



# HISTORY

**Class 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Chapter 4: Forest Societies and Colonialism**



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## Exercise

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

- **Shifting cultivators**

Ans: The changes in forest management affected the jhum cultivators in the following ways:-

1. It was difficult for the government to keep track of the rent on jhum cultivation.
2. So the government decided to ban nomadic farming.
3. Due to this many communities were forcibly displaced from the forests.
4. Some had to change their profession.

- **Nomadic and pastoralist communities**

Ans: The changes in forest management affected the nomadic and pastoral communities in the following ways:-

1. The Forest Act increased the hardships of nomadic and pastoral communities across the country.
2. After this law, everyday activities such as cutting wood for the house, grazing animals, collecting roots and fruits, etc. became illegal.
3. Now they have no choice but to steal wood from the forests.
4. In the event of being caught, the forest guards used to take bribe from them.
5. Women who collect firewood were especially troubled.

- **Firms trading in timber/forest produce**

Ans: Forest management affected the companies dealing in timber and forest products in the following ways:-

1. After the coming of this act, the forest trade went completely under government control.
2. The British handed over the monopoly of forest-products trade to European companies.
3. The business of companies dealing in wood and forest products started increasing.

- **Plantation owners**

Ans: The changes in forest management affected the planters in the following ways:-

1. These tea and coffee plantations were built to meet the growing demand for tea, coffee and rubber in Europe.
2. For these also a huge part of the natural forests was cleared.
3. The colonial government took over the forests and sold vast tracts of them to European planters at very cheap rates.
4. The forests were cleared by fencing these areas and cultivation of tea and coffee started.

- **Kings/British officials engaged in shikar**

Ans: The changes in forest management affected the hunting kings and British officers in the following ways: -

1. The new law deprived people of the right to hunt.
2. Now hunting has become a sport.
3. Trophies were awarded for hunting.

**Que 2: What are the similarities between colonial management of the forests in Bastar and in Java?**

Ans: The colonial forest management of Bastar and Java has the following similarities.

1. Like Bastar, the Dutch introduced forest management in Java.
2. In both places, the colonial government imposed restrictions on villagers going into the forest.
3. In both Bastar and Java, felling of trees and grazing cattle were punished.
4. Like Bastar in India, trees were cut indiscriminately in Java to make ships.

**Que 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:** The role of railways in the decline of the forested area of the subcontinent was as follows:-

1. There was a huge need of wood for the railway tracks.
2. For this, a large number of trees were cut. In the Madras Presidency alone, 35,000 trees were cut annually for sleepers.
3. The government gave private contracts to supply the required quantity.
4. These contractors started cutting trees without thinking.
5. The forests around the railway lines began to disappear rapidly.

**Shipbuilding:** Shipbuilding had the following role in reducing the forested area:-

1. The loss of oak forests in England by the early nineteenth century made it difficult to supply timber for the Royal Navy.
2. The English could not build ships without a regular supply of strong and durable wood.
3. It was impossible to maintain royal power without ships.
4. In the 1820s, expeditions were sent to discover the forest wealth of India.
5. Within a decade, trees were being felled on a large scale and huge quantities of wood were exported from India.

**Agricultural Expansion:** Agricultural expansion had a major role in the decline in forest cover. As the population increased and the demand for food increased, so did the expansion of agricultural land. For this, the forests were rapidly cleared.

**Commercial farming:** The role of commercial farming in the decline in forest cover was as follows:-

1. The cultivation of commercial crops was encouraged by the British government.
2. He encouraged farmers to grow jute, sugarcane and cotton.
3. For this the need of agricultural land was felt.
4. Due to this also trees were cut indiscriminately.

**Tea-Coffee plantations:**

1. The demand for tea and coffee started increasing in Europe.
2. To meet this demand, new tea and coffee plantations were built.
3. For this also a large part of the natural forests was cleared.

**Adivasis and other peasant users:**

1. Tribals and farmers used to do Jhum cultivation.
2. For this, a lot of forest land was made cultivable.

**Que 4: Why are forests affected by wars?**

Ans: The forests were affected by the wars in the following ways:

1. During the First and Second World War, trees were cut indiscriminately to meet the war requirement in India.
2. In Java, the Dutch adopted the policy of burn and run and burnt the logs.
3. Later, Japan cut down many trees for logs.
4. Many people took advantage of this opportunity to clear the forests for agriculture.