

12TH, HISTORY, REVISION NOTES

(4 MARKS) QUESTIONS

1. Why Zamindars defaulted on payments?

Ans. The reasons for this failure were various-

(i) The initial demands of tax were very high, because the company felt that if the demand was fixed for all time to come they would never be able to claim for high shares in the condition of increased income.

(ii) This high demand was imposed in the 1790s, a time when the prices of agricultural produce were depressed, making it difficult for the ryots to pay their dues to the zamindar. If the Zamindar could not collect the rent, how could he pay the company?

(iii) The revenue was invariable, regardless of the harvest, and had to be paid punctually.

(iv) The permanent settlement initially limited the power of the Zamindars to collect rent from the ryot and manage his zamindari.

2. Why did the Santhals revolted against the British rule?

Ans. The Santhals were revolted against the British rule due to following reasons-

(i) The land that Santhals had brought under cultivation was slipping away from their hands.

(ii) The state was levying heavy taxes on the land that the Santhals had cleared, money lenders (dikus) were charging them high rates of interest.

(iii) Moneylenders were taking over the land from Santhals when debts remained unpaid, and Zamindars were asserting control over the Damin – i – koh area.

(iv) By the 1850s, the Santhals felt that the time had come to rebel against Zamindars, money lenders and the colonial state in order to create an ideal world for themselves where they would rule. It was after the Santhal Revolt (1855-56) that the Santhal Pargana was created, carving out 5,500 sq. miles from the districts of Bhagalpur and Birbhum.

3. Discuss about the life of hill folk of Rajmahal hills, Paharia.

Ans. (i) Paharias lived around the Rajmahal hills, subsisting on forest produce and practicing shifting cultivation.

(ii) They cleared patches of forest by cutting bushes and burning the undergrowth on these patches, enriched by the potash from the ash, the Paharias grew a variety of pulses and millets for consumption.

(iii) They scratched the ground lightly with hoes, cultivated the cleared land for few years, then left it fallow so that it could recover its fertility, and moved to a new area.

(iv) From the forests they collected Mahua (a flower) for food, silk cocoons and resin for sale, and wood for charcoal production. The life of the Paharias – as hunters shifting cultivators, food gatherers, charcoal producers, silkworm rearers – was thus intimately connected to the forest.