

# **Tribals, Dikus and the Vision of a Golden Age**

## **Question 1.**

Apart from the Forest Regulation Act, which was the other Act passed by the British in 1871 which labeled all the adivasi groups that rebelled against the British as criminals.

- (a) Illegal Tribes Act
- (b) Illegal societies Act
- (c) Criminal Societies Act
- (d) Criminal Tribes Act

Answer: (d) Criminal Tribes Act

## **Question 2.**

In what way did the movement by Birsa Munda prove to be a significant one?

- (a) This movement helped British to impose huge land taxes on the adivasis.
- (b) He proved that tribal people had the capacity to protest against injustice and rebel against colonial rule.
- (c) This movement proved that British was much stronger than the tribals.
- (d) This movement helped the British to easily implement the Permanent settlement

Answer: (b) He proved that tribal people had the capacity to protest against injustice and rebel against colonial rule.

## **Question 3.**

Which one from the following options is closest in meaning to Guerilla warfare?

- (a) The suppression of a rebellion using non-violence
- (b) An operation by the Government to control a large group of people who rebel.
- (c) Non- conventional warfare of smaller groups attacking a large army
- (d) Non- conventional warfare of a large army attacking a small group

Answer: (c) Non- conventional warfare of smaller groups attacking a large army

## **Question 4.**

From the seeds of Sal and Mahua, the tribal extract oil to cook. What exactly is Mahua ?

- (a) Root of a tree
- (b) A flower that is eaten or used to make alcohol
- (c) Stem of a tree
- (d) Leaves of a tree

Answer: (b) A flower that is eaten or used to make alcohol

Question 5.

According to the list given below, who were the Van Gujjars of the Punjab hills?

- (a) Reared only goats
- (b) Cattle herders
- (c) Village heads
- (d) Money lenders

Answer: (b) Cattle herders

Question 6.

Lists of statements with respect to the tribal life are given below. Choose the one that does not pertain to the tribal life.

- (a) The tribal groups lived by hunting animals and gathering forest produce.
- (b) Most of the tribals ate fruits and roots collected from the forest and cooked food with the oil extracted from the seeds
- (c) The tribals saw forests as essential for survival
- (d) The tribals always migrated and hence did not have a permanent forest habitat.

Answer: (d) The tribals always migrated and hence did not have a permanent forest habitat.

Question 7.

A few statement related to the Adivasis are given below. Choose the one that is not applicable to the tribals of India.

- (a) Isolated, they stayed away from the society and never exploited nature
- (b) They shared common culture
- (c) The adivasis did not like to live in communities or groups
- (d) They lived in forests and hills.

Answer: (c) The adivasis did not like to live in communities or groups

Question 8.

Why did the British consider the Chhota Nagpur belt vital?

- (a) This region had rich minerals and also dense teak and sal forests
- (b) This region was an important place for the British to sell their produce.
- (c) This region had a lot of Adivasis who could work for the British
- (d) This region had many big buildings

Answer: (a) This region had rich minerals and also dense teak and sal forests

Question 9.

Name the Act passed by the British In 1865 that gave British the power to declare any forest land as Government land.

- (a) Forest Ruling Act
- (b) Forest Regulation Act
- (c) Forest Bye-Laws
- (d) Forest Directive Act

Answer: (b) Forest Regulation Act

Question 10.

What did the Bakarwals of Kashmir rear?

- (a) Only horses
- (b) Only cattle
- (c) Only bullocks
- (d) Only goats

Answer: (d) Only goats

Question 11.

Why were the Baigas of Central India reluctant to do work for others?

- (a) Since Baigas were tribal chieftains, they thought they cannot work as labourers.
- (b) Since Baigas only reared cattle, they thought they cannot work as labourers.
- (c) Since Baigas saw themselves as people of the forest, they thought it below their dignity to work as labourers.
- (d) Since the Baigas were money lenders, they thought lending money was more profitable.

Answer: (c) Since Baigas saw themselves as people of the forest, they thought it below their dignity to work as labourers.

Question 12.

From the given number of options, choose the one that can be best tells us about the Gaddis of Kulu.

- (a) Money lenders
- (b) Reared only goats
- (c) Shepherds
- (d) Tribal chieftains

Answer: (c) Shepherds

Question 13.

Which among the following options best describe broadcasting or scattering

- (a) The method of sowing seeds in Jhum cultivation
- (b) The method of harvesting in Jhum cultivation
- (c) The method of raising cattle in poultries
- (d) The method of granting titles to the tribal chiefs by the British

Answer: (a) The method of sowing seeds in Jhum cultivation

Question 14.

Some important features of the Jhum cultivation are given below. Pick out the one that is not related to the Jhum cultivation.

- (a) The cultivators cut the treetops to allow sunlight to reach the ground and burnt the vegetation on the land to clear it for cultivation
- (b) Potash, the ash from the burning of the vegetation used to fertilise the soil.
- (c) Once a crop is harvested they move to another virgin land and the old one remained fallow for many years.
- (d) This type of cultivation is done on small patches of land and hence not suitable for forests cultivation by the tribals.

Answer: (d) This type of cultivation is done on small patches of land and hence not suitable for forests cultivation by the tribals.

Question 15.

What did the Tribal groups do when they wanted to buy goods not produced in their locality?

- (a) Tribals bought goods for higher prices from traders and money lenders gave loan for this.
- (b) Tribals did not buy such goods at all
- (c) Like a barter system, Tribals bought goods they wanted in return for the goods they produced.
- (d) Tribals went to another locality worked there as labourers in return for the goods

Answer: (a) Tribals bought goods for higher prices from traders and money lenders gave loan for this.

Question 16.

What does the word dikus refer to in the Chhota Nagpur region?

- (a) Natives
- (b) Outsiders
- (c) Citizens
- (d) Communities

Answer: (b) Outsiders

Question 17.

Why were the Baigas of Central India reluctant to do work for others?

- (a) Since the Baigas were money lenders, they thought lending money was more profitable

- (b) Since Baigas only reared cattle, they thought they cannot work as labourers.
  - (c) Since Baigas saw themselves as people of the forest, they thought it below their dignity to work as a labourers
  - (d) Since Baigas were tribal chieftains, they thought they cannot work as labourers.
- Answer: (c) Since Baigas saw themselves as people of the forest, they thought it below their dignity to work as a labourers

Question 18.

From the following list of choices, which one would be most appropriate meaning of the term Adivasis?

- (a) Tribals
- (b) Money lenders
- (c) Land lords
- (d) Village Headmen

Answer: (a) Tribals

## Very Short Answer Type Question

1. Name the tribe of 'Birsa'.

Answer: Munda

2. Who were Mundas?

Answer: Mundas was a tribal group that lived in Chottanagpur.

3. Birsa belonged to which village and state?

Answer: Birsa belonged to village of Chottanagpur in Bihar.

4. When and where revolt of Songram Sangma took place?

Answer: The revolt of Songram Sangma took place in 1906 in Assam.

5. Name the place where Khond people used to live?

Answer: Khond people used to live in the forests of Orissa.

6. Why did the British reserve the forests of India?

Answer: British reserved the forests of India to procure timber.

7. What does Vaishnav mean?

Answer: Vaishnav means worshippers of Vishnu.

8. When did Birsa Munda died and how?

Answer: In 1900 Birsa died of cholera.

9. What is the other name of jhum cultivation?

Answer: The other name of Jhum cultivation is shifting cultivation.

10. When and where was the forest satyagraha happened?

Answer: The forest satyagraha happened in 1930s in the Central Provinces.

11. It was below the dignity of which tribe to become a labourer?

Answer: It was below the dignity of a Baiga to become a labourer.

12. What was the color of the flag raised by Mundas as a symbol of Birsa Raj?

Answer: They raised the white flag as a symbol of Birsa Raj.

13. Name the leaves used for making plates by the Dongria Kandha women of Orissa.

Answer: Pandanus leaves

14. In which area the Santhals reared cocoons?

Answer: Hazaribagh, in present-day Jharkhand, was an area where the Santhals reared cocoons.

15. What is fallow field?

Answer: Fallow field is a field left uncultivated for a while so that the soil recovers fertility.

16. Why did the British introduce land settlement?

Answer: The British introduced land settlement because they wanted a regular revenue source for the state.

17. Why were some forests classified as reserved forests by the British?

Answer: Some forests were classified as reserved forests for they produced timber which the British wanted.

18. Who were the outsiders being referred to as dikus?

Answer: Missionaries, moneylenders, Hindu landlords, and the British government were the outsiders being referred to as dikus.

19. Why was Birsa convicted?

Answer: British arrested Birsa in 1895, convicted him on charges of rioting and jailed him for two years.

20. Why did forest Department establish forest villages in many regions?

Answer: Forest Department established forest villages in many regions to ensure a regular supply of cheap labour.

21. What did people say about Birsa Munda?

Answer: People said he had miraculous powers – he could cure all diseases and multiply grain.

22. Which tribal groups moved with their herds of cattle or sheep according to the seasons?

Answer: They were pastoralists who moved with their herds of cattle or sheep according to the seasons.

23. Name the revolts that took place against the colonial forest laws.

Answer: The revolt of Songram Sangma in 1906 in Assam, and the forest satyagraha of the 1930s in the Central Provinces.

# Short Answer Type Questions

1. Who was Birsa Munda?

Answer: Birsa was born in the mid-1870s. The son of a poor father, he grew up around the forests of Bohonda, grazing sheep, playing the flute, and dancing in the local akhara.

2. Why British allowed Jhum cultivation in the reserved forests?

Answer: British allow them to cultivate land on the condition that those who lived in the villages would have to provide labour to the Forest Department and look after the forests.

3. Which tribal group was reluctant to work for others and why?

Answer: Baigas of central India – were reluctant to do work for others. The Baigas saw themselves as people of the forest, who could only live on the produce of the forest. It was below the dignity of a Baiga to become a labourer.

4. What problems did Birsa set out to resolve?

Answer: Problems Birsa set out to resolve were:

Their familiar ways of life seemed to be disappearing.

Their livelihoods were under threat.

Their religion appeared to be in danger.

5. Why did the British want tribal groups to settle down and become peasant cultivators?

Answer: British wanted tribal groups to settle down and become peasant cultivators because settled peasants were easier to control and administer than people who were always on the move.

6. State the five tribes found in India. Write the name of the Indian state where maximum tribes are found.

Answer: The Van Gujjars of the Punjab hills, the Labadis of Andhra Pradesh, the Gaddis of Kulu, the Bakarwals of Kashmir and Santhals of Hazaribagh, in present-day Jharkhand.

7. How did British officials see settled tribal groups and those who lived in the forest?

Answer: British officials saw settled tribal groups like the Gonds and Santhals as more civilised than hunter gatherers or shifting cultivators. Those who lived in the forests were considered to be wild and savage: they needed to be settled and civilised.

8. What accounts for the anger of the tribals against the dikus?

Answer: The following facts account for their anger against the dikus.

The land policies of the British were destroying their traditional land system.

Hindu landlords and moneylenders were taking over their land.

Missionaries were criticising their traditional culture.

9. Mention different types of activities where tribal people were involved?

Answer: Tribal people in different parts of India were involved in a variety of activities.

Some were jhum cultivators.

Some were hunters and gatherers.

Some herded animals.

Some took to settled cultivation.

10. How was the Birsa movement significant?

Or

In what ways was the Birsa movement significant?

Or

What was importance of Birsa movement?

Or

State the significance of the movement started by Birsa Munda?

Answer: The movement was significant in at least two ways.

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

(ii) it showed once again that the tribal people had the capacity to protest against injustice and express their anger against colonial rule.

## Long Answer Type Questions

1. What were the main activities of the Khonds living in the forest of Orissa?

Answer: The Khonds were a community living in the forests of Orissa. They were basically hunters and gatherers. They regularly went out on collective hunts and then divided the meat amongst themselves. They ate fruits and roots collected from the forest and cooked food with the oil they extracted from the seeds of the sal and mahua. They used many forest shrubs and herbs for medicinal purposes, and sold forest produce in the local markets.

2. Mention the revolts by different tribal groups in the country against the British?

Answer: Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, tribal groups in different parts of the country rebelled against the changes in laws, the restrictions on their practices, the new taxes they had to pay, and the exploitation by traders and moneylenders. The Kols rebelled in 1831-32, Santhals rose in revolt in 1855, the Bastar Rebellion in central India broke out in 1910 and the Warli Revolt in Maharashtra in 1940. The movement that Birsa led was one such movement.

3. Enlist three features of tribal people.



Answer: Three features of tribal people were:

Most tribes had customs and rituals that were very different from those laid down by Brahmans.

These societies also did not have the sharp social divisions that were characteristic of caste societies.

All those who belonged to the same tribe thought of themselves as sharing common ties of kinship.

4. How did Birsa resume his movement after his release in 1897?

Or

What did Birsa Munda and his followers do after his release in 1897?

Answer: When Birsa was released in 1897 he began touring the villages to gather support. He used traditional symbols and language to rouse people, urging them to destroy “Ravana” (dikus and the Europeans) and establish a kingdom under his leadership. Birsa’s followers began targeting the symbols of diku and European power. They attacked police stations and churches, and raided the property of moneylenders and zamindars. They raised the white flag as a symbol of Birsa Raj.

5. What was the problem faced by the silk growers (Santhals) of Jharkhand during the nineteenth century?

Answer: Hazaribagh, in present-day Jharkhand, was an area where the Santhals reared cocoons. The traders dealing in silk sent in their agents who gave loans to the tribal people and collected the cocoons. The growers were paid Rs 3 to Rs 4 for a thousand cocoons. These were then exported to Burdwan or Gaya where they were sold at five times the price. The middlemen – so called because they arranged deals between the exporters and silk growers – made huge profits. The silk growers earned very little.

6. How did the powers of tribal chiefs change under colonial rule?

Answer: Under British rule, the functions and powers of the tribal chiefs changed considerably.

They were allowed to keep their land titles over a cluster of villages and rent out lands, but they lost much of their administrative power and were forced to follow laws made by British officials in India.

They also had to pay tribute to the British, and discipline the tribal groups on behalf of the British.

They lost the authority they had earlier enjoyed amongst their people, and were unable to fulfil their traditional functions.

7. How did traders and moneylenders exploit the tribal people?

Or

Why did the tribal group see the moneylender and trader as evil outsiders and the cause of their misery?

Or

Why did the tribal people consider moneylenders and traders as evil outsiders?

Answer: Tribal groups often needed to buy and sell in order to be able to get the goods that were not produced within the locality. This led to their dependence on traders and moneylenders. Traders came around with things for sale, and sold the goods at high prices. Moneylenders gave loans with which the tribals met their cash needs, adding to what they earned. But the interest charged on the loans was usually very high. So for the tribals, market and commerce often meant debt and poverty. They therefore came to see the moneylender and trader as evil outsiders and the cause of their misery.

8. What problem did the British face after they brought changes in forest laws? How did they solve the problem?

Answer: Once the British stopped the tribal people from living inside forests, they faced a problem. From where would the Forest Department get its labour to cut trees for railway sleepers and to transport logs?

Colonial officials came up with a solution. They decided that they would give jhum cultivators small patches of land in the forests and allow them to cultivate these on the condition that those who lived in the villages would have to provide labour to the Forest Department and look after the forests. So in many regions the Forest Department established forest villages to ensure a regular supply of cheap labour.

9. Elaborate upon the shifting cultivation method.

Answer: This was done on small patches of land, mostly in forests. 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. A field that had been cultivated once was left fallow for several years.

10. Why was the British effort to settle jhum cultivators not very successful?

Answer: The British effort to settle jhum cultivators was not very successful because of the following reasons.

Settled plough cultivation is not easy in areas where water is scarce and the soil is dry.

In fact, jhum cultivators who took to plough cultivation often suffered, since their fields did not produce good yields.

So the jhum cultivators in north-east India insisted on continuing with their traditional practice.

Facing widespread protests, the British had to ultimately allow them the right to carry on shifting cultivation in some parts of the forest.

11. What was Birsa's vision of a golden age? Why do you think such a vision appealed to the people of the region?

Answer: Birsa was deeply influenced by many of the ideas he came in touch with in his growing-up years. His movement was aimed at reforming tribal society. He urged the Mundas to give up drinking liquor, clean their village, and stop believing in witchcraft and sorcery. Birsa urged his followers to recover their glorious past. He talked of a golden age in the past – a satyug (the age of truth) – when Mundas lived a good life, constructed embankments, tapped natural springs, planted trees and orchards, practised cultivation to earn their living. They did not kill their brethren and relatives. They lived honestly. Birsa also wanted people to once again work on their land, settle down and cultivate their fields.

Such a vision appealed to the people of the region because they got fed up with British forest laws and the restrictions that were imposed on them.

12. How did different tribal groups live?

Or

How do they earn livelihood?

Answer: Tribal people in different parts of India were involved in a variety of activities.

Some of them practised jhum cultivation, that is, shifting cultivation. This was done on small patches of land, mostly in forests.

In many regions tribal groups lived by hunting animals and gathering forest produce. They saw forests as essential for survival. The Khonds were such a community living in the forests of Orissa.

Many tribal groups lived by herding and rearing animals. They were pastoralists who moved with their herds of cattle or sheep according to the seasons. When the grass in one place was exhausted, they moved to another area.

Many from within the tribal groups had begun settling down, and cultivating their fields in one place year after year, instead of moving from place to place.

13. What problems did shifting cultivators face under British rule?

Answer: Problems faced by shifting cultivators under British rule

For administrative and economic reason, the British wanted the jhum cultivators to settle down and become peasant cultivators. The British effort to settle jhum cultivators was not very successful. Settled plough cultivation is not easy in areas where water is scarce and the soil is dry. In fact, jhum cultivators who took to plough cultivation often suffered, since their fields did not produce good yields. The life of shifting cultivators was directly connected to the forest. So changes in forest laws had a considerable effect on their lives. The British extended their control over all forests and declared that forests were state property. In these

forests people were not allowed to move freely, practise jhum cultivation, collect fruits, or hunt animals. Many were therefore forced to move to other areas in search of work and livelihood.