

NCERT Solutions for Class 8 Social Science History

Chapter 4 Tribals, Dikus and the Vision of a Golden Age

1. Fill in the blanks:

1. The British described the tribal people as **savage/uncivilized**
2. The method of sowing seeds in jhum cultivation is known as **scattering**
3. The tribal chiefs got **land** titles in central India under the British land settlements.
4. Tribals went to work in the tea **plantations of Assam** and the **coalmines** in Bihar.

2. State whether True or False:

1. Jhum cultivators plough the land and sow seeds. **False**
2. Cocoons were bought from the Santhals and sold by the traders at five times the purchase price. **True**
3. Birsa urged his followers to purify themselves, give up drinking liquor and stop believing in witchcraft and sorcery **True**
4. The British wanted to preserve the tribal way of life. **False**

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

Ans. The shifting cultivators were forced to follow the pattern of settled cultivation. But they were revoked of their access to forests and due to land and water scarcity, they could not make adequate production. So, they used to move on to other areas in search of work.

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

Ans. The functions and powers of the tribal chiefs changed a lot under British rule. They lost most of their administrative powers and consequently their authority. They had to pay large tributes to the British and were forced to oppress their own people in the name of discipline. Hence, the colonial rule they lost the authority they had earlier enjoyed amongst their people and were unable to fulfil their traditional functions.

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

Answer.



Tribals were not happy with dikus who were considered as 'outsiders' by them. Tribals wanted to be shifting cultivators and not be peasant cultivators. The dikus were settling in at the tribals' lands, wanting the latter to sell their lands or rent their lands at very high-interest rates. This made the tribals unhappy. Also, the tribal chiefs lost their administrative powers under British rule. Later, the tribals were evacuated from their lands, and they had to look for other livelihood options.

6. What was Birsa's vision of a golden age? Why do you think such a vision appealed to the people of the region?

Answer.

Birsa's vision of golden age was to have their land free of dikus. He considered that age to be the 'age of truth'. According to Birsa, in the golden age, the tribal sirdars will be able to rule among themselves and no one will be there to dictate terms to them. His golden age vision was to have an age with no vices like liquor, witchcraft, sorcery and uncleanness. He did not want any role of outsider participants like missionaries, Hindu landlords, moneylenders, traders and Europeans.

8. Choose any tribal group living in India today. Find out about their customs and way of life, and how their lives have changed in the last 50 years.

Ans. The Sentinelese tribe lives on the North Sentinel Island in the Andaman Sea. They are the dwellers of the place since prehistoric times and have not been exposed to the outside world. They still practise their own traditions and live like prehistoric humans. They do not interact with modern humans and live on hunting. The civilians are not allowed to go to the North Sentinel Islands and they have been left with full autonomy by the Government of India.

