

## RULING THE COUNTRYSIDE

### Questions to be done in CW

I) Fill in the blanks:

1. Agents of the planters were called as \_\_\_\_\_.
2. *Bigha* is a unit of measurement of the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. When Indigo production collapsed in Bengal, the planters shifted their operations to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The visit of \_\_\_\_\_ in 1917 marked the beginning of the Champaran movement against the indigo planters.

II) Answer in a sentence:

1. Who were acknowledged as the Zamindars through the Permanent Settlement?
2. How did the East India Company purchase goods in India before 1865?
3. Why did cloth dyers in Europe prefer indigo over woad?

III) Answer the following:

1. (a) Describe the main features of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal.  
(b) Mention the demerits of this system.
2. Explain the Munro System and state the problems which arose with this system of fixing revenue.
3. What were the circumstances which led to the collapse of indigo production in Bengal?

**ANS:** The 'Blue Rebellion' led by ryots in 1859 in Bengal eventually led to the collapse of indigo cultivation.

thousands of ryots refused to grow indigo, refused to pay rents to the planters, and attacked indigo factories. The gomasthas – agents of planters – who came to collect rent were beaten up.

In many villages, headmen mobilised the indigo peasants and fought pitched battles with the lathiyals. In other places even the zamindars went around villages urging the ryots to resist the planters.

Worried by the rebellion, the government set up the Indigo Commission to enquire into the system of indigo production. The Commission held the planters guilty for the coercive

methods they used with indigo cultivators. It declared that indigo production was not profitable for ryots. The Commission told the ryots that they could refuse to produce indigo in future.

Finally the planters moved their operation to Bihar.

4. How was Mahalwari settlement different from the Permanent Settlement?

5. What were the two main systems of indigo cultivation in colonial India? Explain the problems with nij cultivation.

6. Why were ryots reluctant to grow indigo in Bengal?

**ANS:** Peasants soon realised that the indigo system was harsh and oppressive.

The price they got for the indigo they produced was very low and the cycle of loans from planters never ended.

The planters usually insisted that indigo be cultivated on the best soils in which peasants preferred to cultivate rice. Indigo, moreover, had deep roots and it exhausted the soil rapidly. After an indigo harvest the land could not be sown with rice.