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Class-8th

(Based on N C E R T pattern)

Date:- 06.09.XX.

History

Tribal societies

1. What problems did shifting cultivators face under British rule?

Answer:

The British were uncomfortable with the shifting cultivators, as they were always moving from one place to another in search of pasture lands. For administrative and economic reasons, the British wanted the shifting cultivators to settle down and become peasant cultivators. The British thought it was easier to control and administer peasant cultivators than shifting cultivators. In addition to this, changes in forest laws had a considerable effect on tribal lives. The British extended their control over all forests and declared that forests were state property. People were not allowed to move freely in these forests, practise jhum cultivation, collect fruits, or hunt animals. Many of the shifting cultivators were therefore forced to move to other areas in search of work and livelihood.

2. How did the powers of tribal chiefs change under colonial rule?

Answer:

- The tribal chiefs enjoyed a certain amount of economic power and had the right to administer and control their territories.

But under the colonial rule, their functions and powers changed to a great extent:

- They were allowed to keep their land titles over a cluster of villages and rent out lands, but they lost much of their administrative power.
- They were forced to follow laws made by the British officials in India.
- They also had to pay tribute to the British.
- They were expected to discipline the tribal groups on behalf of the British government.
- They lost the authority that they had earlier enjoyed among their people and were unable to fulfill their traditional functions.

3. What accounts for the anger of the tribals against the dikus?

Answer:

- The tribals considered the British, moneylenders and traders as 'dikus' which means outsiders. They believed that the dikus were responsible for all their miseries. The reasons for their anger against the dikus were as follows:
- The tribals practiced shifting cultivation but the British forced them to settle down and become the peasant cultivators.
- The traders and the moneylenders came into the forests to buy forest produce and lured them take loans at high interest rates. The tribals once caught into the debt trap remained indebted throughout their lives.

- Under the British rule, the tribal chiefs lost the authority that they had earlier enjoyed among their people and were unable to fulfill their traditional functions.
- The tribals were evacuated from their lands and they had to look for other livelihood options.

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