

## **Forests: Using & Protecting Them**

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### **Exercise Pg. 50**

**Q. 1. What is a forest?**

**Answer :** A Forest can simply be defined as a large tract of land covered by trees.

### **Exercise Pg. 51**

**Q. 1. Do you think it is important to have forests? What will happen if all the forests are cleared and used up for growing crops, building factories or mines or houses for people to live? Can't we live without forests?**

**Answer :** Forests are extremely important for the survival of human beings because they give us a lot of valuable things such as oxygen to breathe, wood, medicinal herbs, fruits, vegetables and all kinds of aspects necessary to sustain human life.

No, we can't live without trees because they play a very significant role in generating an environment friendly atmosphere for the healthy growth and development of human beings.

### **Exercise Pg. 54**

**Q. 1. Find out how the mangrove trees adapt to the special conditions of sea coasts.**

**Answer :** Mangrove trees are mostly found on sea coasts, sandy beaches, and marshy lands and on lands affected by tidal waves.

Here, the trees are adapted to salt waters and the flow of tidal waves since tidal waves typically submerge these areas for some hours of the day and recede, thus alternating salt water flooding and drying.

### **Exercise Pg. 56**

**Q. 1. Do you think it is possible for people to take care of forests and use them as well? What would they have done if someone had tempted them to cut trees and sell them in the markets?**

**Answer :** Yes, it is possible for people to conserve their forest cover which is the most important element of human life.

They should take up every possible step to protect the forest cover from being damaged and prevent its destruction.

For example – the chipko movement in the 1970s was aimed at the protection trees.

**Q. 2. Do you think there is any difference between a plantation of a eucalyptus tree or tea shrubs and a forest?**

**Answer :** Yes, there is vast difference between plantations of eucalyptus tree/ tea shrubs and a forest.

A forest is described as a large stretch of land surrounded by trees whereas shrubs and plantations are plants and crops of smaller size which are usually grown for a specific purpose such as coffee, tea etc.

During Colonial Rule, trees in forests were cut down to create plantations of tea, coffee or rubber etc. From then on, trees are being cut down to meet a variety of needs such as wood for building ships, railways, factory works etc. In addition, in many areas, forests are being converted to plantations of quick growing trees eucalyptus or bamboo. Thus, the total area under forests have greatly reduced.

### **Exercise Pg. 57**

**Q. 1. List all the causes for the decline of forests in the last 200 years. Do you think podu cultivation was also responsible for this?**

**Answer :** After the establishment of British Rule (in the last 200 years), forests have been rapidly cut down for a variety of reasons.

1. Firstly, this happened in order to meet the demand for wood for purposes such as building railways, ships, factories, etc. Secondly, many industries required wood pulp. As a result, forests were cut down and wood was sold out.

2. Forests were also cut down to create plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and quick growing trees like eucalyptus or bamboo. Therefore, the total area under forests have greatly declined.

Podu cultivation was practised by tribal groups such as Kolams on hill slopes. This kind of agricultural practice did not harm the forest cover because the tribals usually had a habit of leaving lands fallow for a period of time and shifting to alternate places. Instead, the demarcation of reserved forests by the government rendered by tribals homeless since they did not take account of the agricultural practices of the tribals.

**Q. 2. What was the difference between protection of forests by the tribal people and by the Forest Department?**

**Answer :** The tribal people treated forests as their own, considering it to be a sacred land. They protected forests by ensuring regeneration of trees as they cleared plots of land for podu cultivation, thus, using it without causing damage.

However, the steps taken to protect forests by the Forest Department classified forests into two categories i.e. 'Reserved' and 'Protected' forests without taking account of the agricultural practices of the tribals. These steps severely affected the lives of the tribal people, restricting their livelihood and rendering them homeless.

**Q. 3. Why do you think were the tribal people unable to pay the land revenue demanded by the government?**

**Answer :** Since the government handed over tracts of land to the zamindars and cultivators and the tribals were consequently forced to work on these lands, the evicted tribal people had to pay very amounts of revenue. They often had to borrow money from moneylenders to pay this amount but were most of the times compelled to sell off their lands to the moneylenders because they were unable to pay the land revenue.

### **Exercise Pg. 58**

**Q. 1. Why do you think did the government think that forest was not important for tribal people's development?**

**Answer :** The Forest Department within the government was responsible for carrying out tasks related to protection of forests and planting of new trees. The officials of this department usually belonged to distant rich communities who regarded tribal people as ignorant and dangerous and therefore had no sympathy for them. They exploited the helpless tribals, cheated them and constantly harassed them.

In the name of forest conservation, tribals in a large scale were evicted of their lands, bringing in unending insecurity.

Such situations mainly arose due to high levels of ignorance towards the systems of cultivation undertaken by the tribals such as podu cultivation.

### **Exercise Pg. 60**

**Q. 1. In what way do you think does this act make up for the injustice done to the tribal people in the past 200 years?**

**Answer :** The Forest Rights Act, 2006 majorly gave three reasons for passing the new law in relation to the conditions prevailing from the past 200 years.

1. It aimed to conserve the forests as well as provide for livelihood and food security of the forest dwellers.
2. It recognised the forest rights on the ancestral lands and accepted the gross injustice that had been done to the tribal people and others by denying their traditional rights over forests.
3. It recognised the insecurity of land rights and access rights of forest dwellers especially those who were forced to relocate due state development plans such as dams and tiger reserves.

The reasons behind the enactment of this Act to a great extent make up for the injustice done to the tribal people because it confers on forest dwellers and other traditional users of forests, their traditional rights over the forests and also entitlement to the lands they use.

### **Improve your learning**

**Q. 1. Do you agree with the following statements? Give reasons for your agreement or contradiction.**

- 1. The notion of private property is important to protect the forest.**
- 2. All forests needs to be protected by human beings.**
- 3. Over the centuries most people living on earth have reduced their dependence on forest for their livelihood.**

**Answer :** 1. The notion of private property is not important to protect the forest. For example – the tribal people do not have the notion of private property in land and all clan members use the forest with the consent of the village elders. Each family has a customary right over the land they cultivate.

Therefore, the notion of private property is not suitable in such circumstances.

2. All forests need to be protected by human beings is a fact of matter. Humans are responsible for the excessive cutting of trees and exploitation of forest resources in today's time. Therefore, it is the Humans who have to protect their natural environment, not only for themselves but also for their future generations.
3. Over the centuries most people living on earth have not reduced their dependence in forest for their livelihood and therefore forests continue to be of immense importance to many such people. For example – it is a place for raw material such as timber, bamboo, beedi leaf or hunt animals for the purpose of selling them in the market.

**Q. 2. Create a timeline to show the major changes in use of forest over centuries. It may be necessary to look at your textbooks from previous classes.**

Event	Changes affecting tribal life	Impact on forest
Emergence of agriculture		
Arrival of the colonial rulers		
Government rules		

**Answer :**

Event	Changes affecting tribal life	Impact on forest
Emergence of agriculture	The tribals considered forests as their sacred land and they used it without causing any damage.	Forests did not lose their vitality, in the sense that tribal people regenerated the growth of forest cover after using it through various ways.
Arrival of the colonial rulers	The Britishers used forests for purposes such as establishment of industry, cutting of trees for wood etc. Gradually, the tribal people lost control over these large tracts of land, some of which were even converted into plantations.	Forests cover and resources were drastically impacted because large tracts of forests were cut down to serve the purposes of the colonial rulers.
Government rules	The Nizam government passed laws which restricted the traditional/customary rights of the tribals by classifying them as 'reserved' and 'protected' forest.	Laws passed by the government highly restricted the use of forests by the people. There were limits put in place by the Forest Department in order to conserve them.

**Q. 3. Based on the details given in the above text, or from what you already know about the forests, compare the type of forest that is closest to your area of living on the following aspects:**

Density of trees	Types of trees found	Special features of trees

**Answer :** Students are supposed to perform this activity themselves by observing trees in and around their locality.

**Q. 4. Observe the map of forests in Andhra Pradesh and find out which district(s) has/have the maximum forest covered area?**

**Answer :** Students are supposed to analyse the forest maps and observe the districts having the maximum forest cover.

**Q. 5. A few children in a school participated in Vanamahothsavam programme and they planted some saplings. How do you respond to this?**

**Answer :** The planting of saplings is a very positive and environment friendly programme which would not only enhance the no. of trees but also add to the quality of the environment. At the school level, students should be encouraged to take part in such green drives so that they are well in advance aware of their actions as well as the possible consequences of their actions.

**Q. 6. Read the paragraph under the heading 'Forests of Telangana' and answer the question:**

**What suggestions do you have for increasing the forest cover in our state?**

**Answer :** The government has declared 26,904 sq. Kilometres as forests in Telangana which is about 24% of all land in the region. However, all of this land is not nearly forested as only about 16.74 % of the land has tree cover to qualify as forests.

Therefore, the need of the hour is increase forest cover as much as possible. Student driven Green Drives as well as community awareness programmes should be undertaken for people understand the need for tree cover and its consequential benefits. Also, every person should take a pledge to plant a sapling. Such programmes authorized by the government can contribute in a positive direction.

**Q. 7. Locate the various places mentioned below different photographs of forests given in this chapter in an Atlas. What similarities and differences can you find among them?**

**Answer :** Students can observe the variety of photographic depictions present in the chapter to evaluate places.

This would further help them in finding various similarities and differences.