The East India Company came to India to start trade and commerce but later on this aim changed towards administration. Since the British occupation of Orissa it asserted that its largest source of income was from agriculture. So, the prime measure of the government was to secure maximum income from land. In order to know the yielding capacity of the soil of the province several settlements were undertaken. The repeated settlements proved disastrous since they generated an army of dispossessed and dissatisfied peasants whose anger burst out in several peasant revolts. These revolts made the government uncomfortable but in order to pacify the people the Company introduced modernisation measures in the shape of digging of canals, construction of embankments, introducing scientific farming and commercial agriculture, improvement of communication and conservation of forests. But the modern scientific measures failed to revamp the declining Orissan economy to any extent.

The Company's Government introduced administrative and economic measures to check the creeping decline of the economy of Orissa since 1833. The famine of 1866 exposed the inadequacy of financial investment and modernisation measures leading to sporadic peasant resistance movements. The decline can be found in the village level industries
in salt, textile and other outputs of agricultural products. The Government's policy of Loissez-faire in the economic activities was partly responsible for economic regeneration of the country. For the economic revival of Orissa the following categories of measures be taken into consideration.

1. **End of Salt Monopoly**

   It can be ascertained from the epigraphic and literary sources that salt was an exportable commodity and source of revenue of the state since the sixth century. The land holders were responsible for manufacture of the oceanic salt from remote past with the help of wage earner labourers called *adoora moulanges* and the merchant entrepreneurs were responsible for internal and external trade of the commodities. With the end of political isolation, during the Mughal rule Orissa found out a wider commodity market in India resulting in the growth of salt industry.

   During the Muslim rule the land holders and the zamindars were responsible for manufacturing salt in the off-season starting from mid-November to the rainy season. The salt producing economy during the Muslim period was based on a slave economy as the *adoora moulanges* were in a state of bondage to the proprietor of the land through usury. During Maratha rule salt and paddy became the
only exportable commodities while textile commodity produc-
duction began to decline.

With the advent of the British the salt trade in between Bengal and Orissa was kept under control. Some prote-
tective posts to check smuggling of salt were started. The Com-
pany took permission from the Bhonsle to export the entire salt manufactured in the coastal region of Balasore which was desired. The Company adopted measures to prevent unlimited expansion of salt manufacture by opening up new salt tracts. On 4th May 1804, a temporary regulation was enacted by the Governor-General-in-Council for the manage-
ment of salt monopoly in the areas from the Subarnarekha to the Mahanadi, designated as northern division of Cuttack.

In November 1804, Robert Ker became the collector and Magistrate of the northern division of Cuttack. He endeavoured to make salt monopoly a success and directed the proprietors, chooleah, surburrakars and owners of Khaleary lands to sell salt to the government directly by bringing it to the salt golahs. On 2 September George Hercourt and John Melville, the British Commissioner of Orissa, reported that temporary regulations of salt monopoly was profitable. They recommended that the Government should take over the salt production by opening aurgangs in different parts of the northern division in order to restrict private produc-
tion to check smuggling of salt and to save the manufacturers from the clutches of the oppressive intermediaries.
According to the old method of salt manufacture, the salt was admitted into a pit where brine was prepared by throwing mound of earth to the water. At the bottom of the pit there were layers of coarse grass or straw kept for the brine to strain through into a large earthen receiver placed on a convex kiln. The earthen pot was boiled until it evaporated, leaving the pure salt in the pots. After the assumption of the Government's monopoly salt manufacturing technique did not change. In 1806, James King was appointed as the agent of the salt department to control the manufacture of salt on northern sea coast.

The salt monopoly gave a substantial profit to the Company's government. With the passing of the regulation XXII of 1814 it was extended the salt production to the southern part of the province. The salt regulations of Bengal were enforced in Orissa. The promulgation of salt monopoly immediately led to rise of price of salt. It was four annas per maund during the Maratha rule which reached one rupee soon after the imposition of Monopoly. Later on it reached Rupees two per maund. This led to unprecedented price rise in the daily necessities and depreciation in the value of cowri currency. In 1817, the newly appointed Commissioner ordered the construction of store houses at different parts of the province for retail sale of salt in chowkeys.
In 1819 a new board was formed for the administration of salt monopoly. In the same year regulation X was passed to check smuggling of salt and to punish the salt officials in case of negligence of duty. But the smuggling continued in the same process and the Government passed regulation XIV in 1834 to punish the offenders. Out of the total quantity of manufactured salt in Orissa, 2/3 were exported to the government golas in Bengal and from these were distributed in Northern India.

In 1920 two Salt Agents were appointed for two divisions for the better management of salt department. It continued till the province was divided into three separate agencies: Cuttack, Puri and Balasore. This new arrangement brought two changes. First, the quantity of exported salt was raised, leaving the Karkatch salt for home consumption. The moulangees were registered and given advances during the off season. Second, the earthen pots were substituted by the iron boilers, first of all at Balasore Salt Aurang.

The measures of the government could not check the smuggling of salt. In between 1829 and 1834, about 1,50,000 maunds of salt was smuggled. The moulangies had to face various difficulties, like scarcity of labour, collection of illegal rents by zamindars. They started smuggling with the help of corrupt salt officials. Thus a parallel market of salt continued in Orissa in the thirties of the nineteenth
century which partly led to the collapse of the salt monopoly.  

In 1846-47, the total quantity of salt to be produced in the three agencies of Orissa was fixed at six lakhs maunds of pungah and three lakhs of Karkatch. In 1852-53 it was reduced when public sale of indigenous salt was reduced in the Calcutta market due to importation of Liverpool Salt. The heavy importation of salt created a problem which led to the appointment of a commission under the chairmanship of George Plowden. Plowden reported against monopoly and recommended its substitution by an excise system in the form of salt tax. He found the retail sale of salt as a Panacea to check smuggling and to substitute it with an excise system. But with in a few years the Government of India decided to discontinue salt monopoly in Orissa. The smuggling of salt reached its climax between 1856-1861.

The end of John Company's rule in India sounded the death knell of salt monopoly in Orissa. The cheap Liverpool salt began to pour into the Orissan market and became popular for its good quality. It was sold at cheaper rate at Rs.65 per 100 maunds where as Orissa salt was sold at Rs.83 per 100 maunds in the Government golah. In May 1862 the Government thought of producing salt through excise system. So the discontinuance of salt monopoly and the competition between Liverpool and indigenous salt became beneficial to the consumers and kept the market tolerably steady. The
following table shows the relative price indices Liverpool Salt and salt produced at Balasore per 100 maunds in 1863.

**TABLE 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cost at Calcutta</th>
<th>Freight charge to Balasore</th>
<th>Landing &amp; Golah charge</th>
<th>Profit by importation</th>
<th>Cost of Price to retail duty paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balasore Salt per 100 maunds</td>
<td>Rs.60/-</td>
<td>Rs.12-0-0</td>
<td>Rs.0-6-0</td>
<td>Rs.2-10-0</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Balasore Salt per 100 maunds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wage of Moulangee</th>
<th>Payment to Zamindar for fuel</th>
<th>Rent for land</th>
<th>Contingency</th>
<th>Profit of manufacture</th>
<th>Cost of price to the Retail duty paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rs.56-4</td>
<td>Rs.3-2</td>
<td>Rs.5-3</td>
<td>Rs.6-6-3</td>
<td>Rs.2-0-0</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: BSR, Acc.No.308, 'Salt Agent of Balasore to Commissioner of Cuttack', 29 April, 1863.)

2. Moulangees' condition during the period from 1803-1862.

Moulangees were the real salt manufacturing community for the Government. The period from 1803 to 1862, marked changes in the material condition of the Moulangees. With the increase in export of Punga and Karkatch Salt the adjoora system was replaced by theeska system. The primary producers 'Moulangees' were given cultivable lands on short
term basis. Sometimes they were provided loan of money and paddy at usurious rates of interest. Again two advances were given to them during one season. The first advance was given before the beginning of the manufacturing season through their chooleahs. In the middle of the season the second advance was paid according to the quantity of salt produced by them.

The contemporary salt records gives an oppressive picture of the Zamindars. The moulangees were coerced to pay different types of rents and cess to the Zamindars foregetting the rate fixed by the Company's Government. Sometimes the moulangees had to flee away to escape the clutches of the oppressive zamindars. In 1863 the moulangees agitated to get a just rate. Most of them were landless, for which they engaged themselves in making salt. During the Maratha rule the income of Moulangees was just sufficient for a small family. But with the outcome of the Company's rule their condition deteriorated below the subsistence level due to the rise in the price of essential commodities.

In 1826 the Government had fixed the rate at Rs.50/- per 115 maunds of salt delivered and allowed them to take two pots of salt for his family consumption. As it was not sufficient the Government allowed an additional payment of two annas per maund after 15 March 1833. In order to
stop the agitation of the moulannges the Government raised the rate from 5 to 6 annas per maund in 1843.25


The Government's salt monopoly came to an end in March 1863. The Board of Revenue and the Commissioner of Orissa expressed their views in favour of excise system. In July 1863 the Government decided to impose excise duty on the salt manufacture and to collect customs duty from imported salt.

First of all the Government was confronted with two conflicting views over the principle of tax upon salt. On the one hand the first group advocated a low and uniform tax. On the other hand, the second group advocated a rise in the rate of salt tax other than this.26 Even in Orissa in 1866, a Committee headed by R. Hunter appointed to investigate the prevalent opinions that people of Orissa were badly off as regards the salt duty in comparison to the inhabitants of the other parts of Bengal. The committee finally gave its opinion that due to high rate of salt the average consumption in Orissa was $22\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. Where as the biological necessities required $22\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of salt per annum for consumption to keep high health.27

Though the manufacture of salt continued through excise system in Orissa by contractors, many moulannges found themselves unemployed. In addition to this, the
labourers employed in salt industry now turned out seasonal agricultural labourer creating surplus labour in the agrarian sector. During the famine of 1866, the moulangees and day labourers were first to go out of work to suffering. After the famine many unemployed were encouraged to migrate to Khurda and tributary mahals to reclaim waste lands there.

The Commissioner of Orissa suggested that the full Bengal rate should be levied on Ganjam salt passing through Orissa and the government should mention a specific route through which the Ganjam salt was to be carried out to Central Provinces. The Madras salt was sent to Central Provinces and Sambalpur district on which differential duty had been paid. So in order to check the illicit sell at Cuttack the government accepted the above plan.

A report was submitted by an experienced civil servant A. Mooney, for the completion of the railway which would serve as the greatest carrier of salt. He recommended an increase of duty to 8 annas on Ganjam salt. He also made it clear that the cry for equalisation of duty on salt all over India was based on a misconception as salt tax was either a custom duty upon an article of consumption or it was an indirect levy on all classes especially the poor class. He also held that the present tax on salt in India was differing in mildness of duties and incidence with foreign country like France.
The Act X of 1874 declared the removal of all restrictions on salt trade. On May 5, 1875, Ravenshaw induced all the Rajahs of native states to allow free passage of salt trade. The Rajahs also agreed to give free access to traders with government rowanah showing the duty paid. The removal of restrictions on salt trade between Ganjam and Orissa affected the local manufacturers. The Ganjam salt price raised to Rs.2-4 but manufacture and sale of Orissa salt steadily declined. The following table shows the decline of receipt of salt revenue in Cuttack, Puri and Balasore.

**TABLE 7**

Receipt of Salt Revenue in Rupee between 1873 - 1879

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cuttack</th>
<th>Puri</th>
<th>Balasore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1873 - 74</td>
<td>134003</td>
<td>686753</td>
<td>458285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874 - 75</td>
<td>50849</td>
<td>544059</td>
<td>447577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875 - 76</td>
<td>42519</td>
<td>385446</td>
<td>483514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876 - 77</td>
<td>77752-8-6</td>
<td>304816</td>
<td>4615562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877 - 78</td>
<td>54716-7-5</td>
<td>39156-6-1</td>
<td>492094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878 - 79</td>
<td>46343-0-0</td>
<td>684080</td>
<td>423320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Salt Reports of the Bengal Presidency to the year 1878-79, Calcutta, pp.1-15)

It became unprofitable for the salt contractors as large amount of salt remained unsold in the stores, as the Ganjam salt was 8 annas less than the Orissan Salt. The condition
of the Salt producers in Orissa deteriorated. The Government passed Act XI in 1877 which divided Orissa into six zones for the convenience of tax collection at the revised rate given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Salt Tax to be collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Puri-Kusbadra River</td>
<td>Rs. 2 - 8 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kusbadra - Cuttack</td>
<td>Rs. 2 - 10 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. South Cuttack-Mahanadi</td>
<td>Rs. 2 - 12 - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mahanadi - Dhamra</td>
<td>Rs. 2 - 15 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dhamra - Kansabati</td>
<td>Rs. 3 - 0 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kansabati - Balasore</td>
<td>Rs. 3 - 2 - 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Utkal Dipika, 2 February, 1878)

The act also recommended for the abolition of rowana system which acted as the second line of defence. The abolition of rowana system marked the steady rise of sale in Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts. The following table shows the rise of manufacture of salt in Cuttack, Puri and Balasore between 1879 to 1884.

The availability of cheap Liverpool salt at Calcutta threatened to drive indigenous salt out of Orissa market. As the manufacture of pungah salt by excise system became unprofitable, the moulangees started illicit manufacture.
In 1885 the Lt. Governor of Bengal accepted the suggestion of Fowler to transfer salt administration of Orissa to Madras Salt Agency. In the same year the Commissioner of Orissa suggested to discontinue the salt manufacture in Balasore district.

Till 1888, the salt officials were kept under district collector when Madras Agency took the charge fullfledgedly for better supervision to prevent illicit manufactures of salt. The first measure of the new authority was to abolish pungah salt manufactured in Orissa as it was difficult to supervise and to check smuggling. This change of policy threw thousands of moulangees out of employment.
In Madras, the Karkakh salt was manufactured at less than 1/3 of cost of pungah salt of Orissa and its market rate was much lower than the foreign salt. In January 1891 a meeting attended by C.E. Elliot, the Lt. Governor of Bengal, the Commissioner of Orissa, collectors of three districts of Orissa, and Deputy Commissioner of salt of Madras Agency. It was decided to revive the production of karkatch salt in Orissa by opening factory near Chilika lake under the government supervision.

One of the great concern of the Madras salt Agency was the existence of clandestine salt market run by unemployed moulangees. So it was decided to employ the unemployed moulangees in the industry. In 1891 two factories were opened, one at Thua near Chilika lake and the other at Sartha in the district of Balasore. In 1892 the Raja of Parikud was permitted to open a factory at Gurubai to provide employment to the local moulancees. But due to severe financial loss the factory was closed down in the same year.

The salt Act VII of 1882 which was extended to Orissa in 1888 failed to prohibit the occupation of salt land. From this salt land, salt was produced illicitly. The Chilika salt declined because of its poor quality and high rate of freight and fuel charges. The low priced Ganjam salt was brought to Orissa by traders engaged in
the rice trade. The opening of East Coast Railway in 1895 brought the cheap Madras salt to Orissa.

The Commissioners of Orissa found the experiment undertaken by the Madras Agency unprofitable retransferred it to the hand of Bengal Government. In October 1897 the salt Agency was retransferred to the Government of Bengal and the Commissioner of Orissa was given the charge of the whole department. Thus the moulagees suffered hard after the end of the salt monopoly. Their condition further deteriorated when the salt production declined due to heavy importation of foreign salt which finally brought about the abolition of salt Agency.

4. Decline of Cotton Textile Industry in Orissa

A significant effect of the British rule in Orissa was the decline of indigenous cotton textile industry. The industry was on its downward move towards the end of the Maratha regime. It was completed with the advent of the British rule with its peculiar colonial interests. During the medieval period there was a heavy demand of the Orissa textile commodities. It gave employment to a large number of weavers. The soil of Orissa was not suitable for cotton cultivation so cotton wool were imported to Orissa from Berar and Mahasastra through the land route of Raipur-Sambalpur. T. Motte gives a graphic description of it in his accounts. The cotton wools of different varieties were
imported in lieu of her cheap rice and salt. Maratha
government earned much by imposing heavy customs duty on
imported goods.

In the last part of the eighteenth century the
British Presidents at Cuttack decided to invest money in
the flourishing textile industry in the province. Some Ben-
gali weavers settled around Balasore, Jaipur and Badruk.
G.F.Lackie, in March 1790 passing through Balasore on his
way to Nagpur found Orissan textile industry waning. The
imposition of heavy customs duty on the cotton bales of
Nagpur and importation of English cotton yearn brought about
the decline of cotton trade between Nagpur and Orissa. In
the early years of the Company's rule export of Orissan
textile steadily increased. But with regard to the Company's
investment in the textile industry from 1806-07 to 1816-17,
the average annual income of the Company from this invest-
ment was Rs.56,052.

The passing of Charter Act of 1813 partially opened
Orissa to British traders and facilitated importation of
textile goods to Orissa from Calcutta, putting forth stiff
challenge to the commodities of Orissa textile. The Com-
pany lost its interest to invest in the unprofitable
textile industry. In 1825, A.Stirling had noticed that the
passing of Charter Act of 1833 sounded the death Knell of
village level industries.
The weavers of Balasore, considered as affluent artisans, were reduced to abject poverty after 1833, but the local requirements of cheap and coarse clothes saved them from impending starvation. They began to produce better variety of clothing by purchasing imported yarn. The coarse thread spun at the peasants' home were also mixed with imported yarn for producing good variety of clothes. The proportion of imported yarn with home made yarn was usually 3 to 1. Those weavers who engaged themselves in weaving tussur clothing were praised for their fine texture and durability. But in course of time it also failed to compete with the machine made articles.

During the famine of 1865-66, the weavers like the day labourers and mauloungis were the worst sufferers with no saving and no other means of livelihood. Cotton yarn was supplied by the government free of cost for the weavers relief. It could not check the poverty of the weavers. The following table show the weaving and spinning relief during the famine years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Tot. No. Weavers Received</th>
<th>Net Expenditure</th>
<th>Average cost per person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuttack</td>
<td>51473</td>
<td>Rs. 61972-5-1</td>
<td>Rs. 1 - 3 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puri</td>
<td>13534</td>
<td>Rs. 21835-12-6</td>
<td>Rs. 1 - 9 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balasore</td>
<td>3766</td>
<td>Rs. 7279-13-0</td>
<td>Rs. 1 -14 - 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: J.C. Geddes Administrative experiences of the former famine, Calcutta, 1874, p. 313)
The weaving population migrated towards south-west Bengal after the famine of 1866. Their number declined in the census of 1892 it was calculated at 69,369 which was 3.9% of the total population of the province.

The decline of cotton textile industry had a direct effect on cotton cultivation in the nineteenth century. The following table shows the decline of cotton cultivation in the Cuttack district 1833 - 1897.

**TABLE 11**

Decline of cotton cultivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Area in acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>3020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>6474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>79360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894 - 95</td>
<td>6100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895 - 96</td>
<td>5900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896 - 97</td>
<td>5300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1893-94 only 696 acres of irrigated land was devoted to cotton cultivation despite the availability of irrigation facilities in Cuttack district. Some peasants continued growing cotton plant in their gardens and by the
side of the fences which did not yield good cotton wool. This wool had no market, the poor peasants family used it for yarning coarse thread only to be given to the village weavers.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century four classes of weavers were found in Orissa: Telenga, Muhammadan, Oriya and Bauri. The Telengas and the Muhammadans were aliens and were well off with sufficient capital at their hands to purchase imported yarn. They stayed in the towns and pushed the Oriya and the Bouri Weavers, the poorer lots, to the villages. The decline of salt and cotton textile productions brought in a crisis in the agrarian economy which was heightened by the famine of 1866.

5. The Famine policy of the Raj.

Drought and famine are the ever companions of the inhabitants of Orissa. The year 1866 witnessed the worst ever famine in Orissa, which not only demanded a heavy toll of lives, but also completely wrecked the economic backbone of the people. In the ancient and Medieval period, it was thought to be the moral responsibility of the rulers to help the destitutes in various ways. During the Muslim period, the state made attempts to mitigate the evils of famine through active intervention. After 1803 the policy of the British Raj renounced the policy of intervention, throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.
Thomas Buckle's views in the nineteenth century was partially supported by Ellsworth Hartington who argued that the climate of India was not conducive to do hard physical labour. In case of Orissa where constant variation of climate and its peculiar morphological existence became a major set back to the agricultural prosperity of the region before the famine of 1866 was a case for illustration of the proposition.

The following table shows the natural calamities with the years in the Moghlbandi tracts from 1803-64.

**TABLE 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Calamities</th>
<th>Cuttack</th>
<th>Puri</th>
<th>Balasore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flood and inundation</td>
<td>1806, 1808, 1809, ammost 1817, 1828, 1831, every year 1832, 1834, 1835, between 1855, 1856, 1862, 1836-1864 1863</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclone and gale</td>
<td>1830, 1831</td>
<td>1830, 1831, 1823, 1831 1832</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought</td>
<td>1836, 1837, 1840, 1842</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: LSS O'Malley, BDG: Puri, Cuttack, Balasore)
Thus frequent natural calamities constantly harassed the people of Orissa and forced them to their throes, as they had no reserve grain and saving capacity to face the music of the famine of 1866. In many ways Orissa famine was an watershed in the history, as one of the most severe and wide spread famines that plagued India. It appeared in the nine regnal year of the Gajapati of Puri, therefore, designated as Nauank. It struck several districts of Bihar, Northern part of Madras Presidency, and some districts of Bengal Presidency but the calamity was most intense in the districts of Cuttack, Puri, Balasore and some parts of the Tributary Mahals. The famine was so severe that the people were forced to eat their dead children to avoid death from starvation.

The famine of 1866 was an outcome of variants of weather. The inundation of 1860, 1862 and the drought of 1865 caused crop failure, starvation and high mortality. It was aggravated by the negligence of the local authority. Sir Strafford Northcote later admitted that the Orissa famine of 1866 was a monument of failure of the British policy. The following table shows the statistics of meagre rainfall of 1865 compared with the average rainfall of the previous five years. When crop failed in October 1865, due to meagre rainfall, the people already acquainted with minor crop failure never thought of a great and unprecedented disaster looking a head. Revenshaw, the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>Monthly average of five year 1860-64 in inches</th>
<th>Monthly fall of 1864 in inches</th>
<th>Monthly fall in 1865 in inches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>10.36</td>
<td>15.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>15.64</td>
<td>18.73</td>
<td>8.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>13.29</td>
<td>13.09</td>
<td>12.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>14.71</td>
<td>16.64</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>10.68</td>
<td>12.59</td>
<td>10.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>6.76</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>10.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Commissioner of Orissa not only underestimated the warning but also vainly expected heavy importation of grain with the rise of price. Due to heavy exportation of grain from Orissa to Madras and Calcutta in 1864 the peasants could save little to meet the emergency. The traders were reluctant to take the risk of importation of food grain.
due to difficulties of transportation. The poor people depended on roots and leaves collected form the Jungle. While severe paucity of water in village dried up all avenues of employment opportunity leaving the destitutes through out the years without any work for earning sufficient money to purchased imported high rise food grains.

When the scarcity was growing severe, Burlow, the collector of Puri tried to impress upon Ravenshaw the poor stock of rice in the region. Rice was sold seven seers per rupee in October 1865. On 31 October 1865 when asked by the Government, when the Board of Revenue instituted an enquiry, Ravenshaw opposed it. On 4 November, 1865 Lt. Governor of Bengal requested the Board to give up the policy of non-interference but the Board remained firm and inactive.

Burlow, the collector of Puri requested the Board to revive salt monopoly in order to provide works to the starving millions. Narendra Sarovar of Jagannath Temple was renovated to provide works to the destitutes. Again repairs of Puri-Ganjam road, construction of embankment in the Puri district and digging of tanks at Sathpara, Parikud and Budgerlota were done.

The peasant revolts of Keonjhar forced Ravenshaw to remain absent from Cuttack. In December due to poor harvest the price rose to a great extent. When Ravenshaw
returned from his tour on 31 January 1866 the relief work was in a state of doldrum. He immediately requested the Board to send rice for relief works. But the Board refused to accept his proposals. Though price rose from 7 seers to 4 seers per rupee the Lt. Governor of Bengal Ceciel Beadon could not rise equal to the occasion. The Governor-General sanctioned Rs.30,000 basing on the report of Lt. Hood, the Secretary of Bengal Chamber of Commerce warning a grievous scarcity of food in Orissa connecting to positive famine. In the last part of May, Beadon made a field survey when the province was under the grip of an acute starvation.

On 10 July 1866, the Governor-General expressed his deep sympathy, sanctioned six lakhs of rupees from North-Western famine fund to take prompt measures to mitigate the distress. A special collector was appointed for conducting relief operations. The Board ordered 1,00,000 maunds of Burmese rice. When the ship reached, the rice bags were unloaded with great difficulty due to heavy rains. The unloaded rice bags were sent to different relief centres. The Commissioner made an elaborate arrangements to sell rice but the rotten rice found little buyers in the market. In between July and September 1866 eightyeight centres for distribution of cooked food were opened. The famine condition began to recede after October 1867 with the availability of a large quantity of rice for sale and gratuitous relief.
The relief committees and public works departments supplied rice at a reduced rate of Rs.3-4 per maund. The rice was given to workers instead of money wage by the Public Works Department. For relief of the agriculturists all the instalments of revenue due in 1866 and 1867 were suspended. In June 1867 a favourable monsoon indicated an assurance for better harvest. The deserted labourers returned to their villages. The public sale of rice continued till November 1867 till the good harvest reduced the price of rice.

The relief works continued throughout 1867, saved the weavers, artisans, and day labourers. The Government provided the weavers with 4659 maunds and 32 seers of cotton wool and 3413 maunds of cotton yarn. The artisans were distributed 12000 pieces of tools. The following table reveals the comparative cost of different mode of relief administered in Orissa in 1867.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Centralised relief</th>
<th>Average cost per month</th>
<th>Grand Average in Orissa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Cooked food inside poor houses)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cuttack Puri Balasore</td>
<td>Rs. A P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2-7-3 2-4-3 1-12-1</td>
<td>2 - 7 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village relief</td>
<td></td>
<td>0-10-8 1-0-11</td>
<td>0 -13 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(distribution of grain)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light labour gang</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-9-4 1-3-3 1-14-10</td>
<td>1 - 9 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinning and weaving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was little criminal incidences, no rebellion against the Government during the famine period. It was ably kept under control by the police without requiring military aid. The population figure was unprecedented as evident from the following table.

**TABLE 15**

**Population figure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population before</th>
<th>Cuttack</th>
<th>Puri</th>
<th>Balasore</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Famine</td>
<td>1503829</td>
<td>779718</td>
<td>732269</td>
<td>3015826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality</td>
<td>378009</td>
<td>218852</td>
<td>217603</td>
<td>814469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emigration</td>
<td>53357</td>
<td>32113</td>
<td>295588</td>
<td>115028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total death</td>
<td>431366</td>
<td>250965</td>
<td>247166</td>
<td>229497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population in 1863</td>
<td>107260</td>
<td>528753</td>
<td>495113</td>
<td>2086329</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Utkal Dipika*, Part 3, No.3, dated 18.1.1868)

Sometimes after the famine, officials in the helm of the administrative affairs started brick batting in order to shift the buck. The Lt. Governor accused the Commissioner of Orissa who in return, accused his subordinates for not keeping him informed. The field officials attributed the famine to the lack of public consciousness and education. Discussions over famine of Orissa in the parliament of England created great sensation. The members of the parliament blamed both the Bengal Government and the Board of Revenue for their callousness and lack of foresight.
The Orissa famine shook badly the faith of the Raj on the trade principle in the administration of famine. The misery of death was due to non-interference on the part of the government and due to difficulties of transportation. Had Ravenshaw and his subordinates wanted to purchase grain from other areas and to distribute them to starving population, they could have saved many lives. But their immediate authority the Board of Revenue remained firm to the policy of non-interference.

A commission appointed to enquire into the famine of Orissa, put much stress on the development of communication system, construction of protective embankments and canals for irrigation and for the spread of education. The government renounced the policy non-interference and introduced different developmental measures for the improvement of the people.

6. Scarcity between 1870 to 1897.

Though scarcity frequently occurred from 1870 to 1897 in Orissa, its magnitude was not so severe as the famine of 1866. In July 1870 there was inadequate rainfall. The crop prospect became bleak in the last week of August. The newspaper forecast indicated a scarcity was in the offing in order to attract the attention of the government. The Lt. Governor of Bengal on making a field survey found the market rate of rice steady. When the government was
preparing to face another famine, heavy rain in the month of September saved the dying crops. Even water through canals was supplied to peasants free of charge. By the third week of October 1870 condition improved and showed signs of a good harvest.

In 1874, a total area of 100 square miles around Soro Pargana of Balasore district was hard hit due to drought. The good harvest of 1873 led to heavy export of rice out of Balasore and left little for 1874. So the price increased in 1874 when the symptoms of drought found in Soro. As the scarcity was localised the situation was brought under control by sending rice from Cuttack and by opening relief centres for distribution of cooked food.

In 1877 scarcity appeared in the salt producing tracts of Parikud of Puri district in which moulangee ryots were the worst sufferers. At the request of the Commissioner of Orissa the Lt. Governor of Bengal granted a special advance of Rs.2,000 to the Raja of Parikud for land improvement and later on Rs.1,000 to purchase seeds, which was distributed among the ryots of Parikud for the next cultivating season.

The Commissioner of famine made it clear that in case of bad harvest caused by drought rent remission to the ryots should be granted. The government decided to classify agricultural land and to inform the ryots about
rent remissions. It was an attempt to protect the ryots from illegal evictions from their holdings on the zamindars.⁹⁴

On 9 June, 1889, the Famine Commission issued a set of rules to execute famine relief in India. It prescribed that the Government should not interfere in any isolated or individual case of distress. It also instructed the local officials to seek the help of local people to help the destitutes.⁹⁵ The drought and crop failure brought about rise in prices of essential commodities in the Khandmahals and tributary states. To save the tribal peasantry from starvation the government granted the following sums for their relief:

**TABLE 16**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Public Works</td>
<td>Rs. 7000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Tellavi loans</td>
<td>Rs.12000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For gratuitous relief</td>
<td>Rs.16957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and Miscellaneous charge</td>
<td>Rs. 4895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Revenue & Agricultural Deptt./Famine & Branch Prog. No.6, Resolution of Govt. of Bengal, August 16, 1889, Prog. of August 1889)
Kalipada Mukherjee, a deputy collector was entrusted with the task to conduct the relief works in Khondmahals, where the Khonds laboured hard for constructing Augul-chandipada Road, Tikrapara Road and excavating some tanks in August. The government helped the kings of Athmallick, Duspullah, Ranpur and Narasingpur to open relief camps and granted loan to bring about land improvement. The tribal peasantry were allowed to reclaim forest land for cultivation. The following sum were spent for the relief of destitutes in the drought affected states by the government.

**TABLE 17**

Total amount expended for relief work during famine of 1889

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talcher</th>
<th>Rs. - A. P.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindol</td>
<td>12623 - 5- 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigria</td>
<td>5763 - 10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athmallick</td>
<td>8588 - 10- 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranpur</td>
<td>7071 - 15- 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duspullah</td>
<td>6288 - 8- 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baxama</td>
<td>12351 - 6- 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narasingpur</td>
<td>10037 - 4- 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khandmahal</td>
<td>44070 - 2- 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Revenue & Agriculture Deptt./Famine Branch, Prog.No.15, 'J.Edger to the Secretary to Government of Bengal, 19 August, 1889, Prog. of November, 1889)
SABLE 18

The following amounts were given to the Kings of native states as loans to be given away to peasants for land improvements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native State</th>
<th>Rs.</th>
<th>A.</th>
<th>P.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baramba</td>
<td>1,00,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigria</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athmallick</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banpur</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayagarh</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duspullah</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Utkal Dipika, Vol. No. 1, Part II, 13 July, 1889, p. 43.)

Thus the timely interference of the government and a good rainfall in 1890 brought the situation to normal. Some noticeable changes in the famine policy declared by the Government on 17 March, 1882 may also be examined. The workers were classified, into four classes: (a) able-bodied persons accustomed to labour with skill, (b) able-bodied persons but not skilled, (c) able-bodied persons but not accustomed to labour hard, (d) persons not able-bodied but fit for light employment. The class (a) and (b) were allowed to receive full wages equivalent to a ration sufficient to keep an able-bodied labour in
proper shape. The wage of (c) and (d) classes was not to exceed full wage but would be decided by the authority by judging the degree of calamity. It was decided to give wage either in cash plus kind. The famine of 1866 coerced the Raj to abandon the policy of non-interference to save the starving destitutes in case of scarcity. After the famine of 1866, though the public opinion was against the export of rice from Orissa to Madras Presidency, the Raj did not declare a ban on it.

7. The agrarian legislations for the relief of agriculturists.

The British Raj passed agrarian legislations in order to protect the interests of the peasants over their holdings and to regulate the legal relation between landlords and peasants while the Raj adhered to the economic principle of laissez faire.

The Government's early legislative proposals were pro peasantry. But this proposals changed as the government intended to safeguard the interest of landlords for political stability and unhindered collection of revenue. In 1850 frequent resistance movements against law relating to distraint from holdings for the realisation of arrears of rent forced the Government to change her policy. By the support of the native rulers the mutinous sepoys also exasperated the Raj. This was the background for the passing of Act X in 1859, which was followed by a series of agrarian
legislations passed in favour of the suffering peasants of the Bengal presidency.

The Rent Act X of 1859 was a liberal measure to remove of the abuses of existing law. It was proclaimed as the Magna carta of the Indian ryots. It prohibited the zamindar from compelling the peasants to attend his court for adjustment of rent. The Act declared that ryots were entitled to receive pottahs from the zamindars fixing the amount of rent. This Act further classified ryots into three groups. The first group of ryots were land holders at rates unchanged for twenty years prior to the zamindars rent suit against them. The zaminder was not allowed to enhance the rent of this group. The occupancy ryots came under the second group. Any ryot, cultivating land for a period of twelve years, was declared occupant ryot as long as he paid rent. The zamindar could enhance their rent where cultivation had been extended and where the rent was lower than the pargana rate. The ryot without any permanent right over holdings being either tenant-at-will or annual tenant or tenant with terminable leases, known as non-occupant ryot, comprised the third group. The Act X also provided penalties for exaction of money in excess of rent or for withholding receipts for rent paid or for extortion by imprisonment or other duress by the zamindar.
In the same year the act known as sales Act XI was passed. This act provided for improving law relating to sales of land for arrears of revenue in the lower provinces under the Bengal Presidency. It discontinued the practice of obtaining sanction of the Board of Revenue to the sales of estates for arrears of revenue and other demands of the government in the province of Cuttack. The Acts X and XI of 1859 were immediately implemented in Orissa which provided right of enhancement of rent and security of tenure and occupancy right. The trail of rent suits in Orissa began in revenue court from 1860. The Rent Act of 1859 could not act as a check upon the exaction of zaminder who continued to exercise the old power of levying abwabs as produce rent because of the wide gap between the law and local customs. The conduct of the zamindars of Orissa during the famine was characterised by great apathy. The zamindars did not also grant remissions to ryots during bad harvest. The grant of advance to ryots even did not reach them.

The proclamation of 1866 provided for raising land revenue of improved land by canal irrigation. The zamindar could have been largely benefited by this declaration of 1866. The severe famine of 1878-79 in Madras Presidency led to the appointment of Indian Famine Commission in 1880. It also recommended that provincial government should set up a department of agriculture.
In October 1882 a resolution was passed declaring to adopt the following measures for the relief of peasants:
(a) Classification of agricultural land, (b) adoption of a new system of cultivation, (c) extension of relief measures to tenants, (d) investigation into the outturn of every harvest, (e) making the authority of local officers more commanding for temporary suspension of revenue.

To promote the interest of the peasants, the government passed Land Improvement Act of 1883 and Agriculturist Loan Act of 1884 to finance land improvement and to save the ryots from the clutches of money lenders. The Act was not, however, very popular. In 1885 the Raja of Parikud was granted Rs.2,000 as loan for land improvement to check frequent crop failure in his estates.

The Rent Act of 1859 failed to protect the peasantry of Bengal from the illegal exactions of the zamindars. In its report, the famine commission in 1880 pleaded for protection of the peasants right on landholdings. This consideration led to the passing of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885. This act marks a considerable improvement from the Rent Act of 1859, provided fixity of tenure of ryots, allowed zamindars a fair share of the increased value of the produce and provided the settlement disputes between landlords and tenants on equitable terms.

The agrarian legislations introduced by the Raj failed partly to safeguard the interest of ryots and to
check the illegal enhancement of rent and imposition of cesses. The peasants of Orissa were ignorant of their rights to sue the zamindar under section 75 of Act VIII of 1885. The zamindars being a dominant social class led the peasants to the status of either tenant-at-will or to bonded labourers.

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