

Lesson -4- Colonialism, Tribal Societies and Industries

History

Exercises:

A . MCQs

1. C. Birsa 2. D. England 3. D. Tirath Singh 4. A. Lord Dalhousie
5. B. 1846 6. B. 1843

B. Match the following

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. Birsa Munda | C. Leader of Munda rebellion |
| 2. 1856 | e. Santhals were crushed by the British |
| 3. Surchandra | d. Manipuri leader who sought the British help |
| 4. Cotton gin | B. Flying shuttle |
| 5. Lord Dalhousie | a. Reconstruction of the Grand Trunk Road |

C. Write True or False.

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|---------|----------|---------|
| 1. True | 2. False | 3. True |
| 4. True | 5. False | 6. True |

E. Short answers

1. Ballads and folklore which have passed down the generations orally, are the most important source of tribal history. Official documents, such as petitions of individual peasants and tribals ; records of Administrative proceedings; reports and judgements of enquiry commissions; as well as references in gadgets, contemporary newspapers and biographies are major sources.

2. The British commercial policies devastated the Indian economy and created obstacles to

modern industrialisation. It reduced tribals to bonded labourers, resulted in exploitation of natural resources and cause great distress to peasants . Indian handicrafts declined and a vast number of craftsmen had to give up their livelihood and work as landless labourers. Indian wealth was drained from the country and famines broke out.

3. The Khasis resented the coming of outsiders into their territories, including Europeans, British troops, Christian missionaries and Bengali contractors. They were suspicious of British intentions. Finally, when there was a proposal of construction of a road passing through their region, connecting Brahmaputra Valley and Surma Valley, they rose in rebellion fearing that it might pave the way for foreigners to establish their rule over them.

4. Bengal Coal Company was established in 1843. By 1900, over a hundred coal mines in Bengal and Bihar employed lakhs. Tea was grown in Assam, Bengal, South India. Coffee, Cinchona, rubber did well in the plantation industry. The first jute mill was near Kolkata which became the hub with 20 mills. Early 20th century, India became the largest sugar-producer. Tata Iron and Steel Company was established in Bihar in 1911.

5. Birsa Munda was the leader of the revolt of the Munda tribe against the British. He was born in Ulihatu in Ranchi, in Jharkhand. He gained popularity among the masses for advocating the rights of the Mundas as the real proprietors of the soil. He sought to abolish the existence of middlemen. He was captured by the British in 1900 and died soon after in Ranchi jail.

F. Answer the questions in about 80-100 words.

1. Large tracts of tribal lands were taken over by British plantations resulting in tribals becoming landless. Tribals were even forced to abandon their living spaces in reserved forests. They were forced to work on plantations for meagre wages as bonded labourers. The tribal chiefs became subservient to the British, and Christian Missionaries sought to convert the tribes. The British declared forests as state property, restricted the use of forest resources, and stopped tribals from practising shifting agriculture. Money lenders and traders often cheated and exploited the tribals. In such extreme conditions, they rose up in revolt against the British rule.

2. The clash between the tribals and the British was grossly mismatched as the tribal people fought with bows, arrows, axes, and spears, while the British used sophisticated weapons and troops. The Santhal rebellion that used guerrilla tactics was crushed by a brutal military campaign, following which the leaders were all arrested. The Khasis, Kols, Mundas and tribal revolts of Assam and Manipur were also put down by the power of the British force. Only in Odisha, the British entered into a peace settlement with the Khonds to avoid a large-scale revolt. Everywhere else they used brutal force.



3. After the Charter of 1813, East India company's monopoly ended, and British goods exempted from import duties flooded the Indian market . Indian Handloom products lost out in this unequal competition with cheap machine - made goods. The export of raw materials to fulfil the continuous demand from British industries, led to further paucity of Raw materials for Indian industries. The British imposed heavy custom duties on Indian Handicrafts and goods , making them economically unviable.

4. The Mundas inhabited the region around Ranchi . They traditionally enjoyed a preferential rent rate as per the Khundkattidar system. This system was destroyed with the coming of jagirdars and thikadars (contractors) . In the last decade of the 19th Century, as the monsoons failed, the situation became worse. Faced with starvation and epidemics, The Mundas Rose up in rebellion against the British . They were led by Birsa Munda , and later joined in their rebellion by the Kols of the chota Nagpur region . The British defeated the Kols and Mundas through military force in the middle of the 20th Century.

5. The salient features of Indian industrialisation were :

The British were only interested in profits, so Industries were limited to certain types and specific cities . There was no interest in developing heavy or capital Industries such as iron and steel.

Indian industries faced stiff competition and discrimination. Indians found it difficult to obtain loans and licenses due to the government's hostility and it's free trade policy favouring foreigners.

Society became stratified into two distinct classes - capitalists and workers. The demography changed too in the aftermath of a famines and excessive land revenue demands as farmers migrated in masses to cities as workers.

6. The destruction of indigenous Industries is known as deindustrialisation. Before the British , India was one of the world's largest exporters of textiles . Surat , Masulipatnam and Visakhapatnam were some famous trading centres. Dhaka, Broach, Madurai were some centres for fine textiles. The advent of the East India Company destroyed the traditional fabric of the Indian economy. The British drained resources leaving insufficient raw material for Indian industries. The Indian market was flooded with cheap imported goods exempted from import duties . As a result, the Indian handicraft industry declined steadily and many craftsmen had to give up their livelihood for alternative employment.

