

## Long Answer Questions

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**Q.1. What is shifting cultivation? Why did the Europeans decide to ban it?**

**Ans.** In shifting cultivation, parts of forests are cut and burnt in rotation. Seeds are sown in the ashes after the first monsoon rains. The following prompted Europeans to ban it.

- (i) They regarded this practice as harmful for forests.
- (ii) They felt that the land which was used for cultivation every few years could not grow trees for railway timber.
- (iii) When a forest was burnt, there was the added danger of the flames spreading and burning valuable timber.
- (iv) Shifting cultivation also made it harder for the government to calculate taxes. Therefore, the government decided to ban shifting cultivation.

**Q.2. Give a brief account of the people of Bastar.**

**OR**

**What kind of life is led by the tribals of Bastar?**

- Ans.**
- (i) Bastar is located in the southernmost part of Chhattisgarh.
  - (ii) Different communities live in Bastar such as Maria and Muria Gonds, Dhurwas, Bhatras, etc.
  - (iii) They speak different languages but share common customs and beliefs.
  - (iv) They believe that each village was given its land by the Earth and in return, they look after the Earth by making offerings during the festivals.
  - (v) In addition to the Earth, they pay respect to the spirits of river, the forest and the mountain.
  - (vi) Since each village knows its boundaries, they look after their natural resources within that boundary.
  - (vii) If they want to take some wood from another village, they pay a small fee called 'devsari' in exchange.
  - (viii) Some villages protect their forests by keeping watchmen and each house contributes grains to pay them.

They meet once in a year to discuss issues of concern, including forests.

**Q.3. Describe the events that led to the revolt in Bastar against the British.**

**Ans. (i)** People began to discuss their issues in their village councils or bazars, wherever the headmen of several villages assembled.

**(ii)** Although there was no single leader but Gunda Dhur from village Nethanar became an important figure.

**(iii)** In 1910, mango boughs, a lump of Earth, chillies and arrows began circulating between villages. They were actually messages inviting villagers to rebel against the British.

**(iv)** Every village contributed something to the rebellion expenses.

**(v)** Bazars were looted, the houses of officials and traders, schools and police stations were burnt and robbed, and grain redistributed.

**(vi)** Most of those who were attacked were associated with the British and their oppressive laws.

**Q.4. How was forest conservation carried out by the Asian and African countries later on?**

**Ans.**

- Conservation of forests rather than collecting timber became a more important goal.
- The government realised that in order to meet this goal, the people who live near the forests must be involved.
- In many cases, such as from Mizoram to Kerala, dense forests have survived only because villages protected them in 'sacred groves'.
- Some villages have been patrolling their own forests, with each household taking it in turns, instead of leaving it to the forest guards.
- Local forest communities and environmentalists are thinking of different forms of forest management. Many movements like the 'Chipko Movement' were started to save trees from the ruthless cutting down for commercial purposes.

**Q.5. How were forest products used by the villagers in their day-to-day lives?**

**Ans. (i)** In forest areas, people used forest products—roots, leaves, fruits and tubers—for many things.

**(ii)** Fruits and tubers were nutritious to eat, especially during monsoons before the harvest.

(iii) Herbs were used for medicine, wood for agricultural implements like yokes and ploughs, bamboo makes excellent fences and is also used to make baskets and umbrellas.

(iv) A dried scooped-out gourd was used as a portable water bottle.

(v) Almost everything was available in the forest—leaves could be stitched together to make disposable plates and cups, creepers could be used to make ropes, and the thorny bark of the tree was used to grate vegetables.

**Q.6. Explain any five ways in which the lives of the villagers were affected by the Forest Acts.**

**Ans.** The lives of the villagers were affected by the forest laws:

(i) Now the villagers were deprived of their customary practices like hunting, cutting, grazing their cattle, collecting fruits, etc.

(ii) One of the major impacts was on the practice of shifting cultivations or swidden agriculture.

(iii) People were now forced to steal wood from the forests and if they were caught, they were at the mercy of the forest guards who would take bribes from them.

(iv) Women who collected fuel woods were especially worried.

(v) It was common for police, constables and forest guards to harass people by demanding free food from them.

**Q.7. Explain any five causes of deforestation in India under the colonial rule.**

**Ans. (i)** Population increased, the demand for food went up.

(ii) British encouraged the production of commercial crops.

(iii) Forest were unproductive.

(iv) The spread of railways from 1850s.

(v) By the early 19th century, oak forests in England were disappearing. This created a problem of timber supply for the Royal Navy.

(vi) Emergence of Plantations.

**Q.8. There are many tribes living in India. Visit any one of them and give a brief on the life led by the tribals.**

**Ans. (i)** Most of the tribals in India live in far off villages.

**(ii)** They look after earth, show respect to the spirit of rivers, forests and mountain.

**(iii)** If they want to buy some wood or take wood from other villagers, they pay taxes like devsari.

**(iv)** Some tribals also keep men for protecting their forests.

**(v)** They also do hunting for fuel, animals' meat, etc.