

## Std. 8 History Chapter 3

### Ruling the Countryside

#### WORKSHEET 1

*Note for the teacher: This worksheet contains questions and answers given in the text and a few extra revision questions with answers which may be discussed with the students.*

**Question I: Match the following:-**

| Column A              | Column B                  |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| (a) Ryot              | (1) Palace grounds        |
| (b) Mahal             | (2) Peasant               |
| (c) Nij cultivation   | (3) On ryot's land        |
| (d) Ryoti cultivation | (4) On planter's own land |
|                       | (5) Village               |

**Answer: (a) → 2, (b) → 5, (c) → 4, (d) → 3,**

**Question II: Fill in the blanks:-**

1. Growers of WOAD in Europe saw \_\_\_\_\_ as a crop which would provide competition to their earnings. **(Indigo)**
2. The demand for indigo increased in late 18th century in Britain because of \_\_\_\_\_. **(increased cotton textiles production)**
3. The international demand for indigo was affected by the discovery of \_\_\_\_\_. **(synthetic dyes)**
4. The Champaran movement was against \_\_\_\_\_. **(the indigo planters)**

**Question III: One word Answers:-**

1. The Mughal Emperor appointed the East India Company as the \_\_\_\_\_ of Bengal. **(Diwan)**
2. \_\_\_\_\_ was the Governor General of India when the Permanent Settlement was introduced. **(Cornwallis)**

3. The Mahalvari settlement system was introduced by \_\_\_\_\_. (Holt Mackenzie)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is a large farm operated by a planter employing various forms of forced labour. (Plantation)

**Question IV: Short answers:-**

**1. Give two problems which arose with the new Munro system.**

The revenue officials wanted to increase the income from land. Hence, they fixed very high revenue demand. Peasants were not able to pay the revenue. The ryots fled the countryside and villages became deserted in many regions.

**2. What were the consequences of the economic crisis that gripped Bengal?**

**Answer.** The consequences of the economic crisis that gripped Bengal were as follows :

- (a) Artisans began to leave villages since they were being forced to sell their goods to the Company at low prices.
- (b) Peasants were unable to pay the dues that were being demanded from them.
- (c) Artisanal production was in decline and agricultural cultivation showed signs of collapse.
- (d) In 1770 a terrible famine hit Bengal killing ten million people. About one- third of the population was wiped out.

**3. What happened in St. Domingue in August 1791?**

In the eighteenth century, French planters produced indigo and sugar in the French colony of St. Domingue in the Caribbean islands. The African slaves who worked on the plantations rose in rebellion in 1791, burning the plantations and killing their rich planters. In 1792 France abolished slavery in the French colonies. These events led to the collapse of the indigo plantations on the Caribbean islands.

**4. Where else was indigo grown in the world?**

French were cultivating indigo in St Domingue in the Caribbean islands, the Portuguese in Brazil, the English in Jamaica, and the Spanish in Venezuela. Indigo plantations also came up in many parts of North America.

**5. What types of crops were grown by British in India?**

The Company realised that the countryside could not only yield revenue, it could also grow the crops that Europe required.

- Company tried to expand cultivation of opium and indigo.
- They forced cultivators to produce other crops - jute in Bengal, tea in Assam, sugarcane in united provinces, wheat in Punjab, cotton in Maharashtra and rice in Madras.

## **Question V: Long answers:-**

### **1. Discuss the features of the permanent settlement.**

After the famine in 1770 the economy of Bengal was in ruins. The Company could not be certain of its revenue income. In order to increase their revenue Company officials began to feel that investment in land had to be encouraged and agriculture had to be improved. This was done by introducing the Permanent Settlement.

- The permanent settlement system was introduced during the regime of Lord Charles Cornwallis in 1793.
- The Company focused on improvement in agriculture.
- The Rajas and Taluqdars became zamindars
- Zamindars were responsible for collecting rent from peasants; pay revenues to the Company.
- The amount to be paid was fixed permanently, that is, it was not to be increased ever in future.
- The Company officials felt that Company coffers would have a regular flow of revenue.
- They also felt that this would motivate the zamindars to invest in improving the land. The zamindars would benefit from increased production because the revenue demand would not be increased.

### **2. How was the Mahalvari system different from the permanent settlement?**

| <b>Mahalvari system</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Permanent settlement</b>                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Collectors inspected land, measured field and recorded customs and rights for different groups. The estimated revenue of each plot within a village was added up to calculate the revenue that each village (mahal) had to pay.</b> | <b>The revenue that had been fixed was so high that the zamindars found it difficult to pay. No proper survey or assessment of the land was done before fixing the revenue.</b> |
| <b>Village headman was responsible for revenue collection</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Raja and taluqdars were recognised as zamindars and were responsible for revenue collection.</b>                                                                             |
| <b>Revenue demand was to be reviewed periodically</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Revenue demand was fixed and was not to be increased in future.</b>                                                                                                          |

### **3. Why did the Bengal economy fall into a deep crisis?**

**Answer.** After the Company became the Diwan of Bengal it had to think of administering the land and organizing its revenue resources. The Company began its efforts to increase the revenue as much as it could and buy fine cotton and silk cloth as cheap as possible. They did not set up any regular system of assessment and collection. Within five years the value of goods bought by the Company in Bengal doubled. Before 1765, the Company had purchased goods in India by importing gold and silver from Britain. Now the revenue collected in Bengal could finance the purchase of goods for export. This caused huge loss of revenue for Bengal which paralyzed its economy.

### **4. What were the circumstances which led to the eventual collapse of indigo production in Bengal?**

The planters paid a very low price for indigo. The ryot was not in a position to even recover his cost, earning a profit was a far-fetched idea. This meant that the ryot was always under debt. Hence, the ryots were reluctant to grow indigo. Later the ryots began to refuse to grow indigo. They were supported by the village headmen and some zamindars in their fight. The scale of protest was so much that the government had to intervene. The Indigo Commission was set up to enquire into the problems. The Commission accepted the faults of the planters and allowed the ryots to grow whatever they wished. This led to eventual collapse of indigo production in Bengal.

### **5. Explain Nij cultivation and highlight the problem in this type of cultivation.**

In the system of *nij* cultivation, the planter produced indigo in lands that he directly controlled. He either bought the land or rented it from other zamindars and produced indigo by directly employing hired labourers. The planters found it difficult to expand the area under *nij* cultivation. Indigo could be cultivated only on fertile lands which were all already densely populated. Only small plots scattered over the landscape could be acquired. Planters needed large areas in compact blocks to cultivate indigo in plantations.

They attempted to lease in the land around the indigo factory, and evict the peasants from the area. But this always led to conflicts and tension. It was difficult to get labour. A large plantation required a vast number of hands to operate. And labour was needed precisely at a time when peasants were usually busy with their rice cultivation. *Nij* cultivation on a large scale also required many ploughs and bullocks which could not be easily bought or hired as they were needed for rice cultivation.

