

CBSE CLASS 9 SOCIAL SCIENCE

History — India and the Contemporary World – I

CHAPTER 4: FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

ULTIMATE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS BANK WITH MODEL
ANSWERS

Extended Edition (Version 2) • Fully Aligned with Current NCERT & CBSE
Pattern Guideline Assessments



KEY PEDAGOGICAL ELEMENTS INSIDE VERSION 2:

- **Expanded Question Indices:** Enhanced sets of Very Short, Short, and Long answer questions highlighting critical sub-sections.
- **Advanced Competency Scenarios:** In-depth examination of the socio-economic impacts on forest-dwelling groups across both India and Java.
- **Comprehensive Concept-Checks:** Detailed breakdown of common student errors when sorting "Reserved" vs "Protected" categories.
- **Integrated Timelines:** Multi-tier summary tables charting world forestry acts and institutional revisions from 1800 to 1945.

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SECTION 1: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Q1. What were the long-term strategic reasons behind the British decision to introduce Scientific Forestry in colonial India?

FREQUENTLY REPEATED

The British introduced Scientific Forestry primarily to meet imperial economic and military needs:

- **Imperial Timber Demands:** By the early 19th century, oak forests in Great Britain were depleted, creating an acute crisis for the Royal Navy, which depended heavily on high-quality timber for warship construction.
- **Railway Consolidation:** From the 1850s, railways expanded rapidly across India to facilitate troop movements and internal trade. Millions of durable logs were required for railway sleepers and locomotive fuel.
- **Controlling Local Consumption:** The colonial state viewed local usage—such as cattle grazing, foraging, and traditional swidden agriculture—as a wasteful destruction of natural resources that hindered profit-making commercial timber plantations.



EXAM BOOSTER: ESSENTIAL FACT TO REMEMBER

Dietrich Brandis: A German forestry expert brought to India by the British. He became the first Inspector General of Forests in 1864, founding the Indian Forest Service and drafting the framework of the Indian Forest Act of 1865.

Q2. How did the modifications introduced in the Forest Act of 1878 change the daily lives of rural communities?

ANNUAL EXAM CLASSIC

The 1878 Forest Act divided forests into three categories: Reserved, Protected, and Village forests. This division had a severe impact on local livelihoods:

1. **Criminalisation of Survival Routines:** Daily practices like gathering fallen firewood, cutting grass for cattle feed, hunting game, picking wild fruits, or fishing were declared illegal offenses.
2. **Widespread Harassment:** Rural villagers were forced to steal wood from state lands. This left them vulnerable to harassment and extortion by forest guards, who regularly demanded bribes.
3. **Forced Displacement:** Large numbers of tribal families were evicted from their homes inside the designated "Reserved" zones without compensation, forcing them to abandon their traditional lifestyle.

SECTION 2: PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION COLLECTION

Q3. Describe the main causes and outcomes of the 1910 Bastar Rebellion against British forest laws.

CBSE PAST YEAR FOCUS

Causes: In 1905, the British colonial administration proposed to reserve two-thirds of the Bastar forest, ban shifting cultivation entirely, and heavily restrict the collection of minor forest produce. These proposals deeply threatened local tribal groups, such as the Dhurwas of the Kanger forest. The rebellion found a leader in Gunda Dhur from the village of Nethanar.

Outcomes: The tribal communities formed insurgent squads, plundering colonial markets, schools, police stations, and the homes of traders and officials. Although the British military crushed the rebellion using heavy force, the resistance won a major victory: the colonial state temporarily suspended reservation work and reduced the area targeted for reservation to roughly half of the original plan.

Q4. Explain how the expansion of the Indian railway track network accelerated deforestation between 1850 and 1880.

HIGH FREQUENCY

The construction of railways was critical for expanding colonial trade and deploying imperial troops. This expansion created a massive, immediate demand for wood:

- **Railway Sleepers:** Heavy wooden blocks, called sleepers, were required to hold the metal tracks firmly in place. Every mile of track laid required between 1,760 and 2,000 sleepers.
- **Locomotive Fuel:** Before coal was mined on a large scale, early trains burned massive amounts of wood to produce steam, leading to the clearing of forests near major rail lines.
- **Contract Exploitation:** The colonial government granted large timber contracts to private individuals, who cut down trees recklessly to maximize their profits.

SECTION 3: VERY SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (1 MARK)

Q5. Define the term 'Scientific Forestry'.

A system of forest management where natural forests are cleared and replaced with a single tree species planted in orderly rows, managed according to strict state guidelines.

Q6. In which year was the first Indian Forest Act enacted?

The first Indian Forest Act was passed in 1865.

Q7. Where was the Imperial Forest Research Institute established in 1906?

In Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

Q8. What are 'Reserved Forests'?

The highest tier of state-controlled forests under the 1878 Act. Villagers could not enter these areas or gather any produce from them.

Q9. Name the local term used for shifting cultivation in Central America.

It is known as *Milpa*.

Q10. Who was Surontiko Samin?

A Javanese villager who led a late-19th-century peasant movement against Dutch colonial forest ownership.

Q11. What are 'Sleepers' in railway construction?

Horizontal wooden planks laid across railway tracks to keep the metal rails securely in position.

Q12. Which tree species were favored by colonial foresters for shipbuilding and railways?

Teak and Sal trees.

Q13. Define the 'Blandongdiensten' system.

A system where the Dutch in Java exempted specific villages from land taxes on the condition that they provided free labor for cutting and transporting timber.

Q14. Name the village that Gunda Dhur belonged to.

Nethanar.

SECTION 4: SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (2–3 MARKS)

Q15. Why did colonial governments across the world decide to ban the traditional practice of shifting cultivation?

Colonial administrators opposed shifting cultivation (swidden agriculture) for three main reasons:

- **Timber Damage:** They feared that fires set to clear fields could easily burn out of control and damage valuable timber trees like teak and sal.
- **Hindering Tax Collection:** Shifting cultivation made it difficult for the government to calculate land taxes accurately because families moved their fields every few years.
- **Land Recovery Requirements:** Land cleared for shifting cultivation could not grow trees for railway timber for many years, which conflicted with the state's commercial goals.

Q16. How did British forest laws change traditional hunting practices, creating an ironic double standard?

Before colonial rule, forest dwellers hunted deer, wild boar, and small game for food. The new forest laws banned this practice, turning traditional hunting into illegal poaching. However, at the same time, large-scale hunting was encouraged as a sport for British officials and Indian princes. The British viewed killing large predators like tigers and wolves as a civilizing mission, offering rewards for their destruction while criminalizing the small-scale hunting locals relied on for food.



CORE CONCEPT COMPARISON

Forest Act of 1865: Established basic state control over forests.

Forest Act of 1878: Reorganized forests into Reserved, Protected, and Village categories, effectively cutting off local access to resources.

SECTION 5: LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (5 MARKS)

Q17. Explain how the commercial needs of the British Empire led to rapid deforestation in India during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Colonial deforestation was driven by the commercial and strategic needs of the British Empire:

1. **Deforestation in Britain:** By the early 19th century, oak forests in England were disappearing. This created a severe timber shortage for the Royal Navy, which needed strong wood to build warships to protect the empire. Search parties were sent to India, leading to large-scale timber harvesting.
2. **Railway Network Expansion:** The growth of the railway network from the 1850s created an enormous demand for wood. Trees were cut down across India to provide sleepers for tracks and fuel for steam locomotives.
3. **Expanding Commercial Agriculture:** The colonial state encouraged clearing forests to cultivate commercial crops like jute, sugar, wheat, and cotton to supply British industries and generate land revenue.
4. **Tea, Coffee, and Rubber Plantations:** Large areas of natural forest were sold cheaply to European planters. These areas were cleared to set up tea, coffee, and rubber plantations to meet growing demand in Europe.

SECTION 6: CASE-BASED QUESTIONS

SOURCE TEXT: FOREST REBELLIONS IN JAVA AND INDIA

"Like the rebellion in Bastar, forest resistance movements in Southeast Asia challenged colonial resource management. In 1890, Surontiko Samin, a teak forest villager in Java, began questioning state ownership of the forests. He argued that the Dutch government had not created the wind, water, earth, or trees, and therefore could not own them. Soon a widespread movement developed, led by Samin's sons-in-law. Peasants protested by lying down on their land when Dutch surveyors arrived, while others refused to pay taxes, pay fines, or perform forced labor."

Q18. Based on the source provided, answer the following questions:

(i) What was the main philosophical argument used by Surontiko Samin to challenge Dutch forest laws?

Samin argued that because the Dutch state had not created natural resources like the wind, water, earth, and trees, it had no legitimate right to claim exclusive ownership over them or restrict their use by local communities.

(ii) How did Samin's followers non-violently resist Dutch colonial forest authority?

Followers practiced non-violent civil disobedience by lying down on their land when Dutch surveyors arrived, refusing to pay land taxes or fines, and rejecting demands for forced labor (Blandongdiensten).

SECTION 7: ASSERTION AND REASON QUESTIONS

STANDARD CBSE EVALUATION DIRECTIONS

Evaluate the statements and select the correct option:

- A:** Both Assertion and Reason are true, and Reason is the correct explanation of Assertion.
- B:** Both Assertion and Reason are true, but Reason is not the correct explanation of Assertion.
- C:** Assertion is true, but Reason is false.
- D:** Assertion is false, but Reason is true.

Q19. Assertion (A): The British colonial administration encouraged the establishment of large tea and coffee plantations by clearing natural forests.

Reason (R): Plantations were highly profitable and provided cash crops to meet growing demand in Europe, while generating substantial export revenue for the colonial state.

Answer: A

Explanation: Both statements are true, and the reason correctly explains why the British cleared natural forests to hand over large plots of land to European planters at low costs.

SECTION 8: COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS

Q20. Analyze how the colonial definition of a 'productive forest' differed fundamentally from the perspective of local forest-dwelling communities.

The conflict over forest management stemmed from two opposing views of nature:

- **Colonial Perspective:** The state viewed forests through a purely commercial lens. A forest was considered productive only if it produced straight, tall timber trees like teak and sal for railways and ships. Forests with diverse species were seen as wasteful and unproductive.
- **Local Perspective:** For tribal and rural communities, a productive forest was a diverse ecosystem that met their daily survival needs. They valued a mixture of species that could provide them with fuel, fodder, fruits, medicinal herbs, and materials for housing.

SECTION 9: TIMELINE-BASED QUESTIONS

YEAR	SIGNIFICANT FOREST POLICY / MOVEMENT EVENT	CORE SIGNIFICANCE
1864	Setting up of the Indian Forest Service (IFS)	Brought forest management under state control using European methods.
1865	Enactment of the First Indian Forest Act	Gave the state the legal power to declare specific areas as government forests.
1878	Amended Indian Forest Act passed	Divided forests into Reserved, Protected, and Village categories, restricting local access.
1890	Outbreak of Samin's protests in Java	Marked an early form of peaceful peasant resistance against Dutch forest ownership.
1910	The Bastar Rebellion	A major armed tribal uprising that forced the British to reduce their forest reservation targets.

SECTION 10: MOST IMPORTANT EXAM QUESTIONS

★ **HIGHEST PROBABILITY QUESTION:** What was the 'Scorched Earth' policy implemented by the Dutch in Java, and why was it used?

The 'Scorched Earth' policy was used by the Dutch in Java during World War II as Japanese forces advanced on the island. Rather than leaving valuable resources for the enemy, the Dutch destroyed their own timber infrastructure. They burned large stocks of harvested teak logs and sabotaged state sawmills to prevent the Japanese from using them. This policy caused severe damage to the local environment and economy, and the incoming Japanese forces continued to exploit the forests for their own war needs.

SECTION 11: CHAPTER QUICK REVISION

INSTANT REVISION SUMMARIES

- **Chhau / Dhya / Penda:** Various regional terms used across central India to describe the practice of shifting cultivation.
- **Forest Villages:** Settlements allowed to remain inside reserved forests on the condition that they provided free labor for the forest department to cut trees and prevent fires.
- **Minor Forest Produce:** Items like tendu leaves, honey, resin, and wax collected by forest dwellers for use or trade.

SECTION 12: COMMON MISTAKES STUDENTS MAKE

 WATCH OUT FOR THESE IN YOUR EXAM:

1. **Confusing Forest Classes:** Students often mix up *Reserved* and *Protected* forests. Remember that Reserved forests were completely closed to locals. In Protected forests, villagers could collect some wood and graze cattle, but only with special permission and under strict rules.
2. **Misunderstanding Plantations:** Students sometimes write that scientific forestry protected natural forest diversity. In reality, it did the opposite: it cleared diverse natural forests to plant single-species timber plantations.

SECTION 13: LAST-MINUTE REVISION SHEET

THE ULTIMATE EXAM BLUEPRINT

Core Conflict: Colonial states viewed forests as sources of timber and revenue, while local communities relied on them for daily survival, food, and medicine. This clash of interests led to revolutions in places like Bastar and Java.

Key Statistic: Each mile of railway track built in India required between 1,760 and 2,000 sleepers, which drove rapid deforestation across the country between 1850 and 1920.