BHIC 134: HISTORY OF INDIA: 1707-1950

(TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT)

Course code: BHIC-134
Assignment Code: BHIC-134/ASST/TMA/2026-27
Marks: 100

Note: There are three Sections in the Assignment. You have to answer all questions in the Sections.

Assignment - I

Answer the following in about 500 words each.

1.What was the nature of the Permanent Settlement?Discuss.20
2. Discuss the differences between the Moderates and Extremists in the Indian National Congress.

20

Assignment - II

Answer the following questions in about 250 words each.

3. What were the main ideas of the Utilitarians?Discuss.10

4. Comment on the nature of commercialisation of agriculture under the British rule. 10

5. What was the role of the Constituent Assembly in shaping the Indian Constitution?.10

Assignment - III

Answer the following questions in about 100 words each.

6. Ryotwari Settlement 6
7. State formation in Hyderabad in the 18^{th} century 6
8. The Orientalists in India 6
9. Communalism 6
10. Transfer of Power 6

1.What was the nature of the Permanent Settlement?Discuss.20

Answer

The Permanent Settlement of 1793 was a major experiment in land-revenue administration introduced by Governor-General Lord Cornwallis in Bengal, Bihar and parts of Orissa. It emerged after the East India Company acquired the diwani, or revenue-collecting rights, of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765. Company officials faced fluctuating collections, inadequate information about cultivation and widespread disputes involving revenue farmers, zamindars and peasants. Earlier short-term settlements had encouraged revenue contractors to extract as much as possible before their tenure expired. The Permanent Settlement sought to provide the government with a predictable income and to create a class of landholders whose prosperity would supposedly support agricultural improvement.

A fixed demand and recognised proprietors

Under the settlement, the land revenue assessed on each estate was fixed permanently. The Company promised not to increase its share in response to higher agricultural production or rising land values. Zamindars, who had earlier performed important revenue-collecting and local functions, were recognised as proprietors of their estates, subject to the regular payment of the government demand. The authorities expected them to invest in wells, drainage, embankments and the extension of cultivation, since any extra income earned above the fixed revenue would remain with them. At the same time, the government relinquished the possibility of sharing automatically in future increases in agricultural income.

In practice, the settlement gave zamindars a property right but also imposed a strict financial obligation. Arrears could lead to the public auction of estates. Revenue sales, associated with the strict payment deadlines often described as the 'Sunset Law', weakened many established families and encouraged the purchase of landed property by merchants, moneylenders and other investors. The declared permanence of the assessment therefore did not guarantee that an individual zamindar would continue to possess an estate. Landed property became increasingly transferable and connected to a market in rights over revenue.