



CLASS IX
HISTORY
UNIT II

CHAPTER 1 – FOREST SOCIETY AND COLONIALISM

NOTES

- There is a close relationship between **forests and livelihood**. A large number of people depend on forest for their way of life. They are the forest dwellers, the tribes, the shifting cultivators and food gatherers. Man, who live outside the forests, dwellers of villages, towns and cities also depend on the forests and its produce.
- The forests provide the habitat for man and animal. The forests also gave shelter to the wildlife and forest dwellers. They provide us food, fruits, roots and timber, herb for medicine, woods for yoke and plough for farmers, bamboo and creeper for making of mat and basket, fuel, wood for building houses and making furniture and fodder for domestic animals. **Everything is available in the forests.**
- **The shifting cultivation** is the traditional method of cultivation practiced by the tribes living in the mountain regions of Asia, Africa and South America. It is known by different names in different parts of the world. In Manipur, it is called **Pamlou**. Now, it has become a wasteful form of agriculture because under this system, **forests are destroyed, the productivity has decreased, the fertility of soil has degenerated** and it is **no more profitable**. In spite of all these defects, it is still practiced by a large number of tribes.
- During the colonial period in India, Government took control over the forest lands. **Deforestation** became more extensive as large areas of forests were cleared for cultivation, settlement and industrial purposes. They encouraged the plantation of **cash crops**. The indiscriminate deforestation had disturbed the ecological balance and thereby, causing **soil erosion, floods and change in the climate** of the areas.



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- Realizing the danger of indiscriminate deforestation, the Colonial India Government established the **Department of Forest** for better **administration and management of forests in India**. **Forest laws** were made and soon they introduced commercial and scientific forestry in India. The forest-law divided the **Indian forests into three categories** of forests such as **the reserved forests, the protected forests and the village forests**.
- **The Forest laws** made by the colonial Government **affected the life of forest dwellers** as continuation of the age old practices like cutting of trees for their housing, grazing of their cattle, collecting of forest products, hunting and fishing were declared illegal. As a result of these forest laws, they were forced to leave their habitat and become landless agricultural labourers, factory workers and plantation workers.
- There were several cases of **movements and revolts against the colonial forest policies** in India and other parts of the world. There was a rebellion by **the people of Bastar against the British in 1910** as the tribal people were barred from the **shifting cultivation, hunting and collecting forest products** as soon as the British established a **reserved forest in Kanker district in 1905**. Many **tribal villages were displaced** and people suffered from increasing rents and demands for free labour by the colonial officers. There was **famine in 1900** and another in **1907-08**. Thus, the people of Kanker took the initiative and **revolted against the British in 1910**. The movement was suppressed but some good results were achieved.


