

COLONIALISM AND THE COUNTRY SIDE

Multiple Choice Type Questions

1. When was the permanent settlement introduced in Bengal?
(a) 1785
(b) 1764
(c) 1793
(d) 1905
2. Who Introduced Permanent Settlement in Bengal?
(a) Lord Cornwallis
(b) Lord Dalhousie
(c) Lord Curzon
(d) Lord William Bentick
3. When was Fifth Report introduced in the British Parliament?
(a) 1770
(b) 1858
(c) 1813
(d) 1795
4. Lime of Paharias of Rajmahal completely dependent upon _____
(a) river
(b) permanent agriculture
(c) forests
(d) Trade
5. Who among the following emerged as a danger for Paharis?
(a) Santhal
(b) Bhil
(e) Gujjar
(d) Bekarwal

Answer

1. (c) 2. (a) 3. (c) 4. (c) 5. (a)

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. When was the Permanent Settlement introduced in Bengal? Who enforced it? What ideas worked behind its imposition?

Or

With what major objectives did the British colonial power introduce permanent settlement in Bengal during the 19th century? (C.B.S.E. 2013 (D))

Answer: The British introduced a new system of revenue collection in Bengal. It was called the Permanent Settlement.

What was the system? It was introduced by Lord Charles Cornwallis in 1793. Under this system, the East India Company had fixed the revenue that each Zamindar had to pay. If any Zamindar failed to make the payment of the revenue in time, his estates were auctioned to recover the due revenue.

The ideas behind the system: By introducing the Permanent Settlement, the British officials wanted to resolve the problems that they faced. They were aware that the rural economy of Bengal was in crisis because of the following factors:

- There was the recurrence of many famines.
- There was a considerable decline in agricultural production.

The regular flow of Revenue: The need for Revenue.

The British officials realized the need to enhance revenue resources. This could be done by encouraging investments in agriculture and trade. Therefore they permanently fixed the rates of revenue to ensure a regular flow of revenue.

2. Explain the Permanent Settlement of land.

Answer: The Permanent Settlement was made between the rajas and taluqdars of Bengal. These taluqdars were classified as the Zamindar. They paid the revenue fixed in perpetuity. The main features of the Permanent Settlement were as follows:

1. The Zamindar were not the owners of land in the village.
2. The Zamindars were the collectors of revenue of the State.
3. The Zamindar had many villages under them. Sometimes they had as many as 400 villages under their control.
4. The villages coming under one Zamindar formed one revenue estate.
5. The Zamindar collected rent from the villages under their control and paid this revenue to the officials of the East India Company.
6. The Zamindar were responsible for the regular payment of revenue to the East India Company. If ever they failed to do so their estate was auctioned.

3. What was Damin-i-Koh? How it came into being?

Or

what was Damin-i-Koh? (C.B.S.E. 2016 (D))

Answer: Damin-i-Koh was the land of Santhals situated in the Rajmahal hills. The British persuaded the Santhals to live in the foothills of Rajmahal by giving land to them. By 1832, a large part of the land was demarcated as Damin-i-Koh and was declared as the land of Santhals. They had to live in this region, practise plough agriculture and had to become settled agriculturalists. There was a stipulation in the certificate of land grants that the minimum of 1/10 of the total area had to be cleared and had to be cultivated within the first 10 years. The whole of this region was surveyed and mapped. This region was enclosed by boundary pillars. In this way, this region was separated from the world of settled agriculturists of plains and Paharias of the hills.

4. What was the impact of the end of the American Civil War on Indian cotton market and money-lending trade?

Or

assess the impact of the American Civil War on the cotton imports of the British. (C.B.S.E. 2013 (D))

Answer: As a boom in cotton market lasted for long, Indian cotton merchants began to visualize the capturing of the world market in raw cotton by permanently displacing the U.S.A. But this condition changed in 1865. American Civil War came to an end and it again began producing cotton. As a result, Indian export of cotton to British declined steadily. Under these circumstances, moneylenders and export merchants of Maharashtra were no longer keen on providing long-term loans. They observed that the demand for Indian cotton is decreasing and prices of cotton are also coming down. That is why they stopped their business and refused to give advances to peasants. Now they began concentrating on the recovery of loans. In this way, a source of taking loans, for peasants, came to an end.

5. Write a brief note on the Deccan Riots Commission and its report.

Or

critically examine the Deccan Riots Commission's Report. (C.B.S.E. 2008 (D), (2019 (O.D.))

Answer: When the revolt spread in Deccan, the Bombay Government did not take it seriously. But the Indian Government was worried by the memories of 1857 Revolt and therefore, it pressurized the Bombay Government to set up a commission to find out causes of the revolt. The commission investigated in riot-affected districts took statements of ryots, moneylenders and eyewitnesses.

It also collected statistical data on revenue rates, prices and interest rates of different regions and even collected reports of District Collectors. On the basis of, the collected information, the commission prepared a report and produced it to the British Parliament, in 1878. This report is known as the Deccan Riots. The report which provides the basic material to historiography.

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

1. What explains the anger of the Deccan ryots against the moneylenders?

Answer: The ryots were enraged and infuriated when the moneylenders refused to grant them loans. They may be under debt but they were sad to find all the moneylenders insensitive to their plight. They were anguished to see that the moneylenders had violated the customary norms of the country-side.

Moneylending was quite widespread even before the colonial rule. The moneylenders have always been very powerful in society. There were a few customary norms between the moneylenders and ryots. First of all, the moneylenders charged a fair and reasonable rate of interest.

The interest could not be more than the principal amount. The ryots were sad that these basic norms were broken by the moneylenders under the colonial rule. When investigations were made, the Deccan Riots Commission came to know that a moneylender had charged over Rs 2000/- as interest on a loan of Rs 100/- There were several instances like this. So it was natural for the ryots to be sad at the injustice done to them and the violation of the basic custom of money lending.

The ryots found moneylenders as dubious and deceitful. They saw that many money-lenders manipulated laws and forged accounts.

Attempts to check the Moneylenders: The Colonial government passed a Limitation Law in 1852. It stated that the loan bonds signed between the moneylenders and ryots would be valid for only three years. It was done to check the accumulation of interest over time. But the moneylenders again flouted this law by signing a new bond every three years. In the new bond, they calculated the original loan and the accumulated interest. They added the amount and entered it as the principal amount in the new bond.

The Fraudulent means Adopted by the Moneylender. The moneylenders fleeced the ryots by adopting various unfair means such as:

1. They refused to give receipts when the payment of loan was made.
2. They entered fictitious figures in bonds.
3. They bought the harvest of the peasants at very low prices.
4. They brought the property of the peasants under their control.
5. They made the illiterate peasants sign and put thumb impressions on documents.
6. They did not explain to the farmers what clauses they had inserted in the bonds.

2. How did the Santhals settle in the Rajmahal hills? Discuss the role of the British in this regard.

Answer: The Santhals settled in the Rajmahal hills at around 1800 C.E. They displaced the hill-folk who lived in this region. They cleared many forests. They cultivated the land. Earlier the Santhals had come into Bengal around the 1780s. Then they settled in the Jangal Mahals. In fact, they were ideal settlers due to which their settlements expanded rapidly. They had forty villages in 1838. But about 1473 Santhal villages had come up by 1851. In other words, the Santhals were merely 3000 in 1838 but grew up to 82,000 by 1851.

The Role of the British: The British wanted to establish an orderly, refined and settled society. They did not like the Paharias as they were savage, primitive and unruly. They associated forests with wildness as found the hill-folk difficult to govern. By 1770, they adopted a brutal policy of extermination towards the Paharis. They hunted them down and killed them. As the British had failed to tame the Paharis and transform them into settled agriculturists, they turned to the Santhals.

The Land for Santhals: The British favoured the Santhals by allotting them land in the foothills of Rajmahal. To facilitate their settlement, the British demarcated a large area of land as Damin-i-Koh. They declared it as the land for the Santhals. They wanted all the Santhals to live within it. The Santhals had continuous mobility and were in a tireless search for the place to settle. The British did them a great favour by allotting them the Damin-i-Kop.

3. The travels and surveys of Buchanan were the basis of development and progress for the British East India Company. Justify this statement by giving suitable examples.

Answer: Francis Buchanan came to India in 1794. He was a physician and served in the Bengal Medical Service till 1815. He also served as a surgeon to Lord Wellesley, the Governor-General of India for a few years.

But on the request of the Bengal Government, he undertook detailed surveys of the areas under the control of East India Company. He had become an employee of the East India Company.

1. Buchanan was always inspired by the love of the landscape. He had a keen desire to discover the unknown. So he went everywhere accompanied by draughtsmen, surveyors, palanquin bearers and coolies. The expenses of his travel were met by the East India Company. On his part, Buchanan provided the Company with all the requisite information. He accomplished his work to the satisfaction of the Company. However, many people considered him as an agent of the government.
 2. Buchanan was a keen observer of things. Wherever he went, he saw stones and rocks. He also observed the different strata and layers of soil. He searched for minerals and invaluable stones. He also recorded the sites where iron-ore, mica, granite and saltpetre were available. He carefully noted the local practices of salt-making and iron-ore mining.
 3. Buchanan was a man of vision and always thought how the land could be made more productive. He thought of the crops which could be cultivated in a particular soil. He was a perfectionist who cared for which trees to cut down and which ones to be grown. His priorities were always different from the local inhabitants. He always served the commercial concerns of the East India Company and stood for progress and development. He did not like forest dwellers that were primitive and savage. He wanted that forests should be turned into agricultural lands.
4. What was the impact of the expansion in settled agriculture on the life of the Paharis? What was the policy of the British Government and the Santhals in this regard?
- Answer:** The expansion in settled agriculture had an adverse effect on the life of the Paharis. It can be seen from the following points:
1. The Paharis did not cut forests.
 2. They did not like to touch the plough.
 3. They remained savage, turbulent, unruly and primitive.

4. They were intimately connected to the forest. They became hunters, shifting cultivators, food- gatherers, charcoal producers and silkworm rearers.
5. They lived in huts near the tamarind trees. They rested under the shade of mango trees.
6. They considered the forest as their land and regarded it essential for their identity and survival.

The British Policy: The Paharias had their base in the hills but they regularly raided the plains where the settled agriculturists lived. They asserted their "ower over the settled communities. They negotiated political terms with the outsiders and got a regular tribute from them. They also got money from the traders to protect them, to allow them to use passes controlled by them and to ensure that their goods were not plundered by anyone.

1. **The Policy of Extermination:** The British encouraged forest clearance and asked the Zamindar and Jotedars to turn uncultivated lands into rice fields. They favoured settled agriculture so that they may enlarge the sources of land revenue and produce crops for export. They wanted to set up an orderly and refined society but associated forests with wildness. They found the forest people as savage, unruly, turbulent, primitive and difficult to govern. So to make the foreign people tamed and civilized, the British persuaded them to give up hunting and take up the plough to cultivate the land. But most of the hill-folk raided settled villages and took away the cattle and foodgrains of the settled people. The colonial officials found it very difficult to control and subdue the Paharis. Consequently, in the 1770s, the British adopted a brutal policy of extermination. They hunted down the Paharis and killed them.

2. **The Policy of Pacification:** By the 1780s, Augustus Cleveland, the Collector of Bhagalpur, proposed a policy of pacification towards the Paharis. Under this policy, the Paharias chiefs were given an annual allowance. The duty of the Paharias chiefs was to ensure proper conduct of their men. Making payment of the annual allowance, the British wanted all the Paharias chiefs to discipline their hill-folk and to maintain order in all the localities. This policy proved harmful to the Paharis. Many Paharias chiefs did not accept the allowances and those who accepted this amount lost their creditability and authority within their community. They were considered as subordinate employees or stipendiary chiefs of the Colonial government.

1. **Prejudice for White Men:** To save themselves from the hostile British forces, the Paharis went deep into the mountains. But they continued their war against the outsiders. They felt that the white men were representing a power which destroyed their way of life and means of survival. They realized that the British weakened their control over their forests and lands.

2. **The Policy of Santhals:** The Santhals were ideal settlers and cleared the forests and cut down the timber. They ploughed land and grew rice and cotton. They took over many lower hills and compelled the Paharias to recede deeper into the Rajmahal hills. They symbolized the power of plough against the use of hoe by the Paharis. No doubt the Paharias resisted when the Santhals settled on the peripheries of the Rajmahal hills. But ultimately they were forced to move deeper into the hills. They were confined to more barren and rocky upper hills. It had an adverse effect on their lives. They became poor in the long run and found the fertile soils inaccessible.

5. Critically examine main aspects of the policy of Permanent Settlement introduced by Lord Cornwallis. What was its impact on the condition of peasants?

Or

what changes Lord Cornwallis brought in the revenue policy of Bengal?

Answer: Lord Charles Cornwallis was the commander of the British forces during the American War of Independence. Later on, he became the Governor-General of Bengal. In 1793, he introduced the policy of Permanent Settlement. Under this arrangement, the revenue to be paid by a Zamindar was already fixed in

perpetuity. It was a kind of contract to pay the fixed revenue to the State. In fact, the Zamindar did not own the land and collected revenue from the taluqdars and paid it to the State.

Good Results.

The Permanent Settlement yielded the following good results:

1. It permanently fixed the rates of revenue.
2. It ensured a regular flow of income to the State.
3. It enabled entrepreneurs to earn a profit.
4. It led to the emergence of a new class of yeomen farmers and rich landowners.
5. It brought an improvement in agriculture. By encouraging investment in agriculture, it developed not only agriculture but also trade and revenue resources.
6. Several villages were put under the control of the Zamindar who collected rent from these villages and paid this revenue to the East India Company.
7. It ensured a sense of security in the Zamindar.

Evil Effects.

This policy adversely affected the condition of farmers. It is evident from the following points:

1. Sometimes the ryots found it difficult to pay their dues to the Zamindar.
2. The revenue was invariable.
3. The Sunset Law was not appreciated by the Zamindar. Under it, if a Zamindar did not make payment by sunset of the specified date, his land was auctioned.
4. It limited the power of the Zamindar to collect rent from the ryots.
5. Rent collection was a perennial problem especially when the harvest was low.

In brief, the purpose of Charles Cornwallis in introducing Permanent Settlement was to improve the condition of farmers. But this policy did not yield good results. A few rich Zamindar benefitted from it but most of the peasants suffered losses and went under debt. The government also suffered losses in revenue.