

Very Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. Who was Birsa Munda?

Ans. Birsa belonged to a family of Mundas, a tribal group that lived in Chhotanagpur.

Q. 2. Shifting cultivators were found in the hilly and forested tracts of north-east and central India.

Ans. Shifting cultivators were found in the hilly and forested tracts of north-east and central India.

Q. 3. Who were hunters and gatherers?

Ans. Hunters and gatherers were tribal groups who lived by hunting animals and gathering forest produce.

Q. 4. From where did forest people get their supplies of rice and other grains?

Ans. The forest people exchanged goods and got what they needed in return for their valuable forest produce.

Q. 5. Who were pastoralists?

Ans. The pastoralists were people who moved with their herds of cattle or sheep according to the seasons.

Q. 6. Which tribal groups were found more civilised by the British officials?

Ans. The British officials found settled tribal group like Gonds and Santhals as more civilised than hunter-gatherers or shifting cultivators.

Q. 7. What happened to tribal chiefs after the arrival of the British?

Ans. After the arrival of British rule, the tribal chiefs lost their administrative power and were forced to follow laws made by British officials in India.

Q. 8. What was the cause of establishing forest villages by the forest department?

Ans. The forest department established forest villages in order to ensure a regular supply of cheap labour.

Q. 9. When did Birsa Munda die?

Ans. Birsa Munda died of cholera in 1900.

Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. Write the variety of activities of the tribal people in different parts of India.

Ans. Some of the tribal people were jhum cultivators while some were hunters and gatherers. Some of them herded animals and some took to settled cultivation.

Q. 2. What is jhum cultivation?

Ans. (i) Jhum cultivation or shifting cultivation was done on small patches of land, mostly in forests.

(ii) Once the crop was ready and harvested, they left the field fallow for several years and moved to another field.

Q. 3. Write the names of pastoralists who are found in different parts of India.

Ans. (i) The Van Gujjars of the Punjab hills.

(ii) The Labadis of Andhra Pradesh.

(iii) The Gaddis of Kulu.

(iv) The Bakarwals of Kashmir

Q. 4. What do reserved forests refer to?

Ans. (i) The British took control over all forests and declared them as state property. Some forests were classified as 'Reserved Forests'.

(ii) In reserved forests, those crops were grown which the British wanted like the timber.

(iii) In these forests, people were not allowed to move freely, practise jhum cultivation, collect fruits or hunt animals.

Q. 5. What was the impact of forest laws?

Ans. (i) Many tribal groups reacted against the colonial forest laws.

(ii) They disobeyed the new rules and continued with practices that were declared illegal and at times rose in open rebellion.

Q. 6. Why were the traders and moneylenders coming to forests more often?

Ans. (i) The traders and moneylenders came to forest more often, because they wanted to buy forest produce by offering cash loans and asking them to work for wages.

(ii) Traders came around to buy things at a cheap rate and sold them at high price.

Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. Why was the Birsa Movement significant?

Ans. The Birsa movement was significant in two ways:

(i) First: It forced the colonial government to introduce laws so that the land of tribals could not be easily taken over by dikus.

(ii) Second: It showed once again that the tribal people had the capacity to protest against injustice and express their anger against colonial rule. They did this in their own specific way, inventing their own rituals and symbols of struggle

Q. 2. Briefly explain the land settlements introduced by the British.

Ans. (i) The British wanted a regular revenue source for the state and they introduced land settlements.

(ii) They measured the land, defined the rights of each individual to that land and fixed the revenue demand for the state.

(iii) Some peasants were declared landowners, others tenants.

(iv) The tenants were to pay rent to the landowner who in turn paid revenue to the state.

Q. 3. After his release in 1897, how did Birsa Munda resume the Birsa movement?

Ans. (i) When Birsa was released in 1897, he began touring the villages to gather support.

(ii) He urged people to destroy 'Ravana' (dikus and the Europeans) and establish a kingdom under his leadership.

(iii) Birsa's followers began targeting the symbols of diku and European power.

(iv) They attacked police stations and churches and raided the property of moneylenders and zamindars.

(v) They raised the white flag as a symbol of Birsa Raj.

Q. 4. What was the impact of forest laws on tribals?

Ans. (i) The British extended their control over all forests and declared that forests were state property.

(ii) Some forests were classified as 'Reserved forests' for they produced timber which the British wanted.

(iii) In these forests people were not allowed to move freely, practise Jhum cultivation, collect fruits or hunt animals.

(iv) Jhum cultivation could not survive in such a situation, so they were forced to move to other areas in search of work and livelihood.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

Q. 1. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

Ans. “In this land of the English how hard it is to live”

In the 1930s Verrier Elwin visited the land of the Baigas – a tribal group in central India. He wanted to know about them – their customs and practices, their art and folklore. He recorded many songs that lamented the hard time the Baigas were having under British rule.

In this land of the English how hard it is to live

How hard it is to live In the village sits the landlord In the gate sits the Kotwar

In the garden sits the Patwari

In the field sits the government

In this land of the English how hard it is to live

To pay cattle tax we have to sell cow

To pay forest tax we have to sell buffalo

To pay land tax we have to sell bullock

How are we to get our food?

In this land of the English

Quoted in Verrier Elwin and Shamrao Hivale, Songs of the Maikal, p. 316.

Q. 2. Observe the given picture and answer the questions that follow:



- (i) What do you see in the given picture?**
(ii) How are their working conditions?
(iii) How did different tribal groups live? Describe

Ans. (i) They are coalminers.

(ii) Coal miners have to work deep down in the dark and suffocating mines. Working in such conditions is back-breaking and dangerous. In 1948, it was often killing.

(iii) Tribal people in various parts of India were involved in different activities.

(a) Some tribal people practised jhum cultivation also known as shifting cultivation. This was done mostly in forests on small patches of land. The cultivators cut the treetops to allow sunlight to reach the ground, and burnt the vegetation on the land to clear it for cultivation. They spread the ash from the firing, which contained potash, to fertilise the soil. They used the axe to cut trees and the hoe to scratch the soil in order to prepare it for cultivation. They broadcast the seeds, that is, scattered the seeds on the field instead of ploughing the land and sowing the seeds. Once the crop was ready and harvested, they moved to another field. Shifting cultivators were found in the hilly and forested tracts of north-east and central India.

(b) Few tribal groups were hunter gatherers. They were engaged in hunting animals and gathering forest produce. Khonds, tribal community of Odisha found forests as essential for survival. They regularly hunted for meat and then divided meat amongst themselves; ate fruits and roots. They had a good knowledge of forest produce. Sometimes, local weavers and leather workers turned to the khonds for their supplies of kusum and palash flowers. Sometime, they did the odd jobs of carrying loads or building roads.

(c) Some tribal groups were pastoralists, who lived by herding and rearing animals. They moved with their herds according to the seasons. Example: The Van Gujjars of the Punjab hills and the Labadis of Andhra Pradesh were cattle herders, Bakarwals of Kashmir reared goats, Gaddis of kulu were shepherds.

(d) Some tribal community took to settled cultivation. They began to use the plough, and gradually got rights over the land they lived on.