



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Class: IX	Department: SOCIAL SCIENCE	Subject: History
Question Bank: 04	Topic: FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM	Year: 2022-2023

QUESTION AND ANSWERS:

1) Discuss How the changes in forest management in the colonial period affected the following groups of people:

- Shifting cultivators
- Nomadic and pastoralist communities
- Firms trading in timber/forest produce
- Plantation owners

Ans) *Shifting cultivators: European foresters regarded this practice as harmful for the forests. They felt that land which was used for cultivation every few years could not grow trees for railway timber. When a forest was burnt, there was the added danger of the flames spreading and burning valuable timber. Shifting cultivation also made it harder for the government to calculate taxes. Therefore, the government decided to ban shifting cultivation.

***Nomadic and pastoralist communities:** With the coming of the British, however, trade was completely regulated by the government. The British government gave many large European trading firms the sole right to trade in the forest products of particular areas. Grazing and hunting by local people were restricted. In the process, many pastoralist and nomadic communities like the **Korava, Karacha and Yerukula** of the Madras Presidency lost their livelihoods.

***Firms trading in timber/forest produce:** With the coming of the British, however, trade was completely regulated by the government. The British government gave many large European trading firms the sole right to trade in the forest products of particular areas. Grazing and hunting by local people were restricted which was a boon to firms trading in timber or forest produce.

***Plantation owners:** Large areas of natural forests were also cleared to make way for tea, coffee and rubber plantations to meet Europe's growing need for these commodities. The colonial government took over the forests, and gave vast areas to European planters at cheap rates. These areas were enclosed and cleared of forests, and planted with tea or coffee.

2) What are the similarities between colonial management of the forests in Bastar and Java?

Ans) *In both places, the colonial government took control of the area.

*Trading firms got sole right to trade in the forest.

*Activities like Grazing & hunting by local people were restricted and many communities were forcibly displaced from their homes in the forests.

3) 'Surontiko Samin' played an important role in saving the forest of Indonesia' Explain.

Ans) *Surontiko Samin was a villager who lived in Randublatung village, a teak forest in Indonesia.

*He started a movement questioning state ownership of forests. Under him the movement gained momentum and by 1907, 3,000 families were following his ideas.

*Some protested by lying down on their lands when the Dutch surveyors came. Others refused to pay taxes, fines or perform any labour.

4) What were 'Forest Villages'?

Ans) Forest villages were those villages which were allowed to stay on in the reserved forests. In return the people had to work free for the forest department. They had to help in cutting, transporting trees and protecting forests from fire.

5) What was meant by the 'Blandongdiensten System'?

Ans) Under the Blandongdiensten system the Dutch in Indonesia (i) Imposed rents on land cultivated in the forests.

(ii) Those villages which were exempted had to in return work collectively to provide free labour and buffaloes for cutting and transporting timber.

6) What did Dietrich Brandis suggest for the improvement of forests in India?

Ans) *Dietrich Brandis suggested that a proper system had to be followed. Felling of trees and grazing land had to be protected.

*Rules about use of forests should be made. Anyone who broke the rules needed to be punished. Brandis set up in 1864 the Indian Forest Service.

*He also helped to formulate the Indian Forest Act of 1865.

7) What was taught at the Imperial Forest Research Institute? How was this system carried out?

Ans) -Scientific forestry was taught at the Imperial Forest Research Institute.

-In this system, natural forests which had a variety of trees were cut down and, instead, one type of tree was planted.

-Appointed forest officials managed these forests. They planned and assessed how much of the planted area had to be cut down and how much had to be replanted.

8) Differentiate between the customary practice of hunting and hunting as a sport in India, after the Forest Acts were passed.

Ans) * Before the laws were passed, people who depended on forests hunted birds and small animals for food.

*After the laws were passed, hunting of big game became a sport. Under colonial rule, the scale of hunting increased so much that many species became extinct.

*Rewards were given for killing tigers, wolves, etc., on the pretext that they were a threat to human life. Certain areas of the forests were reserved for hunting.

9) Who was appointed as the first Inspector General of Forests in India? Explain any three reforms of him

Ans. A German forest expert, Dietrich Brandis, was made the first Inspector General of Forests in India. (i) Brandis introduced a proper system to manage the forests and people had to be trained in the science of conservation. This system needed legal sanction and so rules about the use of forests had to be framed.

(ii) Felling of trees and grazing had to be restricted so that forests could be preserved for timber production. Trespassers had to be punished.

(iii) Brandis set up the Indian Forest Service in 1864 and helped formulate the Indian Forest Act of 1865. The Imperial Forest Research Institute was set up at Dehradun in 1906. The system they taught here was called 'scientific forestry'.

10) What is shifting cultivation? Why did the British Government ban it? Give any three reasons.

Ans) *Shifting agriculture is a traditional agricultural practice in many parts of Asia, Africa and South America.

*In shifting cultivation, parts of the forest are cut down and burnt in rotation. Seeds are sown in the ashes after the first monsoon rains and the crop is harvested by October - November.

*Colonial impacts on shifting agriculture- Europeans regarded this practice harmful for the forests. They felt that the burning down forest would destroy timber and the dangerous flames would spread and burn valuable timber. Shifting cultivation also made it harder for the government to calculate taxes.

11. Describe the life of the tribal people of Bastar.

Ans.-Bastar is located in the southernmost part of Chhattisgarh and borders Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra.

-A number of different communities live in Bastar such as Maria and Muria Gonds, Dhurwas, Bhatras and Halbas. They speak different languages but share common customs and beliefs. The people of Bastar believe that each village was given its land by the Earth, and in return, they look after the earth by making some offerings at each agricultural festival.

- In addition to the Earth, they show respect to the spirits of the river, the forest and the mountain. Since each village knows where its boundaries lie, the local people look after all the natural resources within that boundary.

- If people from a village want to take some wood from the forests of another village, they pay a small fee called devsari or dand in exchange.

-Some villages also protect their forests by engaging watchmen and each household contributes some grain to pay them. Every year there is one big hunt where the headmen of villages in a pargana (cluster of villages) meet and discuss issues of concern, including forests.

12. State the provisions of the Forest Act passed by the Dutch.

a) In the nineteenth century, when it became important to control territory and not just people, the Dutch enacted forest laws in Java, restricting villagers' access to forests.

b) Wood could only be cut for specified purposes like making river boats or constructing houses, and only from specific forests under close supervision.

c) Villagers were punished for grazing cattle in young stands, transporting wood without a permit, or travelling on forest roads with horse carts or cattle.

13. Describe the main causes of the revolt of Bastar.

a) When the colonial government proposed to reserve two-thirds of the forest in 1905, and stop shifting cultivation, hunting and collection of forest produce, the people of Bastar were very worried.

b) Some villages were allowed to stay on in the reserved forests on the condition that they worked free for the forest department in cutting and transporting trees, and protecting the forest from fires. Subsequently, these came to be known as 'forest villages'. People of other villages were displaced without any notice or compensation.

c) For long, villagers had been suffering from increased land rents and frequent demands for free labour and goods by colonial officials. People also suffered terrible famines, in 1899-1900 and again in 1907-1908.

14. Why are forests affected by wars?

a) The First World War and the Second World War had a major impact on forests. In India, working plans were abandoned at this time, and the forest department cut trees freely to meet British war needs.

b) In Java, just before the Japanese occupied the region, the Dutch followed “scorched earth” policy, destroying sawmills, and burning huge piles of giant teak logs so that they would not fall into Japanese hands. The Japanese then exploited the forests recklessly for their own war industries, forcing forest villagers to cut down forests.

c) Many villagers used this opportunity to expand cultivation in the forest. After the war, it was difficult for the Indonesian forest service to get this land back.

15. Why were forests considered unproductive by the British?

Answer: They considered them to be wild and wasteful. Needs to be ‘brought under cultivation so that the land could yield agricultural products and reverse and enhance the income of the state.

16. How could English ships be built without a regular supply of strong and durable timber?

Answer: (i) Search parties of Great Britain were sent to explore the forest regions of India. (ii) Within a decade, trees were being felled on a massive scale and vast quantities of timber were being exported from India.

17. Which tribes of India were recruited to work on tea plantations?

Answer: Santhals and Oraons from Jharkhand and Gonds from Chhattisgarh were recruited to work on tea plantations.

18. Where is Bastar located?

Answer: Bastar is located in the southernmost part of Chhattisgarh and it borders Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra.

19. Which country occupied Indonesia during the Second World War?

Answer: During the Second World War, Japan occupied Indonesia.

20. What was ‘Scorched Earth Policy’?

Answer: In Java, just before the Japanese occupied the region, the Dutch followed a Scorched Earth Policy, destroying Sawmills and burning huge piles of giant teak logs so that they would not fall into Japanese hands.
