



CHAPTER 5: PASTORAL NOMADS AND THEIR MOVEMENTS

Q1. Explain why nomadic tribes need to move from one place to another. What are the advantages to the environment of this continuous movement?

Ans. Nomadic tribes need to move from one place to another to save their animals from adverse climatic conditions and to provide meadows or pastures regularly. Some of the pastoral nomads move to combine a range of different activities – cultivation, trade and herding- to make their living.

Advantage to the environment:

- a) The variety of grasses that sprouted provide rich nutritious forage for the animals herd.
- b) Banjaras played very important role as moving traders. In search of good pasture land for their cattle, they moved over long distances, selling plough cattle and other goods to villagers in exchange for grain and fodder.
- c) The nomadic tribes had to set up relationship with farmers on their way, so that the herd could graze in harvested fields and manure the soil.
- d) Environmentalists and economists have increasingly come to recognize that postal nomadism is a form of life that is perfectly suited to many hilly and dry regions of the world.
- d) Pastoral movements allowed time for the natural restoration of vegetation growth.

Q2. Discuss why the colonial government in India brought in the following laws. In each case, explain how the law changed the lives of pastoralists:

- **Waste Land Rules**
- **Forest Acts**
- **Criminal Tribes Act**
- **Grazing Tax**

Ans. Waste Land Rules: from the mid nineteenth century, Waste Rules were enacted in various parts of the country. By these rules uncultivated lands were taken over and given to selected individuals.

Forest Acts: by the mid nineteenth century, various Forest Acts were also enacted in different provinces. Through these Acts some forests which produced valuable timber like deodar or sal were declared 'Reserved'. No pastoralist was allowed access to these forests. Other forests were classified as 'protected'.

Criminal Tribes Act: in 1871, the colonial government in India passed the 'Criminal Tribes Act'. By this Act, many communities of craftsmen, traders and pastoralists were classified as Criminal Tribes. They were stated to be criminal by nature and birth. Once this Act came into force, these communities were expected to live only in notified village settlements.



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Grazing Tax: to expand its revenue income, the colonial government looked for every possible source of taxation. So tax was imposed on land, on canal water, on salt, on trade goods and even on animals (Grazing Tax).

Q3. Give reasons to explain why the Massai community lost their grazing lands.

Ans. The Massialand spread over a vast area from north Kenya to the Steppes of northern Tanzania. This gradually shrank due to the following reasons:

- The colonial powers were hungry for colonial possessions in Africa. Once they reached Africa, they began to cut it down into different colonies. Massialand was cut into two with an international boundary between British Kenya and German Tanganyika.
- The best grazing lands were gradually taken over for the settlement of white people. Maasias were pushed into small area in south Kenya and north Tanzania.
- The colonial governments promoted cultivation. Local peasant communities began to take control over the pastoral lands.
- Large areas of land were also turned into game reserves. Very often these reserves were in areas that had traditionally been regular grazing grounds for Massais.

Q4. There are many similarities in the way in which the modern world forced changes in the lives of pastoral communities in India and East Africa. Write about any two examples of changes which were similar for Indian pastoralists and the Maasia herders:

Ans. It is correct to say that there are similarities in the way in which the modern world forced changes in the lives of pastoral communities in India and East Africa. We can give the following example:

i) One of the problems that the Massai and the Indian pastoralists faced was the continuous loss of their grazing lands. In both areas it was the result of the laws, steps and policies adopted by the European colonial governments.

2. In east Africa as well as in India in late nineteenth century, the British colonial government encouraged local peasant communities to expand cultivation. As cultivation expanded, pasturelands were turned into cultivated fields. In India as well as in east Africa, pastoralists were not allowed to enter in reserved areas or forests. They lost their traditionally grazing areas, which had been regular grazing grounds for the pastoralists of India as well as of the East Africa.