

VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE THAKURPUKUR KOLKATA-700063

NAAC ACCREDITED 'A' GRADE



Topic: "Todarmal was appointed to the lofty office of the Diwan. An excellent ordering of administration and financial matters was the result."(Ain-i-Akbari)-Discuss

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6) "Todarmal was appointed to the lofty office of the Diwan. An excellent ordering of administrative and financial matters was the result." (Ain-i-Akbari) - Discuss.

Raja Todarmal, one of the most brilliant jewels of Akbar's court, is well known to the student of Indian history, and to some extent to the Indian people in general as one of the greatest revenue experts India ever produced.

It seems from Badawari that at the end of the year 970 H., i.e. before the end of A.D. 1563, Todar Mal was appointed in the revenue department of Akbar. Since then he was connected with almost all the steps that were taken to make Akbar's land revenue system steady and stable. Dr. K. R. Gaurung suggests that Todar Mal was not a product of Akbar's reign, he had served under Sher Shah. The fact that he had worked under Sher Shah in the revenue administration must have helped him a lot to contribute to the brilliant land revenue (Zabti) system formulated and executed during Akbar's reign.

In the early years of Akbar's reign the land revenue system was generally a continuation of the previous one by Sher Shah. It was Todar Mal who first introduced significant change in the existing system. The first important work regarding land settlement in which Todar Mal

had a hand was made in the 11th regnal year of Akbar (1566-67 A.D.), and practically this was the first major experiment of Akbar's reign in this field. In this year Muzaffar Khan Turbati and Todar Mal set aside the revenue demand recorded in kind ("jama-i-naqami-qalmi"). This "jama" was in force from the beginning of Akbar's reign. But this method of levying State's demand ("jama") became a source of corruption and exploitation. In order to redress the abuses Muzaffar Khan Turbati and Todar Mal obtained from the local qanungos the schedules of produce and assessed revenue prepared on their knowledge of actual yield ("taqsimat-i-mulk") and having completed the "mashul" by estimate and computation, brought into force a new "jama". Ten superior qanungos were employed by them to collect the statistics from the local qanungos. The revenue demand ("jama") thus assessed was undoubtedly more rational and closer to "hasil" (revenue actually received). Thus Todar Mal along with Muzaffar Khan Turbati deserves the credit of bringing the assessment nearer to reality.

It was Todar Mal who introduced measurement for the purpose of assessment during Akbar's reign and devised the classification of land. This was first done in Gujarat and later on it was applied to many parts of the empire. Todar Mal classified lands into four categories on the basis of the continuity or discontinuity of cultivation:

D) "Polaj" is land which is annually cultivated for each crop in succession and is never allowed to lie fallow.

ii) "Baranti" is land left out of cultivation for a time that it may recover its strength.

iii) "Chachar" is land that has lain fallow for three or four years.

iv) "Banjar" is land uncultivated for five years and more.

Todar Mal's classification of land had directly admitted the principle of productivity and had mitigated the burden of cultivators of the lesser productive lands to a great extent.

Moreover, the emperor consulted Raja Todar Mal and Shah Mansur in adopting the "Ain-i-Dahsala" or ~~the settlement~~ settlement and entrusted them with the task of implementing the settlement. It is known from Abul Fazl that although the execution of the "Ain-i-Dahsala" was entrusted to Todar Mal and Shah Mansur, it was actually put into force by the latter as the Raja was sent to chastise the rebels in the eastern region of the empire. But it seems that Shah Mansur, who was only concerned with the collection of revenue and replenishing the treasury, did not give attention to various problems that cropped up during the execution of the "Ain-i-Dahsala". Consequently these caused various troubles. So, on the order of the emperor, Todar Mal, who had the knowledge based on ~~the~~ assessment of produce of a land of previous ten years,

of the world", and who had become free from the eastern campaign, made rules for removing these difficulties. For the smooth running of the revenue department Todar Mal formulated "Twelve Regulations" regarding revenue administration defying all obstacles. These were duly approved by the emperor on 3rd March 1582 and put into force. Most of the Twelve Regulations dealt with various functions of the collectors, known variously as the "Karcari" or "amil" or "amalguzar". The Regulations provided for grant of loans to the distressed or destitute cultivators, who possessed neither seed nor cow, on receipt of bonds from the "muzaddam" or respectable person so that it could be recovered every time. The Twelve Regulations not only made the revenue administration smooth and removed most of the existing defects but also revealed Todar Mal's ideas and principles regarding land revenue administration. The Twelve Regulations of Todar Mal set a standard for future administrators to follow. Several subsequent regulations in the empire were promulgated or formulated on this model.

In Bengal Todar Mal adopted a different method in the settlement of land revenue. In Bengal the unit of assessment was the individual cultivator and the revenue was paid in cash. Regarding the method of assessing the "jama" or revenue demand of the province Abul Fasl

categorically states that "crop-division" was not practised". Abul Fazl speaks of the continuance of the traditional "nasaq" on which the revenue demand of Bengal was based. "Nasaq" in Bengal meant a method of assessment in which an amount per plough irrespective of area and produce was levied upon the cultivators. Todar Mal prepared a new settlement of Bengal. The Raja also divided the province into 24 "Sarkars" including the 5 "Sarkars" of Orissa for the purpose of revenue administration. The land revenue settlement of Bengal, which was introduced by Raja Todar Mal during Akbar's reign, lasted throughout the Mughal period.

We thus see that Akbar's land revenue system was practically Todar Mal's creation. His success is proved by the fact that the system continued to exist both in Northern India and in Bengal not only throughout the Mughal period but even for several decades after the establishment of British authority. That is why the Mughal revenue system came to be known to the posterity as Todar Mal's "Candlestick".