control and the consolidation of imperialism in the province. Their services were utilized by the colonial government in the district judicial and revenue administration, military services and in active work against any political agitation. In lieu of their services to the raj, they were given honorific titles such as Khan Bahadurs and Khan Sahibs and were granted Jagirs, inams and revenue remissions.

The imperialists regarded these big Khans or the privileged landed aristocracy as the natural leaders of the people. They owned large pieces of land. Sometime thousands of acres of land were owned by them, possessed enormous wealth, had great social status, and exercised great influence over the villages. (Shah; 1999) Another group of the landed elite was the smaller Khans, though numerically strong, less favored by the government. As a group they were not opposed to the British Government. They had direct contacts with the peasants and ordinary cultivators. The Khans both big and smaller ones did not cultivate the land by themselves, under their tutelage were dehqans humsayas, and faqirs who simply tendered their allegiance to the Khans and

acted on their directives. The bulk of the agricultural population of the province was Khudkast Zamindars, i.e. cultivators of low rented land from the big zamindar in return for a share in the crop. Then there were the Burkhakhar ijaradars, who got their income from agricultural land but did not cultivate the land by themselves or through their relatives or servants. They rented the land from a zamindar for a fixed term at some fixed cash rates. (Shah: 1999).

Revenue assessments served as a means of establishing proprietary status. As regards assessment of the land, two methods of assessment, fixed cash assessment and fluctuating assessment were introduced. The former was introduced in all the districts of frontier except a part of Dera Ismail Khan, the Daman tract where fluctuating assessment was applied because the yield of crop was liable to extreme variation due to the uncertain supply of water. (Baha: 1978). Two classes of tenants, occupancy tenants and tenants at will were recognized. The formers were known as mauroosi tenants. They had in their possession the land for twenty years or more. They paid no rent beyond the state's share of the revenue demand and the village cesses. They had right to hold their land so long as they paid the fixed rent. Tenants at will were liable to ejection at the end of an agricultural year in pursuance of a notice of ejection issued by a revenue officer on the application of landlord. His rent was determined by agreement between himself and his landlord. (Naqvi, Khan and Chaudhry: 1989) About 80 percent of the tenants were 'tenants at will' in Frontier districts. Punjab Tenancy Act XXVIII of 1868 first officially determined the status of tenants in all the frontier districts except Hazara. In Hazara district determination of tenant's right necessitated a special regulation 3 of 1873, which gave broader interpretation to the term occupancy rights than that given in the Punjab Tenancy Act.

This special regulation conferred the right of occupancy on every tenant who either himself or through his predecessor had tentatively occupied his holding from a period earlier than the summary settlement of 1847 (Baha; 1978). The most common system of cultivation was share cropping, which is uneconomic and highly labor-intensive form of cultivation. Broadly speaking three kinds of rent were prevalent in the frontier districts Batai rents, Zabti rents, and chakota or kalang rent. Rent in kind was common in all districts except Hazara where cash rent was levied. For purpose of revenue collection, the system of joint village responsibility was introduced and the collection of land revenue was entrusted to a village lambardar. The lambardar was usually a Malik or other influential man and was allowed a 5 percent commission on the actual revenue collection. This commission was called the lambardari cess. (Government of India: 1989).

Land division (taqseem) in Frontier Districts

The land tenure system in the Northwest Frontier regions was one of extreme egalitarianism. The land tenure in the Pashtun's area was based on a strong sense of

territorial right. It was collective right as well as providing for the separate enjoyment of the individual family share in the land. A very important aspect of this right was the system of taqsim among the tribes, their clans and subsections. Each tribe had a specified area of land, which was further subdivided into smaller units for various tribal segments down to the bakhra. The possession of a separate tract by each tribe was parceled out into lots or tappas, each held by main sub division of the tribe. These lots were again subdivided into blocks each held by a khel of the subdivision. These blocks were yet again subdivided into Kandi that held by subsection of the Khel, while inside each kandi each individual proprietor has his share or bakhra. Each bakhra was not, however, represented by a simple compact plot of land.

To secure an equality of distribution each kandi was subdivided into wands according to the nature of the soil or facilities of irrigation, and a field or field in each wand, which usually ran the whole length of the block, represented each share. (Baha: 1978) In Marwat tehsil of Bannu distinct system of khula vesh prevailed. Under khula vesh shares were allotted to man, woman and child. In the Hazara district the original distribution of tribal land was known as wirasat and the owner being called waris. (David: 1975). As the irrigated land was parceled out among the main sections of the tribe, subsequently the amount of labor, which the different subsection of the tribe contributed to the maintenance, improvement and extension of the existing irrigation facilities, determined their shares in water. These practical shares hardened into rights that passed from generation to generation (Baha: 1978).

Agricultural Productions

The settled districts lying east of the Indus like Hazara received sufficient rainfall while the other tract, west of the Indus like Peshawar, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan where rainfall averaged less than 20 inches in the year depended largely on irrigation. The Peshawar, Kohat and Bannu valleys were well irrigated and were highly cultivated. In the hills the best cultivation was found in Kohat. In Lakki Marwat agriculture mainly depended on rain fall, the harvest was precarious. In the Daman crops depended on hill torrents. Autumn (Kharif) and spring (Rabi) were two harvests. The tillage of the districts was not of high order. The agricultural implements in use were of an ancient type. The wooden plough was drawn by cattle. Grains were trodden out by bullocks. Manure was used near villages. The Frontier districts constituted nearly 1/14th of the Punjab's total area, and 1/15th of its total revenue and a little less than 1/18th of its entire population in 1901 (Government of India: republished: 1989). About 64.5 percent of the population was supported by agriculture and of these 31 percent were actual workers. Wheat was the chief crop of the spring harvest and was sown in more than 1,406 square miles. About one third was sown on irrigated land. The average yield per acre was from 30 tons (one ton = 40 kg) to 6 in irrigated land and in case of rain-fed land it ranged from 14 to 20 tons per acre. (Government of India: republished 1989) Barley was next in importance and was sown on more than 313 square miles.

Its yield per acre was less than wheat. Gram covered 188 square miles and was grown chiefly in Lakki Marwat Tehsil of Bannu. Per acre return was 16 to 20 tons. Maize, the chief crop of autumn harvest covered about 625 square miles and was coming next to wheat. Hazara and Peshawar claimed most of the output and was also sown in Bannu district. Bajra (spiked millet), Jowar (surgum) and rice were cultivated on 313, 156 and 49 square miles. Cotton and Oil crops covered 50 to 120 square miles on average. (Government of India re-pub: 1998) The total area under fruit orchards was estimated at 4,000 acres of which 27,000 acres was situated in Peshawar district. The chief fruits were grapes, peaches, plums, pears, pomegranates, watermelons, Guava and dates. Dates were produced in Dera Ismail Khan, apricots from Hazara and Kohat was main producer of Guava and grapes. The province possessed no noteworthy breed of cattle except the Peshawar buffalo. Sheep and goats were bred in every district. Camels were largely used for transport. Hazara was the only district having forest division in the province. About 30,000 thousand surplus incomes was coming from reserved forest spreading over 235 square miles. (Government of India: 1989).

CONCLUSION

It could be clearly perceived that the tribal disturbance was very largely hunger created. The government, so far, believed in using force to correct the tribal intransigence and was trying to suppress the tribal lawlessness by violence. No proper efforts were made to find out the real causes. The tribesmen were mostly unemployed. There was no industry in this part of land. Large fertile lands were lying barren in the southern districts of province as well as in tribal belt. The sinking of canals to irrigate the rain-fed areas was an intense need of the time. The government was boosting its steps for maintaining law and order. It had neither the time nor any plan to pay proper attention to improve the economic conditions of the people of these areas. Those running the provincial administration have thought that a matter like the development of cottage and large-scale industries has no truck with them and that was left to private enterprise and there was no private enterprise at all.

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