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Class 9 History Notes

Forest Society and Colonialism



Key Notes and Important Questions with Answers

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CHAPTER - 4
FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- The comprehensive cutting down of trees is referred as **Deforestation.**
- Process of deforestation under colonial rule had become systematic and extensive.
- Between 1700 and 1995, the period of industrialization, 13.9 million sq km of forest or 9.3 per cent of the world's total area was cleared.
- **The reason for this large scale deforestation** were as follows-
  - A. **Expansion of cultivation takes place rapidly** for a variety of reasons-
    - I. The British directly **encouraged the production of commercial crops** to feed the growing urban population
    - **II.** Raw materials for the industries**.**
  - B. The colonial govt. thought that **forests were unproductive**. That the land could yield agricultural products and revenue, and **enhance the income of the state**.
  - C. **For Imperial shipbuilding** strong and durable wood were needed ,
  - D. **The spread of railways** from the 1850s created a new demand of timber
    - I. To run locomotives, wood was **needed as fuel**,
    - II. To lay **railway lines sleepers** were essential to hold the tracks together.
    - III. Railways were essential for **colonial trade** and
    - IV. For **the movement of imperial troops**.
  - E. 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 British were worried that the use of forests by local people and the reckless felling of trees by traders would destroy forests. So they decided to

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invite a German expert, **Dietrich Brandis**, for advice, and made him **the first Inspector General of Forests in India.**

- Brandis realized that a proper system had to be introduced to manage the forests and people had to be trained in the science of conservation.
    I. Brandis set up the **Indian Forest Service in 1864**
    II. He helped in formulating the first Indian Forest Act of 1865.
    III. After the Forest Act was enacted in 1865, it was amended twice, once in 1878 and then in 1927.
    IV. **The 1878 Act** divided forests into **three categories: reserved, protected and village forests**.
    V. The **best forests** were called **'reserved forests'**. Villagers could not take anything from these forests, even for their own use. For house building or fuel, they could take wood from protected or village forests.
- **The Imperial Forest Research Institute was set up at Dehradun in 1906.** The system they taught here was called 'scientific forestry'.
- **In scientific forestry**, natural forests which had lots of different types of trees were cut down. In their place, one type of tree was planted in straight rows. This is called a plantation.
- Almost everything is available in the forest – leaves can be stitched together to make disposable plates and cups, the siadi (Bauhinia vahlii) creeper can be used to make ropes, and the thorny bark of the semur (silk-cotton) tree is used to grate vegetables. Oil for cooking and to light lamps can be pressed from the fruit of the Mahua tree.
- **Impact of Forest Laws:**
    A. After the implementation of act, almost all **everyday practices of native became illegal** like-
        I. Cutting wood for their houses,
        II. Grazing their cattle,
        III. Collecting fruits and roots and other forest products
        IV. Hunting and Fishing
        V. collecting honey
        VI. Collection of Mahua

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B. People were now forced to steal wood from the forests, and if they were caught, they were at the mercy of the forest guards who would take bribes from them.

C. Women who collected fuel wood were especially worried for their safety.

D. It was also common for police constables and forest guards to harass people by demanding free food from them.

E. One of the major impacts of European colonialism was on the practice of **shifting cultivation or Swidden agriculture.**

Sl. No.	**Place**	**Name of Shifting Agriculture**
1	South –East Asia	**Lading**
2	Central America	**Milpa**
3	Africa	**Chitemene or Tavy**
4	Sri Lanka	**Chena**
5	India	**Dhya, Penda, Jewar, Nevad, Jhum, Podu, Khandad and Kumri**

F. In the process, **many pastoralist and nomadic communities** like the Korava, Karacha and Yerukula of the Madras Presidency **lost their livelihoods**.

G. Some of them began to be called 'criminal tribes',

H. They were forced to work instead in factories, mines and plantations, under government supervision

- **In shifting cultivation**,

I. Parts of the forest are cut and burnt in rotation.

II. Seeds are sown in the ashes after the first monsoon rains, and the crop is harvested by October-November.

III. Such plots are cultivated for a couple of years and then left fallow for 12 to 18 years for the forest to grow back.

IV. A mixture of crops is grown on these plots.

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- While the forest laws deprived people of their customary rights to hunt, hunting of big animals became a sport.
    I. The British saw large animals as signs of a wild, primitive and savage society. They believed that by killing dangerous animals the British would civilize India.
    II. 0ver 80,000 tigers, 150,000 leopards and 200,000 wolves were killed for reward in the period 1875-1925.
    III. A British administrator, **George Yule, killed 400 tigers**. Initially certain areas of forests were reserved for hunting.
- From the medieval period onwards, we have **records of adivasi communities trading** in
    I. Elephants
    II. Hides, horns,
    III. Silk cocoons,
    IV. Ivory,
    V. Spices
    VI. Gums and resins
    VII. Fibers
    VIII. Bamboos
- **Bastar** is located in the southernmost part of Chhattisgarh.
    I. It borders Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra.
    II. A number of different communities live in Bastar such as Maria and Muria Gonds, Dhurwas, Bhatras and Halbas.
    III. They speak different languages but share common customs and beliefs.
- Some villages' were allowed to stay on in reserved forest on the condition that they worked free for forest department in cutting and transporting trees from fires. These villages were called **"forest villages" or "Van Gram"**
- The initiative of revolt in Bastar region was taken by Dhurwas of Kanger forest once reservation was implemented.
- One of the important figures of this revolt was **'Gunda Dhur'.**
- Though revolt was suppressed, in a major victory for the rebel,
    I. work on reservation was suspended temporarily
    II. The area to be reserved was reduced to roughly half of that planned before 1910.
- **Java** is now famous as a rice-producing island in Indonesia.

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I. But once upon a time it was covered mostly with forests.
II. **The Kalangs of Java** were a community of skilled forest cutters and shifting cultivators.
III. The Dutch first imposed rents on land being cultivated in the forest and then exempted some villages from paying it if they work collectively to provide free labour and buffalos for cutting and transporting timber. This was known as **Blandongdiensten (Blan-dong-dien-sten.)**

- **After the enacted forest law in Java by the Dutch**,
  I. Restricting villagers' access to forests.
  II. Wood could only be cut for specified purposes like making river boats or constructing houses, and only from specific forests under close supervision.
  III. Villagers were punished for grazing cattle in young stands, transporting wood without a permit, or travelling on forest roads with horse carts or cattle.
- **The Samins** protested this advancement of Dutch
  A. They were led by Surontiko Samin who argued that state had not created the wind, water, earth and wood, so it could not own it any ask for taxes.
  B. They protested by
    I. Lying down on their land when the Dutch came to survey it,
    II. Others refused to pay taxes or fines
    III. They also refused to perform free labour.
- 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. The Japanese then exploited the forests recklessly for their own war industries, forcing forest villagers to cut down forests.
- In India, from Mizoram to Kerala, dense forests have survived only because villages protected them in sacred groves known as sarnas, devarakudu, kan, rai, etc.

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QUESTIONS

Very Short Answer Type Questions (1 Marks each)

1. What is deforestation?
2. Why figure has gone up to about half of India's landmass under the cultivation?
3. What is general sign of progress?
4. Define sleepers.
5. Which types of forests in England were disappearing in the early nineteenth century?
6. Who was Dietrich Brandis?
7. Who set up the Indian Forest Service in 1864?
8. At which place The Imperial Forest Research Institute was set up in 1906.
9. What were the categories of forest by 1878 forest act?
10. What is meant by scientific forestry?
11. What is the main impact of European colonialism in agriculture?
12. Which agriculture practice European foresters regarded as harmful for the forests?
13. What is the location of Bastar?
14. Who killed 400 tigers?
15. Write the name of river which flows across Bastar from east to west.

Short/Long Answer Type Questions (3/ 5 Marks)

1. Why cultivation expanded rapidly in the colonial period?
2. Why were British worried?
3. Discuss the effect of the forest Act.
4. Discuss some of the local terms and cultivation process of swidden agriculture.
5. In India, write main leader of forest communities rebelled against the British?
6. Discuss the importance of forests in our lives.
7. Where is Bastar located? What were the results of the Bastar rebellion?

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8. What restrictions were imposed by the Dutch Government in Java Forest laws?
9. Discuss the classification of forests on the basis of forest act, 1878.
10. Why did European regard the shifting cultivation practice as a harmful for forests?
11. Explain the factors which prompted the Samins to revolt against the Dutch.
12. Evaluate the various forest laws and policies which were adopted by the colonial rulers.
13. Discuss the causes of deforestation in India during the colonial rule.

ANSWERS

Very Short Answer Type Questions (1 Marks each)

1. The disappearance of forests is referred to as deforestation.
2. Population growth
3. Expansion of cultivation
4. sleepers is the Wooden planks laid across railway tracks; they hold the tracks in position
5. Oak
6. First Inspector General of Forests in India.
7. Dietrich Brandis
8. Dehradun
9. The 1878 Act divided forests into three categories: reserved, protected and village forests
10. It is a system of cutting trees controlled by the forest department, in which old trees are cut and new ones planted.
11. One of the major impacts of European colonialism was on the practice of shifting cultivation or swidden agriculture.
12. European foresters regarded this practice as harmful for the forests
13. Bastar is located in the southernmost part of Chhattisgarh and borders Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra.
14. George Yule
15. River Indrawati

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Short/Long Answer Type Questions (3/ 5 Marks)

1. a) production of commercial crops
   b) need to feed the growing urban population
   c) need to raw material
   d) colonial govt. thought that forests were unproductive
   e) Enhance the income of the state.
2. a) use of forests by local people
   b) The reckless felling of trees by traders
3. All the everyday practices became illegal-

   I.These are –cutting wood for their houses, grazing their cattle,

   II. collecting fruits and roots,

   III.hunting and fishing

4. a. In India, Dhya, denda, Bewar, Nevad, Jhum, Podu, Khandad and Kumri are some of the local terms for swidden agriculture.

   b. In shifting cultivation-
      I. Parts of the forest are cut and burnt in rotation.
      II. Seeds are sown in the ashes after the first monsoon rains,
      III. The crop is harvested by October-November.
      IV. Such plots are cultivated for a couple of years and then left fallow for 12 to 18 years for the forest to grow back.
      V. A mixture of crops is grown on these plots.

5. The name of the leaders of some movements against the British are-
   I. Siddhu and Kanu in the Santhal Parganas
   II. Birsa Munda of Chhotanagpur
   III. Alluri Sitarama Raju of Andhra Pradesh
6. I. They provide raw materials
   II. They provide food, fodder, fuel etc.
   III. They prevent soil erosion and preserve the fertility
7. Bastar is located in the southernmost part of Chhattisgarh and borders Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra.

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I. Work on reserved forest was temporarily suspended.

II. Reserved area was reduced to roughly half of that planned

III. revolt inspired the other tribal people regarding to unjust policies

8. The java people were not -

I. allowed to graze their cattle

II. transport wood without permission

III. allowed to travel on forest roads with horse carts

9. a. Reserved forests- villagers could not take anything

b. Protected forests – villagers could collect wood under strict supervision

c. Village forests- villagers could be use only domestic purpose

10. a. shifting cultivation made it harder to calculate taxes

b. European felt that in these types of land they could not grow trees for railway timber

c . Danger of the flames spreading and burning valuable timber

11. a. The Saminists laid down on their land when the Dutch surveyors came to reclassify communal and salary lands

b. They cut teak despite Dutch efforts to guard the forest.

c. They refused to pay taxes, fines to accept wages

d. They refused to leave rented or communal land when their leases expired

e. Some piled stones on the roads which they had been ordered to build

12. various restrictions

a. impact on cultivation practices

b. various heavy taxes

c. loss of livelihood

d. displacement of the people

13. See the content

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