



CLASS NOTES-ANSWERS

Let's recall.

1) Match the following:

Answer:

Ryot	Peasant
mahal	Village
Nij	Cultivation on planter's own land
Ryoti	Cultivation on ryot's lands

2) Fill in the blanks:

- Growers of woad in Europe saw [indigo](#) as a crop which would provide competition to their earnings.
- The demand for indigo increased in the late-eighteenth-century Britain because of [the expansion of cotton production as a result of industrialisation, which in turn created an enormous demand for cloth dyes.](#)
- The international demand for indigo was affected by the discovery of [synthetic dyes.](#)
- The Champaran movement was against [the indigo planters.](#)

Let's discuss

3) Describe the main features of the Permanent Settlement.

Answer: The main features of the Permanent Settlement were:

- The rajas and taluqdars were recognized as zamindars.
- They were asked to collect rent from the peasants and pay revenue to the Company. The amount to be paid was fixed permanently.
- It encouraged the zamindars to invest in improving the land.
- Since the revenue demand of the state would not be increased the zamindar would benefit from increased production from the land.
- If any of them failed to fulfil these conditions, he was ousted from his land and the government did not hesitate in putting his zamindari to auction.



4) How was the Mahalwari system different from the Permanent Settlement?

Answer: Permanent Settlement Mahalwari System

a) The Permanent Settlement was introduced in Bihar and Bengal.

The system of Mahalwari was introduced in western part of Gangetic Valley, North-West Province, parts of Central India and Punjab

b) The Permanent Settlement was introduced in 1793.

The system of Mahalwari came into effect in 1822.

c) In the Permanent Settlement the amount to be paid as land revenue was fixed.

The government could not enhance the land revenue.

In the Mahalwari Settlement the amount of land revenue was revised periodically. The government could revise the revenue.

d) In the Permanent Settlement the zamindar had the charge of collecting the revenue.

In the Mahalwari Settlement the charge of collecting the revenue and paying it to the Company was given to the village headman.

5) Give two problems which arose with the new Munro system of fixing revenue.

Answer: The problems created by the Munro system of fixing revenues were:

- i) Driven by the desire to increase the income from land, revenue officials (Captain Alexander Read and Thomas Munro) fixed too high a revenue demand. Peasants were unable to pay, ryots fled the countryside, and villagers became deserted in several areas.
- ii) Optimistic officials had imagined that the new system would transform the peasants into rich enterprising farmers. But this did not happen.

6) Why were ryots reluctant to grow indigo?

Answer: Ryots were reluctant to grow indigo because:

- i) The indigo system was intensely oppressive.
- ii) Indigo could be cultivated only on fertile lands and these were all already



densely populated.

- iii) Peasants who were initially tempted by the loans soon realized how harsh the system was. The price they got for the indigo they produced was very low and cycle of loans never ended.
- iv) The planters usually insisted that indigo be cultivated on the best soils in which peasants preferred to cultivate rice.
- v) Indigo had deep roots and it exhausted the soil rapidly. After an indigo harvest the land could not be sown with rice.

7) What were the circumstances which led to the eventual collapse of indigo production in Bengal?

Answer:

- In March 1859, thousands of ryots in Bengal refused to grow indigo. As the rebellion spread, ryots refused to pay rents to the planter and attacked indigo factories armed with swords and spears, bows and arrows.
- Ryots swore they would no longer take advances to sow indigo nor be bullied by planter's lathiyals.
- The government set-up the Indigo Commission to enquire into the system of indigo production. The Commission held the planters guilty and criticized them for the coercive methods they used with indigo cultivators.
- The Indigo Commission declared that indigo production was not profitable for ryots. The Commission asked the ryots to fulfill their existing contracts but also told them that they could refuse to produce indigo in future.

Let's do

8) Find out more about the Champaran Movement and Mahatma Gandhi's role in it.

Answer: When the indigo production collapsed in Bengal, the European planters of indigo shifted their operations to Bihar. When Mahatma Gandhi returned from



South Africa, a peasant from Bihar persuaded him to visit Champaran and see the plight of the indigo cultivators there.

Role of Mahatma Gandhi: Mahatma Gandhi's visit in 1917 marked the beginning of the Champaran movement against the indigo planter. The European planter oppressed the peasants. Gandhiji reached Champaran in 1917 to witness the miserable conditions of the peasants. The districts officials ordered him to leave Champaran but he refused to comply the orders and started the Satyagraha.

- 9) Look into the history of either tea or coffee plantations in India. See how the life of workers in these plantations was similar to or different from that of workers in indigo plantations.

Answer: Accounts of earlier Indian history do not mention the use of tea or its cultivation. We get a mention by a Dutch sea-traveler in 1598 that tea is being eaten as well as drunk in India.

In 1824, tea plants were discovered in the hills of the Indian state of Assam. The British introduced tea culture into India in 1836. India had been the top producer of tea for nearly a century.

The workers in the tea plantations were oppressed. They were given low wages. There were poor housing and lack of social mobility. For making more profits, the tea planters reclaimed wastelands where the workers had to labor hard to develop plantation. For this, the planters introduced indentured labour system. The local as well as outside labourers were employed under contract.

There were two types of indentured labour system- arkatti and sardari. Under arkatti system, unlicensed recruitment was carried from chotanagpur and other tribal areas of the sub-continent. Under the sardari system new labourers were employed by those who were already employed in the plantation gardens.

The labourers had to work hard. The outside labourers had to stay at the garden for a longer period. They were not permitted to meet their family, even on occasions. They were exploited in many ways. They were not allowed to leave the plantation



garden during the contract period.

The labourers in the tea plantations and indigo farming were similar in the way that they were exploited heavily. The profit was made by the owners and the labourers got almost nothing. They were different in the way that, however, there was a contract with the planters, but indigo workers were not under indentured labour system.

