

CBSE Class 09 Social Science
NCERT Solutions
Chapter 5 History
Pastoralists in the Modern World

Question 1. Explain why nomadic tribes need to move from one place to another. What are the advantages to the environment of this continuous movement?

Answer: Nomads are people who do not live in one place but move from one area to another to earn their living. Their main occupation is cattle rearing for which they need availability of water and pastures for grazing their animals. When the pastures get depleted they move to another place with their animals, looking for pasture and water. When the water and pasture get depleted they move again and keep repeating the cycle.

There were many reasons for nomadic tribes to move from one place to another:

- a) No ownership of Land- The nomadic tribes had no agricultural fields of their own from where they could get fodder for their cattle. So they had to move from one place to another searching for the same.
- b) Change in Climate- The Pastors lived with their herd in the low hills of Himalayas from September to April because the huge mountains or high altitudes were covered with snow during this period. In the low lying areas the dry scrub forests provided pastures for their herds during the winter period.

→With the onset of summers, as the snow melted and the hill sides began to be covered with lush green with a variety of new grasses, the pastoralists started their northward march for their summer grazing grounds.

→Again with the onset of winter when the mountains began to be covered with snow and there were dearth of nutritious forage, these pastoralists on the move again, this time on their downward journey.

The movement of the nomadic pastoralists from the low lying to the high altitude areas and vice-versa allowed sufficient time for natural restoration of vegetation grounds. Their continuous shifting provided sufficient forage to the different animals both at the high mountains and the lower hills. They also helped in maintaining the quality of the pastures.

Advantages

The movement of the nomads allows the pasture to regrow and recover.

It helps to protect the ecology of the environment.

It prevents the overuse of pastures.

The cattle by the dung help in providing manure.

Question 2. Discuss why the colonial government in India brought in the following laws. In each case, explain how the law changed the lives of pastoralists:

(i) Waste Land rules

Answer : (i) Waste Land rules:

To the colonial officials all uncultivated land appeared to be unproductive. Therefore grazing lands were also considered as wastelands as they produced neither revenue nor agricultural produce. The colonial government wanted to bring the grazing lands under cultivation so that they could get revenue and agriculture goods from this land. According to wasteland rules, the uncultivated lands were taken over and given to select individuals who were granted concessions and encouraged to settle these lands.

If this land could be transformed into cultivated farmland, it would result in an increase in land revenue with the production of crops such as jute, cotton and wheat. This is why the Waste Land rules were formulated. However, they sounded the death knell for pastoralists because increase in cultivated land meant an obvious decline in pastures, and a consequent loss of a means of livelihood for them. Therefore, expansion of cultivation inevitably meant the decline of pastures and created problems and hardships for the pastoralists.

(ii) Forest Acts

Answer (ii) By the mid nineteenth century, various Forest Acts were also being enacted in the different provinces of India. Through the Forest Acts, the forests were divided into two categories; reserved forests and protected forests.

- Reserved Forests Some forests which produced commercially valuable timber like

deodar or sal were declared 'Reserved'. No pastoralist was allowed access to these forests.

- Protected Forests In these forests some customary grazing rights of pastoralists were granted but their movements were severely restricted. They needed a permit for entry into the forests. The British believed that during grazing the herds trampled over the saplings and munched away the shoots and prevented trees from growing. So, they enacted these laws to protect the forests.

Effects of the Forest Acts Pastoralists could no longer remain in an area even if forage was available.

They could enter only by getting permit for entry.

If they overstayed the specified period of time they were liable to fines.

Their lives became difficult and full of hardships

Their traditional rights were severely restricted.

(iii) Criminal Tribes Act

Answer : (iii) Criminal Tribes Act (1871) :The British government eyed nomadic people with suspicion and disregarded them on account of their continuous movement. They could not be tracked down or placed in one particular place, unlike rural people in villages who were easy to identify and control. Hence, the British distrusted mobile craftsmen and traders and considered them as criminals. They Wanted to rule over a settled population, which was seen as peaceful and law abiding.

The Criminal Tribes Act was passed in 1871 in which many communities were classified as criminal Tribes and it further ruined the lives of the pastoralists who were now forced to live in notified settlements, and were not allowed from moving out without a government permit.

(iv) Grazing Tax

Answer : (iv) Grazing Tax: It was imposed by the colonial government to expand its revenue income. Pastoralists had to pay a tax on every animal they grazed on the pastures.

The grazing tax went up rapidly. During the period of 1850's to 1880's, this right was now auctioned out to contractors. They extracted as high a tax as they could, to recover

the money they had paid to the state and earn as much profit as they could. After 1880's, the government started collecting taxes directly. This created problems for the pastoralists who were harassed by tax collectors. It also became an economic burden on them.

Effects of the Grazing Tax

Pastoralists had to pay tax on every animal they grazed on the pastures.

The tax went up rapidly. So, the economic hardship of the pastoralists increased.

Question 3. Give reasons to explain why the Maasai community lost their grazing lands.

Answer : The Maasais lost their grazing lands due to the following reasons :

→In 1885, Maasai land was cut in half by an international boundary drawn between the two colonies as "British Kenya" and "German Tanganyika".

→The best pastures were reserved for white settlements, and the Maasai tribes were given arid, small areas in south Kenya and north Tanzania.

→This lack of good grazing lands and a two-years drought led to loss of almost 60% cattle belonging to the Maasai tribes. Increase in cultivation and promotion of game reserves added to their woes.

Thus, with the increasing power of the colonists and their adverse impact on the Maasai's social life, this community gradually lost all its grazing lands.

Question 4. 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 Maasai herders.

Answer : 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. Here are two examples of changes which were similar for Indian pastoralists and the Maasai herders:

a) All uncultivated land was seen as wasteland by colonial powers. It produced neither revenue nor agricultural produce. This land was brought under cultivation. In most areas the lands taken over were actually grazing tracts used regularly by pastoralists. Expansion of

cultivation inevitably meant the decline of pastures and a problem both for Indian pastoralists and the Maasai.

b) From the 19th century onwards, the colonial government started imposing restrictions on the pastoral communities. They were issued permits which allowed them to move out with their stock and it was difficult to get permits without trouble and harassment. Those found guilty of disobeying the rules were severely punished.

c) The problems faced by the Indian pastoralist due to the enforcement of the Wasteland Rules was similar to the problem faced by the Maasai community in Africa. The British Colonial government in East Africa encouraged the local peasant communities to expand cultivation. Pasturelands were turned into cultivated fields and the Maasai community lost its grazing fields. Similarly, under the Wasteland Rules, pastoral land was taken from the pastoralists and given to local individual who in turn brought the land under cultivation. The Maasais and the Indian pastoralists lost their grazing grounds.

Yet another problem faced by the Maasais and the Indian pastoralists was the restriction that was imposed on them by the colonist. The Indian Forest Acts, restricted the Indian pastoralist from entering the reserved forests which were rich in pasture. Similarly the colonist in East Africa converted grazing land into Game Reserves. The pastoralists were not allowed to enter these Reserves.

The pastoral communities in India and East Africa had to endure many hardships as the demands of the modern world grew increasingly.