

Government Sector Institutional Set Up for Development of Tea Industry in Sri Lanka

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As coffee agriculture in Sri Lanka collapsed in the late 1970s, tea was found to be a successful substitute for coffee and a renewed interest in tea cultivation emerged. It was tea which eventually became Sri Lanka's foremost plantation crop for nearly one and half Centuries. Though economic structure of Sri Lanka has changed considerably since independence, still tea is the major export crop of Sri Lanka and largest net foreign exchange earner.

The objective of this research is to identify the governmental organization and institution that helped to the promote tea industry in Sri Lanka in order to evaluate their role and contribution to the economic development of the country. Historical recodes and other relevant documents were extensively used for the research. Finding of the research reveal that colonial government has not established any governmental institution or organization until 1925 to help or promote tea industry. The colonial government enacted necessary legislation in order to provide land for the tea cultivation and on other hand it developed an extensive road network for the plantation industry. But its involvement in the plantation economy was Laissez - Fair.

In 1925 colonial government established the tea research institute. Thereafter, Tea Promotion. Bureau (1932) and the Tea Control Department were established. After the independent, two new institutions the Tea Small Holding Department Authority and Sri Lanka Tea Board were established. The tea plantation in Sri Lanka has been established in Sri Lanka without any help from any particular government organization or institution and also no such organization was there during the expansion and height of the industry, But during down fall of the industry, various government institution were established to help and developed the industry.

Key words: *tea industry, plantation economy, tea board, small holding department*