

# Ch 7 Tribes, Nomads and Settled Communities

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Let's recall

1. Match the following:

|           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| garh      | khel          |
| tanda     | chaurasi      |
| labourer  | caravan       |
| clan      | Garha Katanga |
| Sib Singh | Ahom state    |
| Durgawati | paik          |

Answer

|           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| garh      | chaurasi     |
| tanda     | caravan      |
| labourer  | paik         |
| clan      | khel         |
| Sib Singh | Ahom state   |
| Durgawati | Garh Katanga |

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2. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) The new castes emerging within varnas were called \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) \_\_\_\_\_ were historical works written by the Ahoms.
- (c) The \_\_\_\_\_ mentions that Garha Katanga had 70,000 villages.
- (d) As tribal states became bigger and stronger, they gave land grants to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer

- (a) The new castes emerging with in varnas were called jatis.
- (b) Buranjis were historical works written by the Ahoms.

- (c) The Akbar Nama mentions that Garha Katanga had 70,000 villages.
- (d) As tribal states became bigger and stronger, they gave land grants to poets and scholars.

3. State whether true or false:

- (a) Tribal societies had rich oral traditions.
- (b) There were no tribal communities in the north-western part of the subcontinent.
- (c) The chaurasi in Gond states contained several cities.
- (d) The Bhils lived in the north-eastern part of the subcontinent.

**Answer**

- (a) True
- (b) False
- (c) False
- (d) False

4. What kinds of exchanges took place between nomadic pastoralists and settled agriculturists?

**Answer**

Nomadic pastoralists exchanged wool and ghee with settled agriculturists in return for grain, cloth, utensils and other products.

**Let's understand**

5. How was the administration of the Ahom state organised?

**Answer**

Administration of the Ahom state:

- (i) The administration was centralised during first half of the 17th century.
- (ii) The Ahom state depended upon forced labour to work for the state and were called paiks.
- (iii) Almost all adult males served in the army during war and in other times, they were engaged in building dams, irrigation systems and other public works..
- (iv) Ahom society was divided into clans or khels who often controlled several villages.
- (v) The peasant was given land by his village community and even king could not take it away without the permission of the community.

6. What changes took place in varna-based society?

**Answer**

Social changes took place in the varna-based society:

- (i) Smaller castes or jatis emerged within varnas.
- (ii) Many tribes and social groups were taken into caste-based society and given the status of jatis.
- (iii) Jatis became the basis for organising society instead of varna.
- (iv) Specialised artisans, smiths, carpenters and masons were also recognised as separate jatis by the Brahmanas.

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### 7. How did tribal societies change after being organised into a state?

#### Answer

Changes in tribal societies after being organised into a state:

- (i) With the support of the Brahmanas, many tribes became part of the caste system.
- (ii) Leading tribal families joined ruling classes and a large majority joined the lower jatis of caste society.
- (iii) Many dominant tribes of Punjab, Sindh and the North-West Frontier had adopted Islam.
- (iv) Some became politically powerful and conflicted with larger and more complex kingdoms and empires.

#### Let's discuss

### 8. Were the Banjaras important for the economy?

#### Answer

Banjaras were important for the economy as:

- (i) They were the most important trader-nomads.
- (ii) They were used to transport grain to the city markets.
- (iii) They buy grain where it is cheaply available and carry it to places where it is dearer.
- (iv) Sometimes they were hired by big merchants and trade for them.
- (v) They carried grain on their bullocks from different areas and sold it in towns and also transported food grain for the Mughal army during military campaigns.

### 9. In what ways was the history of the Gonds different from that of the Ahoms? Were there any similarities?

#### Answer

Difference:

- (i) Gonds lived in a vast forested region called Gondwana while the Ahoms migrated to the Brahmaputra valley from present-day Myanmar.
- (ii) Gonds practiced shifting cultivation while the Ahoms don't.
- (iii) Gonds were completely annexed by Mughal empire while the Ahoms got defeated by the Mughals but direct control over the region could not last long.

Similarities:

- (i) In both have administration was centralised.
- (ii) Both were smaller tribe who grew annexed neighbouring small societies and got power.
- (iii) Both the societies were divided into clans or jatis.