



SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

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

Answer: The Khonds were basically hunter- 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. All their activities were based on forest.

Question 2. How did traders and moneylenders exploit the tribal people?

Or

How were traders and moneylenders cause of the tribals' misery?

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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. They sold the goods at high prices.

Moneylenders used to give loans with which the tribals met their cash needs, adding to what they earned. But the interest charged on the loans was very high. Thus, both traders and moneylenders always exploited the tribal people. It is therefore the tribals- saw them as evil outsiders and the cause of their misery.

Question 3. How did the British officials view settled tribal groups and those who moved about from place to place?

Answer: The British officials saw settled tribal groups such as the Gonds and Santhals as more civilised than hunter-gatherers or shifting cultivators. These tribal groups lived in the forests and kept on moving. They did not have a fixed home. The British considered them wild and savage and therefore they needed to be settled and civilised.

Question 4. Describe land settlements introduced by the British.

Answer: The British introduced land settlements to ensure a regular revenue source for the state. Under these settlements:

- the British measured the land, defined the rights of each individual to that land, and fixed the revenue demand for the state.
- some peasants were declared landowners, others tenants. The tenants were to pay rent to the landowner who in turn paid revenue to the state.

Question 5. Why was the British effort to settle jhum cultivators not very successful?

Answer: (a) It is usually difficult to carry on settled plough cultivation in areas where water is scarce and the soil is dry.
(b) Jhum cultivators who took to plough cultivation often suffered since their fields did not produce good yields. Hence, the jhum cultivators in north-east India insisted on continuing with their traditional practice.

(c) The British faced widespread protests. Therefore, they allowed them to carry on shifting cultivation in some parts of the forest.

Question 6. What problem did the British face after they brought changes in forest laws? How did they solve this problem?

Answer: The British stopped the tribal people from living inside forests by introducing some changes in forest laws. This created a problem. They lost labour force because most of the jhum cultivators moved to other areas in search of work. Who would cut trees for railway sleepers and transport logs?

Colonial officials solved this problem by giving jhum cultivators small patches of land in the forests and allowing them to cultivate these on the condition that these who lived in villages would have to provide labour to the Forest Department and look after the forests. The Forest Department established forest villages in many regions to ensure a regular supply of cheap labour.

Question 7. Give a brief history of the revolts by different tribal groups in the country.

Answer: Several tribal groups in different parts of the country were unhappy with the changes they were experiencing and the problems they were facing under the British rule. Finally, they 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.

1. The Kols rebelled in 1831-32.
2. The Santhals rose in revolt in 1855.
3. The Bastar Rebellion in central India broke out in 1910.
4. The Warli Revolt in Maharashtra in 1940.
5. Birsa Munda also led one such movement.

Question 8. How did Birsa resume his movement after his release in 1897?

Answer: Birsa was released in 1897. Now he began touring the villages to gather support. He used traditional symbols and language to rouse people, urging them to destroy dikus and the Europeans and establish a kingdom under his leadership. Birsa's followers began targetting the symbols of dikus 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.

Question 9. In what ways was the Birsa movement significant?

Answer: The Birsa movement was significant in two ways:

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

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