



**NOTES**

# **SOCIAL SCIENCE**

**(HISTORY)**

## **FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM**



**REVISION NOTES  
CHAPTERWISE &  
TOPICWISE**

## Chapter 4: Forest Society And Colonialism

### Concepts Covered:

1. **Why Deforestation?**
    - **Deforestation**
      - Meaning
    - **Land to be improved**
      - (i) Raw material (ii) Food grains for growing population and (iii) Unproductive Forest
      - Sleepers on the track
      - British Navy needed Timber
      - Plantations
  2. **The Rise of Commercial Forestry**
    - **Commercial Forestry**
      - Dietrich Brandis (German expert)
      - Scientific Forestry
    - **How were the lives of people affected**
      - Impact and result of the events
    - **How did forest rule affect cultivation**
      - Shifting Cultivation
    - **Who could Hunt**
    - **New trades, New Employment and Services**
  3. **Rebellion in the Forest**
    - **Introduction and example of some Rebels**
    - **The People of Bastar**
    - **The Fear of the People**
      - Reason for Rebellion
      - Start of the Rebellion
      - Suppression by British
  4. **Forest transformations in Java**
    - **Introduction**
    - **The Woodcutters of Java**
    - **Dutch Scientific Forestry**
    - **Samin's Challenge**
    - **War and Deforestation**
    - **New developments in Forestry**
  5. **Mind Map**
    - **(Colourful & Interactive/ Complete All Concept Covered)**
- Practice Questions (All Topics Available)**

**FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM****WHY DEFORESTATION?****WHY DEFORESTATION?****Deforestation**

The disappearance of forest is referred to as Deforestation. It is not a new phenomenon, and during colonial rule it became more systematic and extensive.

**Land to be improved.**

- **Raw material**

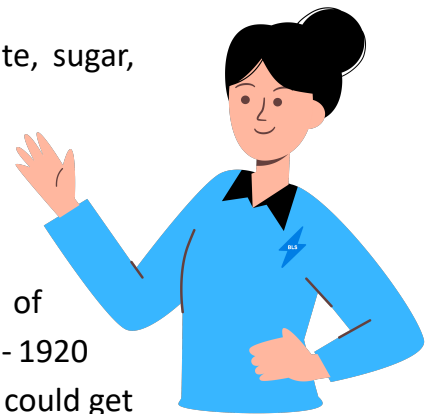
During British period, production of commercial crops like jute, sugar, wheat, and cotton expanded.

- **Food grains for growing population and**

Growing urban population demanded more food crop.

- **Unproductive forest**

Colonial government considered forest as unproductive and full of wilderness. Land is to be brought under cultivation. e.g., between 1880 - 1920 cultivated area increased by 6.7 million hectares. So that they [British] could get extra revenue. Expansion of cultivation is seen as a sign of progress but in this case, we missed it because forest was cleared which in turn gave many other problems.



**Cutting of Forest During Colonial Rule**



**Deforestation During British Period**

**a) Sleepers on the track**

Wooden planks laid across railway tracks, they hold the track in position.



## FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

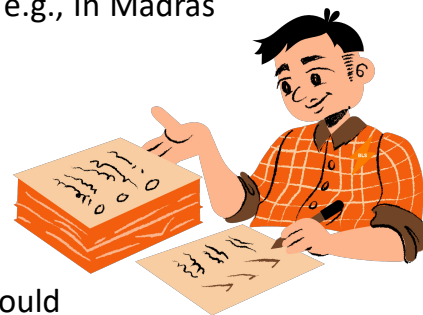
### WHY DEFORESTATION?



Spread of Railways [essential for colonial trade and for the movement of Imperial troops] Wood was required for the development of Railways'. Each mile of railway track required between 1760 to 2000 sleepers. Over the period of time Railways network expanded in 1890 - 25,500 km to 7,65,000 km by 1946. Due to this, there was huge deforestation. e.g., In Madras Presidency alone 35,000 trees were being cut annually.

#### Role of contractors in accelerating the problem.

- 1) Converting Sal logs into sleepers in the Singh hum forests, Chhota Nagpur, May 1897. Adivasis were hired by the forest department to cut trees and make smooth planks which would serve as sleepers for the railways. At the same time, they were not allowed to cut these trees to build their own houses.





## FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

### WHY DEFORESTATION?

- 2) Elephants piling squares of timber at a timber yard in Rangoon. In the colonial period elephants were frequently used to lift heavy timber both in the forests and at the timber yards.



#### b) British Navy needed Timber

Britain's Royal navy also created a problem of deforestation in India. By early nineteenth century oak forest in England were disappearing. Problem of timber supply for Royal Navy of Britain. For Navy Power timber was essential requirement. So, search parties were sent in India to explore resources in India. Then vast quantity of timber was being exported from India. This led to the huge deforestation.





**FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM****WHY DEFORESTATION?****c) Plantations**

Another important reason for deforestation was plantation farming. It is a form of Commercial farming in which crop is cultivated on a large tract of land for profit motive. Large area of natural forest was cleared to cultivate crops such as tea, coffee, and rubber. To meet the Europe's growing need Growing industries and trade demanded these crops. Vast area of land was cleared by European planters.

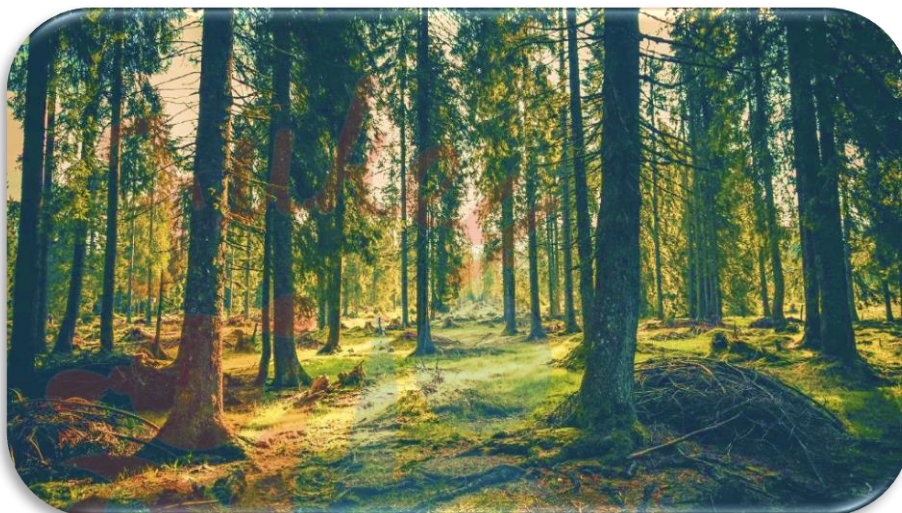
**Plantation Fields****Clearing of forest by British  
for plantation agriculture**



## THE RISE OF COMMERCIAL FORESTRY

### Commercial Forestry

The British rulers had requirements of wood and some commercial crops. They used the forest area for commercial crop cultivation, which increased the rate of deforestation. In 1865, they enacted the Indian Forest Act. After that, they introduced the term commercial forestry in 1878.



#### 1. Dietrich Brandis (German expert)

Dietrich Brandis was the first inspector general of India who advised many changes regarding forest systems with legal sanction.



- He set up the Indian Forest Service in 1864 and formulated the Indian Forest Act in 1865.

**FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM****THE RISE OF COMMERCIAL FORESTRY**

- His journey as Inspector General of Forest marked the dawn of scientific forestry.
- The Imperial Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, was set up in 1906, where scientific forestry or commercial forestry was taught by him.

**2. Scientific Forestry**

Based on the ideas of Dietrich Brandis 'Scientific Forestry' was introduced in India. Natural Forest Were [Lots of different types of trees] cut down. Now, in their place one type of tree was planted in straight rows. This is called Plantation. Forest officials surveyed the forest and made working plans for forest management.

- They planned how much of the plantation area to cut every year.
- The area cut was then to be replanted.
- So, that it was ready to be cut again after a period.

**How were the lives of people affected?****Impact and result of the events**

- The Forest Act meant severe hardship for villagers across the country. After the Act all their everyday practices – cutting wood for their houses grazing their cattle collecting fruits and roots hunting and fishing – became illegal.
- People were now forced to steal wood from the forests and if they were caught, they were at the mercy of the forest guards who would take bribes from them.





## FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

### THE RISE OF COMMERCIAL FORESTRY

- Women who collected fuel wood were especially worried. It was also common for police constables and forest guards to harass people by demanding free food from them.

### How did forest rule affect cultivation?

#### Shifting Cultivation



#### a) Meaning

It is also known as swidden agriculture. Types of traditional farming, practiced in many parts of Asia, Africa, and South America. [Mainly by tribes] Know as lading is southeast Asia, Milpa in central America, Chittenden or Tavy in Africa and China in Sri Lanka. In India, it is known by many local names such as dhya, penda, podu, Nevad, jhum, beware, khan dan and kumri.

## FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

### THE RISE OF COMMERCIAL FORESTRY

#### b) Effect of Colonial rule on it

Shifting cultivation destroyed the timber which the British wanted and had an added concern that the fire would destroy the forest. Shifting cultivation was unyielding to the farmers and the British wanted to improve farmers livelihoods by promoting better agricultural practices.

#### Who could Hunt?

People living in or near forest. Survived by hunting deer, partridge and variety of small animals used to live. But under new forest laws their customary practice was prohibited. If they caught hunting, they were punished for poaching. New forest laws Affected the lives of forest dwellers.

While tribals were deprived of the customary rights, at the same time hunting of big game became a sport. Hunting of tiger and other big animals and culture related to it. But during colonial period Hunting reached to such extended that various species became almost extinct



#### New trades, New Employment and Services

Colonial control over forest had a positive impact also Some opportunity opened up in trade Many communities left their traditional occupations and started trading in forest products.

This opportunity was enjoyed across the world.

**Example:** Mundurucu peoples of Brazilian Amazon saw the growing demand for rubber Munduruku people shifted from the cultivation of manioc to the cultivation of latex from wild rubber. Started supplying it to traders Gradually, they became completely dependent on traders.

India, trade in forest product was not new from medieval period, Adivasi uses to trade Hides, horn, silk, cocoons, ivory, bamboo, spices, fibres, grasses, gums, and resins etc.





Nomadic communities like Banjaras [traders Trading rights were given to European trading firms. Grazing and hunting by local people were restricted. Many pastoralist and nomadic communities like the korava, karacha and yerukula of madras presidency lost their livelihoods They were called as 'criminal tribes'.



# Fukey Education

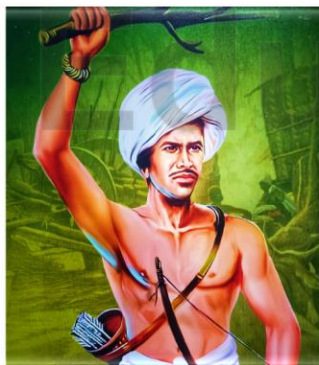
## REBELLION IN THE FOREST

### Introduction and example of some Rebels



- 1) Siddhu and Kanu in Santhal Parganas.
- 2) Birsa Munda of Chhattisgarh.
- 3) Alluri Sitarama Raju of Andhra Pradesh

They all rebelled because of the suppression, injustice and atrocities over them and most important reason for their rebellion was interference in their forest, culture, and life. One such rebellion which took place in the Kingdom of Bastar in 1910.



### The People of Bastar

Bastar is a district of Chhattisgarh State. The headquarters of Bastar district and Bastar division is Jagdalpur. It was known as Dakshin Kaushal. It is known for the beautiful forests and tribal culture, because of this it is called as the cultural capital of the state. Spread over 6596.90 sq. km, this district



**FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM****REBELLION IN THE FOREST**

was once bigger than a state like Kerala and countries like Belgium, Israel. For the district to be systematically managed, two separate districts, Kanker and Dantewada, were constructed in 1999. It is surrounded by Kondagaon, Dantewada, Sukma and Bijapur. The district headquarters Jagdalpur is located at a distance of 305 kilometres from the capital city Raipur.

Central part is Plateau, Chhattisgarh plain lies in its north and in its south lies the Godavari plain. Rivers Indravati flows across east to west of Bastar. Communities such as Maria and Muria Gonds, Dhurawas, Bhatra and Halba live in Bastar.

**Customs and beliefs**

The people of Bastar believe that the earth gave each village its land, and in return, they care for the earth by making offerings at each agricultural festival. They honour the spirits of the river, the forest, and the mountain in addition to the earth.

**The Fear of the People****1. Reason for Rebellion**

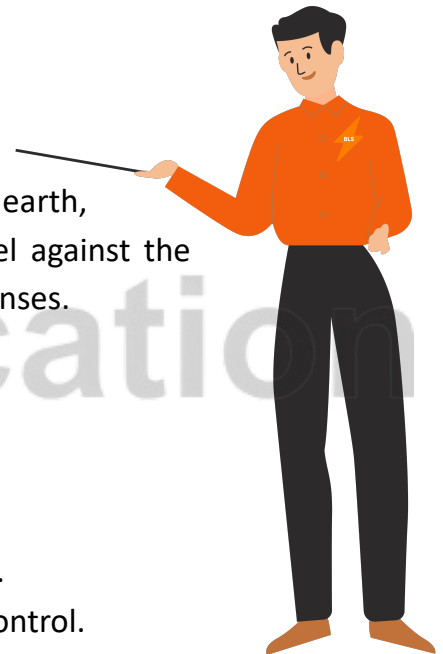
The primary cause of the rebellion, as was later discovered by several government reports examining the cause of the riots, were British colonial policies regarding usage of the forests. The British colonial government had begun reserving forests, which only allowed certain corporations to exploit forest resources.

**2. Start of the Rebellion**

The initiative was taken by Dhurwas of Kanger Forest, where reservation first took place. In 1910, Mango boughs, a lump of earth, chillies and arrows began circulating between villages. To Rebel against the British. Every village contributed something to the rebellion expenses.

**3. Suppression by British**

- British sent troops to suppress the rebellion.
- British surrounded their camps and fired upon them.
- Punishing all those who participated in rebellion.
- Most villages were deserted as people fled into the jungle.
- Within three months [February - May] the British regain control.



Struggle of the people of Bastar does not end there. The practice of keeping people out of the forests and reserving them for industrial use continued after Independence also. Similar story of struggle can be seen in Indonesia also.

## FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

### FOREST TRANSFORMATIONS IN JAVA

## FOREST TRANSFORMATIONS IN JAVA

### Introduction

Colonial rule in Java was by Dutch [Netherland] Today Java is famous as a rice - producing island in Indonesia. But once upon a time it was covered mostly with forest. Dutch started forest management in Java. Timber to build ship.

### The Woodcutters of Java

The Kalangs of Java were a community of skilled forest cutters and shifting cultivators. In 1755 the Mataram kingdom of Java split, the 6000 Kalang families equally divided between the two kingdoms. Without their help to harvest the teak it was not possible for the kings to build their palaces. Under colonial period, Dutch tried to make Kalangs work under them.

### Dutch Scientific Forestry

1. Dutch enacted Forest laws in Java.
2. Restricting villagers' access to forest.
3. Cutting of wood was specified [Making River boats and constructing Houses].
4. It was allowed from specific forest and under supervision.
5. Villagers were punished for grazing cattle in young stands, transporting wood without a permit or travelling on forest road with horse cart or cattle.

Dutch first imposed rent on land begin cultivated Then exempted some villages from these rents. On the condition that these villages worked collectively to provide free labours and buffaloes for cutting and transporting timbers. This system of providing free labour was known as "Blandongdiensten" Later on they were given small wages but right to cultivate was restricted.

### Samin's Challenge





**FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM****FOREST TRANSFORMATIONS IN JAVA**

Samin was a Javanese religious leader who lived during the Dutch colonial era in Indonesia. He was known for his resistance against the Dutch government and his teachings of non-violent resistance.

He lived in the Randublatung village having teak forest. Began questioning state ownership of the forest. His argument was that wind, water, earth, and wood was not created by state.



Soon his idea turned into a widespread movement [His sons - in - law]

Saminists protested by lying down on their land when the Dutch came to survey it, while others refused to pay taxes or fines or perform labour. By 1907, 3000 families were following his idea.

**War and Deforestation**

The first world war and the second world war had a major impact on forests. As the Japanese were going to occupy the region, Dutch followed the 'Scorched earth' policy. Dutch colonial officers destroyed sawmills and burnt huge piles of giant teak logs. So that the Japanese didn't get that. At the same time Japanese also exploited the forest recklessly for war industries. Villagers used this opportunity to expand cultivable land.

**New developments in Forestry**

- Since 1980's, government across Asia and Africa. Realised the conflicts in scientific Forestry and Conservation of forest rather than collecting timber has become a more important goal.
- People who live near the forests must be included in conservation.
- People protecting forest in the name of sacred groves.
- Because in many cases local communities contributed a lot in conservation. Villages patrolling their own forests. This opens an opportunity of thinking of different term of forest management.

04

## FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

## MIND MAP

