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FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

CONCEPTS

**DEFORESTATION**

Deforestation is cutting down of trees indiscriminately in a forest area. Under the colonial rule it became very systematic and extensive.

**Why Deforestation**

- As population increased over the centuries and the demand for food went up, peasants extended the boundaries of cultivation by clearing forests.
- The British encouraged the production of commercial crops like jute, sugar, wheat and cotton for their industries as raw material.
- The British thought that forests were unproductive land as they yielded no revenue nor agricultural produce. Cultivation was viewed as a sign of progress.
- Oak forests in England were disappearing. There was no timber supply for the shipbuilding industry. Forest resources of India were used to make ships for the Royal Navy.
- Spread of railways required two things :
  - land to be cleared to lay railway tracks
  - wood as fuel for locomotives and for railway line sleepers.
- Large areas of natural forests were cleared for tea, coffee and rubber plantations. Thus land was given to planters at cheap rates.

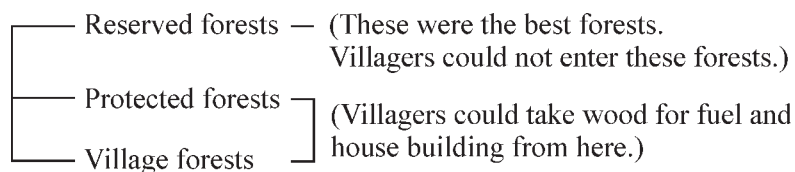
**COMMERCIAL FORESTRY**

The British were worried that the use of forests by local people and the reckless felling of trees by traders would destroy forests and hence invited German expert Dietrich Brandis as first Inspector General of Forests in India.

Brandis set up the Indian Forest Service in 1864 and helped formulate the Indian Forest Act of 1865. The Imperial Forest Research Institute was set up in Dehradun in 1906.

Scientific forestry was taught there. In the scientific forestry system, forests with different kinds of trees were replaced by plantations. Forest management plans were made by forest officials. They planned how much of the forest had to be cut and how much had to be replanted.

**The Forest Acts** divided forests into



The villagers were dissatisfied with the Forest Acts. They were now forced to steal wood from the forests. If they were caught, they were punished.

### **Forest Rules and Cultivation**

Shifting cultivation or swidden agriculture was the agricultural practice in many parts of Asia, Africa and South America. The colonial foresters did not favour this system as it made it difficult for the government to calculate taxes. In addition, the forest officials saw in it the danger of fire and also that no trees could grow on this kind of land.

**Hunting and Forest Laws :** The forest laws forbade the villagers from hunting in the forests but encouraged hunting as a big sport. They felt that the wild animals were savage, wild and primitive, just like the Indian society and that it was their duty to civilise them.

**New Trade and New Employment :** New opportunities opened in trade as the forest department took control of the forests, e.g., the Mundurucu peoples of the Brazilian Amazon.

With the colonial influence trade was completely regulated by the government. Many large European trading firms were given the sole right to trade in forest products of a particulate area. Many pastoral communities lost their means of livelihood.

New opportunities of work did not always mean improved well-being for the people.

### **FOREST REBELLIONS**

Forest communities rebelled against the changes imposed upon them. The people of Bastar were one such group. The initiative was taken by the Dhurwas of the Kanger forest where reservation first took place. The British sent troops to suppress the rebellion. It took them three months to regain control. A victory for the people of Bastar was that the work on reservation was suspended and the area was reduced to half.

### **CHANGES IN JAVA**

**The Kalangs :** They rose in rebellion against the Dutch in 1770 but their uprising was suppressed.

**Scientific Forestry in Java :** Forest laws were enacted in Java. The villagers resisted these laws. Forest timber was used for ships and railway sleepers.

The Dutch government used the 'balandongdiensten' system for extracting free labour from the villagers.

**Samin's Movement :** Samin of Randublatung village (a teak forest village) questioned the state ownership of forests. A widespread movement spread. They protested by lying on the ground when the Dutch came to survey it and refusing to pay taxes and perform labour.

**World Wars and Deforestation :** The world wars had a major impact on forests. The forest department cut freely to meet the British demands. The Dutch followed the scorched earth policy of destroying saw mills, burning logs of teak so that the Japanese could not benefit from it. The Japanese forced the villagers to cut down forests, when they occupied the area.

**New Developments :** Conservation and preservation of forests has now become the focus rather than timber. It has also been realised that if forests are to survive, the local community needs to be involved. There are many such examples in India where communities are conserving forests in sacred groves. This looking after is done by each member of the village and everyone is involved.

# I. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

## A. NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Discuss how the changes in forest management in the colonial period affected the following groups of people :**

- Shifting cultivators
- Nomadic and pastoralist communities
- Firms trading in timber/forest produce
- Plantation owners
- Kings/British officials engaged in hunting.

- Ans.**
- **Shifting cultivators** — Forest management had a great impact on shifting cultivators. In shifting cultivation parts of the forest are cut and burnt in rotation. European foresters regarded this practice as harmful for the forests. They felt that such land could not be used for growing trees for railway timber and was dangerous while being burnt as it could start a forest fire. This type of cultivation also made difficult for the government to calculate taxes. The government, hence, decided to ban shifting cultivation. As a result, many communities were forcibly displaced from their homes in the forests. Some had to change occupations, while some resisted through large and small rebellions.
  - **Nomadic and pastoralists communities** — Nomadic and pastoralist communities were also affected by changes in forest management. Their traditional customary grazing rights were taken away and their entry into the forests was restricted. Passes were issued to them which had details of their entry and exit into and out of the forests. The days and hours they could spend in the forest were also restricted. This was in contrast to the earlier system that allowed them unrestricted entry into forests. Pastoralists had to lessen the number of cattle in their herds which reduced their income. As their entry into forests was restricted they could not gather forest products. Earlier the forests were open for them and they would collect forest products and sell them. This had supplemented their income. Now they were deprived of this additional income. Some pastoralists even had to change their lifestyle, leave pastoralism and work in mines, plantations, factories. Some were branded as the 'criminal tribes'.
  - **Firms trading in timber/forest produce** — Firms trading in timber products were given the sole trading rights to trade in the forest products of particular areas. They made huge profits and became richer. The entire timber and forest trade passed on to them. They became powerful and began to cut down trees indiscriminately.
  - **Plantation owners** — Plantation owners found that more and more forest land could be cleared for plantations. The British had made it very clear that their system of forestry would be scientific forestry, i.e., plantations. Plantation owners began to reap profits as the British government gave large areas of forest land to European planters.
  - **Kings/British officials engaged in shikar** — The kings/British officials engaged in shikar found that now the villagers were prohibited from entering the forests. They had the forest and wild animals to themselves. Hunting animals became a big sport for them. Thus hunting increased to such an extent that various species became almost extinct.

**Q.2. What are the similarities between colonial management of the forests in Bastar and in Java? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** The similarities between colonial management of the forests in Bastar and Java were :

- Forest laws were enacted in Java and Bastar.
- These laws restricted villagers' access to forests.
- Timber could be cut from only specified forests and under close supervision.
- Villagers were punished for entering forests and collecting forest products without permit.
- Permits were issued to the villagers for entry into forests and collection of forest products.
- Both had a forest service.
- Both followed a system of forestry which was known as scientific forestry.
- In both places Forest Acts meant severe hardship for villagers. Their everyday practices — cutting wood for their houses, grazing their cattle, collecting fruits and roots, hunting and fishing became illegal.
- Constables and forests guards began to harass people.

**Q.3. Between 1880 and 1920, forest cover in the Indian subcontinent declined by 9.7 million hectares, from 108.6 million hectares to 98.9 million hectares. Discuss the role of the following factors in this decline :**

- Railways
- Shipbuilding
- Agricultural expansion
- Commercial farming
- Tea/Coffee plantations
- Adivasis and other peasant users.

**Ans.**

- **Railways** — Railways contributed significantly to the decline of forests in India. Wherever railway tracks had to be laid land had to be cleared. This land was forest land. Apart from clearing area for tracks, railway locomotives required timber for fuel and sleepers. For all these needs forests had to be cut down. The British government gave contracts to individuals to supply the required quantity of timber. These individuals cut down trees indiscriminately.
- **Shipbuilding** — Oak forests in England were decreasing in number and the shipbuilding industry was in trouble. They did not have enough timber for making ships. They turned their attention towards India. Huge forest areas were cleared and the timber transported to shipbuilding yards in England. British ships were being constructed and as a consequence trees were cut down indiscriminately in India.
- **Agricultural expansion** — Population was on the rise and the demand for food increased. Peasants extended the boundaries of cultivation by clearing forests. This gave them more land available for cultivation. In addition, there was great demand for cash crops such as tea, cotton, jute, sugar, etc., which were needed to feed the industries of England.
- **Commercial farming** — The British directly encouraged the production of commercial crops like jute, sugar, wheat and cotton. The demand for these crops increased in the 19th century in Europe, where foodgrains were needed to feed the growing urban population and raw materials were required for industrial production. Hence, large tracts of forest land were cleared to make land available for commercial farming.

- **Tea/Coffee plantations** — The colonial state thought that forest land was unproductive. It did not yield agricultural produce nor revenue. Large areas of natural forests were hence cleared to make way for tea, coffee and rubber plantations to meet Europe's growing need for these commodities. The colonial government took over the forests and gave vast areas to European planters at cheap rates. The areas were enclosed and cleared of forests and planted with tea or coffee.
- **Adivasis and other peasant users** — Adivasis and other peasant users do not cut down forests except to practice shifting cultivation or gather timber for fuel. They also gather forest products and graze their cattle. This does not destroy the forests except sometimes in shifting agriculture. In fact, now the new trends that promote forest conservation tend to involve local villagers in conservation and preservation. The adivasis and other peasant communities regard the forests as their own and even engage watchmen to keep a vigil over their forests.

**Q.4. Why are forests affected by wars?**

**(CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Forests are affected by wars and this often leads to deforestation. Forests during wars are freely cut to meet the needs of war. Forests are an important resource and hence during wars they are destroyed by their own country. This prevents the enemy from using this resource.

### OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS (AS PER CCE PATTERN)

#### B. MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS [1 MARK]

**Q.1. The Imperial Forest Research Institute was set up in :**

- (a) Dehradun                      (b) Delhi                      (c) Calcutta                      (d) Kanpur

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.2. This river \_\_\_\_\_ flows through Bastar.**

- (a) Ganga                      (b) Indus                      (c) Indrawati                      (d) None of these

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.3. Java was a \_\_\_\_\_ colony.**

- (a) French                      (b) English                      (c) Dutch                      (d) None of these

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.4. Sarnas are \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (a) Sacred groves                      (b) Forests                      (c) Grasslands                      (d) None of these

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.5. The Forest Act meant severe hardship for the villagers across the country, because :**

- (a) Cutting wood, grazing cattle, collecting fruits, roots, hunting and fishing became illegal  
 (b) People were forced to steal and if caught, they had to pay bribes to the forest guards  
 (c) Women who collected firewood were harassed by guards  
 (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.6. Shifting cultivation was banned by the Government in India because :**

- (a) European foresters regarded this practice as harmful for the forests  
 (b) When a forest was burnt there was the danger of flames spreading and burning valuable timber

- (c) It also made it harder for the government to calculate taxes
- (d) All the above

Ans. (d)

**Q.7. How did the American writer Richard Harding justify the conquest of Honduras in Central America?**

- (a) The Central Americans were semi-barbarians, who failed to understand the value of their land
- (b) Uncultivated land had to be taken over by the colonisers and improved
- (c) Land could not be allowed to remain unimproved with its original owner
- (d) All the above

Ans. (d)

**Q.8. Why does the story of the forests and people of Bastar not end with the rebellion of 1910?**

- (a) Practice of keeping people out of the forests and reserving them for industrial use continued even after Independence
- (b) The World Bank proposed that 4,600 hectares of national *sal* forest should be replaced by tropical pine for paper industry. It was scrapped later.
- (c) Both (a) and (b)
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (c)

**Q.9. Which of the following problems were faced by the people of Bastar under the colonial government?**

- (a) People of villages were displaced without any notice of compensation
- (b) Villagers suffered from increased rents, frequent demands for free labour and goods by colonial officials
- (c) Terrible famines in 1899-1900, 1907 and 1908
- (d) All the above

Ans. (d)

**Q.10. About how much percentage of the world's total forest area was cleared between 1700 and 1995?**

- (a) 9%
- (b) 9.3%
- (c) 20.5%
- (d) 30%

Ans. (b)

**Q.11. How much of India's landmass was under cultivation in 1600?**

- (a) One-sixth
- (b) One-third
- (c) Two-third
- (d) Half

Ans. (a)

**Q.12. What was the 'scorched earth' policy followed by the Dutch in Java during the First and the Second World Wars?**

- (a) Dutch weapons were destroyed on the land of Java
- (b) The earth was exploited further to grow more trees
- (c) Huge piles of giant teak logs were burnt and saw mills destroyed
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (c)

**Q.13. What was the policy followed by the British in India towards forests during the First and the Second World Wars?**

- (a) The forest department cut trees freely to meet British war needs
- (b) Cutting of trees was strictly prohibited for everyone, including the British
- (c) More and more trees were planted to give employment to Indians
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.14. How have some of the dense forests survived across India from Mizoram to Kerala?**

- (a) Villagers have protected them in sacred groves
- (b) Some villagers have been patrolling their own forests
- (c) By strict patrolling of forest officers
- (d) Both (a) and (b)

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.15. Out of three categories, which forests were regarded as the best?**

- (a) Reserved forests
- (b) Protected forests
- (c) Village forests
- (d) Both (a) and (b)

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.16. The new forest laws changed the lives of forest dwellers in yet another way. What was it?**

- (a) The forest laws prohibited people from hunting animals
- (b) The people could not build houses in the forest areas
- (c) Women were not allowed to work in the forest areas
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.17. Large areas of natural forests were also cleared to make way for which of these?**

- (a) Tea plantations
- (b) Coffee plantations
- (c) Rubber plantations
- (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.18. During the colonial period, the British directly encouraged the production of which of these crops?**

- (a) Jute
- (b) Sugar and wheat
- (c) Cotton
- (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.19. Which of these trade regulations in colonial India had serious effects on pastoralist and nomadic communities?**

- (a) Many communities became slave labours in tea and coffee plantations
- (b) Some of them were called criminal tribes
- (c) Grazing and hunting were restricted and many communities lost their livelihood
- (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.20. Why did the cultivated area in India rise between 1880 and 1920?**

- (a) The British directly encouraged the production of commercial crops like jute, sugarcane, wheat and cotton
- (b) Forests were considered to be wilderness. They had to be cultivated to yield agricultural products and revenue

- (c) The growing urban populations in Europe needed more crops and more raw materials for industry
- (d) All the above

**Ans. (d)**

**Q.21. The British believed that by killing dangerous animals, the British would civilise India. What did they do to encourage these killings?**

- (a) They gave rewards for killing tigers, wolves and other large animals
- (b) Over 80,000 tigers, 150,000 leopards and 200,000 wolves were killed during 1875-1925 alone
- (c) Gradually the tiger came to be seen as a sporting trophy
- (d) All the above

**Ans. (d)**

**Q.22. Which of the following problems were faced by the tribal communities from Assam, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh etc?**

- (a) Stopping of 'shifting cultivation' had left them without a source of earning
- (b) In tea plantations their wages were low and conditions of work were very bad
- (c) They could not return easily to their home villages from where they had been recruited
- (d) All the above

**Ans. (d)**

**Q.23. Where is Bastar located?**

- (a) Southernmost part of Chhattisgarh
- (b) In central Jharkhand region
- (c) In Andhra Pradesh
- (d) None of the above

**Ans. (a)**

**Q.24. What were 'forest villages'?**

- (a) 'Reserved forests' where some villagers were allowed to stay
- (b) Forests which were cut down to make new villages
- (c) Villages where forests were to be grown
- (d) None of the above

**Ans. (a)**

**Q.25. Who was Gunda Dhur?**

- (a) A rebel of Java
- (b) First Inspector General
- (c) A leader of Santhal rebellion
- (d) A leader of Dhurwa tribe

**Ans. (d)**

**Q.26. What was the result of the rebellion by the Dhurwas?**

- (a) The British sent troops to suppress the rebellion
- (b) Work on reservation was temporarily suspended
- (c) Area to be reserved was reduced to roughly half of that planned before 1910
- (d) All the above

**Ans. (d)**

**Q.27. Who were the colonial power in Indonesia?**

- (a) British
- (b) Dutch
- (c) French
- (d) Portuguese

**Ans. (b)**



**Q.28. Which place is now famous as a rice-producing island in Indonesia?**

- (a) Java (b) Sumatra (c) Borneo (d) Kalimantan

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.29. Where did the Dutch start forest management in Indonesia?**

- (a) Java (b) Sumatra (c) Bali (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.30. Who were 'Kalangs' of Java?**

- (a) Dynasty of rulers (b) Skilled forest cutters and shifting cultivators  
(c) A community of moneylenders (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.31. The Kalangs resisted the Dutch in**

- (a) 1700 (b) 1750 (c) 1770 (d) 1800

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.32. According to the forest laws enacted by the Dutch in Java,**

- (a) villagers' access to forest was restricted  
(b) wood could be cut only for specified purposes like making river boats or constructing houses  
(c) villagers were punished for grazing cattle  
(d) all the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.33. What was the system of 'blandongdiensten'?**

- (a) A system of education  
(b) Industrialisation  
(c) First imposition of rent on land and then exemption  
(d) None of the above

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.34. What did Surontiko Samin of Randublatung village, a teak forest village, begin questioning?**

- (a) The foreign policy of the Dutch (b) State ownership of the forest  
(c) The export policy of the Dutch (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.35. What was the policy followed by the British in India towards forests during the First and the Second World Wars?**

- (a) The forest department cut trees freely to meet British war needs  
(b) Cutting of trees was strictly prohibited for everyone, including the British  
(c) More and more trees were planted to give employment to Indians  
(d) None of the above

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.36. What is the goal of governments across Asia and Africa since the 1980s?**

- (a) Conservation of forests  
(b) Collection of timber

- (c) Settling people in forest areas
- (d) Destroying old forests and growing new ones

Ans. (a)

**Q.37. Who wrote the book 'The Forests of India' in the year 1923?**

- (a) David Spurr
- (b) E.P. Stebbing
- (c) Verrier Elvin
- (d) John Middleton

Ans. (b)

**38. Which of the following is not associated with swidden agriculture? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Karacha
- (b) Jhum
- (c) Bewar
- (d) Penda

Ans. (a)

**39. Indian Forest Service was set up in the year: [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) 1865
- (b) 1864
- (c) 1854
- (d) 1884

Ans. (b)

**40. Which of the following was not a tribal community? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Karacha
- (b) Jhum
- (c) Korava
- (d) Yerukula

Ans. (b)

**41. The system of scientific forestry stands for: [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) system whereby the local farmers were allowed to cultivate temporarily within a plantation
- (b) system of cutting old trees and plant new ones
- (c) division of forest into three categories
- (d) disappearance of forests

Ans. (b)

**42. In which year the Bastar rebellion took place? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) 1910
- (b) 1909
- (c) 1911
- (d) 1912

Ans. (a)

**43. In South-East Asia shifting agriculture is known as: [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Chitemene
- (b) Tavy
- (c) Lading
- (d) Milpa

Ans. (c)

**44. The Gond forest community belongs to which of the following? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Chhattisgarh
- (b) Jharkhand
- (c) Jammu and Kashmir
- (d) Gujarat

Ans. (a)

**45. Forests consisting of which type of trees were preferred by the Forest Department? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Forests having trees which provided fuel, fodder and leaves
- (b) Forests having soft wood
- (c) Forests having trees suitable for building ships and railways

Ans. (c)

**46. Which of the following term is not associated with shifting agriculture in India? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Penda
- (b) Bewar
- (c) Khandad
- (d) Lading

Ans. (d)

- 47. Which of the following is a community of skilled forest cutters? [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Maasais of Africa (b) Mundas of Chotanagpur  
 (c) Gonds of Orissa (d) Kalangs of Java  
**Ans. (d)**
- 48. Why did the government decide to ban shifting cultivation? [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) To grow trees for railway timber  
 (b) When a forest was burnt, there was the danger of destroying valuable timber  
 (c) Difficulties for the government to calculate taxes  
 (d) All the above reasons  
**Ans. (b)**
- 49. Wooden planks laid across railway tracks to hold these tracks in a position are called: [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Beams (b) Sleepers (c) Rail fasteners (d) None of these  
**Ans. (b)**
- 50. Which of the following was the most essential for the colonial trade and movement of goods? [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Roadways (b) Railways (c) Airways (d) Riverways  
**Ans. (b)**
- 51. Which of the following is a commercial crop? [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Rice (b) Wheat (c) Cotton (d) Corn  
**Ans. (c)**
- 52. Colonial rulers considered forests as unproductive because: [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) the forests were not fit for habitation (b) forest had wild grown trees only  
 (c) forest did not yield revenue to enhance income of the state  
 (d) forests were full of wild animals  
**Ans. (c)**
- 53. Who were the colonial power in Indonesia? [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) British (b) Dutch (c) French (d) Portuguese  
**Ans. (b)**
- 54. Java is famous for: [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Rice production (b) Mining industries (c) Huge population (d) Flood and famines  
**Ans. (a)**
- 55. Latex can be collected from which of the following trees? [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Rubber tree (b) Eucalyptus tree (c) Pine tree (d) Deodar tree  
**Ans. (a)**
- 56. Who among the following led the forest revolt in Bastar? [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Siddhu (b) Birsa Munda (c) Kanu (d) Gunda Dhur  
**Ans. (d)**
- 57. Villagers wanted forests to satisfy their following needs: [2011 (T-2)]**  
 (a) Fuel, fodder and shelter (b) Fuel, fodder and fruit  
 (c) Fuel, fodder and cultivation (d) Fuel, fodder and minerals  
**Ans. (b)**

### C. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS [3 MARKS]

**Q.1. What is deforestation? Why is it considered harmful?**

**Ans.** The disappearance of forests is referred to as deforestation. Forests are cleared for industrial uses, cultivation, pastures and fuel wood. Clearing of forests is harmful as forests give us many things like paper, wood that makes our desks, tables, doors and windows, dyes that colour our clothes, spices in our food, gum, honey, coffee, tea and rubber. They are the home of animals and birds. Forests check soil erosion and denudation, sand dunes. They preserve our ecological diversity and life support systems.

**Q.2. Describe scientific forestry.**

**Ans.** In scientific forestry, natural forests which had lots of different types of trees were cut down. In their place one type of tree was planted in straight rows. This is called a plantation. Forest officials surveyed the forests, estimated the area under different types of trees and made working plans for forest management. They planned how much of the plantation area to cut every year. The area cut was then to be replanted so that it was ready to be cut again in some years.

**Q.3. Mention the various uses of forests. (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Forests give us a mixture of things to satisfy our different needs — fuel, fodder, leaves, trees suitable for building ships or railways, trees that can provide hard wood. Forest products like roots, fruits, tubers, herbs are used for medicinal purposes, wood for agricultural implements like yokes, ploughs etc. Forests provide shelter to animals and birds. They also add moisture to atmosphere. Rainfall is trapped in forest lands.

**Q.4. What is shifting agriculture? Why was it regarded as harmful by the British? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Shifting agriculture or swidden agriculture is a traditional agricultural practice in many parts of Asia, Africa and South America. It has many local names such as 'lading' in South-East Asia, 'milpa' in central America, 'chitemene' or 'tavy' in Africa, 'chena' in Sri Lanka, *dhya*, *penda*, *bewar*, *nevad*, *jhum*, *podu*, *khandad* and *kumri* in India.

In shifting cultivation, parts of a forest are cut and burnt in rotation, seeds are sown in ashes after the first monsoon rains and the crop is harvested by October-November. Such plots are cultivated for a couple of years and then left fallow for 12 to 18 years for the forest to grow back.

It was regarded as harmful by the British for the forests. They felt that land which was used for cultivation every few years could not grow trees for railway timber. When the forest was burnt there was the danger of the flames spreading and burning valuable timber.

**Q.5. Explain why did the Dutch adopt the 'scorched earth policy' during the war. (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** The First World War and Second World War had a major impact on forests. In India, working places were abandoned and trees were cut freely to meet British demand for war needs.

In Java, just before the Japanese occupied the region, the Dutch followed the 'scorched earth policy' destroying saw mills, burning huge piles of giant teak logs so that they could not fall into Japanese hands.

**Q.6. How did the forest rules affect cultivation? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** One of the major impacts of European colonialism was on the practice of shifting cultivation or swidden cultivation.

In shifting cultivation, a clearing is made in the forest, usually on the slopes of the hills. After the trees are cut, they are burnt to provide ashes. The seeds are then scattered in the area, and left to be irrigated by the rain.

Shifting cultivation was harmful for forests and the land both. It also made it harder for the government to calculate taxes. Therefore, the government decided to ban shifting cultivation. As a result many communities were forcibly displaced.

**Q.7. Why did land under cultivation increase during colonial rule? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** During the British domination of India, the British encouraged the cultivation of cash crops such as jute, indigo, cotton, etc. Food crops were also required to be grown for food. Both things were important. Secondly, the forests were considered unproductive by the British government and hence large areas of forests were cleared for agriculture. Now this forest land could be cultivated to enhance the income of this state.

**Q.8. What did Dietrich Brandis suggest for the improvement of forests in India?**

**Ans.** Dietrich Brandis suggested that a proper system had to be followed. Felling of trees and grazing land had to be protected. Rules about use of forests should be made. Anyone who broke rules needed to be punished. Brandis set up in 1864 the Indian Forest Service. He also helped to formulate the Indian Forest Act of 1865.

**Q.9. What was taught at the Imperial Forest Research Institute? How was this system carried out?**

**Ans.** Scientific forestry was taught at the Imperial Forest Research Institute. In this system, natural forests which had a variety of trees were cut down and, instead, one type of tree was planted. Appointed forest officials managed these forests. They planned and assessed how much of the planted area had to be cut down and how much had to be replanted.

**Q.10. Differentiate between the customary practice of hunting and hunting as a sport in India, after the Forest Acts were passed.**

**Ans.** Before the laws were passed, people who depended on forests hunted birds and small animals for food. After the laws were passed, hunting of big game became a sport. Under colonial rule the scale of hunting increased so much that many species became extinct. Rewards were given for killing tigers, wolves, etc., on the pretext that they were a threat to human life. Certain areas of the forests were reserved for hunting.

**Q.11. With the help of an example, show how new opportunities of work did not always mean improved condition of the people during colonial times.**

**Ans.** New opportunities in Assam was on tea estates. Certain forest communities such as the Santhals and Oraons from Jharkhand and Gonds from Chhattisgarh had lost their means of livelihood. They were recruited to work on tea plantations. Their condition was miserable in these tea plantations. They were given a low salary and the work conditions were severe. They were in a dilemma as they could not even return back to their villages as there was no support for them there.

**Q.12. How did the spread of railways from the 1850s in India, create a new demand for timber?**

**OR**

**Why was the railway network spread by the British in India from 1850s onwards? Why was there a need for forest timber spread for railways? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Wood was required as fuel to run locomotives and to lay railway lines. Sleepers were essential

to hold the tracks together. From the 1860s, the railway network expanded rapidly. The length of the railway tracks increased tremendously. As railway tracks increased, the need of timber also increased. More and more trees were felled. Contracts were given to individuals to supply timber. These contractors cut down trees indiscriminately. Railway tracks were soon devoid of forests.

**Q.13. Why were the people of Bastar dissatisfied with the forest policies of the British?**

**(CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** The people of Bastar were dissatisfied because of the following —

- 2/3 of forest land being declared reserved area
- ban on shifting cultivation, hunting and gathering of forest products
- people of many villages were displaced without notice or compensation
- increased rent and frequent demand of free labour and goods by colonial officials
- the terrible famines.

**Q.14. Who were the Kalangs? Why did they attack the Dutch forts at Joana?**

**Ans.** The Kalangs were a community of Java. They were skilled forests cutters and shifting cultivators. They were so valuable that teak could not be harvested without them, nor could kings build their palaces. When the Mataram Kingdom of Java split, the families of the Kalang community were divided equally between the two kingdoms.

When the Dutch colonised Java they forced the Kalangs to work under them. The Kalangs reacted by attacking the Dutch fort at Joana.

**Q.15. What were the consequences of the forest laws which the Dutch enacted in Java?**

**Ans.** These laws restricted villagers' access to forests. After these Acts were imposed, wood could only be cut for specified purposes such as making river boats or constructing houses and that too only from specific forests and under close supervision. Those villagers who grazed cattle in young stands, transported wood without permit or travelled on forest lands with horse carts or cattle were punished.

**Q.16. Discuss the link between war and deforestation.**

**OR**

**Give three ways in which forests in India and Java were affected by the first and second world wars.**

**(CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Both the world wars had a major impact on the forests. In India, the forest department cut the forests indiscriminately to meet the needs of the war. In Java, the Dutch followed the 'scorched earth' policy. Before the Japanese occupied this region, the Dutch destroyed all the saw mills, burnt huge piles of giant teak logs so that they did not fall into Japanese hands. When the Japanese occupied this area they used the forests recklessly. Forest villagers were forced to cut down forests. Many villagers expanded cultivation during this time.

**Q.17. Mention any three causes of deforestation in India under the colonial rule.**

- Ans.** (i) In the colonial period, cultivation expanded rapidly for various reasons. First the British encouraged the production of commercial crops like jute, sugar, wheat and cotton. The demand for these crops increased in the 19th century and forests were cleared to meet the foodgrains and raw materials needed for industrial growth in Europe.
- (ii) The spread of railways from 1850 created a new demand. To run locomotives, wood was needed as fuel and to lay railway lines sleepers were necessary to hold the tracks together. The government gave out contracts to individuals and the contractors began cutting the trees rapidly. Forests around the tracks disappeared.

(iii) Large areas of natural forests were cleared for tea, coffee and rubber plantations. Forests were cleared for them.

**Q.18. What were the three categories of the forest that were divided after the amendment of Forest Act in 1878 in India?**

**Ans.** The three categories of forests were : (i) reserved, (ii) protected and (iii) village forests. The best forests were called "reserved forests". Villagers could not take anything from these forests, even for their own use. For house building or fuels they could take wood from protected or village forests.

**Q.19. Discuss in brief the Saminist movement of Indonesia. (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Around 1890, Surontiko Samin of Randublatung village challenged state ownership of forests. He argued that the state had not created the wind, water, earth and wood, so it could not own it. A widespread movement started soon and by 1907, 3000 families were following Samin's ideas. Some refused to pay taxes, fines or perform labour and some lay down on their land when the Dutch came to survey it.

**Q.20. What was the impact of regulation of trade in forest products by the British government in India?**

**Ans.** Trade in forest products was completely regulated by the government. Grazing and hunting by local people were restricted. In the process many nomadic and pastoralist communities like the Korava, Caracha and Yorukula of the Madras Presidency lost their livelihoods. Some of them began to be called "criminal tribes" and were forced to work in factories, mines, plantations. In Assam, both men and women from forest communities like the Santhals and Oraons from Jharkhand, and Gonds from Chhattisgarh were forced to work on tea plantations on low wages and very bad conditions of work.

**Q.21. Why was the Bastar rebellion organised?**

**Ans.** Refer to Question 3, Long Answer Type Questions.

**Q.22. Name one great leader of a forest community who led a rebellion against the British. Give four examples to show that the people of Bastar participated whole-heartedly in the rebellion against the British policy of reservation of forests.**

**Ans.** Gunda Dhur, from village Nethanar, was an important leader.

Refer to Question 3, Long Answer Type Questions.

**Q.23. Write any four examples to show that villagers used forests in a variety of ways. How did the Forest Act of 1878 affect the villagers in India?**

**Ans.** Refer to Question 2, Long Answer Type Questions.

**Q.24. Name two communities that live in Bastar. What are some of the beliefs regarding nature of the communities of Bastar?**

**Ans.** Refer to Question 9, Long Answer Type Questions.

**Q.25. In what ways did the development of railways and shipbuilding during colonial rule affect the forests in India?**

**Ans.** Refer to Question 3(a), NCERT Text Book Questions.

#### D. LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS [4 MARKS]

**Q.1. Discuss the rise of commercial forestry under the colonial governments.**

**Ans.** Commercial forestry became important during the British rule. By the early nineteenth century

oak forests in England were disappearing. This created a problem of shortage of timber supply for the Navy.

How could English ships be built without a regular supply of strong and durable timber?

How could imperial power be protected and maintained without ships?

Because of the factors given above, before 1856 the commercial forestry was considered important in India. By the 1820s, search parties were sent to explore the forest resources of India. These parties gave them green signal for commercial forestry in India.

Within a decade trees were being felled on a massive scale and large quantities of timber were being exported from India.

The spread of railway from the 1850s created a new demand. In India, the colonial government felt that railways were essential for effective internal administration, for colonial trade, for the quick movement of imperial troops.

To run locomotives wood was needed as fuel, and to lay railway lines, sleepers were essential to hold the track together. The government gave out contracts to individuals to supply the required quantities. These contractors began cutting trees indiscriminately.

**Q.2. How did the new forest laws affect the forest dwellers? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Foresters and villagers had very different ideas of what a good forest should look like. Villagers wanted forests with a mixture of species to satisfy different needs — fuel, fodder, leaves. The forest department wanted trees which were suitable for building ships or railways. They needed trees that could provide hard wood and were tall and straight. So particular species like *teak* and *sal* were promoted and others were cut. The new forest laws meant severe hardship for villagers across the country. After the Act (Forest Act), all their everyday practices, cutting wood for their houses, grazing their cattle, collecting fruits and roots, hunting and fishing became illegal. 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. Women who collected fuel wood were especially worried. It was also common for police constables and forest guards to harass people by demanding free food from them.

**Q.3. “The introduction of extremely exploitatives and oppressive policies proved to be a disaster.” With reference to Bastar — (CBSE 2010)**

**(a) What were these policies?**

**(b) What were the consequences of these policies?**

**Ans. (a)** The colonial government proposed to reserve two-thirds of the forest in 1905 and stop shifting cultivation, hunting and collection of forest produce. The people of Bastar were very worried. Some villages were allowed to remain on in the reserved forests on the condition that they worked free for the forest department in cutting and transporting trees and protecting the forests from fires. Subsequently these came to be known as forest villages. People of other villages were displaced without any notice or compensation. For long the villagers had been suffering from increased land rents and frequent demands for free labour and goods by colonial officials. Then came the terrible famines in 1899-1900 and again in 1907-1908. Reservations proved to be the last straw.

**(b)** People began to gather and discuss these issues in their village councils, in bazars and at festivals or wherever the headmen and priests of several villages were assembled. The initiative was taken by the Dhruvas of the Kanger forest, where reservation first took place. Although there was no single leader, many people speak of Gunda Dhur from village



Nethanar as an important figure in the movement in 1910 mango boughs, a limp of earth, chillies and arrows, began circulating between villages. These were actually messages inviting villagers to rebel against the British.

Every village contributed something to the rebellion expenses. Bazaars were looted, the houses of officials and traders, schools and police stations were burnt and robbed and grain redistributed.

The British sent troops to suppress the rebellion. The adivasi leaders tried to negotiate, but the British surrounded their camps and fired upon them. After that they marched through the villages, flogging and punishing those who had taken part in the rebellion.

It took three months for the British to regain control. However, they never managed to capture Gunda Dhur. In a major victory for the rebels, work on reservation was temporarily suspended and the area to be reserved was reduced to roughly that planned before 1910.

**Q.4. How did the transformation in the forest management during the colonial period affect the following?**

**(a) Pastoral communities      (b) Shifting cultivators**

**Ans.** The British required Indian forests in order to build ships and for railways. The British were worried that the use of forest by local people and the reckless felling of trees by traders would destroy forest. Therefore the colonial government decided to invite a German expert Dietrich Brandis for advice and made him the first Inspector General of Forests in India.

Dietrich Brandis realised that a proper system had to be introduced to manage the forests and people had to be trained in the science of conservation. Rules about the use of forest resources had to be framed. Felling of trees and grazing had to be restricted so that forests in India could be preserved for timber production.

British management decided that anybody who cut trees without following the system had to be punished.

Dietrich Brandis set up the Indian Forest Service in 1864 and helped formulate the Indian Forest Act of 1865. The Imperial Forest Research Institute was set up at Dehradun in 1906. The system they taught here was scientific forestry.

The changes in forest management in the colonial period affected the following groups of people.

**(a) Pastoral communities :** Pastoral communities were affected by the new forest laws. Before these laws came into force, the people of pastoral as well as nomadic community had survived by hunting deer, partridges and a variety of small animals. This customary practice was prohibited by the forest laws. Those who were caught hunting were now punished for poaching. Some of them began to be called criminal tribes and were forced to work in factories, mines and plantations under government supervision.

**(b) Shifting cultivators :** One of the major impacts of European colonialism was on the practice of shifting cultivation or swidden agriculture. This is a traditional agricultural practice in several parts of Asia, Africa and South America.

European foresters regarded the practice of shifting cultivation as harmful for the forests. They felt that land which was used for cultivation every few years could not grow trees for railway timber. When a forest was burnt, there was the added danger of the flames spreading and burning valuable timber.

Shifting cultivation also made it harder for the British government to calculate taxes. So the colonial government decided to ban shifting cultivation. As a result, shifting cultivators

were forcibly displaced from their homes in the forests. Some had to change occupations, while some resisted through large and small rebellions.

**Q.5. How did the following contribute towards the decline of forest cover in India between 1880-1920? (CBSE 2010)**

- (a) **Railways and shipbuilding**
- (b) **Commercial farming**

**Ans. (a) (1) Railways :** The spread of railways from 1850s created a new demand. Railways were essential for successful colonial control, administration, trade and movement of troops. Thus to run locomotives, (a) wood was needed as fuel (b) and to lay railway lines as sleepers were essential to hold tracks together. As the railway tracks spread throughout India, larger and larger number of trees were felled. Forests around the railway tracks started disappearing fast.

**(2) Shipbuilding :** UK had the largest colonial empire in the world. Shortage of oak forests created a great timber problem for the shipbuilding of England. For the Royal Navy, large wooden boats, ships, courtyards for shipping etc., trees from Indian forests were being felled on massive scale from the 1820s or 1830s to export large quantities of timber from India. Thus the forest cover of the subcontinent declined rapidly.

**(b) Commercial Farming :** Large areas of natural forest were also cleared to make space for the plantations or commercial farming. Jute, rubber, indigo, tobacco etc. were the commercial crops that were planted to meet Britain's growing need for these commodities. The British colonial government took over the forests and gave of a vast area and exported it to Europe. Large areas of forests were cleared on the hilly slopes to plant tea or coffee. This also contributed to the decline of the forest cover in India.

**Q.6. How was colonial management of forests in Bastar similar to that of Java? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** The colonial government imposed new forest laws according to which two-thirds of the forests were reserved. Shifting cultivation, hunting and collection of forest produce was banned. Most people in forest villages were displaced without notice or compensation. In the same way, when the Dutch gained control over the forests in Java, they enacted forest laws, restricting villagers' access to forests. Now wood could only be cut for specific purposes and from specific forests under close supervision. Villagers were punished for grazing cattle, transporting wood without a permit or travelling on forest road with horse-carts or cattle. This was the similarity between the British (in Bastar) and Dutch (in Java) management of forests.

**Q.7. What new trends and developments have affected the forestry of today?**

**Ans.** Since the 1980s governments across Asia and Africa have begun to see that scientific forestry and the policy of keeping forest communities away from forests has resulted in many conflicts. Conservation of forests rather than collecting timber has become a more important goal. The government has realised/recognised that in order to meet this goal, the people who live near the forests must be involved.

In many cases, across India, from Mizoram to Kerala, dense forests have survived only because villagers protected them in sacred groves known as sarnas, devarakudu, kau, rai etc. 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 today are thinking of different forms of forest management.

**Q.8. What is shifting cultivation? Why did the European foresters regard this practice as harmful for the forests? (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** In shifting agriculture certain parts of the forest are selected, cut and burnt. This is done in rotation. Then seeds are sown in the ashes after the monsoon. The crop is ready to be harvested by October-November. This cultivation is carried on for two to three years. After this, the land is left fallow for about 12 to 18 years. This allows the forest to grow back again. Cultivators grow different crops on this land. It varies from region to region. In central India and Africa, it could be millets, in Latin America, maize and beans and in Brazil, manioc.

This practice of shifting agriculture was considered by European foresters as harmful.

They were of the opinion that any land that was cultivated in this manner could not produce trees which would yield timber for railways.

They also argued that burning of forests was a dangerous activity. The flames could spread and burn valuable timber.

In addition, the government found that calculation of tax was a problem with shifting agriculture as the cultivators did not stay on the same piece of land for more than three years. The government, hence, decided to ban shifting agriculture. Many people lost their means of livelihood and were displaced from their homes.

**Q.9. Where is Bastar located? Discuss its history and its people. (CBSE 2010)**

**Ans.** Bastar is situated in the southern part of Chhattisgarh and borders Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. The river Indrawati flows from east to west across Bastar. The central part of Bastar is a plateau. To the north of this plateau is the Chhattisgarh plain and to its south is the Godavari plain. The people of Bastar believe that each village was bestowed land by the earth and hence they offer something in return during agricultural celebrations. Apart from the earth the people of Bastar show reverence to the spirits of rivers, forests and the mountains.

Different communities such as Maria and Muria Gonds, Dhurwas, Bhatras and Halbas practise common customs and beliefs but speak different dialects. Each village is well aware of its boundaries. They look after and preserve their natural resources. There exists a give and take relationship among the communities. If a village wants some forest produce from another village a small price is paid before taking it. This price is called 'dhand' or 'man' or 'devsari'. Villagers engage watchmen to look after their forests for a price. This price is collected from all the families. There is a large annual gathering — a big hunt where the headmen of all the villages in a 'pargana' (a group of villages) meet and discuss matters that concern them.

**Q.10. Discuss the new developments in forestry after the 1980s.**

**Ans.** Since the 1980s the governments of Asia and Africa have begun to see that scientific forestry and the policy of keeping forest communities away from the forests has resulted in many conflicts. Conservation and preservation of forests have become the major goal. Collection of timber is a secondary objective. The governments emphasise that in order to conserve and preserve forests the involvement of people is important. These are perfect examples to quote here — across India, from Mizoram to Kerala, dense forests have survived only because villagers protected them in sacred groves known as 'sarnas', 'devarakudu', 'kan', 'rai', etc. Some villagers have been patrolling their own forests, with each household taking it in turns, today are thinking of different forms of forest management.

**Q.11. Why did the people of Bastar rise in revolt against the British? Explain. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** (i) In 1905, the colonial government imposed laws to reserve two-thirds of the forests, stop

shifting cultivation, hunting and collection of forest produce. People of many villages were displaced without any notice or compensation.

- (ii) For long, villagers had been suffering from increased land rents and frequent demands for free labour and goods by colonial officials.
- (iii) The terrible famines in 1899–1900 and again in 1907–1908 made the life of people miserable. They blamed the colonial rule for their sorry plight.
- (iv) The initiative of rebellion was taken by the Dhurwas of the Kanger forest, where reservation first took place. Gunda Dhur was an important leader of the rebellion.

**Q.12. How forest of Java were affected by Dutch colonialists? Describe how farms for rice cultivation in Java expanded? [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** The Dutch started forest management at Java in Indonesia. Like the British, they wanted timber to build ships. The Dutch began to gain control over the forests in the 18th century. In 1770, the Kalangs resisted by attacking a Dutch fort at Joana, but the uprising was suppressed. The Dutch enacted forest laws in Java in the 19th century, restricting villagers' access to forests. Now wood could only be cut for specified purposes like making river boats or constructing houses, and only from specific forests under close supervision. Villagers were punished for grazing cattle in young stands, transporting wood without a permit, or travelling on forest roads with horse carts or cattle. The Dutch first imposed rents on land being cultivated in the forest and then exempted some villages from these rents if they worked collectively to provide free labour and buffaloes for cutting and transporting timber. This was called as the 'blandongdiensten' system. Later on, instead of rent exemption, forest villagers were given small wages, but their right to cultivate forest land was restricted.

Java is now famous as a rice-producing island in Indonesia. After Indonesia gain freedom from colonial rule rice farms were developed on a large scale.

**Q.13. "A growing population in England was responsible for deforestation in India." Justify the statement. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** The British directly encouraged the production of crops like jute, sugarcane, wheat and cotton. The demand for these crops increased in the 19th century in England where food grains were needed to feed the growing urban population. The colonial state thought that forests were unproductive. Forests had to be brought under cultivation so that the land could yield agricultural products and revenue, and enhance the income of the state. Thus, between 1880–1992, cultivated area rose by 6.7 million hectares.

**Q.14. Describe four provisions of the Forest Act of 1878. [2011 (T-2)]**

- Ans.**
- (i) The Forest Act of 1878 divided forests into three categories : reserved, protected and village forests.
  - (ii) The best forests were called 'reserved forests'.
  - (iii) Villagers could not take anything from reserved forests, even for their own use.
  - (iv) For house building or fuel, they could take wood from protected or village forests.

**Q.15. Explain how did the First World War and the Second World War have a major impact on forests? [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** The two world wars had a major impact on forests. In India, working plans were given up, and the forest department cut trees freely to meet the British war needs. In Java, the Dutch followed 'a scorched earth' policy, destroying saw mills, and burning huge piles of giant teak logs so that they would not fall into Japanese hands. The Japanese exploited the forests recklessly for their

own war industries, forcing forest villagers to cut down forests. Many villagers in Indonesia used this opportunity to expand cultivation in the forest. After the war, it was difficult for Indonesian authorities to get this land back.

**Q.16. Who was appointed as the first Inspector General of Forests in India? Explain any three reforms introduced by him. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** A German forest expert, Dietrich Brandis, was made the first Inspector General of Forests in India.

- (i) Brandis introduced a proper system to manage the forests and people had to be trained in the science of conservation. This system needed legal sanction and so rules about the use of forests had to be framed.
- (ii) Felling of trees and grazing had to be restricted so that forests could be preserved for timber production. Trespassers had to be punished.
- (iii) Brandis set up the Indian Forest Service in 1864 and helped formulate the Indian Forest Act of 1865. The Imperial Forest Research Institute was set up at Dehradun in 1906. The system they taught here was called 'scientific forestry'.

**Q.17. How did commercial farming led to a decline in forest cover during colonial period? [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** Natural forests which had lots of different types of trees were cut down. In their place, one type of tree was planted in straight rows. Forest officials surveyed the forests, estimated the area under different types of trees and made working plans for forest management. They planned how much of the plantation area to cut every year. The area cut was then to be replanted so that it was ready to be cut again in some years. Natural forest cover was thus destroyed on a large scale.

**Q.18. How did the local people look after and protect the forests in Bastar region? [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** The people of Bastar showed respect to the spirits of the river, the forest and the mountain. Since each village knew its boundary the local people looked after all the natural resources within their boundary. If the people from a village wanted to take some wood from forests of another village, they paid a small fee called 'devsari,' 'dand' or 'man' in exchange. Some villagers also protected their forests by engaging watchmen and each household contributed some grain to pay them. Every year there was one big hunt where the headman of villages in a 'pargana' met and discussed issues of concern, including forests.

## II. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### A. PROJECT

**Topic Covered** : Rebellion in the forest.

**Objective** : To bring out the main features of the Bastar rebellion in 1910.

**Skills Developed** : An insight into problems of forest tribes.

**Time Required** : 3 days

**Method** : (a) Read more about Bastar rebellion in 1910.

(b) Collect information about Maoist insurgency in Bastar in contemporary era.

- (c) Focus on causes of Bastar rebellion, its genesis, current status of Bastar insurgency.
- (d) Provide your own solution to the Bastar insurgency which is continuing even today.

## B. ACTIVITIES

- (1) Have there been changes in forest areas where you live? Find out what these changes are and why they have happened?

**Ans.** There have been many changes in forest areas where I live. I talked to my grandfather and came to know that most of the land that I see today as constructed area was not so always. He tells me that the hill slopes were green and covered with forests. There were lush green trees all around. One could walk through them without the sun troubling you. There was no need for fans inside houses and the windows were enough to cool you during a hot summer day. The chirping of birds and the rustling of leaves were sounds that you heard all around. But today, the green trees have been replaced by cement structures — hotels, houses, shopping areas, parking lots, etc. The green area is decreasing and the cemented area is increasing. The hillslopes have become bare and barren. The forest cover has reduced tremendously.

This decrease in green cover has happened because of a number of reasons. I live in Nainital and feel that this change has occurred due to population rise and tourism. People are increasing in number and need to be accommodated. Secondly, tourism is gaining importance in Nainital. Hotels, shopping areas and parking lots are being made for the tourists. All these facilities require land and this can be acquired only by clearing the forest area. In addition, approach roads need to be constructed which again requires clearing of new forest land.

All these factors have necessitated the clearing of forests in areas where I live.

- (2) Write a dialogue between a colonial forester and an Adivasi discussing the issue of hunting in the forest.

**Ans.**

Adivasi	—	Namaste, Sahib.
Colonial Forester	—	What are you doing here?
Adivasi	—	Nothing, sir.
Colonial Forester	—	What do you mean nothing? I'm sure you have been hunting here. Come on, show me what you have hunted!
Adivasi	—	Sahib, you can see that I have not hunted. But tell me why can't I hunt in this forest!
Colonial Forester	—	The forests are no longer your hunting grounds. If you hunt here you will be punished.
Adivasi	—	But Sahib, this hunting has been a customary practice since ancient days. How can you stop it?
Colonial Forester	—	It is no longer so now. You are prohibited by forest laws to do so.
Adivasi	—	But the English Sahib hunts in the forests.

Colonial Forester — Yes! he can do it. He is a British. He has come to civilise you all. The wild animals are a sign of a primitive and savage society. These animals must be killed by the white man to help you to become civilised.

### C. MAKING CHARTS

- (1) Make a chart bringing out the similarities between colonial management of the forests in Bastar and in Java.
- (2) Make a chart detailing main features of the following rebellion in forests :
  - (a) Santhal rebellion led by Siddhu and Kanhu
  - (b) Chhotanagpur rebellion led by Birsa Munda
  - (c) Rebellion in Andhra Pradesh led by Alluri Sitaramulu Raju.

### D. ASSIGNMENT

- (1) Read other books related to Birsa Munda and the Chhotanagpur rebellion. Collect pictures and sketches of Birsa Munda and the rebellion.
- (2) Read the following extract and list out the problems faced by the Baigas, a forest community of Central India.

Baigas are a forest community of Central India. In 1892, after their shifting cultivation was stopped, they petitioned to the government :

*'We daily starve, having had no food grain in our possession. The only wealth we possess is our axe. We have no clothes to cover our body with, but we pass cold nights by the fireside. We are now dying for want of food. We cannot go elsewhere. What fault have we done that the government does not take care of us? Prisoners are supplied with ample food in jail. A cultivator of the grass is not deprived of his holding, but the government does not give us our right who have lived here for generations past.*

*Verrier Elwin (1939), cited in Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, This Fissured Land : An Ecological History of India.*

### E. GROUP DISCUSSION

During the colonial era, hunting was the favourite pastime of the British officers and Indian princes. Organise a group discussion in the class on the topic 'Were these people justified in hunting wild animals for the sake of recreation and entertainment?' [Divide the class in groups of ten students. The teacher will conduct the discussion.]