

Forest Society and Colonialism

Source Based Questions

Source 1

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow by choosing the most appropriate option:

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. This system would need legal sanction. Rules about the use of forest resources had to be framed. Felling of trees and grazing had to be restricted so that forests could be preserved for timber production. Anybody who cut trees without following the system had to be punished. So, 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'. Many people now, including ecologists, feel that this system is not scientific at all. 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. After the Forest Act was enacted in 1865, it was amended twice, once in 1878 and then in 1927. The 1878 Act divided forests into three categories: reserved, protected and 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 fuel, they could take wood from protected or village forests.

Q1. What did General Dietrich Brandis realised about forest management?

- a. A proper system had to be introduced to manage the forests.
- b. People had to be trained in the science of conservation.
- c. Rules about the use of forest resources had to be framed.
- d. All of the above

Ans. (d)



Q2. When did Brandis set up the Indian Forest Service?

- a. 1825
- b. 1864
- c. 1865
- d. 1927

Ans. (b)

Q3. How could the forests be preserved for timber production?

- a. By cutting down natural forests having lots of different types of trees.
- b. By restricting the felling of trees and grazing.
- c. By taking wood from protected or village forests.
- d. By making working plans for forest management.

Ans. (b)

Q4. Which forests were called the best according to 1878 Act?

- a. Reserved forests
- b. Protected forests
- c. Village forests
- d. Scientific forests

Ans. (d)

Q5. What was proposed in the system of Scientific Forestry?

- a. Natural forests having different types of trees were cut down and one type of tree was planted in straight rows in their place.
- b. The area under different types of trees was estimated and working plans were made for forest management.
- c. Anybody who cut trees without following the system had to be punished.
- d. The forests had to be divided into three categories- reserved, protected and village forests.

Ans. (d)

Q6. There are two statements marked as Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Read them and choose the correct option:

Assertion (A): The British began extending their control over forests in India after

passing the Forest Act.

Reason (R): There was a growing significance of forests as a source of revenue.

- a. Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true and Reason (R) is the correct explanation of Assertion (A).
- b. Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true, but Reason (R) is not the correct explanation of Assertion (A).
- c. Assertion (A) is true, but Reason (R) is false.
- d. Assertion (A) is false, but Reason (R) is true.

Ans. (b)

Source 2

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

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 many parts of Asia, Africa and South America. It has many local names such as lading in Southeast Asia, milpa in Central America, chitemene or tavy in Africa, and chena in Sri Lanka. In India, dhya, penda, bewar, nevad, jhum, podu, khandad and kumri are some of the local terms for swidden agriculture. In shifting cultivation, parts of the forest are cut and burnt in rotation. Seeds are sown in the 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. A mixture of crops is grown on these plots. In Central India and Africa it could be millets, in Brazil manioc, and in other parts of Latin America maize and beans. European foresters regarded this practice 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.

Q1. What is shifting cultivation?

Ans. Shifting cultivation is a method of farming in which a patch of ground is cultivated for a period of few years until the soil is partly exhausted or overrun by weeds and after which the land is left to natural vegetation while cultivation is carried elsewhere.

Q2. Why did European foresters regard this practice as harmful for forests?

Ans. European foresters regarded this practice as harmful for forests due to the following reasons:



(i) They felt that land which was used for cultivation every few years could not grow trees for railway timber.

(ii) There was also the added danger of the flames spreading and burning valuable timber.

Q3. Name the local terms for swidden agriculture in India.

Ans. The local terms for swidden agriculture in India are Dhya, Penda, Bewar, Nevad, Hum, Podu, Khandad and kumri.

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Source 3

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

In India, the trade in forest products was not new. From the medieval period onwards, we have records of adivasi communities trading elephants and other goods like hides, horns, silk cocoons, ivory, bamboo, spices, fibres, grasses, gums and resins through nomadic communities like the Banjaras. With the coming of the British, however, trade was completely regulated by the government. The British Government gave many large European trading firms the sole right to trade in the forest products of particular areas. Grazing and hunting by local people were restricted. In the process, many pastoralist and nomadic communities like the Korava, Karacha and Yerukula of the Madras Presidency lost their livelihoods. Some of them began to be called 'criminal tribes', and were forced to work instead in factories, mines and plantations, under government supervision.

Q1. Which products were used to be traded by adivasi and nomadic communities during the medieval period?

Ans. During the medieval period, the following products were traded:



(i) **Adivasi Communities:** Elephants.

(ii) **Nomadic Communities:** Hides, horns, silk cocoons, ivory, bamboo, spices, fibres, grasses, gums and resins.

Q2. What was the condition of trade in India during the British rule?

Ans. During the British rule, the trade suffered the following conditions:

(i) It was completely regulated by the government.

(ii) Large European trading firms were given the sole right to trade in the forest products of particular areas.

Q3. Which communities lost their livelihoods with the coming of the British?

Ans. With the coming of the British, pastoralist and nomadic communities such as Korava, Karacha and Yerukula of Madras presidency lost their livelihood

