



LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Question 1. How do the official records of the British administration help historians to write about the last 250 years of Indian history?

Answer: The British believed that the act of writing was important. Hence, they got written up every instruction, plan, policy decision, agreement, investigation, etc. They thought that once this was done, things could be properly studied and debated. This conviction produced an administrative culture of memos, notings and reports.

The British were very interested in preserving all important documents and letters. For this, they established record rooms attached to all administrative institutions such as the village tahsildar's office, the collectorate, law courts etc. They also set up archives and museums to preserve important records.

Letters and memos that moved from one branch of the administration to another in the early years of the 19th century can still be read in the archives. Historians can also take help from the notes and reports that district officials prepared or the instructions and directives that were sent by officials at the top to the provincial administrators.

Question 2. How did surveys become important under the colonial administration?

Answer: The British gave much importance to the practice of surveying because they believed that a country had to be properly known before it could be effectively administered. Therefore, they carried out detailed surveys by the early 19th century in order to map the entire country:

1. They conducted revenue surveys in villages.
2. They made efforts to know the topography, the soil quality, the flora, the fauna, the local histories and the cropping pattern.
3. They also introduced census operations, held at the interval of every ten years from the end of the 19th century. They prepared detailed records of the number of people in all the provinces of India, noting information on castes, religions and occupation separately.
4. The British also carried on several other surveys such as botanical surveys, zoological surveys, archaeological surveys, forest surveys, etc. In this way, they gathered all the facts that were essential for administering a country.

SOURCE-BASED QUESTIONS

Question 1. Read the following extract (source 2) taken from the NCERT textbook page 7 and answer the questions that follow:

“Not fit for human consumption”

Newspapers provide accounts of the movements in different parts of the country. Here is a report of a police strike in 1946.

More than 2000 policemen in Delhi refused to take their food on Thursday morning as a protest against their low salaries and the bad quality of food supplied to them from the Police Lines kitchen.

As the news spread to the other police stations, the men there also refused to take food ... One of the strikers said: “The food supplied to us from

the Police Lines kitchen is not fit for human consumption. Even cattle would not eat the *chappattis* and *dal* which we have to eat.”

Hindustan Times, 22 March, 1946

Questions:

- (i) Why did the policemen in Delhi refuse to take their food on Thursday morning ?
- (ii) How did the men in other police stations react when they came to know about the protest?
- (iii) What was the comment of one of the strikers on the food supplied to them ?

Answers:

- (i) They did so as a protest against their low salaries and the inferior quality of food supplied to them from the Police Lines kitchen.
- (ii) They also refused to take food.
- (iii) One of the strikers said that the food supplied to them was not fit for human consumption. Even cattle would not eat the chapatis and dal which they had to eat.

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