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Q33

Indigo cultivation in India declined by the beginning of the 20th century because of (a) peasant resistance to the oppressive conduct of planters (b) its unprofitability in the world market because of new inventions (c) national leaders' opposition to the cultivation of indigo (d) Government control over the planters
Official key: B.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2020 · General Studies · 2 marks · History (Ancient, Medieval, Modern)
Ancient, medieval and modern Indian history - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation

(a)

Peasant resistance. 1859-60 was earlier; decline by 1900 is the market.

(b) Official key

Unprofitable because of new inventions. Synthetic indigo (German, 1890s) crashed natural indigo.

(c)

National leaders. Secondary to chemistry and prices.

(d)

Government control of planters. Not the keyed cause of the fade-out.

Summary

Official key is (b). Natural indigo lost the world market once synthetic indigo was invented and cheapened. Peasant revolt is the 1859 story, not the twentieth-century decline.

Related possible facts

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

Adolf von Baeyer

Indigo synthesis; commercial by the 1890s.

Champaran 1917

A later, remaining planter pocket - not the global fade.