



1. Why was jotedar a powerful figure in many areas of rural Bengal ?

Ans: Jotedars were rich peasants in Bengal. They owned big plots of land sometimes running into thousand of acres of land. They controlled local trade and commerce including the money lending business. They had great influence on the local village population. They were regarded more powerful than the Zamindars even. Following are the main reasons for the high status of Jotedars.

1. The Jotedars controlled trade and commerce including money lending business at the local level.
2. In order to weaken the Zamindars, Jotedars would mobilise ryots not to pay or delay payment towards land revenue.
3. The Jotedars opposed the moves of Zamindars to increase the Jama of a village.
4. The Jotedars lived in villages only. Hence they were in a better position to interact with and influence the peasants.
5. Jotedars were rich and owned big areas of land under cultivation. Many a time they would buy estates of Zamindar. That would be auctioned due to failure to pay up land revenue.

2. How did Zamindars manage to retain control over their zamindaris?

Ans: When zamindars were in bad times, they often resorted to various tactics to maintain control over their zamindari. These were in fact their survival tactics. Following are the important ones.

1. Zamindars created fictitious sales during auction. Their own men would make highest bid and later refused to pay up. After repeating this exercise for couple of occasions, the government would be tired and sell it back to zamindar at lesser rate.
2. A part of Estate was often transferred to female members of the family, and that part of property could not be taken by the government any more.
3. Zamindars put hurdle in purchase and occupation of the estate by others by use of sheer muscle power.
4. Sometimes even peasants under the influence of zamindars opposed auction of estate.

3. How did the Paharias respond to the coming of outsiders?

Ans: Paharias live in the hills of Rajmahal. The British people began to interact with them and later Santhals began to settle down there. The response of the Paharias was as follows:

1. Paharias resisted the settlement of Santhals initially but had to accommodate them in course of time.
2. The Paharias shifted to deeper areas into the hills.
3. They were confined to more barren and rocky areas of the hills in course of time.
4. The paharias did shifting cultivation. Now shifting cultivation was becoming more and more difficult as proper and stable settlements.
5. As forest began to be cleared, the paharis could not depend on it for livelihood. Thus, the lifestyle and living of Paharias

underwent change due to coming of outsiders.

4. Why did the Santhals rebel against British rule ?

Ans: By 1832 the Santhals had settled in Damin-i-Koh area. Their settlement expanded rapidly. Forests were cleared to accommodate them. The Company also benefitted as it got more and more land revenue. However, the Santhals too got dissatisfied. They rebelled against the British rule. Following are the main causes for their rebellion.

1. Santhals were not happy with the tax regime of the company. They thought that the land revenue rates were high and exploitative .
2. The Zamindars began to exercise greater control on the areas brought under cultivation by Santhals, apparently it was a part of the British Policy. But Santhals resented that.
3. Moneylenders in the rural areas were seen as villain and agent of Company rule by the Santhals. Moneylenders could auction the land of Santhals in case of defaulter. All this was not liked by the Santhals.
4. The British took steps to placate the Santhals later on. A separate district of Santhal Pargana was carved out and law was enacted to protect the santhals.

5. What explains the anger of Deccan ryots against the moneylenders?

Ans: The main reasons for the anger of Ryots against moneylenders are as follows:

1. In rural India it was traditional rule that the interest will always remain less than the principal amount. However, in many cases interest payable was more than the principal itself. In one case the interest was Rs 2000 against principal amount of Rs100.
2. No receipt was paid in case of payment of loan partly or fully. This opened the scope of manipulation by the moneylenders.
3. Ryots complained about forging of documents and other fraudulent activity by the moneylenders.
4. Ryots believed that moneylenders were insensitive to them and made an arrogant and exploitative lot.

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