

**Introduction:**

British rule was first established in Bengal, India after the battle of Buxar in the year of 1764. In 1793 a permanent solution was found to the land revenue in Bengal. The economic measures taken by the British government made India a consumer of goods made in England. When the landlords were facing a crisis by the end of the 18th century, on the other hand such a group of peasants consolidated their position in the villages. The power of the zamindars diminished considerably as it increased. He did not surrender easily. So they devised various ways to cope with stress and focus on their landlords.

**1. Colonialism and Rural Society: Evidence from Official Reports**

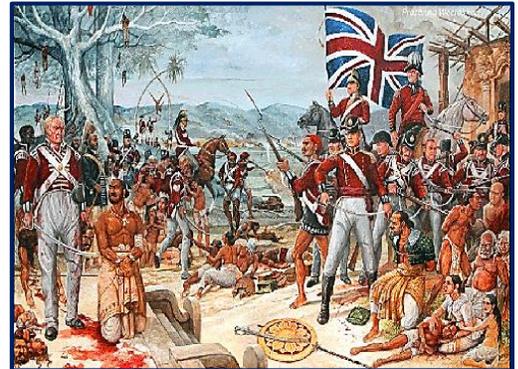
By the end of the 18th century, the most negative impact of colonial rule was on the economic condition of the peasantry. The Indian economy had to face catastrophic consequences as a result of the British occupation of India. In order to fulfill his selfish interests, broke with his own tradition and the structure of the Indian economy.

Due to the decline of the Indian industry, Indian handloom workers and artisans were completely unemployed. Industries like Surat in the west, Dhaka and Murshidabad in the east, which were once flourishing, were destroyed.

Percival Spear, P.E. Robot and R.C. Dutt was praised because of the permanent solution to land revenue.

- Government revenue stagnated
- Effective governance
- British rule was established.
- Permanent settlement of income has also been criticized for these reasons-
- This did not benefit the landlords.
- With this, there was interest among the growers.
- The tax burden fell on other classes.

Introduced a new system called Mahalwari system of land revenue in Punjab (Modern day Indian Punjab and Pakistan Punjab) and North West Frontier Province. The group of villages was called 'Mahal'. Hence this system is called Mahalwari method. The purpose of the Fifth Report is to control and regulate the activities of the East India Company in India. The East India Company of England established its control over the countryside and implemented its revenue policies. In this chapter, we will discuss what these policies mean to people and how they have changed people's daily lives.

**DO YOU KNOW?**

- 1765** - In the wake of the Battle of Buxar, the East India Company receives Diwani for the province of Bengal.
- 1773** - The Regulation Act is enacted by the British Parliament to regulate the East India Company.
- 1800** - Saints begin to settle in the Rajmahal hills.
- 1818** - The first land revenue settlement is made in the Bombay Presidency.
- 1820** - Prices of agricultural products fall.
- 1855-56** - Santal Rebellion at Rajmahal.
- 1861** - Cotton boom for Indian farmers in the wake of the American Civil War
- 1875** - Rights uprising in Deccan villages.

## 2. Bengal and the Zamindars:

Colonial rule was first established in Bengal. In Bengal, the East India Company sought to reorganize rural society and establish new land rights and a new revenue system. An auction was held in Burdwan (now Bardhaman) in 1797, known as the Grand Public Event. The company determined the revenue and each zamindar had to pay. This revenue estimate was made under a permanent settlement and came into force in the year 1793.



The property of the landlords who failed to pay the revenue was auctioned off and the proceeds collected. But sometimes at auction buyers are found to be the landlord's servants and agents, e.g. Auction in Burdwan

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### Unpaid Income Issue:

British officials believed that by encouraging investment in agriculture, trade and the state's sources of income would grow. This can be done by acquiring property rights and permanently determining income demand rates. Once the income is stabilized, the company realizes that it will enable the individual to invest in agriculture as a way to make a profit and guarantee the company regular returns.



After a long discussion between the company officials, permanent settlements were made with the kings and taluks of Bengal. Under the zamindars there were many, sometimes even 400 villages. The landlords that collected rent from different villages, paid income to the company and kept the difference as their income.

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## 3. Reasons for non-payment by landlords:



There are various reasons why landlords do not pay income and the demand for income is very high. It was imposed at a time when the prices of agricultural produce were very low, so it was difficult for farmers to pay. Landlords were also treated with a strict law that was known as 'Sunset Law' regardless of the crop. According to this law, the landlords had to pay the proceeds by sunset on the specified date, otherwise the landlords could be auctioned off.

Apart from these, permanent settlement and the company reduced the power of the landlords. Sometimes Ryot and the village head-jotedar deliberately delay payment.

#### 4. Restrictions on Company Landlords:

The landlords were important to the company, but it wanted to control and regulate them, to suppress their authority and to limit their autonomy.

Thus, the forces of the zamindars were abolished, the customs duties were abolished and their 'kacheri'



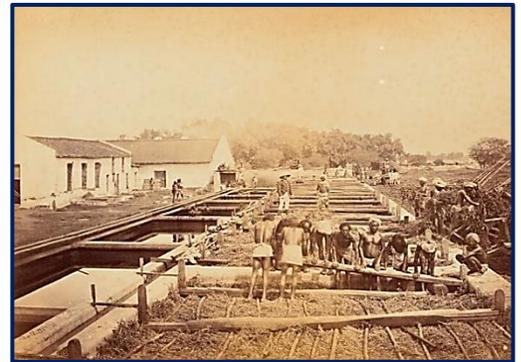
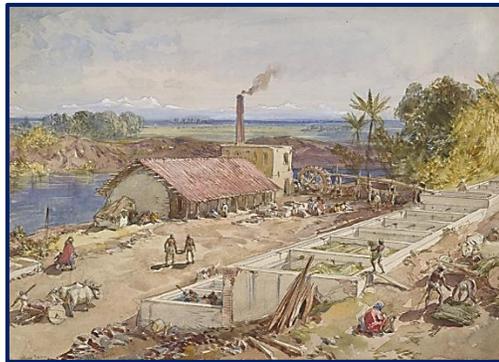
(courts) were brought under the supervision of a collector appointed by the company. The landlords lost the power to administer local justice and the local police. Over time the landlords imposed severe sanctions and confiscated their powers.

#### 5. Growth of partners in villages:

A group of wealthy peasants was called Jotedar. Jotedar are a class of affluent peasants. They acquired vast tracts of land, controlled trade, lent money, and exercised enormous power over poor tenants. Their land was cultivated by shareholders called Adhyar or Bargdar.

The power of the jotedar in the village was more effective than that of the zamindars. He vehemently opposed Jama's efforts to raise Jama in the village and prevented the zamindari officer from performing his duties. Sometimes they even bought property that the landlord had auctioned off. Jotedar played an

important role in weakening the zamindari system.



#### 6. Landlord resistance:

To prevent his power from being eroded, the zamindar took various measures such as forging or selling property to his family's mother-in-law, manipulating the auction, deliberately withholding income, and threatening or intimidating people outside his zamindari. Try to buy the property.



#### DO YOU KNOW?

**Tenant:** A person living on rental income.

**Diwani:** State Revenue Department.

**Permanent Settlement:** The land revenue system introduced by Cornwallis in Bengal in 1793. In this system the landlords collected land revenue. The zamindari right passed from father to son.

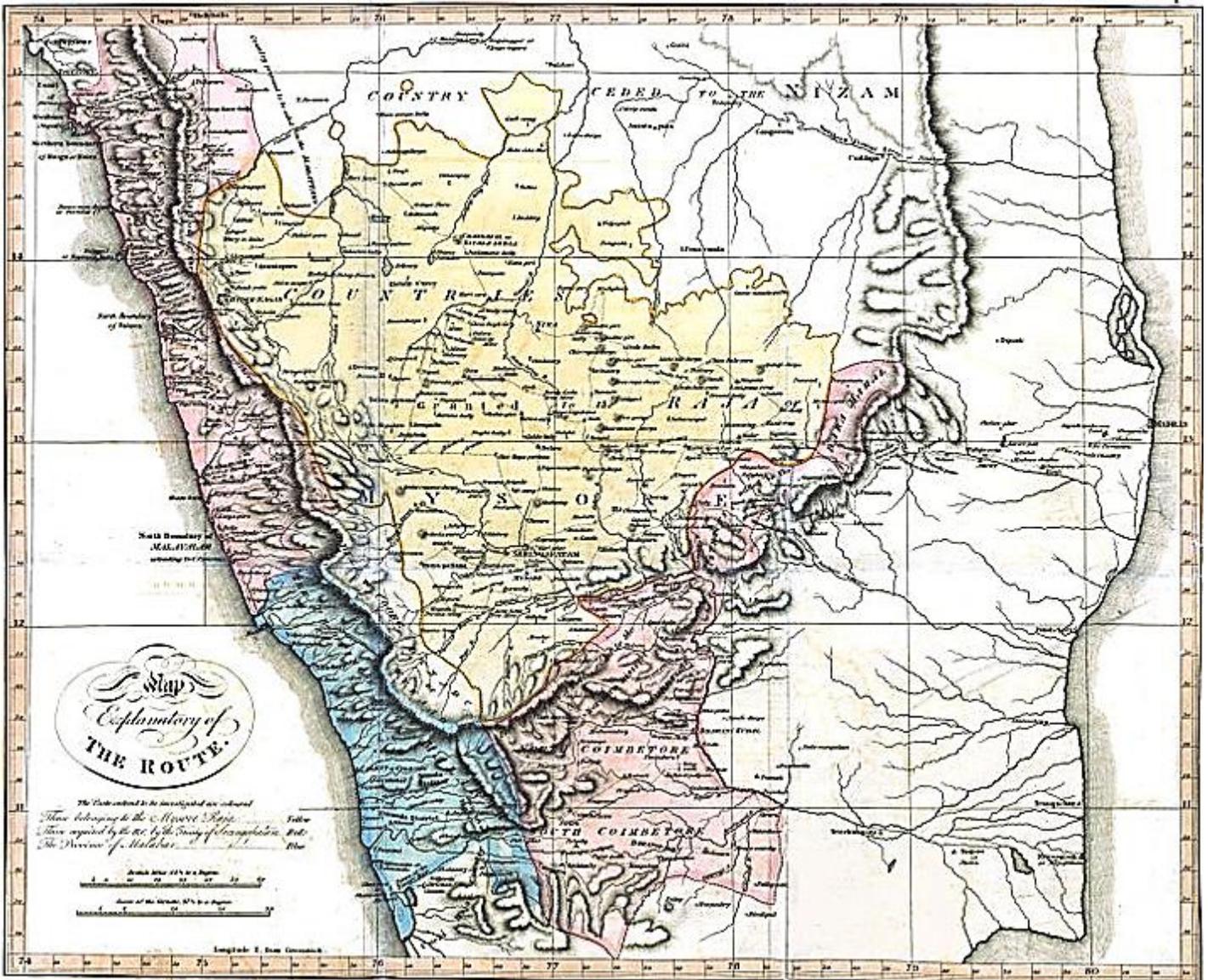
**Ryotwari system:** Introduced land revenue system in Madras and Bombay Presidencies. In the system, settlement is made directly with the tenants.

## 7. The Fifth Report and its Impact on the Landlords:

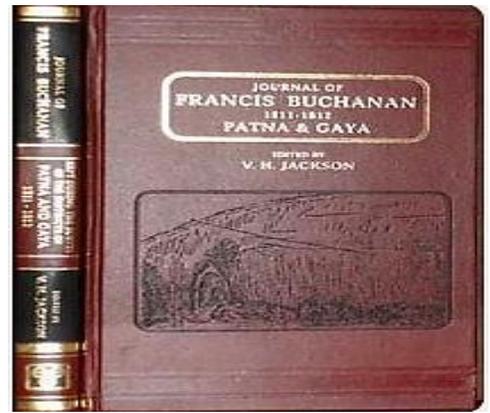
It is the fifth in a series of reports on the administration and operations of the East India Company in India. It was presented to the British Parliament in 1813. The British Parliament pressured the Company to submit regular reports on the administration of India and appointed committees to inquire into the affairs of the Company. It became the basis for a serious parliamentary debate on the nature of East India Company rule in India. The Fifth Report shaped our understanding of what happened in rural Bengal at that time and the evidence contained in the Fifth Report is very important.



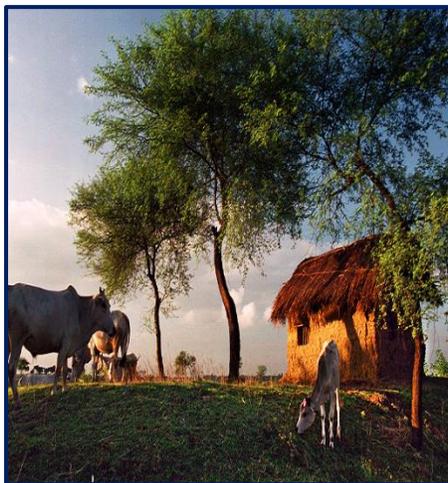
## 8. Buchanan Accounts:



Francis Buchanan conducted a detailed survey of the territory under the jurisdiction of the British East India Company. The Buchanan tour was sponsored by the company and planned according to its need. He has specific instructions on what to watch and what to record. Buchanan observed commercially valuable stones, rocks, various layers of clay, minerals and stones. Buchanan writes about landscapes and how these landscapes can be transformed and become productive. His predictions are shaped by the company's business interests and modern Western ideas about progress. He heaped criticism on the lifestyle of the forest dwellers.



**9. Rural areas of Bengal:**

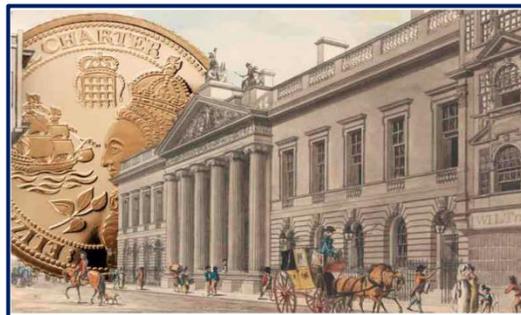


**DO YOU KNOW?**  
**Mahals:** Property owned by large landlords locally known as kings.  
**Raja:** This is the word for emperor, but often refers to large landlords in their respective local areas.  
**Talukdar:** A taluka refers to a piece of land or territorial unit owned by a taluka.  
**Jotedar:** Wealthy farmers are often the owners of large farms. They often controlled moneylenders and business at the local level. Sometimes the village headman is also called Jotedar.

Gradually over time, settled agriculture expanded and reached the area that had been cultivated, engulfing the meadows and forests of the Rajmahal hills. Jhum was cultivated with the help of, while stable farming was done with a plow.

**In the Palace Hills:**

A physician named Francis Buchanan traveled through the palace hills and described it. The Paharyas actually lived in the palace hills. They lived on hunting, shift farming, food gathering and were closely associated with the forest. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, the British



encouraged deforestation and even landlords and cronies began to turn barren lands into paddy fields. With the expansion of settled agriculture, forest and pasture areas declined. This intensified the conflict between the strikers and the settled tenants. Saints came to these places in the 1780s. He flattened the forest and plowed the land. As the lower hills were taken over by the Santal settlers, the Paharia Rajmahal went inland into the hills.

**10. Santhal became a resident:**

The landlords and the British resorted to the Santhals after they had conquered the hills and failed to convert them into settled tenants. The saints seemed to be ideally settled in clearing the forest and plowing the land.

After acquiring the land, the population of the saints increased rapidly and so did the number of their villages. As the Santals settled, the Paharias resisted but eventually had to retreat deeper into the hills. This made the hill people poor in the long run.



The saints now lead a stable life, cultivating a variety of commercial crops for the market and dealing with traders and moneylenders. But the state imposes exorbitant taxes on them, the usurers (Dikus) charge high interest rates and occupy their land due to non-repayment of debt and the landlords take possession of their land. Later, due to problems, Santhal revolted in 1855-1856 and to pacify them, the British created new territories for Santhal and imposed some special laws on them.



### Uprising in Bombay Deccan:

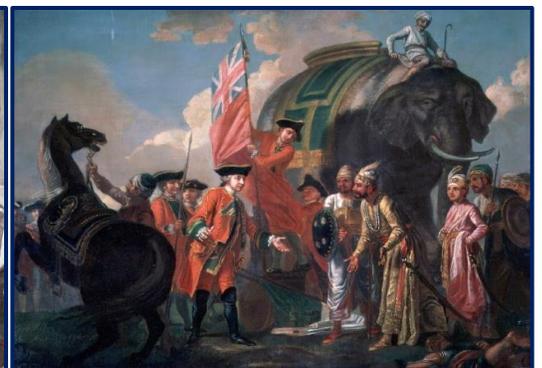
One way to find out what is going on in the Bombay Deccan region is to focus on the insurgency in that region. The rebels expressed their anger and resentment. The uprising provides information about peasant life, the events surrounding the uprising, and the suppression or control of the uprising. Investigations into the uprising have yielded remarkable results by historians.



In the nineteenth century, farmers in various parts of India revolted against moneylenders and grain traders, e.g. In 1875 there was an uprising in the Deccan. In 1895 a movement began in the village of Supa in Poona, where rights gathered from the surrounding countryside to attack shopkeepers and demand their Bahi-Khata account (account Bahi) and loan bonds. Rights accounts were burned, shops looted and sometimes even the homes of moneylenders burned. The revolt then spread from Pune to Ahmednagar and the more frightened moneylenders left their wealth and possessions and fled the village. The British authorities controlled the uprisings, they set up police outposts in the villages and arrested and punished the people.

### New revenue system introduced:

In the 19th century, the British company was interested in expanding its financial resources to its vicinity through other provisional revenue settlements. Because, after 1810 agricultural prices rose and the income of the Bengal landlords increased, but not to the company. Demand for this specialty has grown significantly as a result of recent corporate scandals. So in order to diversify its revenue sources, the company started introducing temporary solutions.



The policies of the authorities are also based on the economic principles they are familiar with. In the 1820s, the authorities were under the influence of Ricardian ideas. David Ricardo is a leading English economist. Ricardian opined that the landlord should only claim the average rent and when there is a surplus, the state should tax that surplus. He said that if the tax is not collected, farmers are likely to become tenants and the extra income will not be invested productively to improve the land.

The Ryotwari settlement was introduced as a new revenue system in the Bombay Deccan. In this policy, the income is settled directly with the tenant or Ryots. The average income from land, Wright's income payment capacity is estimated and its ratio is determined by the state share. The provision stipulates that the land must be re-surveyed every 30 years.

## Revenue Demand and Farmer Loans:

The demand for income is high and when the crop is bad, it is impossible to pay; When the farmer failed to pay the income, his crops were confiscated and the whole village was fined. In the 1830s, prices plummeted, with a famine in the Deccan killing 1/3rd



of the cattle and half the human population. So, the problem is very serious, but the unpaid income has increased. Under these circumstances many farmers left their villages and moved to new areas. Farmers need money to get married and start farming to get out of trouble. That is why he took a loan from a moneylender. However, once the loan was taken, they could not repay it. Farmers' reliance on moneylenders has increased as debts have increased and defaults.

By the 1840s, authorities had identified farmers at a precarious level of debt, so they reduced demand for income slightly. By 1845, farm prices had improved rapidly and farmers began to expand farming. However, he went to the moneylender again as he needed money to buy seeds for expansion.

## Experience of injustice to farmers:

Farmers are stuck in a debt trap and now live entirely on the moneylender but now the moneylenders have turned down their loan. Also, it is customary for the interest charged not to exceed the actual amount of the loan. But this law was violated during colonial rule and now the rights are starting to look at the moneylenders crookedly and fraudulently. The moneylenders complained that the laws had been tampered with and that the accounts had been forged.

To solve this problem, the British passed a restriction law in 1859 stating that the validity of debt bonds was only 3 years. This was done to check the accumulation of interest. But the moneylenders are now forced to sign a new limit every 3 years in which the total balance of the previous loan is recorded as the original amount and interest is charged on it. In the Deccan Rights Commission, rights petitions. It describes how moneylenders oppress and harass them, forcing them to register counterfeit toys on bonds, sign a repayment bond or document, and stamp their toes without giving receipts for the repayment of loans. I was unaware of it and could not read. The moneylenders also acquired the crop at a low price and eventually took possession of the farmers' property. They have no other way to live. Debt but moneylenders are not ready to give without a bond.



## 11. Deccan Riots Commission and its report:

The Bombay government has set up a commission to investigate the riots in the Deccan. The commission inquired into the riots and recorded the statements of the wrongdoers, moneylenders, eyewitnesses, revenue collections, interest rates in different areas and reports sent by the district collectors. The Commission's report was submitted to the British Parliament in 1878. This report reflects the official idea of the immigration government. The farmers came to a conclusion that they were angry with the moneylenders and that the company was not in demand for income. This shows that the colonial government was reluctant to recognize that public discontent was against government action. Official reports are an invaluable source for reconstructing history, but they also need to be combined with other sources.

## Cotton and its global status:

In 1861 the American Civil War began. Cotton exports to Britain declined due to the war. Cotton cultivation in India was encouraged to reduce dependence on America. Exporters gave money to urban moneylenders; they gave it to rural moneylenders to secure products. So now money



is easily available to the farmer and due to this cotton production has increased rapidly. But it brought prosperity to many rich farmers and led to huge debts to small farmers. By 1862, more than 90 per cent of Britain's cotton was imported from India.

When the Civil War ended in 1865, cotton exports resumed, cotton prices fell and demand for cotton from India declined. With this the merchants, the moneylenders, did not give loans to the farmers but demanded to repay. At the same time, revenue demand also increased from 50 to 100 percent.

### Activity

- Q1. Write a note on the colonialism and its Impact on rural economy?
- Q2. Make a short note on the Bengal and Zamindar?
- Q3. See the political world map and find out the Bengal territory during the early British rule?
- Q4. What was the reason for non-payment by landlord?
- Q5. What was 5th Report & its impact on the landlord?

## Questions For Practice

1. Who among these was the leader of the Santhal Rebellion?  
(a) Sidhu Murmu (b) Birsa Munda  
(c) None (d) Paharias
2. In which year did the American Civil War take place?  
(a) 1857 (b) 1859  
(c) 1861 (d) 1872
3. What was the hilly people called by Britishers?  
(a) Wild Human (b) Wild Settler  
(c) Santhal (d) Paharias
4. When was the Fifth Report tabled in the British Parliament?  
(a) 1770 (b) 1858  
(c) 1813 (d) 1795
5. The importance of the hill areas of the palace depends entirely on \_\_\_\_\_?  
(a) River (b) Sustainable Agriculture  
(c) Wild (d) Commerce
6. Which of the following poses a threat to the hills?  
(a) Santhal (b) Bhil  
(c) Gujarat Bhil (d) Bakarwal
7. Damin-e-Koh was set up for \_\_\_\_\_?  
(a) Santhal (b) Paharias  
(c) British (d) Zamindari
8. \_\_\_\_\_ was the main source of cotton for the British until 1862.  
(a) America (b) India  
(c) China (d) Japan
9. Damin-e-Koh is the designated area for the tribe?  
(a) Ho (b) Santhal  
(c) Garo (d) All
10. When did the permanent settlement in Bengal begin?  
(a) 1785 (b) 1764  
(c) 1793 (d) 1905
11. Who initiated the permanent settlement in Bengal?  
(a) Lord Cornwallis  
(b) Lord Dalhousie  
(c) Lord Curzon  
(d) Lord William Bentinck
12. Which revenue system was introduced in Bombay Deccan?  
(a) A permanent Settlement  
(b) Single System  
(c) Mixed System  
(d) Ryotwari System
13. By what name are the astrologers called?  
(a) Zamindars (b) Teacher  
(c) Holders (d) Paharias
14. Who initiated the permanent settlement in Bengal?  
(a) Lord Charles Cornwallis  
(b) Francis Buchanan  
(c) David Ricardo  
(d) Thomas Munro
15. Which of the following statements is incorrect regarding Santhals?  
(a) They lived on the border of the Rajmahal hills.  
(b) He cleared the forests and plowed the land.  
(c) He took money from Discussion  
(d) They practiced shifting cultivation.
16. Which of the following is not a feature of Jhum cultivation?  
(a) Forest pieces are cut down and alternately burned.  
(b) The seeds are sown in ashes.  
(c) Cleared plots are cultivated for a few years and then abandoned.  
(d) These patches are rich in nitrogen from ash.
17. Which of the following is true of colonial rule?  
(a) Forest people have the right to hunt.  
(b) The forest people were considered wild, primitive and difficult to accepted the colonial forest law.  
(c) British authorities promoted shifting cultivation.  
(d) All of these
18. Consider the following options.  
1. The Fifth Report was submitted to the British Parliament in 1813.  
2. Astrologers are very powerful.  
3. The saints are a great threat to the people of the hill country.  
4. No zamindari was auctioned in Bengal.  
(a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 1, 2, 3 and 4  
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) 3 and 4 only
19. Consider the following statements:  
1. Permanent Settlement in 1793 AD.  
2. Astrologers are very powerful.  
3. All the landlords paid their dues very easily.  
4. Rights came to see the crooks and crooks of the moneylenders.  
(a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 1, 2, 3 and 4  
(c) 1, 2 and 4 (d) 2, 3 and 4
20. Consider the following events:  
1. Introduction to a permanent

- Settlement.
2. American Civil War
  3. Fifth Report in the British Parliament
  4. The saints reached the hilly area of the palace
- The exact chronology of these events is:
- (a) 1, 2, 3, 4      (b) 1, 4, 3, 2  
(c) 1, 3, 2, 4      (d) 1, 3, 4, 2
21. When did the permanent settlement in Bengal begin?  
(a) 1785      (b) 1764  
(c) 1793      (d) 1905
  22. Who initiated the permanent settlement in Bengal?  
(a) Lord Cornwallis  
(b) Lord Dalhousie  
(c) Lord Curzon  
(d) Lord William Bentinck
  23. When was the Fifth Report tabled in the British Parliament?  
(a) 1770      (b) 1858  
(c) 1813      (d) 1795
  24. The hilly life of the palace depends entirely on \_\_\_\_\_?  
(a) River  
(b) Sustainable agriculture  
(c) Wild  
(d) Commerce
  25. Which of the following is a threat to the hills?  
(a) Santhal      (b) Bhil  
(c) Gujarat Jaro      (d) Bakarwal
  26. Damin-e-Koh formed for \_\_\_\_\_?  
(a) Santhal      (b) Paharias
- (c) British      (d) Zamindari
27. Until 1862 \_\_\_\_\_ cotton was the main source for the British?  
(a) America      (b) India  
(c) China      (d) Japan
  28. Area designated for the Damin-i-Koh tribe?  
(a) Ho      (b) Santhal  
(c) Khasi      (d) Junto
  29. Consider the following options.  
1. The Fifth Report was submitted to the British Parliament in 1813 AD.  
2. Astrologers are very powerful.  
3. The saints are a great threat to the hill people.  
4. The zamindari auction was not held in Bengal.  
(a) 1, 2 and 3      (b) 1, 2, 3 and 4  
(c) 2 and 3 only      (d) 3 and 4 only
  30. Consider the following statements:  
1. The permanent settlement began in 1793 AD.  
2. Astrologers are very powerful.  
3. All the landlords paid their dues very easily.  
4. Rights came to see usurers crooked and deceitful.  
(a) 1, 2 and 3      (b) 1, 2, 3 and 4  
(c) 1, 2 and 4      (d) 2, 3 and 4
  31. Who among these was the leader of the Santal Rebellion?  
(a) Sidhu Murmu      (b) Birsa Munda  
(c) Ho      (d) Paharias
  32. In which year did the American Civil War take place?  
(a) 1857      (b) 1859  
(c) 1861      (d) 1872
  33. What are the hill people called?  
(a) Wild Human      (b) Rights  
(c) Santal      (d) Paharias
  34. When was the Fifth Report tabled in the British Parliament?  
(a) 1770      (b) 1858  
(c) 1813      (d) 1795
  35. The lease of the Palace Hills is entirely dependent  
(a) River  
(b) Sustainable agriculture  
(c) Wild  
(d) Commerce
  36. Which of the following is a threat to hill people?  
(a) Santali      (b) Bhil  
(c) Gujarat Jaro      (d) Bakarwal
  37. \_\_\_\_\_ was set up for Damin-e-Koh \_\_\_\_\_?  
(a) Santal      (b) Paharias  
(c) British      (d) Zamindari
  38. Until 1862, cotton was the main source of cotton for the British.  
(a) America      (b) India  
(c) China      (d) Japan
  39. Area identified for the Damin-e-Koh tribe?  
(a) Jaitiya      (b) Santhal  
(c) Garo      (d) Junto
  40. When did the permanent settlement in Bengal begin?  
(a) 1785      (b) 1764  
(c) 1793      (d) 1905

## Solutions

- |        |        |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (a) | 5. (c) | 9. (b)  | 13. (c) | 17. (b) | 21. (c) | 25. (a) | 29. (a) | 33. (d) | 37. (a) |
| 2. (c) | 6. (a) | 10. (c) | 14. (a) | 18. (a) | 22. (a) | 26. (a) | 30. (c) | 34. (c) | 38. (a) |
| 3. (d) | 7. (a) | 11. (a) | 15. (d) | 19. (c) | 23. (c) | 27. (a) | 31. (a) | 35. (c) | 39. (b) |
| 4. (c) | 8. (c) | 12. (d) | 16. (d) | 20. (b) | 24. (c) | 28. (b) | 32. (c) | 36. (a) | 40. (c) |

