CONCLUSION

After the acquisition of Diwani rights of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765, the British administration of English East India Company gripped their hold over the economic movement of the region. After here, they continuously attempted to improve the land revenue administration and management and tighten their hold on the movement of land revenue tax. In that process, they introduced various land revenue settlement one after another in a series of experimentation. From the introduction of Farming System where land had been allotted to the highest bidders for the contractual terms of five years to the permanent Zamindari system, the aim of British Empire was very clear, i.e., the establishment of a permanent and regular source of income generation from the agriculture sector. The introduction of Mahalwari system of land revenue settlement was the last attempt in that process made by the British administration of Company government.

The first quarter of the 19th century was witnessed as a period of enormous changes in the apparatus of the British Empire. It was a period of British territorial expansion through the war and expedition and also a period of challenges and economic crisis. By this period, the British lost the monopoly of opium trade with China. Therefore, they paid full attention to
develop a sound land revenue administration which insured the permanent and regular income for the company administration. The secretary of state for India in England had sent Lord W. Bentinck with a special task to established a sound land revenue administration by which the British government of East India Company could able to combat on the shattered economy. He was well influenced by the Utilitarian philosophy of rent doctrine and instructed to apply that concept of land rent in India. However, the Utilitarian principles of economic rent have not been applied successfully.

By the introduction of *Mahalwari* system, the British made the land revenue administration and management a highly technical business. They introduced *Mahalwari* system with a belief that it is best land settlement ever be experimented in India. They tried to make happy to the larger section of agricultural population through the implementation of the new system. About *Mahalwari* the British claimed that it was an obvious improvement over all the previously existing land revenue system because it was an intermediary type borrowed the features of both the *Ryotwari* and *Zamindari* settlement. However, it failed at every front and did not produce positive results for the agricultural community. It fell heavily on the peasantry and resented the *Talukdari* section as well at wider scale. The
standard of living of the peasants had decreased by the operation of the new settlement.

Though many historians have touched the aspects of Mahalwari system of land revenue operation but no one dealt all the aspects of the settlement. The agrarian consequences of the settlements’ operation were not dealt in depth and that area demands a fresh investigation. How the working of Mahalwari settlement proved to be a cause of the revolt of 1857?

The Mahalwari system was implemented in the region of the North Western Provinces with a special preference given to the village community by the time of settlement deed. The British administration and officials claimed that they promoted the community holding by implementation of Mahalwari system. But in practicality, the operation Mahalwari system promoted the proprietary right and strengthens the hold of big taluqdars in the region. The institution of Lambardari played a greater role in the mechanism of Mahalwari system turned corrupt and proved to be parasite for the peasant yeomanry. This institution became the source of all misery.

The Mahalwari system were not working on a universal and uniform pattern of land tenurial system in all operated region but varied according to its locality and operated with different names. The operation of the system was based on the local information made available by the settlement or
revenue officers who got that knowledge through the agencies of *Patwaris* and *Qanungoes*. Local existing condition played key role in its operation.

The operation of the system paced the commercialization of Indian agriculture and also increased the ratio of India’s export which raised the proportion of *Tribute* or Drain of Wealth. The operation of *Mahalwari* system increased the cases of female infanticide in the North Western Provinces. This social consequence was one of most interesting and striking outcomes of the *Mahalwari* operation. The British statesmen and officers claimed that it was old superstitious practices prevailed in Rajputs clan. But in reality it seems to be a result of too much tax burden on the peasantry section. In the North Western Provinces, Rajputs were the dominating caste engaged them in agricultural occupation.

The harsh and coerce method of revenue collection was very common in the *Mahalwari* operated regions. The whole mechanism of revenue collecting agents became corrupt and dishonest obviously doubled the burden of peasantry and other agricultural community. The harsh and coerce methods of revenue collection caused oppression of peasantry naturally provoked them to participate in the revolt of 1857. They revolted against the bulk confiscation of their land by the company government for the default of arrears of land revenue amount. The widespread participation of peasantry
section in the revolt was mainly because the Mahalwari mode of revenue collection forced them into the condition of poverty where they could not manage their day-to-day consumption with comfort and ease. It was the oppressive nature of land revenue collection under Mahalwari operation dived them into situation where they had no land to cultivate. The problem of peasantry became so alarming and acute when a price of foodgrains keeps on fluctuating. The prices of foodgrains decreased during the time of cultivating but increases by the time of bowing season. This type of happenings turned lives too tough which outburst in the event of 1857 revolt.

The system failed practically at all front and appeared to be most unpopular for the peasantry as well as for other agricultural community. The operation of new settlement was not even beneficial to the company government because most of the time the real collected amount never reached to the central authority due to the involvement of corrupt officials in the mechanism of collection. Most of the times, the settlement officers’ with the company of Lambardars collected the land revenue amount at their own will and discretion. It seems that the operation of new land revenue settlement proved to be disastrous for the nineteenth century Indian agriculturists as well as for the administration of English East India Company.