

THEME - 10

COLONIALISM AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

Exploring official archives

Key concepts in nutshell

- Bengal- Establishment of colonial rule- New land revenue, Auction system under Warren Hastings, 1793 Permanent Revenue settlement in Bengal by Lord Cornwallis 10/11 of produce - British, 1/11 of 11 to zamindars
- Crises in village economy, revenue demand of the state was fixed.
- The rise of the Jotedars, Their land was cultivated through share croppers.
- Resistance of Zamindars, their land was auctioned frequently.
- The fifth report- report submitted to British parliament 1813.
- The Hoe and the Plough- Shifting agriculture, expensive of village economy.
- Paharias - hunters food gathers connected with forests, invaded settled farmers 1770
- Santhals- settled in Bengal- practiced cultivation; land demarcated to them known as Daman-i-Koh.
- Conflicts with unsettled Paharias- 1850- they resisted the British- Santhals revolt.
- Revolt in the Bombay and Deccan- 1875.
- Burning of account book of money lenders and shop keepers
- New revenue System- Ryotwari system in Bombay Deccan- Direct settlement, land assessed for 30 years subject to periodic revision.
- Experience of injustice by peasants.

V. S. A. (2 Marks)

Q.1 Why were many Zamindaris auctioned after the permanent settlement?

Ans.Agricultural products prices were very low. The East India Company had fixed high amount of revenue.

Q.2 What steps were taken by East India Company to control the Zamindars?

Ans.(1) The troops of Zamindars were disbanded; (2) The courts were brought under the control of British collectors.

Q.3 How Jotdars did resists Zamindars?

Ans.(1) They prevented Zamindars from performing their duties; (2) They mobilized riots against Zamindars.

Q.4 When and who established permanent settlement?

Ans.In 1793 lord Cornwallis introduced permanent settlement.

Q.5 What were the demerits of ryotwori system?

Ans.The land revenue was very high. To pay land revenue was compulsory.

Q.6 What was fifth report?

Ans.The fifth report was submitted to the British Parliament in 1813 about administrative activities of the East India Company.

S. A. (4 Marks)

Q.7 Examine the policies adopted by the British towards paharias during 18th century.

Ans.(1) Firstly British adopted policy of extermination. (2) Augustus Cleveland, the collector of Bhagalpur proposed policy of pacification. (3) Under policy of pacification paharia chiefs was to ensure proper conduct of their men. (4) Paharia went into mountains and deep forests and continued their war against outsiders.

Q.8 What was Damin-i-Koh? Why did Santhals resist against Britishers during 18th century.

Ans.Damin-i-Koh was a large area given by British to Santhals. The colonial government had imposed heavy taxes on their land. The moneylenders were charging high rates of interest and snatching their lands. The Zamindars asserted control over their land.

Q.9 How did the Zamindars manage to retain control over their Zamindaris?

Ans.(1) Benami sales enabled the estate to be sold at a low price back to the Zamindar. (2) New Zamindars were attacked by former Zamindars. (3) The ryots resisted the entry of outsiders. (4) Some Zamindaris were declared property of ladies.

Q.10 Why Jotdar were more powerful than Zamindar?

Ans.(1) The Jotdar had vast area of land. (2) He was a local moneylender. (3) He was local trader. (4) The Jotdar lived in the village. (5) He would not allow Zamindar to perform his duties.

Q.11 How did American civil war affect the lives of ryots in India?

Ans.(1) Traders of the Bombay persuaded farmer for growing more cotton. (2) Moneylenders were ready for long term loans. (3) Cotton productive area doubled between 1860-1864. (4) The government started to collect more land revenue from peasants. (5) Only rich farmers gained profit.

Q.12 What are the problems of using official sources in writing about the history of peasants?

Ans.(1) The official sources reflect official concerns and interpretation of events, (2) The government was not ready to admit that discontent was because of government action, (3) Official reports must be verified with evidence gathered from newspapers, unofficial records, legal records and oral sources.

L. A. (8 Marks)

Q.13 In what ways was the livelihood of the paharias different from that of Santhals?

Ans.(1) The paharias practised shifting cultivation and lived on forest production. The Santhals practised settled-cultivation. (2) The agriculture of the paharias depended on hoe. Santhals practised with plough. (3) Besides agriculture the forest products too were means of livelihood of the paharias. The Santhals gave up life of mobility and had started settled cultivation. (4) The paharias were intimately related to the forest because of their occupations. The Santhals were settled in a specific region. (5) The paharias regularly raided plains for food, power and tax. The Santhals had friendly relations with British, moneylender and traders. (6) The paharias liked to gather forest produce for selling in the market but Santhals did not like it.

Q.14 What explains the anger of the Deccan ryots against the moneylenders?

Ans.(1) Ryotwari settlement of land revenue was direct revenue settlement of government with ryot. (2) The peasants were in need of money for many purposes. (3) Once They got entangled in the clutches of Sahukar, it would become very difficult for them to get themselves free from it. (4) Being unable to back the loan to the moneylender, they had no choice but to give over all their possessions. (5) They took land on rent and animals on hire from Sahukar. (6) The Sahukars would not give receipts when loans were repaid. (7) Fictitious figures were entered in the bonds. (8) Peasants harvest was procured at low prices. (9) The government increased the land revenue from 50 to 100 percent. (10) After American civil war moneylenders refused to extend advances. (11) The moneylender started renewing the bond every three years.

Q.15 Read the following passage carefully and answers the Questions given below;

On 16 May, 1875 the district magistrate of Poona wrote to the police commissioner:

On arrival at Supa on Saturday 15, May learnt of the disturbance. One house of a moneylender was burnt down; about a dozen were forcibly broken into and completely gutted of their content. Account papers, bonds, grains, country cloth were burnt in the street where heaps of ashes are still to be seen. The chief constable apprehended 50 persons. Stolen property worth Rs. 2000 was recovered. The estimated loss is over Rs. 25000. Moneylenders claim is over 1 lakh.

(I) Where and how did the Deccan riots start?

Ans.The riot started from Supa, a large village in Poona district. It was market centre where many shopkeepers and moneylenders lived. On 12 May, 1875 riots from the surrounding rural areas attacked the shopkeepers and demanded their Bahikhatas and debt bonds. They burnt the Khatas and looted grain shops.

(II) What steps did the British take to quell the revolt?

Ans.The British established police station in the village reinforcements were rushed to the Deccan. 95% people were arrested and many were convicted.

(III) State two reasons why peasants revolted?

Ans.High revenue demand and rigid system of collection angered the peasants, the moneylenders manipulating laws and forging accounts.