

Back Ground Nature and Dynamics of Civil Service in Pre-Colonial Period in Sri Lanka (Special Reference to Period from 1801 to 1946)

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Abstract: The main purpose of this paper is to explore how and what factors were caused to emerged and evolution of Ceylon Civil Service (CSS) under the colonial administration. Sri Lanka is one of the colonized country in the Asia which have colonial administration under the three European nations. There was a public service or civil service has been performed by the three European nations but formal civil service was established by the British colonial administration. Pre- colonial experience of the local administration of the Island was highly feudal one under the King domain period. Kandyan Kingdom was last administration of the Kingship and governance system I n the country. In 1796 British encroached the law country side and they could succeeded the entire country in 1815 with support of the King’s officers of the up country Kingdome. There are many terms have been used by the many scholars and writers for define of the decision making and implementation body of the government with regard socio economic development of the people in given country. Therefore many terms such as Civil service, Public service, Public administration etc. have been used for defined it in modern context. However, commonly, it has been define by the academia as term bureaucracy. Sri Lankan experience of emerging and evolution of civil service has a long historical time line with different context and back ground. It has come as a most modified Civil Service In today. Therefore, How and what factors have been caused to emerging of Ceylon Civil Service in the colonial period? This is mainly a historiography investigation with regard nature and establish of the administrative system by the colonial administration in the Island. Therefore, various scholarly writings and arguments with regard establishment of the beginning stage of Ceylon Civil Service have been critically examined in this paper. The main outcome of this paper has been discovered that European domination of the Ceylon Civil Service has been negatively impact on colonization of the civil service at the British colonial stage. Political patronage, recruitment of the less qualified people for the civil service has been badly impact on their performance. Un- familiarization of the native culture. Language and customs of the native people that European officers have been failed to give a comprehensive service for the local people and society. But, however, some positive reforms and enhancement done by the colonial administration have been crucially and positively impact on prevailing public service by the time. It has been impact on long term quality and Ceylonization of the public service in Sri Lanka. This finding is significant in term study of the public service and civil service of the country. Also, this paper has been given a motivation and new path for researchers who desire to do an investigation with regard history of public administration in Sri Lanka.

Key Words: Colonial Administration, Ceylon Civil Service, Un-familiarization of the service, Civil Service Reforms, Political Patronage

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I. INTRODUCTION

Term “Civil Service or Public Service “has been reinterpreted by the scholars in today. It’s called as Bureaucracy in the modern terminology in scientific management. It is an essential practical component or mechanism of the governing process in the modern state. In term Bureaucracy was well defined by the many scholars such as Max Weber who is pioneer scholar in social science discipline. Also, he is the father of elaborate of the conceptual and practical meaning of the Bureaucracy. Further, as a practical concept, it is working as a permanent government of the state as an alternative for the political executive of the given country. As a significant component of the state, it is combined with various kind of functions and activities of the government behalf of the state. There are many issues have emerged in modern societies on various socio, economic and political aspirations. Finding resolutions for all those aspirations were primary responsibility and role of the government by the time. Result of this trend that significant attention was focused towards public policy with regard socio,

economic and political aspirations of the society. These policies have been implemented by the bureaucracy or public service of the government behalf of society. Therefore, administrative mechanism become as a most important tool of the government with regard delivering services and goods for the people of the society. There are different kind of public service in different countries have been established on their social aspirations and complexities. Specially, there are some differences have been emphasized between developed and developing countries on their public service or public administrations. Most of colonial countries were gained completely different experiences from the colonial government on their public service in the post-colonial period. Emerging of the public service of the many colonial countries goes back to end of the 19th century. Existing public service of those countries were result of the influence of the colonial government. Sri Lanka as a post-colonial state that it has their own public service at the movement. It was started specially, under the British colonial ruling period.

II. ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE IN EARLY STAGE OF THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

Sri Lanka was controlled by the three European nations in pre-colonial period. It was subjected to the fully colony to the British imperial government in 1815. Before the British colonial administration that there was a system of public service has been handled by the Portuguese and Dutch. Until encroach of the law country side by the British that there was an administrative mechanism implement under the Dutch East India Company in Ceylon. It was closed in 1796 with British arrival to the Island. When the possessions of the Dutch East India Company in Ceylon passed into the hands of the English East India Company in 1796.¹ British imperial government was fully handed over political and administrative power of the country in 1815 with signing of the Kandyan Convention at the Kandy. Almost consisted 16 heads of the King of the upcountry as other party of this convention. The Udarata kingdom was ceded to Britain on March 2, 1815. The ceremony took place at the Magul Maduwa in Kandy, (known as Audience Hall today) which was where the Sinhala king attended to state matters and received foreign ambassadors.² It was a diplomatic deal between British imperial government and Kandyan headsmen with regard political and administrative governance of the whole country. On the other hand 1815 treaty called as a legal document of the two parties. Don Doyle who is chief translator and newly appointed governor Brownrigg from the British Empire and nine heads of the up country have been signed in this document. It was the legal document which has been given guidelines and directions to the British government regarding control of the Island colony hereafter.

The ‘Kandyan convention’ was drafted by Doyle in consultation with Governor Brownrigg and the Kandyan chiefs. It was in the form of an agreement between the British government on one side and the chiefs and headmen representing the Kandyan nation on the other. It said that the Kandyan king was deposed and the Kandyan Kingdom was now vested in the British king. The treaty contained 12 clauses.³ British imperial government did not wants to radically change existing administration and their positions which had functioned under the King domain period in Kandyan country side. What they did that they gave a formal and legal surface for the administrative system in the Island. According to 1815 convention that governor who appointed by the royal crown was chief ruler of the Island. Article 80th the of the up country convention that has clearly mentioned that power of the governor with regard administration of the colony. According to that the sole authority with regard collecting revenue and managing of the revenue was vested to the governor with under the conditions of the many customs and traditions. It was a remarked bench mark regarding abolishing of the Kingship and governance system in the country. The Governor’s control over the revenue was exercised through a central revenue office which underwent several changers during this period. Governor become as a chief of the administrative post in Ceylon. Until, British encroachment, there was an administrative system has been function under the Dutch and Prut grease. Until 1796 East India Trade Company has been controlled of the administrative system in the Island. The main purpose of this company is to handle all the trading and commercial activities in the region. Entire administrative system has been complicated under the Dutch period. Lord Hobart has been written in this regard,

“ The precariousness of our positions the short time the whole of Dutch settlements have been in our hands, the difficulty of obtaining information, the distrust of the natives, the indisposition of the Dutch, were obstacles to successful management ”⁴

All the judiciary and revenue activities were functioned by the Madras civil service through East India Trade Company. At the beginning stage there was a special administrative groups were engaged in Island

¹¹ Kannangara P.D. The History of the Ceylon Civil Service 1802 – 1833. 1966, Thisara Prakasakyo, Dutgamunu

Street, Dehiwala, Ceylon.

² The Island, Thursday September 21st(Online) , The Kandyan Convention of 1815, Kamalika Pieris,

³ - Ibid -

⁴ De Silva Colvin R. Ceylon under British Rule, Colombo 1953.

administrative matter that they called as Aumildars. In order to successful execute collection of revenue, the Assistants of Robert Andrews were provided with a set of subordinates called Aumildars, specially imported from Madras for the purpose of administration.⁵ However, at the initial stage there are small official group were arrived with Fredrick North who is newly appointed governor for the British Imperial Island. During the period of Fredrick North there are many riots and objections were raised up among the local Sinhalese with regard these imported official from Madras. At the time under the previous administration system has been formed a feudal local elite group called Mudliyors. The administrative unit, to which they belonged was collectively known as the "Kachcheri". Clearly, there functions were not confined to clerical work. The cut wall's and peshar,s functions were, clearly, similar to those exercised by the Mudliyors of the Attepattu and Kanakapulle in Tamil areas. The functions of one set of officials would have been a duplication of those of the other and would have brought them into conflict.⁶ Mudliyors social class has been dominated the local society and they have been enjoyed many privileges and immunities from the previous European administration such as Dutch and Prutugrease. Fredrick North had some basic idea about separate administrative system for the Island without engaged in East India Company or Madras Civil service. As a governor, he should be responsible for the Royal crown on all the matters in the local administration. On the other hand , as a governor he could not desire to follow up officers instruction who are not familiar with Ceylon social , cultural back ground. Also, power and authority of the governor was crucial by the time. There was a dualism on administration of the Ceylon. Madras civil service and leading role of the Governor and his subordinated groups were functioned their duties. Governor, Fredrick North's pro-reforms ideology brought and did an investigation of the existing madras civil service in Ceylon. At the beginning stage there was nothing special changes or attempt with regard bureaucratic system in Ceylon. British government was tried to maintain prevailing system without going confrontation with local elite class. They gave their priority for those class who had a social power. But imperial government has given new shape for the administrative system with modern features. British government appointed all the local elite for the positions by giving legal appointment and demarcated power and authority.

There are four civil service officers were arrived to Ceylon from madras civil service under the leadership of Robert Andrew who is chief of the mission and collecting revenue. Other officers were did not clearly assigned for a specific task. But they have engaged in many services such as administration, Finance, and Judiciary etc. However, by the time those civil servants or service did not wants to enhance or promote a strongest civil service for the Island. They did only routing works such as handling, monitoring and implementations. Mainly, those officers were concerned about collecting revenue rather than promoting civil service in the country. There are no any progressive enhancement regarding local civil service during the first stage of the British colonial administration. Clash between madras civil servant and Mudliyors who is local elite class has been escalated. There are many riots were aroused among the Sinhalese against Madras civil service and officers. As same time there was a conflict interests has been developed between governor and court of directors who were appointed by previous Dutch government. One of the significant points was remarked in this regard. Governor Fredric North was establish a committee to investigate the prevailing situation and to obtained recommendations to mitigate the situation. The Meuran Committee was established by the governor with regard investigation of the prevailing situation. This committee was significant with regard establish new civil service for the Island. British government and governor needed to more information about prevailing Dutch administrative system. The first need that had to be met before establishing any new system was obtaining more information, with Brigadier General Pierre De Meuran as chairman, and Robert Andrews and P. Agnew as members.⁷ There are many faults have been recovered on madras civil service on Ceylon administration. Lack of language ability and Un- familiarizing of the society have been caused to maintain proper administrative function in the Island. Some time, several madras civil servant were not properly work with governor of the country. They were worked with dishonesty, in-subordination and factionalism with governor. All those factors have been brought up that the proposal of separate civil service for the Ceylon to the British colonial office. Therefore, Henry Dundas who was colonial secretary in Britain has gear up the proposal of separate civil service for the Ceylon. The establishment of this service was conveyed by the dispatch from Dundas to north dated 13th March 1801. This dispatch laid down the principles on which the service was to be organized.⁸ Separate civil service for the Island was established on influence and innovation of the colonial secretary, and governor which based on model of the Indian civil service.

⁵ Warnapala Wishwa W.A, *Civil Service Administration in Ceylon: A Study of Bureaucratic Adaptation*, 1995, Godage International Publishers (Pvt Ltd. No. 675. P. De S. Kularathna Mawatha, Colombo 10, Sri Lanka.

⁶ Wickrmerathnae Upali C. *The Conservative Nature of The British Rule of Sri Lanka'*; With Particular Emphasis on the Period : 1796-1802

⁷Steuart, J., *An account of the Pearl fisheries of Ceylon*, Cotta, 1843. *Notes on Ceylon and its affairs*, London, 1862.

⁸ Kannangara P.D. *The History of the Ceylon Civil Service 1802 – 1833*.

Political Patronage of the British Government and Ceylon Civil Service

At the beginning stage of the Ceylon civil service was completely depends and dominant by the British colonial office and the governor general of the country. British needed to well establish colonial office at the country and expecting to expansions power and authority of the royal crown in the entire Island. All the recruitments were done by the colonial office which based on British political interests. There are no proper mechanism with regard recruitment of the officers to the Ceylon civil service. It was depend by the interest of the secretary of the colonial office behalf of the royal crown. The main qualification was to entering civil service was political patronage of the British government. The chief result of recruitment was that the Ceylon Civil Service was usually drawn from men with influence and connections. They also appear to have been generally drawn from the higher rugs of society. These factors had an important bearing not only on the development of the Civil Service, but also on the evolution of the administrative structure.⁹ Recruitment for the Ceylon Civil Service was based on political patronage of the British government. Mainly it was decided by the colonial secretary of the British imperial government. At the beginning stage that all the civil servant were from most young people. Most of them were school levers came from elite social families. They were recruited by the colonial secretary behalf of the British Government. Many who were sent to join the Ceylon Civil Service were young men nominated by the secretary of state, and they were in the age group of 16 to 20. It was said that young men of that age group were recruited purposely because the young could easily adapt themselves to tropical conditions.¹⁰ These young people did not have enough maturity or experiences with regard how to handled administration in the colonial administration. Some time they .did not have enough educational qualifications because just they were school levers. These factor was a critical regarding maintain and sustain successful civil service in the local administrative service. During the period of Fredrick North governorship these trend was highly emphasized. Due to this reason there could not seem successful Civil Service in the Island. These political patronage and local administrative system has been continued until governor Metland who was succeeded by the Governor Fredrick North. There was a conflict of interest between secretary of the state and Governor of the Island regarding power and authority on the giving appointments for the Civil Service.

However, final stage of the North governor has been shows his objection for the youngest people who were appointed for the service by the state secretary. He made an objection because all those young people could not fit with the administration of the colonial country like Sri Lanka. Culture, language and society and climatology were main significant facts with regard understanding of the society. That was an important cause regarding maintain of the local administration smoothly. When the Metland governorship was successes by the Fredrick North that he was strongly against for the recruitment system of the British government for the Island Civil Service. He opposed the recruitment at the age of sixteen, and wanted the age limit to be within the range of 22 to 26 years; he was also of the opinion that certain appointments in the Ceylon should be given to men of mature age. It was not possible for a young man of sixteen years of age to attain an acceptable standards of education, therefore it did not appear that young men who come to serve in the Civil Service possessed any educational qualifications except for an experiences in public school.¹¹ It is necessarily requirement of experienced, mature and qualified people for any Civil Service for the implementations of the government activities. Specially, colonial country like Sri Lanka was a highly dynamic during the period. Different culture and language and different social economic aspirations were fulfillment was doubtful by the prevailing Civil Service with their immature officers. All those officers who appointed by the state secretary did not follow proper procedures with regard their service delivering. Most of them were tried to satisfactions about feeling of the state secretary rather than providing service for the local people on their aspirations.

Therefore, necessity of reforms of the Civil service has been erupted. Under the Metland governorship there was a process of reforms with regard Ceylon Civil Service have been introduced by the colonial office of the British government. On account of a tendency to be over-critical of North's administration, Metland accused him of creating places for unworthy favorites.¹² As regards the Civil Service he believed that the number was much greater than could be employed either with benefit to the Civil Servants, or to the public service.¹³ Therefore, there are many administrative reforms have been taken place during the Metland period in Sri Lanka. Administrative reforms which involved the appointments of a revenue Commissioner in place of the Board of Revenue, the removal of the second judge from the provincial courts, the provision of civil service assistants only to a few of the offices, the appointment of collectors to function as Fiscal of Court, and the abolition of the separate existence of the office of account General, enabled Metland to reduce a few offices. He also checked the expansion

⁹ -Ibid-

¹⁰ Warnapala Wishwa W.A, *Civil Service Administration in Ceylon: A Study of Bureaucratic Adaptation.*

¹¹ Metland to Castlereage, 17 August, 1808, CO 54, 28

¹² Hobart to North, 1 May 1802. CO. 55, 61. Camden to Metland 21 February 1805. C.O.55, 22.

¹³ Metland to Windham, 1 June 1806. C.O. 54, 22.

of the Service. The only Civil Service post created during his time was that of Comptroller General of Customs.¹⁴ However, British ruler did not tried to create an unnecessary issues from the Sinhalese. Special, they were understood the power of the Buddhist clergy and their hand with regard Sinhala society. Therefore, British administration in Ceylon was gave significant attention for the Buddhist clergy and their privileges. It had mentioning upcountry convention that Buddhism and the Buddhist clergy or the “Buddhist order’ in the country would be protected and preserved by the British administration.¹⁵ However, British imperial government unnecessarily did not go for the allegation with the local people and their heads. Metland asked more mature and experiences officer for the local civil service. Basically he did not agree with recruitment of young people for the Ceylon Civil Service. He was argued that this trend act as a barrier to the form of mature Civil Service in the Island. Further, real story is it was negatively impact on establish of the progressive and efficiency bureaucratic system.

These political and social patronage system for the recruitment for the Ceylon Civil Service has been placed highly critical stage by the Governors in the latter period of the colonial administration. Governor Barnes had say, Nine out of ten were boys who had just left school.¹⁶ Governor Wilmot Horton had discovered in 1831 that out of the 36 Civil Servants who were serving the Island at that time , there were 11 decidedly incompetent , 9 , just within the pale of competency, 14 decidedly competent , and 2 whose merits and demerits were not yet known.¹⁷ Under the Governorship that British government used governor to gathering information with regard functions and competency of the Civil Service. Therefore, Governor could gathered all information regarding Civil Service and their nature through formal and informal approaches. Governor Wilmot Horton was received many advices and consultations from the most experiences individuals who were from Britain in the country. One of the pioneer expert persons called Major Skinner was did such a role for the Governor. During this period that Governor had closed contact with the top officials in the Island; therefore, became the best judge of the competency of Civil Servants. Major Skinner, who was in Ceylon for nearly a period of fifty years as the Engineer in charge of the construction of roads, had occasion to comment upon his close relationship with Governor Horton, He consulted me on most subjects, writes Major Skinner, some of which were most confidential, and he often sent for me to discuss complicated questions.¹⁸ At the beginning until end of the period of colonial administration, there was huge and significant, influence and important role has been vested in the Governor. Relationship between Governor and Civil Service was a strong and highly one.

External as well as internal reflection of the dignity of the Ceylon Civil Service was mainly depend on the relationship with the Governor. By the time, the relationship between top officials and ordinary people were wakened. Most top level officers could not engaged in ordinary people in the local society. Mostly, people were build up relationship between second level officers such as head of the department and many technical officers who were engaged in infrastructures activities. Therefore, people could not have opportunities express their grievances or aspiration at the top level administration. Second level administrative officer some time they were not belong to, Civil Service. At the top of the administrative hierarchy were the English men who constituted the exclusive Civil Service who had very little social intercourse with the people though there were contacts between the Civil Service men and the Englishmen who functioned as heads of the departments and technical officers, this second category of Englishmen were socially acceptable bur definitely not members of the Civil Service and local European community, who were primarily men on Dutch origin.¹⁹ Therefore, basic purpose or objective of enhancing social or economic conditions of colonial society was not realized in this administrative system. On the other hand, there was a huge gap has been developed in the society with regard administrative people and ordinary mass in the colonial Sri Lanka.

Social Unrest and Reforms of the Ceylon Civil Service

All of European people were appointed for the top administrative positions and they have built up separate social class on their social status. It was like an elite class at the colonial Sri Lanka. They have built up their own social background with their social necessities such as social clubs, societies, and sports activities which based on Colombo society. At the beginning that British colonial Civil Service and their nature of the officers have been reflected immature performance with regard Service delivering. It was a remarked of laid down of

¹⁴ Metland to Windham, 1 June 1806. C.O. 42.

¹⁵ Wijethunga Sirisaman, *The Ancient Heritages of Sri Lanka – 12, From the Kingdom of Kotte Sri Jayawardnepura till 1948*, Samudra Book Publications, No. 1141, Maradana Road, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka.

¹⁶ Barnes to Huskisson, 6 December, 1828, CD 54.101

¹⁷ Horton to Goderich, 22 November, 1831. CO 54.114.

¹⁸ Skinner, Miss. Major Thomas Skinner. *Fifty Years in Ceylon, an Autobiography*. London, W, H, Allen, 1891. P.

185

¹⁹ De Silva , Colvin R.D, *Ceylon under the British Rule*, Colombo, 1953

foundation with regard Unnecessary service practices such as corruptions and bribes also has been raised in latter with this administrative system.

However, there are many civil riots have been erupted in several occasions in the Island. One of the main reasons behind this riots was bad and un-familiarized administrative system. The first riot was erupted from the local people in 1818 called as Uva Wellsassa Riot. Apart from the unfavorable climatic conditions, the common mass, the Buddhist clergy and the Sinhala leaders strongly and unitedly rose against the British because of their cruel administration and the destructive behavior. Keppetipola Disawa and others Sinhala leaders got the opportunity to lead the people towards their liberation. It was introduced by the British as the 1818 rebellion and they wanted to crush it down rudely.²⁰ Most of British officers could not familiarized the local culture and customs. They have been failed to build up proper communication with local people due to language barriers. European officers cannot speak Sinhala properly. It was one of the main barrier for the successful administrative system in the Island. During the Governor Metland, a period that administrative reforms were raised up. According to, that governor needed to more mature people for youngest in the existing Civil Service. Apart from this requirements that it had been agreed to allow these young men to retire at the age of 28 or 30 they were able to serve only for a period of 12 years. The first few years of this twelve years were spent in acquiring a training in administration as well as a knowledge of the languages and customs of the country, during which period their services were not very useful.²¹ Result of this reforms that most of officers tried to protect their positions and safe retirements rather than delivering best service for the country. They were tried to safeguard trust and mutuality with state secretary on their job security. Therefore expected outcome was not realized. However, there was a considerable and dynamic administrative reforms done by the governor Metland.

First time he was categorized entire Civil Service under the three layers. Under the Governor Metland that Civil Service gone many changers. He was made an objection regarding unnecessarily enhance of the scale of the Civil Servant. In his categorization, as a part of the reorganization of the positions Maitland introduced a regular gradation of officers by diving Civil Service into three Classes. Class 1. Which formed the apex of the Service, consisted of five officers receiving salaries of over 2000 sterling pawns'; they were the Chief Secretary, the Commissioner of Revenue, the Civil Auditor –General, the Vice Treasure, and the Civil and Military Paymaster-General. Officer's receiving 550 sterling pawns and less were brought within Class III. Metland, releasing the need to establish a stable Civil Service structure, introduced the regulations that no officers of less than seven and eight years of service could be promoted to Class I. A person in class II could obtain a promotion to Class II only if he had served three years in the Class from which he sought promotion.²² It seems that many reforms have been laid down by the time and have impact Ceylon Civil Service for it long time journey. Even today, Sri Lanka Administrative Service is based on that laid down rules and regulations by the Colonial legacy of the Ceylon Civil Service. Privileges and immunities are very significant factor with regard Maintain of quality Civil Service. In a previous investigation also found that law scale salaries were one of the reasons behind the weak efficiency and commitment of the Ceylon Civil Service was under the British rule.

Prevailing European officers needed to maintain their social and life status in the local context as same. On the other hand, British government has been tighten the promotion system in the Ceylon Civil Service. Specially, it has been regularized by the British government for the British nationalities. If the officer needed to get promote to higher rank class in Civil Service that he had to complete the local language efficiency. It was a compulsory requirement for the Civil service Officers in Colonial administration in Sri Lanka. On the other hand, it was clearly emphasized that professionalism has been enhance gradually with in the Civil Service. Ceylon Civil Service has been offered a pension scheme as a strategically approach to early retirement of the officers from the service.

1.2 Colebrook Committee Recommendations and Dynamics of Ceylon Civil Service

Colebrook Cameron committee was kept a remarkable point in history of Ceylon Civil Service. The Royal Commission of 18 January 1823 appointed W.M.G.Colebrook and C.H Cameron as commissioners. Colebrook was an influential personality that he had strongly followed liberal economic and political ideology. Further, Colebrook, though a military officer, was an economist, who had come under the influence of Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and the Radicals.²³ The commission was came to the Island in 1831. It was one of the results that made on view of the two officers of the colonial service in Sri Lanka. The liberal views comes from the two governors. Though the opinions expressed by Barnes and Horton were immediately occasioned by a proposal made by the Colebrook Cameron Commission to throw open the Service, it is convenient

²⁰ Wijethunga Sirisaman, *The Ancient Heritage of Sri Lanka – 2; From the Kingdom of Sri Jayawaradnepura till 1948.*

²¹ Mills, Lennox, *Ceylon under the British rule, 1795-1932*, London, 1933.

²² De Silva, Colvin R. *Ceylon under British Rule.*

²³ Mendis, (ed), *The Colebrook Cameron Papers*, Vol. 1, p.xxxiii

to note them here, especially in view of the fact that these opinions were before the commissioners before they finalized their recommendations.²⁴The main purpose of this committee was to investigate the prevailing situation of the administrative activities in Civil Service and Judiciary service. Immediate reason behind this committee was result of the ongoing political and economic changes of the British government. Idea of the reforms were stimulated by the liberal and utilitarian environment that was prevailing in England, and more particular for economy and efficiency.²⁵ In parallel to changing pattern of politics and economy in the British imperial government that they needed to establish favorable situations in their colonies. Therefore, Colebrook Cameron committee was one of the results of British government expectations.

Establishing Capitalist Economy and Strengthening Commercial Market through Civil Service

The British were committed to establish a capitalist economical system and then to form a bourgeois class in Sri Lankan society. The work of commission in fact marked the first real attempt to examine the feasibility of the application of liberal ideas to the situation in Ceylon.²⁶ When the Colebrook Reforms were implemented all the obstacles and barriers to form a capitalist class were automatically disappeared.²⁷ The Imperial government wanted to convert local society and economy towards their objectives. Therefore, initiate of the necessary reforms on administration and economy and society were main objectives of the Colebrook and Cameron committee.

Specially, in public administration, there was a major reforms were occurred with Colebrook Cameron committee. The year 1833 was a landmark in Sri Lanka public administration as the public service for freely made open to all classes of persons according to their qualifications.²⁸Mainly, Colebrook who was chairman of the committee was concerned about enhancement of the quality of the service of The Civil Service in Ceylon. Further he drew his attention for recruitment and training of the Civil Servant. On the other hand, Colebrook's reforms were concerned about social and economic background of the Island. By the time, there was a feudal social system has been negatively impact on establishment of new economic environment which was expected by the British. Committee has been conducted Island wide survey with regard fact-finding about general administration. Mainly committee was used many strategies to gathering information. One is questionnaires have been used for the gather information. On the other hand they were visit some peripheral areas and had discussions with the ordinary people in various areas. By the time, the task of the Colebrook committee did not tolerate by the Governor Edward Barnes. He opposed the task of the committee on two reasons. One is He had some fear about senior officers because those evidence will prove of the weakness of the Civil Servant of the Island. On the other hand Governor thought that he was the representative from the Royal Majesty, therefore, he did not willing to answer to inquiries by subordinator committee such as Colebrook Cameron commission. However, Colebrook needed to finalize comprehensive report to the home government with regard reforms of the economy and society in the Island. British was look in to their colonies in their perspectives, Therefore, They need to be established a free labor market is essential requirements for the establishment of open economic environment in the Island. Existing social customs such as "Corvee labor" in Sinhala (Raja Karee Kramaya) has been blocked the pre-conditions for above labor markets which is essential for open economy in the country. Apart from this process, British Imperial government has been offered opportunities for the Civil Servant in the country regarding engaged in private investment and business activities. In private sector activities were highly inefficiency by the time. Imperial government expected two objectives through giving opportunities for the Civil Servants on engaged in private business activities. One is to enhance their income in addition to their salaries which had to subject as law salaries of the Civil Servant On the other hand, British government was expected to enhance efficiency in private sector.

Proposal for the Comprehensive Training Programme on Civil Service

With regard training of the Civil Service that Colebrook commission was suggested special training for the most junior Civil Servant. Some attention was paid to the training of officials who came to serve in the Island. It was the belief of the early forefathers of the service that appointment to a junior post gave experience and training. With this aim in view, they created office of assistance, and appointed the raw recruits to those

²⁴ Evidence of Johnston, 9 July 1832. Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company, Vol. IV, Judicial

²⁵ Kannangara P.D. The History of the Ceylon Civil Service 1802 – 1833.

²⁶ -Ibid-

²⁷ Wijethunga Sirisaman, the Ancient Heritage of Sri Lanka – 2.

²⁸ Nanayakkara V.K. Sri Lanka Administrative Service (1963 – 2013): A Fifty Years Legacy, SLIDA 2015, 79-93.

positions.²⁹ However, Governor Maitland was not happy with this decision that he has said it is “All assistants here do nothing”³⁰ However, many senior Civil Servant had declared their support regarding this training proposal which introduced by the Colebrook committee. Lord Carrington who was Supreme Court judge has openly support for this proposal. Senior Civil Servant thought that this training programme will enhance capacity of the junior officer in the Civil Service. Further, he recommended, the appointment of juniors to work at Magistrates; such activities, he thought would bring the officials in touch with the people.³¹ These juniors’ officers have been appointed in Colombo as well as in many local administration places such as Kachcheri. Specially, officers who appointed in Kachcheri that they could enhance their experience with working general public at the peripheral administration places. These training programmes were consisted many observational field visits. Therefore, junior members could get the experience about local culture, customs and pattern of the people lives. By the same time, they could enhanced relationship between local elites or heads. Local administration was concentrated in to Kachcheri which is modern unit of the peripheral administration that established by the British Imperial government. This local administration system and their institutions were used for the training programme for the junior Civil Service officers. Every district has an administrative center called Kachcheri that in charge of the Government Agent (GA) which appointed by the governor. Mature educated English gentlemen’s were appointed as GA, s in every district. All the trainee junior Civil Servants were trained under the supervision of the Government Agent. These methods of training were continued till the introduction of the competitive system.

About Training programme for the junior Civil Servant that Leonard Woolf who is one of the prominent Civil Servants as well as District Agent has expressed his view, In provincial Kachcheris the Government Agent always had two young Civil Servants immediately under him who did the office work checking the accounts, issuing license, preparing the files and submitting all important questions for decision by the Government Agent with a precise, and if they had any their own proposals. Of these two the senior was the office assistant to the Government Agent who might have anything from one to six years’ service; the junior was called a Cadet and every Civil Servant when he first arrived was attached to the provincial Kachcheris as Cadet.³² This is important bench marked in Civil Service in Sri Lanka because this kind of training system was absorbed by the Ceylon administration service in latter part of the history. Even today, the training programme has been consisted field training activities for the newly recruited junior Civil Servant as a similar training programme which was started at the colonial period under the Colebrook suggestions at the local or regional administrative institutions.

However, one of the important expectations of the British imperial government was to establish a favorable environment for the free market economy. Establishing a free labor market was essential requirement of the British government by the time. Because, prevailing Corvee labor system was a major social barrier which had been blocked to create such an environment. Colebrook objected to the system of compulsory labor service in Ceylon, which as we have seen, was vitally connected with the old social, economic and administrative order.³³ On the other hand, they needed to enhance commercial agricultural sector rather than rural agricultural activities. As a strategically approach, British government declared that freedom of the Civil Servant to engaged in commercial agricultural activities and private enterprises. However, British colonial administration was restructured Ceylon Civil Service again in 1844. Under the recommendation of Lord Stanley’s reform that Civil Service was re-classification and enlargement. Simultaneously, Service related privileges such as salaries, promotions were re stored which based on efficiency of the officers.

Chance for the Native Gentlemen’s to Entering Civil Service which based on Qualifications

In 19th century, there was a many radical changes were happened in British royal government regarding social, economic and political administration. Specially, those radical changes were happened in focused to British Administration Service. One of the significant incidents was remarked in 1854 with introduced the Trevelyan Northcort Report for the radical changers on British Administration Service. These Northcort Trevelyan report was consisted neo liberal ideology which had focused to professional Civil Service with qualified gentlemen’s for the British Administrative Service. The major re-organization of the colonial Public Service was the introduction of the competitive principles of the recruitment to the Civil Service apparently influence by the Northcort Trevelyan reforms of 1854 in Britain. While agreeing than some specialist positions required “scientific and other attainments” Northcort and Trevelyan were primarily concerned in attracting liberally educated generalists who would have the chance to move up to the relatively small number of superior situations that really mattered for

²⁹Warnapala Wishwa W.A, *Civil Service Administration in Ceylon: A Study of Bureaucratic Adaptation.*

³⁰ Maitland to Windham, 1 June 1806.CO 54,22

³¹ Carrington to Maitland, 5 October 1805, CO 54, 18.

³² Woolf Leonard, *Growing, An Autobiography of the years 1904 – 1914*, London, Hogarth Press, 1961.

³³ Colebrook Report on the compulsory service , 16 March 1832, C.O. 145, 54

the running of the country.³⁴ These radical changes of the British administration system has been influenced for the colonial local administration system as well. Specially, recruitment for the administrative service was based on competitive exam system which based on education qualification in British. On the other hand, as a colonial country that Sri Lankan society has been formed many patriot movement called as Ceylonese campaign against British rule. Especially they have emphasized that discrimination against local educated people preventing enter to the high level public service in their own country. Civil Service of this country has been dominated by the European but did not have chance for the local people. Colebrook also has been discovered that youngest European had failed to maintain proper and efficiency service. Education and their competency also was questioned. There are many educated European personalities were advocated for the native entry for the Civil Service.

Alexander Johnston who was chief justice that one of among them had expressed his idea with regard to opening chance for the higher class native educated people to entering the Ceylon Civil Service. By the time colonial governor had expressed his idea in this regard, I wish to know where you propose to draw the line. Admitted to one situation they would have an equal claim to another, so that unless you contemplate the suppression of all the European authorities not excepting the governor, I could not see where you could stop. My opinion is that the line native are perfectly content and that is ought not to be invaded.³⁵ It was one of the achievements of the local elite and their struggle against British government through social movement such as national patriotic and Ceylonese campaign. In accordance, higher class local educated limited elite young people could enter the Civil Service. However, one of the important and significant recommendations of the Colebrook reports that is education qualification was compulsory recommended for enter to the Civil Service. Therefore, they introduce competitive exam system for the recruitment. This was resulted due to reformist movement in British and India regarding Civil Service in their countries. This competitive exam system was keep bench marked in Ceylon Civil Service. The competitive Principle, however, was adopted, and the developments which centered on it form a significant chapter in the evolution of the Ceylon Civil Service.³⁶ However, at the beginning stage that local elite were entered to the Civil Service without facing competitive exam. At the beginning point Governor General was appointed some local elite for the Civil service on their general educational back ground. But, in 1863 with introduced the competitive examination system that local elite were required to pass the competitive exam for entering Ceylon Civil Service. This is the first time that competitive examination system was introduced for the Ceylon Civil Service. This examination was consisted comprehensive educational back ground with its examination content. It included four subjects-(1) English Composition, (2) Accounts and Book Keeping, (3) Euclid Books I-IV and Algebra, and (4) Geography. They were also given the option to choose one subjects: these sub branches were (a) Language-Greek, Latin, French, German, and Sanskrit, (b) Modern History-British Colonies and Dependencies including India, (c) Elements of Constitutional and International Law, (d) Element of Political Economy, € Civil Engineering and Surveying.³⁷ However, Introducing of the competitive examination system was a significant point of the Ceylon Civil Service history with regard local nationalities for entering public service. On the other hand it was keep bench marked for the latter development of Ceylon Civil Service. Even today that Sri Lankan administrative service has been elaborated on those basic principles which was introduced British Colonial Government.

III. CONCLUSION

In today, Sri Lanka Administrative Service has been come to the significant bench mark after long historical time line on their role with regards government activities. At the movement, It is the most best and important public service in the country. It has a most prestigious and vibrant historical time line on its evaluation process. Specially, its origin going back to pre-colonial stage of the country. Basic foundation for a strong civil service was laid down at the pre- independence era under the British colonial period. At the beginning stage that Ceylon Civil Service (CCS) did not reflected fulfill of local necessity and loyalty. It was completely hegemonies by the British people who were appointed by the imperial British government. There was many complexities rise up on civil service on their lack of efficiency, competency, locality and lack of service delivering. At the beginning stage, Ceylon Civil Service was opened only for the British people who were favored to the British imperial government and governor of the Island. Lack of educated people were one of the most important issues among the complexities. There was an argument was raised within governors who were controlled by the beginning stage. Lack of language ability and lack of understanding of the local socio, economic and cultural background of the locality that had been negatively impacted on expected outcome of the Civil Service. However, could be shown

³⁴ V.K.Nanayakkara, Sri Lanka Administrative Service (1963 – 2013) : A fifty year Legacy, SLIDA 2015 (05) 79-93

³⁵ Barnes to Colebrook, 10 September, 1830, CO 54, 112.

³⁶ Warnapala Wishwa W.A. Civil Service Administration in Ceylon; A Study in Bureaucratic Adoption, Godage Publishers (Pvt) Ltd. Kularathna Mawatha, Colombo 10.

³⁷ Dickman, C. Ceylon Civil Service Manual, 1865, Colombo, 1865

only one positive point. That is, it was laid down a strong foundation for the modern Civil Service in Sri Lanka by the British imperial administration. Gradually, there are many steps have been taken by the colonial government with regard upgrade of the Civil Service. In first time, in history, colonial administration was introduced competitive exam system for recruiting for the civil service. Also, they were opened Civil Service for the local educated people. This was remarkable point in Ceylon Civil Service history. Specially, those who entered the civil service from the local elite class that could fruitfully serve their service for the country. Localization of civil service brought many benefits for the local people. British colonial government was established systematic administrative structure in Island wide. Also, Ceylon Civil Service structured in a bureaucratic framework with hierarchy. Interesting thing is, many British colonial governors who governed the country during the initial period, they encouraged and taken necessary steps to setting a local Civil Service for Sri Lanka. Therefore, in nowadays, Sri Lankan people are enjoying and getting many more benefits through Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS) which has been evolved from the Ceylon Civil Service in Pre independence era.

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